

Positive News™

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Summer 2014

from around the world, and right next door...

Campaign Launches to End War Everywhere



Code Pink demonstrators at the White House

by Blair Sandler

A global movement is growing to stop war—that is, all war on Earth. And now a crowdfunding project at Indiegogo.com offers individuals and organizations the opportunity to contribute to an advertising campaign aimed at making “millions of people ... aware of exactly how popular and mainstream the idea of war abolition has become.”

World Beyond War, the organization behind the global billboard and ad campaign, is dedicated to ending the institution of war everywhere. Its organizers provide resources and coordinate peace-promoting activities and events. For example, you can sign a pledge on its website to “engage in and support nonviolent efforts to end

all war and preparations for war and to create a sustainable and just peace.” Already, people from 58 countries have signed the pledge.

Militarism has been profitable for armaments manufacturers and the politicians who support them, but it has ever been



6,000 people form a human peace sign in Ithaca, N.Y.

unpopular among those who are drafted to fight. It was the Vietnamese people who defeated first the French and later the U.S. occupations of their country, but the peace movement of that era in the States helped bring the war to a close. More recently, popular resistance within the U.S. may have prevented American missile attacks against Syria.

The costs of war are well

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. This is not a way of life at all in any true sense.

— U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, from a speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 16, 1953.

known. The World Beyond War petition states that, “wars and militarism make us less safe rather than protect us, that they kill, injure and traumatize adults, children and infants, severely damage the natural environment, erode civil liberties and drain our economies, siphoning resources from life-affirming activities.”

Now awareness is growing that war is not only harmful but also unnecessary. Evidence shows that

nonviolent resistance is often more successful than violence in overthrowing tyranny and creating space for democracy and peace.

Sociologist Jane Addams, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931, observed that “peace is not merely an absence of war, but the nurture of human life.” Every year, the world spends about two trillion dollars on war and war preparation—half from the U.S. alone.

The good news is that we can redirect those resources to sustainable energy, agricultural, economic, health and educational systems. This would not only end war, but nurture life and make possible the social justice necessary to sustain lasting peace on earth.

More information:

worldbeyondwar.org



\$80 million pledge to save world's wild cats

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The girl who hunts with eagles

YOUTH

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CARING

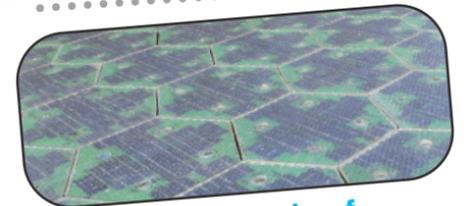
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Canada
Aboriginals
score
huge win

JUSTICE

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Roads made of solar panels

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to Nurture Hope
to Exemplify Solutions
to Inspire Action

We envision a world in which people treat each other with respect and kindness, where we consider the Earth to be our home to care for and enjoy. And we see that this world is in the process of emerging!

Positive News is a reflection of this widespread movement and tells its powerful stories.



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POSITIVE WORLD

Alaska residents open their homes

The Kenai Peninsula wildfire in Alaska grew rapidly from 7,131 acres burning on May 19 to more than 156,000 acres by May 25.

The American Red Cross was readying a temporary shelter at an elementary school to help some of the hundreds of evacuees expected from the areas around Soldotna. Meanwhile, Soldotna locals readied comfortable beds, churches served dinner, and Hooligan's Lodge put out the word on Facebook: free room and board for anyone displaced by the fire.

When the Red Cross shelter opened that night, the cots were empty because, according to the Anchorage Press, every single evacuee had found more comfortable accommodations in private homes and inns!



Pakistan's first solar project - one of the world's largest

This spring, Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif inaugurated Pakistan's first solar-power park, which will start generating 100 megawatts of energy by the end of the year and a total of 1,000 megawatts by 2016.

The Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park project has 400,000 solar panels. When complete, the plant will produce about 2.5 times the power output of the 392 megawatt Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System in California's Mojave Desert, making it one of the largest solar parks in the world. This is big news for a country experiencing chronic energy shortages that leave people without power for large chunks of the day on a regular basis.

Source: ThinkProgress.org



Jury awards \$3 million in a first fracking case

This April, in a landmark legal victory that centered on fracking, a middle-class north Texas ranching family won nearly \$3 million from a big natural gas company whose drilling, they contend, caused years of sickness, killed pets and livestock and forced them out of their home for months.

Robert and Lisa Parr filed suit against Aruba Petroleum Inc. in 2011, contending that its operations near their land had contaminated the air and harmed their health. "I feel like I am just this little bitty girl," Lisa Parr said. "This little family who just beat the biggest, most powerful industry in the world!"

Source: LA Times

Indianapolis to serve all students free meals

Starting this fall, all students in Indianapolis public schools will get a free breakfast, lunch and snack every school day under a federal

Indianapolis Public Schools Superintendent Lewis Ferebee told the Indianapolis Star earlier this week. "We want to make sure our students are healthy and well fed so they can learn."

The federal program, which was set up by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, funds free or reduced cost meals for students in community-eligible districts.

Indianapolis wasn't the first to decide to join the program. Schools in Dallas, Boston and Chicago already participate, and New York City may join

Source: ThinkProgress.org



program set up four years ago. "Hunger and having a healthy lunch and breakfast should not be a barrier to teaching and learning,"



Robert and Lisa Parr with daughter



Donors from China, India, the United Arab Emirates and the U.S. provided \$80 million as cornerstone funding to save all 38 species of wild cats.

As the animals at the top of the food chain, wild cats help maintain the delicate balance of the ecosystems in which they live and upon which humans depend, and serve as the flagship species for conserving large, wild landscapes.

Panthera, a leading organization dedicated to ensuring the future of wild cats, announced on



to Save World's Wild Cats

June 1 the 10-year guaranteed commitment from several environmental philanthropists and the crown prince of Abu Dhabi. Unprecedented in its scope, Panthera said the money will immediately fund the most effective solutions for wild-cat conservation while lessening their greatest threats: poaching for trade; retaliatory and punitive killing from conflict with humans; unsustainable hunting of prey; and the loss of habitat.

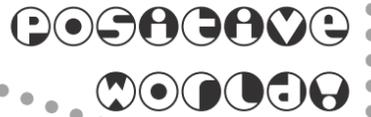


www.panthera.org

World's oldest message in a bottle found

This is no joke: the island nation of Cyprus is now home to a political party for animals. Launched in its capital city, Nicosia, this spring, Animal Party Cyprus (APC) follows the lead of Holland, which was perhaps the first country to start a political party for animals. The APC launch included such leaders as Olympia Stylianou, permanent secretary of the ministry of agriculture, natural resources and environment; Kyriakos Kyriakou, founder and coordinator of APC; and the chairwoman of the Netherlands Party for the Animals, Dutch Parliamentary Leader Marianne Thieme. Kyriakos said that the newly formed party "together with our sister parties is dedicated to reducing the cruel suffering that nonhuman animals are forced to endure."

Cyprus starts political party ... for animals!



Recent gay marriage legal victories

June 26 marks a momentous anniversary for gay-rights activists. On this day one year ago, the Supreme Court ruled Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional, allowing legally married same-sex couples to receive the same federal spousal benefits as straight couples. Those benefits now apply to more gay couples than ever. On June 25, Indiana joined the 18 other states where gay marriage is legal by striking down its state ban. All told, seven states have successfully legalized same-sex marriage in the past year: New Jersey, Hawaii, Illinois, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania and now Indiana. In states like Wisconsin, the status of gay couples' right to marry is tied up in the courts. Utah's decision may go all the way to the Supreme Court. Other states have passed milder laws, such as Tennessee and Ohio to recognize out-of-state marriages.



The message and bottle dated 1913

When a German fisherman found an old brown beer bottle floating in the Baltic Sea, he could never have predicted that it was more than a century old. His surprise was even greater when he discovered a message rolled up inside. Analysts at the International Maritime Museum in Hamburg, discovered that the note, dated 1913, was written by a baker's son, Richard Platz. Though much of the ink had faded, Angela Erdmann, Angela Erdmann's 62-year-old granddaughter, was 'very surprised' when she knocked on her grandfather's door to deliver the message from her return postal address as a return postal address. It is thought to be the world's oldest message in a bottle.

Angela Erdmann, a genealogical researcher known her grandfather, who was 20 years old when he tossed the bottle into the sea. Holger von Neuhoff, curator at the museum, said: "Why are people all over the world moved by a plain handwritten postcard in a bottle? Because in our age of high-speed communications and great uncertainty, time stands still for a moment."

Written by Danielle Batist for Positive News UK

Campaigners form a "Glacier Nation" in Chilean Andes

Environmental activists have proclaimed a new "glacier nation" in the Chilean Andes as part of a campaign to create laws protecting water reserves. Greenpeace Chile founded the independent state—named Republica Glaciar according to *The Santiago Times*—in early March and have since opened embassies in dozens of countries, using Greenpeace International offices.

Those who pledge allegiance online are issued special passports, with around 133,000 people signing up before the end of June, including the Chilean writer Isabel Allende. Campaigners set up a camp on the ice and declared that the new country comprises all glaciers in Chile "given that Chilean legislation

does not recognize them as their own."

Chile is home to 82 percent of South America's glaciers, covering 23,000 square kilometers. Glacial watersheds supply millions of people in Chile with fresh water, yet it is one of the few countries with no laws to protect glaciers, according to Matías Asún, head of Greenpeace Chile. By contrast, Argentina already has such a law and Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador have international funding to create glacier protection, said Matías.

More Information:

www.greenpeace.org/chile/es/
Reported by Robin Yapp for Positive News UK





Costa Rican Lawyer Crusades for the Right to Peace

Luis Roberto Zamorra Bolaños was just a law student when he challenged the legality of his government's support for George Bush's invasion of Iraq. He took the case all the way up to the Costa Rican Supreme Court—and won.

by Madea Benjamin

Though today a practicing lawyer, Luis at 33 still looks like a wiry college student. And like his student self, he continues to think outside the box and find creative ways to use the courts to fuel his passion for peace and human rights.

During my recent visit to Costa Rica, I got a chance to interview this maverick attorney about his past victories and his brilliant new idea to seek compensation for Iraqis.

Madea: Let's start out by recalling the key moment in Costa Rica's pacifist history.

Luis: That was 1948, when Costa Rican President Jose Figueras declared that the nation's military would be abolished, a move that was ratified the following year by the Constituent Assembly. Figueras even took a sledgehammer and smashed one of the walls of the military headquarters, announcing that it would be turned into a national museum and that the military budget would be redirected toward healthcare and education.

Since then, Costa Rica has become renowned for its peaceful and unarmed neutrality in foreign affairs.

So let's fast-forward: It's 2003, you're in law school, and your government joined George Bush's "Coalition of the Willing"—a group of 49 countries that gave their stamp of approval for the invasion of Iraq. Costa Rica didn't contribute anything; it simply added its name. But that was enough to get you so upset that you decided to take your government to court?

Yes. Bush told the world that this was going to be a war for peace, democracy and human rights. But he couldn't get a UN mandate, so he had to create a coalition to make it look like the invasion had global support. That's why he pushed so many countries to join. Costa Rica—precisely because it abolished its military and has a history of peace—was an important country to have on his side to show moral authority. Costa Rica is listened to when it speaks at the UN. So in this sense, Costa Rica was an important partner.

When President Abel Pacheco announced that Costa Rica had joined this coalition, the vast majority of Costa Ricans were opposed. I was really upset about our involvement, but I was also upset that my friends didn't think

we could anything about it. When I proposed suing the president, they thought I was crazy.

But I went ahead anyway, and after I filed a lawsuit, the Costa Rica Bar Association filed a suit and the Ombudsman filed a suit—and they were all combined with mine.

When the ruling came out in our favor in September 2004, a year and a half after I filed, there was a sense of relief among the public. President Pacheco was depressed because he's really a nice guy and he probably thought, "Why did I do this?" He even considered resigning over this, but he didn't because so many people asked him not to.

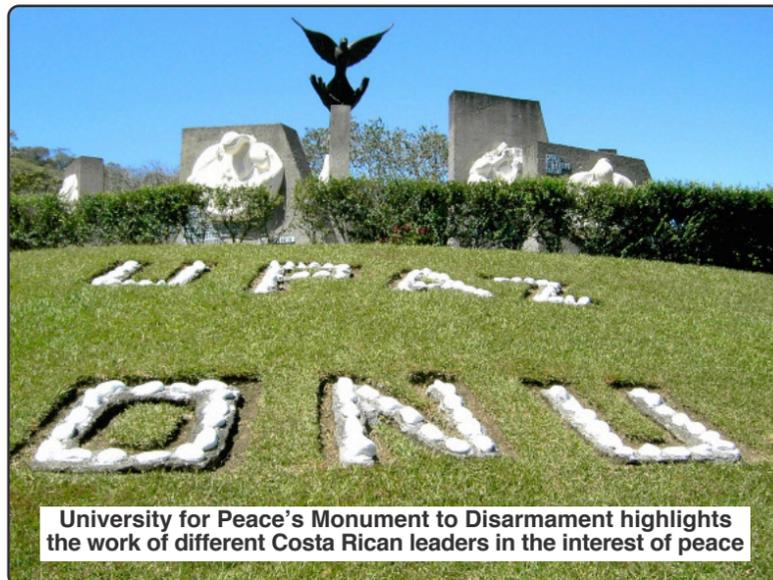
On what basis did the court rule in your favor?

One of the most significant things about this ruling was that it recognized the binding character

purposes." In that case I again claimed a violation of the right to peace. The court annulled the president's decree, explicitly recognizing the existence of a right to peace. This means the State must not only promote peace, but must refrain from au-
tho-



“If we want peace to be a fundamental right, then we have to protect it.”



University for Peace's Monument to Disarmament highlights the work of different Costa Rican leaders in the interest of peace

of the UN Charter. The court ruled that since Costa Rica is a member of the United Nations, we are under the obligation to follow its proceedings and since the UN never authorized the invasion, Costa Rica did not have the right to support it.

The court also said that the support for the invasion contradicted a fundamental principle of the "Costa Rican Identity," which is peace. This makes us the first country in the world to recognize the right to peace, something that was made even more explicit in another case that I won in 2008.

Can you tell us about that case?

In 2008 I challenged a decree by then-President Oscar Arias that authorized the extraction of thorium and uranium, nuclear fuel development and the manufacture of nuclear reactors "for all

riking war-related activities, like the production, export or import of items intended to be used in a war.

So this meant that companies like Raytheon, which had purchased land here and intended to set up shop, are now not operational.

What are some of the other lawsuits you've filed?

Oh, [there's so] many of them. I filed another case against President Arias—who won the Nobel Peace prize in 1987—for authorizing the police to use military weapons against demonstrators. This case also went all the way to the Supreme Court and won.

I sued the government for signing the Central America Free Trade Agreement, (CAFTA), which includes weapons forbidden in Costa Rica. I sued the government twice for allowing the

U.S. military, under the pretext of the war on drugs, to play war games on our sovereign land as if they were a game of chess.

Our government gives six-month permits for up to 46 military vessels to dock in our ports with over

Perhaps if we could win one case in Costa Rica, we could start the lawsuits in other countries. I certainly don't want to bankrupt Costa Rica with case after case. But we have to look at how to seek justice for Iraqis, and how to prevent this sort of coalition from forming again. It's worth a try.

Do you think there is something that we could be doing in court to challenge drone killings?

Certainly. I think the people pressing the kill button should be held personally responsible for criminal acts because the drone is an extension of their body, used to perform actions they cannot do personally.

Have you had personal repercussions for taking on such sensitive issues?

I have friends in the phone company who told me I was being tapped. But I don't really care. What can they do if I talk on the phone about filing a suit?

Yes, you have to take risks, but you can't be afraid of the consequences.

Why don't more lawyers around the world challenge their governments in the creative ways you do?

Lack of imagination perhaps? I don't know.

I am surprised that so many good lawyers oftentimes just don't see the obvious. I encourage students to be creative, to use international law domestically. It's weird because nothing I've done has been extraordinary. These are not really great ideas. They are just a bit different, and instead of just talking about them, I move them forward.

I also encourage students to study a second profession so they start thinking differently. I studied computer engineering as my second major; it taught me to be ordered and structured in my thinking.

I love my [current] job because I do what I want to do; I take on the cases I am passionate about. I am fighting for my country and for my personal freedom. I don't think of this work as a sacrifice but as a duty. If we want peace to be a fundamental right, then we have to institutionalize it—and protect it.

12,000 troops and equipped with 180 Blackhawk helicopters, 10 Harrier II fighters, machine guns and rockets. Everything on the approved list of ships, aircraft, helicopters and troops is designed and intended to be used in a war—a clear violation of our Right to Peace. But the court has not heard this case.

At an international gathering in Brussels in April marking the 11th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, you came up with another brilliant idea. Can you tell us about it?

I was in town for another meeting of international lawyers, but the Iraq Commission organizers found out and asked me to speak. There was a brainstorming meeting afterwards and people were bemoaning the fact that the U.S. does not follow international law, that it isn't party to the International Criminal Court, that it will not hear cases related to reparations for Iraqis.

I said, "If I may, the Coalition of the Willing that invaded Iraq was not just the United States. There were 48 countries. If the U.S. is not going to compensate Iraqis, why don't we sue the other members of the coalition?"

If you were able to win a case on behalf of an Iraqi victim in the Costa Rican courts, what level of compensation do you think you could win? And wouldn't there be one case after another?

I could imagine winning perhaps a few hundred thousand dollars.

More Information:

*Content from Nation of Change
www.nationofchange.org*

Don't Clip Your Daughters' Wings ... Let Them Be Free

When 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai was shot by the Taliban for campaigning for girls' education, the world was stunned by her bravery and wisdom. Nicola Slawson speaks to Malala's father, Ziauddin, about education, equality and the upbringing that helped shape Malala

Paul Marotta via Getty Images



Malala Yousafzai and her father Ziauddin Yousafzai at Boston College High School



Malala speaking at the We Day Conference in the UK

Ziauddin Yousafzai's stammer was a flaw he used to inspire his students when he was the principal of a chain of schools in the Swat Valley region of Pakistan. This was before his daughter Malala was assaulted by the Taliban.

"My top priority was confidence-building in children—to make them able to express their views and ideas, to trust themselves—to speak up," he said.

"I used to say to them, 'Look, I stammer when I speak and God has given you very fluent tongues, so speak up ... If a weak man like me could be stronger, then what's wrong with you?'"

For someone with a speech impediment, Ziauddin certainly likes to talk. In Swat, before the shooting, he was a respected educator, the leader of the elders of the valley and a social activist.

Today, advocating for education and women's rights still tops his agenda. When speaking at the recent launch event for Girl Up, a platform to empower girls worldwide, he told the audience: "If you want to see a change in the life of

your family and if you want to see change in your country, don't clip the wings of your daughters and sisters. Let them be free."

"My experience and my life tell me that education has empowered me. Had I not been educated, who would I have been to express my views? Education gave me that power."

Education gave his famous daughter power, too. Malala was just 11 years old when she started blogging for BBC Urdu about her experiences of being a schoolgirl in Swat, where the Taliban was growing in influence. Girls' education, music and television were among the things they were trying to ban at the time.

"Look at Malala. If she had not been in school, she wouldn't have been so powerful. Her education gave her a power to raise her voice. Had she been illiterate, she would not have been able to speak with a cause, with a vision, with persistence."

Following the popularity of Malala's blog, she soon became a public advocate for girls' educa-

tion and was often interviewed on local television. It wasn't long before she received threats from the Taliban. "She was a little celebrity in her own right. She had become a burning beacon," Ziauddin said with pride. "Her message was spreading. The Taliban just couldn't stand it."

Now a household name worldwide, she has continued to strive for the rights of women and girls. Her memoir, "I Am Malala," has been translated into 38 languages. But what kind of parenting leads to raising the youngest-ever nominee for the Nobel peace prize, I asked Ziauddin. "I didn't clip her wings," he explained, "I let her live as she wished."

Malala marked her 16th birthday in July last year by addressing an audience at the United

“The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage were born.”

~ Malala

Nations headquarters in New York. In her speech, she described education as "our most powerful weapon," while insisting that just "one child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world."

Malala added, "I want education for the sons and daughters of the Taliban and all terrorists and extremists."

Most recently she has spoken up for the more than 200 schoolgirls who were kidnapped in Nigeria and, at press time, are still missing. The people of Nigeria

have been in the family's thoughts, especially as there are similarities with their own experience. Like the Taliban, the terrorist group Boko Haram, who claim responsibility for taking the girls, are

also trying to ban girls' education. "Malala has said she is their sister and all girls around the world are their sisters and they stand with them. And all parents should stand with their parents. I stand with them. They should know there is hope. There is light even in the darkest cloud," Ziauddin commented.

More Information:

malalafund.org

Reported by Positive News UK

Major religious group divests funding to protest Israel's policies

On June 20, the Presbyterian Church became the most prominent religious group in the U.S. to endorse divestment as a protest against Israeli policies toward Palestinians, voting to sell church stock in three companies whose products Israel uses in the occupied territories.

The General Assembly voted by a razor-thin margin—310-303—to sell stock in Caterpillar, Hewlett-Packard and Motorola Solutions.

The decision is expected to reverberate beyond the 1.8 million-member church. It comes amid discouragement over failed

peace talks that have left activists desperate for some way to affect change and as the broader movement known as BDS—or Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel—has gained some momentum in the U.S., Israel's closest and most important ally.

Omar Barghouti, a co-founder of the BDS movement, said Presbyterian supporters of Palestinian rights have introduced divestment into the U.S. mainstream and have given Palestinians "real hope in the face of the relentless and intensifying cruelty of Israel's regime of occupation, settler colonialism and apartheid."



Palestinians in Bethlehem send message on wall to Presbyterians' 221st General Assembly in Detroit

More Information:

www.bdsmovement.net

Content from the Associated Press

www.positivenewsus.org



Fatima and Ahmad, a young married couple who—despite Ahmad's lack of arms and Fatima's lack of legs—take good care of each other.



Meet Dan. Every Wednesday and Thursday, he heads to local cancer centers and purchases a cup of coffee for each patient, nurse, doctor and everyone in between—straight out of his own pocket.



The old tree in the town of Bideford, UK was falling down and the town council, in their wisdom, decided to fell it. But the residents protested so fiercely that a local sculptor came to the rescue with a helping hand to hold the tree up. The council agreed to let the tree be.



The World IS Good!



Babies don't see race as a barrier while their parents shop obliviously in the supermarket.



Chicago Christians showing up at a gay parade to apologize for homophobia in the church.



Two football players who didn't want a student to eat alone.



This boy invented a new form of currency: "FREE with a smile" lemonade.



This guy painted his car with chalkboard paint so kids can draw on it.

You do not know me but I saw that you needed some tires for your truck and I wanted to do something nice for a stranger because one day a stranger did the same for me. The receipt is in the envelope and all you have to do is go by Warehouse Tire on 3rd Street and ask for Steven Hodges and they will be put them on for free. All I ask is that one day you do something nice for a complete stranger.



This homeless man found a bunch of my wife's stolen property strewn all over downtown Tulsa. He took the time to gather it all up, in the rain, and called us up for retrieval. I just want to recognize him as an awesome human being.



While Most Flee War, Woman Finds Sanctuary in Somalia

Chinese soldiers serving as a bridge to save people from recent floods.



- Proving that one dedicated woman can spawn a community that improves the lives of thousands, Hope Village lights the way for Somalis during civil war



Dr. Abdi (center) together with daughters Deqo and Amina started a hospital near Mogadishu in Somalia

by Kimberly Gomes

For nearly 30 years, over 90,000 South-Central Somalis have found refuge at Dr. Hawa Abdi's home. What began as a one-room clinic on her family's ancestral land just north of capital city Mogadishu transformed into a 400-bed hospital—and a communal beacon of light for the war-torn region.

By founding her work in the national tradition of hospitality, Dr. Abdi, who was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize

a TED talk in 2010.

At that time, the Dr. Hawa Abdi Foundation (DHAF) had less than 20 staff members to oversee a camp of 90,000 people, about one percent of Somalia's population, and mostly women and children. Not only did the clinic see 500 patients per day, but it also conducted a remarkable 300 surgeries daily.

On top of the mass resettlement effort, the foundation fed over 162,000 Somalis during the 2011 famine, and implemented a self-sustaining

great impact [on our] foundation," said Dr. Deqo Mohamed.

Yet the foundation's life-altering efforts continue on. In addition to implementing youth activities and sports clubs, Hope Village now aims to raise \$5,000 by the end of 2014 for its entrepreneurial-focused Women's Education Centre. The funds will cover material and education costs to promote and train 40 women in soap making, thus empowering local women by creating livelihoods they can foster and teach to others.

Dr. Abdi's hospital now leads South-Central Somalia in neonatal care with plans to open a nursing and midwife

“We are the leaders of our community and the hope of our future generations. We are not just helpless victims of the civil war. We can reconcile. We can do everything.”

in 2012, continues to welcome displaced survivors of the civil war. She does so by providing shelter in an inspiring community now known as the Hawa Abdi Village, or Hope Village.

“Most people fled abroad [when the war began in 1991]. But I remained ... I was trying to do something, [any] little thing I [could] do,” said Dr. Abdi. “Now my place is [full of] people who are respecting each other, who are not fighting.”

The world last saw Dr. Abdi and her daughters, Drs. Deqo and Amina Mohamed, speak at

food security program in 2012 on a 61-acre farm.

Today, as peace returns to the region, Hope Village thrives with 11,000 people. The fully functioning hospital is situated alongside a day-care facility, a women's education center and a primary school for over 300 children.

“We have successfully resettled over 50,000 people to their original homes or better villages; and over 30,000 [have left] on their own to their homes in Mogadishu. Peace in our region [has had a]

school to further empower the women of Mogadishu.

Hope Village proves that one dedicated woman can spawn a community that improves the lives of thousands.

“Over the last 20 years, the Somali women have stood up,” says Dr. Abdi. “We are the leaders of our community and the hope of our future generations. We are not just helpless victims of the civil war. We can reconcile. We can do everything.”

More Information:

www.dhaf.org

Donations for DHAF Women's Education Centre:
www.globalgiving.org/projects/women-entrepreneurs-somalia/



I ordered food online, and under Special Instructions typed in, “Please draw something uplifting on the container. I just got dumped.” The result exceeded my expectations.



Together since 1954.



Don't Wait for the Revolution—Live It!

When pranksters and creative organizers create temporary utopias, the experience leaves us wanting more—and ready to work hard to get it

by Andrew Boyd

We can't create a better world if we haven't yet imagined it. How much better then, if we are able to touch such a world, experience it directly, even live in it—if only to a partial degree and for a brief moment. This is the idea behind "prefigurative interventions," actions that not only work to stop the next dumb thing the bad guys are up to, but also enact in the here and now the world we actually want to live in.

These kinds of interventions come in all shapes and sizes, from artistic gestures like John and Yoko's 1969 "War Is Over! (If You Want It)" Times Square billboard, to utopian-flavored mass movements like Occupy Wall Street with its free libraries, communitarian ethic and experiments in direct democracy.

"You never change things by fighting the existing reality," Buckminster Fuller advised. "To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete." A brilliant insight, but he's only half right, because the best direct actions—and social movements—actually do both.

Creating Change

Consider the lunch counter sit-ins of the 1960s. They were not only brave acts of resistance against the racism of the Jim Crow South, but they also beautifully and dramatically prefigured the world the civil rights movement was trying to bring into being: blacks and whites sitting together as equals in public spaces.

The young students didn't ask anyone's permission; they didn't wait for society to evolve or for bad laws to change. In the best spirit of direct action, they walked in there and simply changed the world. At least for a few moments, in one place, they were living in an integrated South. They painted a picture of how the world could be, and the vicious response from white bystanders and police only proved how important it was to make it so.

Utopian Thinking

With the dominance of market capitalism and its apologists proclaiming an "end of ideology,"

provocations that stretch our political imaginations are more vital than ever. Social theorist Steve Duncombe goes a step further, arguing that we need to bring back utopian thinking. In his recent book, "Open Utopia," he argues that even for reformers, utopian thinking is necessary, providing "a compass point to determine what direction to move toward and a measuring stick to determine how far one has come."

However, in an era of media saturation and distrust of the utopia-inspired disasters of the 20th century, this is increasingly hard to do via criticism alone. Using dystopian visions to sound the alarm—a more and more popular strategy—is just another form of criticism that leaves the status quo standing, Duncombe argues. What is needed instead are direct interventions that both embody and point toward utopian possibilities. Contemporary social movements, it turns out, are chock full of them.

Making it Today

Monthly Critical Mass bike

rides prefigure future cities in which bicycles actually hold their own as traffic. PARK(ing) Day is a global day of action in which people put a day's worth of coins into a parking meter and transform their parking space into a mini-park or jazz lounge or tiny public swimming pool. It prefigures a greening of urban space and a reclaimed commons.

In 2006 members from a coalition of environmental groups posed as a government agency—the Oil Enforcement Agency—that should have existed, but didn't. Complete with SWAT-team-like caps and badges, agents ticketed SUVs, impounded fuel-inefficient vehicles at auto shows, and generally modeled a future in which government takes climate change seriously.

Clever protest campaigns can bring little shards of utopia not just into the streets but also into our elections and even legislatures. When Jello Biafra ran for mayor of San Francisco in 1979, one of the planks in his platform called for beat cops to be voted on by the neighborhoods they patrolled. Once out in the open, this and other seemingly radical

ideas were revealed as the reasonable proposals they were, and thousands of San Franciscans pulled the lever for Jello.

Even legislation can be prefigurative. One of my pet projects, "What Would Finland Do?" aims to introduce a bill in the New York legislature to prorate traffic fines according to the net wealth of the driver. It wouldn't pass, but a lot of New Yorkers might think: "Why the hell not?" and the long fight for greater economic equality might inch a tiny bit forward. (Finland, by the way, has such a law, and in 2004 the 27-year-old heir to a sausage fortune was fined \$204,000 for driving 50 miles per hour in a 25 mph zone.)

Whether religious or artistic, a playful thought experiment or a serious attempt to be true to one's values in the face of state violence, prefigurative engagement allows us to experience for ourselves (and demonstrate to others), that another world is necessary, possible—and maybe even beautiful.

More Information:

Story from Yes! Magazine
www.yesmagazine.org

Image from the annual Burning Man event held in Nevada's Black Rock Desert is a place where people can test out ideas and experiment with the future in real time

Photo by Rick Egan



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There is an alternative to capitalism: Mondragon shows the way

Why are we told a broken system that creates vast inequality is the only choice? The world's largest consortium of co-ops located in the Basque Country is living proof otherwise

by Georgia Kelly and Shaula Massena

Here's how it played out when one of the Mondragón cooperatives fell on hard times. The worker/owners and the managers met to review their options. After three days of meetings, the worker/owners agreed that 20 percent of the workforce would leave their jobs for a year, during which they would continue to receive 80 percent of their pay and, if they wished, free training for other work.

This group would be chosen by lottery, and if the company was still in trouble a year later, the first group would return to work and a second would take a year off.

The result? The solution worked and the company thrives to this day.

The central importance of workers permeates every aspect of the Mondragón, both a corporation and federation of worker cooperatives. Even though the MCC businesses are affected by the global financial crisis, there is no unemployment within the MCC businesses. People are moved around to other jobs, or hours are cut without cutting pay. The wages for unworked hours are to be repaid through extra hours worked later in the year.

Background

Founded in the town of Mondragón in 1956 by Father Jose Maria Arizmendiarrjeta, a Basque Catholic priest, the Mondragón cooperatives today comprise more than 100 cooperatives, as well as more than 100 subsidiaries that MCC has purchased and hopes to convert. Altogether, MCC companies employ more than 100,000 worker/owners and in 2007 generated revenues of more than \$24 billion.

This empire of egalitarianism grew from humble roots. Father Jose Maria brought together the residents of this Basque community through study circles and workshops. His aim was to confront



Worker/owners at one of Mondragon's 111 cooperatives

high levels of unemployment that kept the region in poverty and isolation. The philosophy that emerged from those meetings put the rights and well-being of workers first, with growth mainly aimed at providing additional jobs and job security to employees.

These principles drive everyday practice at MCC companies. For instance, while most businesses determine voting power based on how many company shares a person owns, MCC cooperatives allocate each worker one vote. They also stick to an egalitarian pay scale—top management is rarely paid more than six times the lowest-paid worker. Profits and losses are distributed among all the members equitably because their efforts together determine the success of the company.

Co-op Entrepreneurs

“Whereas workers at other companies must answer to shareholder needs—often by sacrificing their jobs—that is not true at Mondragon, which acts as the parent company to 111 co-ops.”

At the same time, the MCC has never lost sight of the fact that it can't generate high-quality well-paying jobs without innovation and creativity.

To that end, MCC managers in 1981 founded Saiolan, an incubator program that aims to create new companies and products by bringing together would-be entrepreneurs with identified needs, and helping them out with feasibility studies and prototypes.

The result has been rates of innovation that challenge those of the world's most successful corporations. A Mondragón firm manufactured Spain's first computer chips, for example. Others are producing wind, solar and hydrogen power. New

business opportunities in health and food, communications and alternative energy are now being researched, as well as shared housing for elders and furniture convenient for older people.

Saiolan also offers budding entrepreneurs coaching, technical resources, funding and help with business plans. To date, it has helped 285 entrepreneurs create their own companies and many others to develop their ideas within existing co-ops.

A New Way of Life?

One of the first things you notice while driving from the Bilbao Airport towards the corporate headquarters in Arrasate-Mondragón is the countryside's unspoiled beauty—rolling green hills uninterrupted by billboards and smooth roads untarnished by potholes.

The town of 23,000 is solidly middle class. There are neither mansions on the hill nor poverty in the streets. We didn't see wealth but everyone had a comfortable place to live, healthy food to eat and the comfort of modern conveniences. Equally noticeable was their convivial, even joyful sense of community. The people we met were friendly, conversational and trusting.

Mondragón is proof that a commitment to the common good is not an obstacle to commercial success. Instead, a dedication to innovation and training at all levels can bring forward the best of the community. That quality of life continues outside the workplace, multiplying the benefits for those who choose a cooperative path.

More Information:

www.mondragon-corporation.com
Page content from Yes! Magazine
www.yesmagazine.org

Worker-Owned Co-ops Get \$1 Million in NYC Spending

by Liz Pleasant

New York City's budget for the 2015 fiscal year includes a new item that supporters of a fairer economy will want to celebrate: \$1.2 million set aside for the development of worker-owned cooperative businesses.

The spending is a small fraction of the \$75 billion budget, which the City Council approved on June 26. However, according to a statement by U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives, it's the largest investment in the sector ever made by a city government in the United States.

Cooperative businesses are both owned and operated by employees. They focus on maximizing value for all their members as well as creating fair and quality jobs.

“This is a great step forward for worker cooperatives,” Melissa Hoover, executive director of the U.S. Federation of

Worker Cooperatives, said in a press release.

Here's how the city's new budget describes the program:

Funding will support the creation of 234 jobs in worker cooperative businesses by coordinating education and training resources and by providing

technical, legal and financial assistance. The initiative will fund a comprehensive citywide effort to reach 920 cooperative entrepreneurs, provide for the start-up of 28 new worker cooperative small businesses and assist another 20 existing cooperatives.



Legendary Hawaii Canoe Embarks on Epic Journey

Double-hulled Hōkūle‘a left Hawaii in late May on round-the-world voyage, guided by traditional navigation



“This latest voyage—called Malama Honua, or “To Care for Our Earth”— seeks to bring awareness of the earth’s beauty and our interconnectedness to ports around the planet.”

by Sam Eifling

To take the Hōkūle‘a for a spin off the coast of Oahu is to see the Hawaiian islands in perhaps the same way as their discoverers did many hundreds of years ago.

Those Polynesian seafarers likely arrived on a boat resembling the double-hulled canoe, bridged by a modest deck, compelled by three sails and steered by a rudder, its components held fast with ropes rather than screws or nails.

The 62-foot vessel left Hawaii on May 30 on its longest-ever ocean voyage. Relying on wind and stars to guide it, the Hōkūle‘a will chase the horizon for 47,000 miles, dropping anchor at 85 ports on six continents.

“We could be sailing around the world on a high-end yacht,

but we’re not,” said Chad Kalepa Baybayan, one of five master navigators who take shifts on the Hōkūle‘a. “We’re doing it on traditionally built voyaging canoes, reflective of the architecture of voyaging canoes across the Pacific. This is a cultural project for us. It has a lot of spiritual meaning.”

The three-year tour—roughly south and west from Hawaii past Australia, around the Cape of Good Hope, to the Americas, and back via the Panama Canal—will make the Hōkūle‘a’s watershed first voyage in 1976 look like a light jog.

That round trip to Tahiti demonstrated, for the first time in centuries, the efficacy of ancient Polynesian way-finding and boat design. The canoe became an immediate icon amid an ongo-

ing renaissance in Native Hawaiian language and culture.

The boat’s first navigator, Pius “Mau” Piailug, was among the last half-dozen people in the world to practice the art of traditional navigation when he agreed to teach the Hōkūle‘a’s crew.

What the Hōkūle‘a once sought to tell Polynesians about themselves, it now wants to tell the world. This latest voyage—called Malama Honua, or “To Care for Our Earth”—seeks to bring awareness of the earth’s beauty and our interconnectedness to ports around the planet.

The trip will also help train the next generation of young navigators to propagate the craft.

“You go through the oral history and you understand all the processes and concepts about it, but when you see a voyaging

canoe for the very first time manifested in reality in front of your eyes? Man, that’s incredibly powerful,” said Baybayan, who first beheld the boat at 19 in 1975.

“I used to spend hours on the beach just watching her float at anchor. It was just that strong a magnet for me. And it wasn’t just for me. It was the same way for a lot of Hawaiians,” he said.

The canoe is being escorted by a modern 72-foot sister vessel called Hikianalia. A flotilla of gadgetry aboard that boat will connect the voyage to classrooms via satellite uplink, giving students throughout Hawaii and around the world a chance to see math and science in action. Crew members will perform experiments and gather data throughout the trip to fuel projects and discussions around ocean health, ma-

rine animals and sustainable living.

“What I think she can do, in a very quiet way, is bring the idea that we are all indigenous to this earth, and we all have that ocean memory,” said Jenna Ishii, one of the apprentice navigators who will take shifts during various legs of the voyage.

Those months at sea promise to be an epic adventure—if also damp, cold, itchy, salty and nauseating, Jenna said.

“I do tell kids that the reality when you’re out there, when the glamour wears off, is you’re part of the ocean.”

More Information:

www.hokulea.com

Reported by Associated Press

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Girl, 13, Hunts with Eagles

A photographer who witnessed what could be the world's only girl hunting with a golden eagle – an ancient Mongolian tradition – says watching her in action was a breathtaking sight

“She was a lot more comfortable with the eagle [than some of the other trainees], a lot more powerful with it and a lot more at ease.”



Ashol-Pan displaying her skill of hunting with a golden eagle, a Kazakh tradition dating back some 2,000 years

by William Kremer

Most children, Asher Svidensky has observed, are a little intimidated by golden eagles. Yet Kazakh boys in western Mongolia start learning how to use the huge birds to hunt for foxes and hares at the age of 13, when the eagles sit heavily on their undeveloped arms.

Asher, a photographer and travel writer, photographed five boys learning the skill as well as a 13-year-old girl, Ashol-Pan. “To see her with the eagle was amazing,” he recalled. “She was a lot more comfortable with the eagle [than some of the other trainees], a lot more powerful with it and a lot more at ease.”

The Kazakhs of the Altai mountain range in western Mongolia are the only people that hunt with golden eagles, and today there

are around 400 practicing falconers. Ashol-Pan, the daughter of a particularly celebrated hunter, may well be the country's only apprentice huntress.

The skill of hunting with eagles, Asher says, lies in harnessing an unpredictable force of nature. “You don't really control the eagle. You can try and make her hunt an animal - and then it's a matter of nature. What will the eagle do? Will she make it? How will you get her back afterwards?”

The eagles are not bred in captivity, but taken from nests at a young age. Female eaglets are chosen since they grow to a larger size—a large adult might be as heavy as 15 pounds, with a wingspan of over 90 inches.

Then, on a spring morning, after years of service, a hunter will release his mature eagle a

final time, leaving a butchered sheep on the mountain as a farewell present. “That's how the Kazakh eagle hunters makes sure that the eagles go back to nature and have their own strong newborns, for the sake of future generations,” Asher said.

Asher describes Ashol-Pan as a smiling, sweet and shy girl. His photographs of her engaging in what has been a traditionally male activity for around 2,000 years say something about Mongolian the 21st Century.

“The generation that will decide what will happen with every tradition that Mongolia contains is this generation,” said Asher, who showed Ashol-Pan's family the photographs on his laptop. “Everything there is going to change and is going to be redefined—and the possibilities are amazing.”

Boy, 9, Creates an Animal Shelter in His Garage

With a little help from his dad and the local community, nine-year-old Ken from the Philippines is finally fulfilling a dream—to help run a no-kill dog shelter of his very own.

Ken's mission is both simple and straightforward: “The official at the pound said most dogs are put down because only 20-30 percent of owners claim their dogs, and no animal welfare organization is doing something about it. I want to save as many of those dogs as I can from being killed for no reason.”

Although Ken has wanted to shelter stray dogs for some time, the ball really

“Happy Animals Club is autonomous and independently managed by me with help from volunteers (currently my dad, he complains that he is an ‘involunteer’).”

began rolling after he posted pictures online of himself feeding stray dogs in February of this year. After the photos went viral, strangers from all over the world expressed their support by helping him achieve his dream.

Now, with help from his dad and other concerned locals, he's helping stray dogs on the street recover from their many illnesses and hopefully find a loving home.

“My dad told me it would take a lot of money and 20 years for me to get

an animal shelter. He said only grown-ups can raise enough money to start an animal shelter,” Ken explains on his website.

“Some very kind people who saw these pictures donated money to help me care for the dogs. We got enough money to get the dogs I was feeding off the street, feed them high-quality canned food and provide them with veterinary

care. They gained a LOT of weight, their open wounds healed, and their fur grew back. They also learned not to be scared of humans.”

More Information:

www.happyanimalsclub.org
Reported by Huffpost





Teachers Standing Up

Tennessee Tied Teachers' Jobs to Standardized Test Scores. Here's How They Pushed Back—and Won.

by Molly Rusk

What if a surgeon's medical license could be taken away based on an error-prone statistical formula that ranked his abilities on a scale of 1 to 5, based on the success (or failure) of a small number of the operations he performed? Or imagine if a lawyer could lose her membership to the bar because a statistical estimate of her success predicted that she would lose the majority of her cases next year?

Last year, public school teachers in Tennessee faced precisely that situation, but they didn't take it lying down. Instead, the educators started a year of creative actions that led to a decisive change in policy—despite a governor determined to keep an unreliable statistical formula as a key method for teacher evaluations.

Their campaign ended successfully on April 24, when Governor Bill Haslam signed a bill rolling back the use of a statistical instrument known as TVAAS in teacher licensing decisions—and hitting the pause button on an important facet of the testing trend in Tennessee, at least for the moment.

Many believe that this development could spark similar campaigns nationwide. "The change in Tennessee sends a message about politics," said Dan Goldhaber, director of the Center for



Teachers pack the room at an education committee meeting in March 2014

“The change in Tennessee sends a message about politics. It will embolden people in other states who think that tests ought not to be used for teacher evaluations to continue the pushback.”

Education Data and Research at the University of Washington. "It will embolden people in other states who think that tests ought not to be used for teacher evaluations to continue the pushback."

According to Bob Peterson, president of the Milwaukee teachers' union, the development in Tennessee is just one piece of the puzzle. "The success of the pushback in Tennessee is one part of the larger growing movement for testing reform, against the use of standardized tests to pigeonhole

and sort our students, and to scapegoat our public schools and teachers," Peterson said. "New York, California, Oregon—there's growing grassroots activity."

How they did it

The TEA (Tennessee Education Association) started by doing what teachers do best: educating. "What we ended up doing is, first and foremost, explaining to the legislature what exactly TVAAS was," said Jim Wrye, who

was among the TEA leaders who spearheaded the campaign.

On January 23, two TEA allies, Senator Mike Bell and House Rep. Mathew Hill, presented an initial bill—the Educator Respect and Accountability Act of 2014—that would completely remove student standardized test scores from teacher evaluations.

Later that month, the state Board of Education met to finalize new rules for teacher licenses. During that meeting, they rescinded the policy they had approved in August 2013.

This meeting was followed in February by a presentation before the state's House Education Committee, laying out the major problems with TVAAS.

Educating the legislators

Once members of the legislature understood that TVAAS was not a state standardized test but rather an unreliable statistical estimate, the bill gained widespread support. Within two weeks, 88 out of 99 members of the Tennessee legislature, including both House representatives and senators, signed on as sponsors.

Despite the growing support for a policy change in the legislature and in the Board of Education,

the governor was determined to keep TVAAS as a core component of teacher evaluations.

"One senator said he had spent over 10 years in the general assembly and [had] never been called to the governor's office on a particular bill, before this one," Wrye said. "He still voted for us in committee."

The TEA also created a petition asking the governor to treat teachers as professionals. After nearly 12,000 people signed the petition, the TEA delivered it to Governor Haslam's office.

The final twist of the screw came in the form of two lawsuits that the TEA filed against Governor Haslam and Commissioner Huffman. In both cases, the teachers lost bonuses they believed they deserved, due to poor TVAAS scores that did not represent the full extent of their work.

In the end, there were only six "no" votes on the TEA's licensure bill in the Tennessee legislature, out of a total of 132 voting members. And when Governor Haslam signed the bill on April 24, teachers across the state celebrated the development as a major policy victory.

"It showed tremendous care and support by the rank and file senators and House members for their teachers," said Wrye.

More Information:

www.teateachers.org
Story from Yes! Magazine
www.yesmagazine.org

Canada Aboriginals score huge win in land title court case

OTTAWA —The Supreme Court of Canada has granted a declaration of Aboriginal title to the Tsilhqot'in over 1,087 square miles of territory in a historic ruling handed down on June 26.

This is the first time the high court has ever granted a declaration of Aboriginal title to a First Nations people. The ruling also acknowledges indigenous nations can claim occupancy and control over vast swaths of land beyond specific settlement sites, provides more clarity on Aboriginal title and sets out the parameters for government "incursion" into land under Aboriginal title.

“B.C. Justice Minister Suzanne Anton said the decision provided “additional certainty around processes and tests that are applied to the relationship between the province and Aboriginal peoples.”

The ruling also hands a final victory to the Tsilhqot'in Nation—which encompasses six communities with a population of about 3,000 people throughout British Columbia—in a long-running battle, including blockades, over logging permits in their claimed territory.

"I would allow the appeal and grant a declaration of Aboriginal title over the area at issue, as requested by the Tsilhqot'in," said the unanimous ruling,

written by Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin. "I further declare that British Columbia breached its duty to consult owed to the Tsilhqot'in through its land-use planning and forestry authorization."

British Columbia and Ottawa both opposed the Tsilhqot'in claim to title.

The Supreme Court blasted the British Columbia Court of Appeal, which had overturned a lower court ruling on what territory the Tsilhqot'in could

claim under Aboriginal title. The high court found the B.C. Court of Appeal's definition of occupancy too narrow.

"There is no suggestion in the jurisprudence or scholarship that Aboriginal title is confined to specific village sites or farms, as the Court of Appeal held," said the ruling. "Rather, a culturally sensitive approach suggests that regular use of territories for hunting, fishing, trapping and foraging is "sufficient" use to ground Aboriginal title."

The high court said that Aboriginal title could be declared over territory



Chief Roger Williams upon hearing the verdict

"over which the group exercised effective control at the time of assertion of European sovereignty."

Tsilhqot'in Nation Tribal Chair Joe Alphonse called

the ruling "amazing" and said it marked the beginning of a "new Canada."

More Information:

www.tsilhqot'in.ca
Reported by APTN News

Couple Makes Roads out of Solar Panels

by Emily Atkin

Finding a way to replace regular roads with ones that could better serve a sustainable world has long been Scott and Julie Brusaw's dream. Lately, the couple has been working on that dream so much that on Tuesday, May 13, they didn't even sleep.

"All of the publicity is keeping us hopping," Julie said by email on Wednesday afternoon, after Scott had fallen asleep. "I

up yellow LED lights, replacing painted-on road lines to make night driving safer.

It's a seemingly crazy idea, but according to the couple, it's actually working. Boosted by two phases of funding they've received from the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, they've built a parking lot that they say can withstand vehicle weight, generate electricity and ultimately help reduce climate change.

"We want to install a suffi-



Julie and Scott Brusaw stand on a 12x12-foot parking lot, the first installation of their Solar Roadways project

have over 6,800 unanswered emails in my inbox right now—not counting all of the thousands I've responded to, of course!"

The emails are about the couple's Solar Roadways project, which aims to replace traditional asphalt-and-concrete roadways with solar panels that are covered with 4-square-foot glass hexagon panels. The glass panels are designed not only to withstand the heaviest of trucks, but are also textured, which allows tires to grip the road's surface while water runs off it.

The solar panels underneath generate energy from the sun, which would not only power nearby communities but also the electric vehicles that drive on top of them. The power produced would also fuel embedded heating elements that melt ice and snow, essentially making snowplows obsolete. In addition, the panels would also generate enough juice to light

cient number of parking lots, sidewalks and driveways to feel ready to move on to [installing] roads," she said. "However, we have potential customers waiting from all over the country and the world, so we're also hoping to move very quickly. If we meet our goal on Indiegogo (crowdfunding website), that will enable us to hire our initial team and gear up for production."

Their dream seems to be coming true. The initial \$1 million Indiegogo campaign raised over \$2 million for Solar Roadways.

More Information:

www.solarroadways.com
Reported by Think Progress

US Supreme Court Supports Drastic Emissions Cuts: Three Time's the Charm

"The strongest action by an American president to tackle climate change."

—**"The Politics of Obama's Climate Move," The New York Times, June 2, 2014**

by Katherine Russell

In a 5-4 vote, the U.S. Supreme Court voted on June 23 to uphold most of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to radically cut carbon pollution.

The ruling gives needed support to the Clean Power Plan, which proposes to reduce power plant emissions by 30 percent over 2005 levels by 2030, while setting the "first-ever national pollution carbon standards," according to the White House.

The court confirmed the EPA's authority to regulate carbon emissions from power plants—the linchpin of Obama's Climate Action Plan. "It bears mention that EPA is getting almost everything it wanted in this case," Justice Antonin Scalia's opinion said.

Instead of 86 percent of nationwide holdings initially requested, the EPA will be able to regulate 83 percent of sources responsible for carbon emissions—a negligible loss of 3 percent.

The case brought by power companies and 13 states argued that the EPA was exceeding its powers by using air quality rules to address global warming.

As the decision puts Obama's climate plan into force, it may impact any future legal challenges to the new power plant rules brought by conservative groups and Republican states. Republicans in Congress stopped an earlier climate change initiative while denying the fact of its very existence.

Because of this opposition, Obama decided last year to use his executive authority and previous Supreme Court actions to bypass Congress to cut carbon pollution.

Although the vote was tight, its supporters feel the momentum is on the side of the EPA, since the decision is the third time the Supreme Court has ruled in favor of its authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

The court may also decline trying any further cases challenging the broad power of the EPA. "Now more than ever, it's clear that EPA's authority to set standards for carbon pollution—the basis of Obama's Climate Action Plan—is firmly settled on solid [legal] ground," said David Doniger, climate and clean air director at Natural Resources Defense Council.

On June 2, the EPA announced the Clean Power Plan, a potentially transformative new body of environmental rules. If the plan is passed, it will be the single most significant climate change action ever undertaken by any U.S. president.

"It's the most important action available to cut U.S. emissions—and the Obama administration has seized the opportunity," said Andrew Steer, chief executive of the World Resources Institute. "These new standards send a powerful message around the world that it's time to face the global threat of climate change."

According to United Nations Climate Chief Christiana Figueres, the new rules could even translate into negotiations for a global climate change deal.

"Right now there are no national limits to the amount of carbon pollution that existing plants can pump into the air we breathe. None," Obama said in his weekly radio address prior to the EPA announcement. "They can dump unlimited amounts of carbon pollution into the air. It's not smart, it's not safe, and it doesn't make sense."

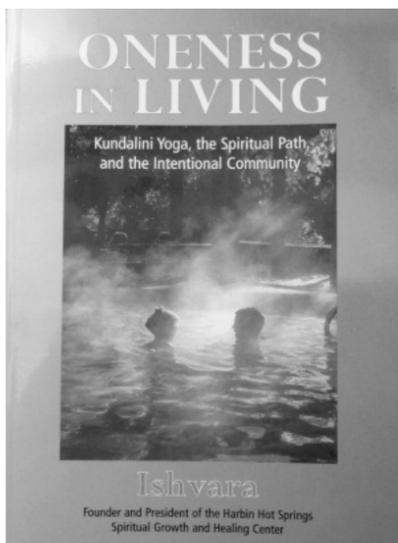
The EPA is accepting public comments until October 16, 2014. People can comment by fax, email, U.S. mail and on its website, as well as attend public hearings held throughout the U.S. the last week of July.

More Information:

www2.epa.gov/
cleanpowerplanttoolbox



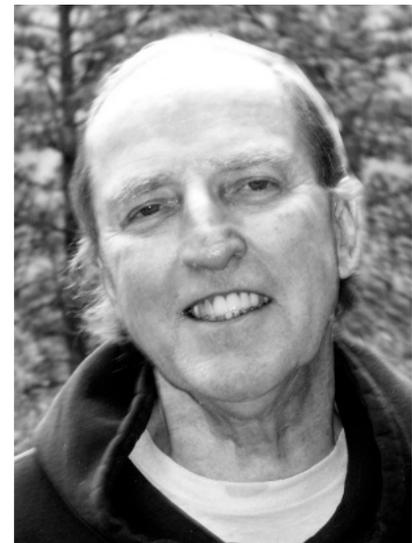
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"This book has grit and stamina - it's clean. Ishvara has written about his life, not the 'I am born' kind, but one written with courage and clarity about his living work of Kundalini Yoga and Tantric yoga, about practicing masters and about his initiation into secret practices. This is going to blow your mind." -- *Wavy Gravy, activist, clown, author of "Something Good for a Change"*





Rapper Turns Success into Service for Humanity

by Abby Cunningham

In the early 2000s, Nimesh Patel caught a massive wave. He rode it beautifully, but not in the blue Pacific near L.A. where he spent his childhood, but along the northern edges of the East Coast. His breaking wave ultimately led him to New York City, and with it came a remarkable degree of success.

After earning a business degree from the prestigious Wharton School in Philadelphia, Nimesh went on to a career on Wall Street. In his spare time, he devoted himself to his art—that is, the art of rap music—that gave him an outlet for his unusual talent of building bridges between vastly different worlds.

His group, Karmacy, became an underground success with the MTV rap hit “Blood Brothers.” The story of material success set against a backdrop of spiritual longing and renunciation resonated deeply with urbanites everywhere, especially with the rising and economically powerful demographic of South-Asian Americans.

His business career continued to soar, and soon Nimesh (known as Nimo), found himself in Pune, India as head of an animation studio that he’d also founded, working long into the night, pushing, striving, yet hungry for something more. As his success grew, so did the gulf between his work and his values. During a particularly intensive late-night creative session, a burning ques-



Photo by Rahul Pardasani

Nimo enjoying time with the kids he works with in India

tion welled up inside: “Is this all there?”

Ironically, this line of existential questioning was inspired on some level by a night on the town years earlier. Nimo’s friends had invited him to a show in New Jersey (of all places) to see the dance-drama performance group Ekata (meaning unity). Funded by the nonprofit Manav Sadhna based in Gandhi Ashram, the group included children from some of India’s most underprivileged communities. The performance struck a deep chord within him.

After a period of introspection, Nimo decided to extract himself from the career he’d worked so hard to build. His journey then led him to the Gandhi Ashram in Ahmedabad, India, where he stepped away from all forms of music, even renouncing it entirely for a year.

He wanted to help this talented new generation share their gifts with the world. Once again, inspiration struck.

He inquired about the possibility of doing a kind of encore performance of Ekata. In collaboration with Manav Sadhna, Nimo created Ekatva (meaning oneness), a group of 16 kids handpicked from local slums, and developed their performance skills for two years. In 2010, the two-month Ekatva World Tour was warmly received throughout India, the UK and across America. When the kids returned home, both Nimo and the nonprofit saw to it that the children received funding for their education, giving back to the kids who had given the world so much of themselves through their artistry.

Nimo spent the next several years in residence at the ashram, both serving and learning from the local children who lived in abject poverty but nevertheless had so much to share. “It helped me rewire,” remembered Nimo.

Nimo also gave back, sharing his talents, mentoring the kids and instilling in them the art of creative discipline. He realized

Nimo also returned to India to serve at Gandhi Ashram once again. For the first time in seven years, he began writing new music, but this time with a different twist. The entire Ekatva journey became the inspiration for Empty Hands Music, an album project whose stated mission is to “spread seeds of goodness in the world through selfless service, music and love” that offers its music downloads free to all listeners as “gifts to the world.” Now back in the U.S. and back on tour as a musician, Nimo plans to return to India after his brisk tour schedule.

“In this process of using music as a tool, I’ve really found ways to serve,” Nimo explained. “At this phase, I feel like I’m really able to go a little more in terms of breadth of society and connecting and growing in that way.”

It is easy to reflect on the story of the incredible luck and good fortune of one man. What is perhaps most inspiring, though, is just how practical—and universal—his message is: We can begin a life of service right now.

“We can be serving any time, any point of the day; we don’t need to wait to volunteer at a non-profit or when we have free time. Service to humanity means serving all walks of life,” said Nimo. “Everyone is suffering in their own ways and if we can sprinkle a little love or kindness in anyone’s days, that is a huge offering.”

More Information:

manavsadhana.org
emptyhandsmusic.com
servicespace.org

Kazoo’s D.I.Y. Corner: How to make your own POSITIVE NEWS BOX

Positive News is about to launch a newspaper box project and we want you to get involved! Here’s how you can make your own newspaper box for your neighborhood. We will send you a bundle (75-100 papers) for each issue that we publish so you can continue to spread the independent media that inspires us all.

1. Collect up-cycled lumber for your project. You can use 2x4’s and plywood from construction waste.

2. Cut pieces into sizes described in the diagram, saving the base and top for after you’ve fastened all sides together—these will differ based on the thickness of your wood.

3. Pre-drill holes through the front and back panel into the side panels. Drill one hole, then fasten 2.5” screw before drilling more holes. Once you have two screws per side you can pre-drill the rest of the holes spacing them 2-4”

4. Trace the bottom of box and cut base. Fasten base up into the walls.

5. Trace box opening and add 1-3” around all sides before cutting. Paint several coats on all sides of the top with exterior high-gloss paint before fastening.

6. Mark 28” up on the 36” 2x4’s. Fasten legs to outside of box so that bottom of box is at 28” marks. Attach remaining 2x4 pieces to bottom of legs as seen below. The length of the front and back 2x4’s will vary based on thickness of box walls so cut those last.

7. If box is going outdoors, paint the entire exterior with high-gloss exterior paint. Several coats is recommended for long-lasting water resistance. You can be creative with the paint job and make your box speak to you!

8. Fasten bottom hinges to outside wall of the back panel, and top hinges to the top of the box.

9. Email lovekazoo@gmail.com to receive your bundle of papers! Install your box at a location where people will see it, cafe, library, community centers are all good places. Send us a photo of you and your box and we will feature it in the next issue of Positive News!



For more detailed instructions:

thepartystarterdotcom.com/positivenewsbox.jpg



Gender equality now considered in UK aid spending

by Nicola Slawson

The UK government has pledged to support the rights of women and girls in international development funding. The new bill will mandate that Secretary of State for International Development Justine Greening take gender into consideration in all decisions relating to how overseas aid is spent.

According to the BBC, women perform an estimated 60 percent of the world's working hours, yet earn only 10 percent of the world's income and own just two percent of the world's land.

"Ensuring justice for women and girls is a fundamental human rights obligation and one of the most urgent issues of our time," said Jacqui Hunt, director of Equality Now, an international human rights organization.

Jacqui welcomed the UK's lead in linking development and humanitarian funding to gender equality, and urged other countries to follow suit.

"Recognition that one of the key priorities for successful international development is the empowerment of women and girls helps to ensure that everyone can reach their full potential and contribute," said Jacqui, who stressed that rather



than just supporting women, the legislation would lead to a win-win situation for both genders.

The new International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, which came into force on May 13, was originally proposed by Member of Parliament William Cash. Only 10 percent of private members' bills become law in any given year. However, this bill received cross-party support as well as endorsement by Justine Greening, Prime Minister David Cameron and non-government organizations including WaterAid, Plan International and The Gender Rights and Equality Action Trust.

More Information:

Reported by Positive News UK

Project Changes Racist Views in Young People

by Laura Smith

SOUTH WALES - An innovative project that aims to prevent young white people from becoming involved in far-right extremism has been recognized at the House of Commons in London.

The Think Project, launched by the Swansea-based Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST), aims to tackle racist and other negative views held by some of the most disengaged and disadvantaged young white people in South Wales. Such views, often fueled by media coverage of asylum and immigration, have been linked to a number of racial attacks.

Representatives from the project traveled to the House of Commons in London this spring to unveil an academic report



Think Project participants Cherry Stace, Robert Elsom and Iuan Jones

about their work, which described the initiative as "brave and necessary."

Funded by the Big Lottery Innovation Fund, the Think Project has two facilitators—one British Indian Muslim and one white Welshman with a background in policing—who initiate what they describe as "dangerous conversations" with groups of young people about race, immigration and extremism.

Rocio Cifuentes, director of EYST, told Positive News that the three-year project has so far worked with 200 young people across South Wales, who are referred by other agencies. Many of the younger teenagers have been excluded from school and the older teenagers are not involved in education, employment or training.

External evaluation of the project, launched in April 2012, found it has a 90-95 percent success rate in changing the views of participants. "The vast majority of the young people say they think there is a need for this to help prevent racist views and teach young people that not everything they read is true," said Rocio. "They feel quite strongly about it as something they never had the opportunity to think about and to work out what is really going on."

More Information:

<http://eyst.org.uk/think-project/>
Reported by Positive News UK



On June 2, the Seattle City Council approved a new ordinance that will raise the minimum wage in the city to \$15 per hour—the highest in the United States.

Seattle's economy is fueled by high-tech industries and cutting-edge products produced by some of the most famous corporate names in the nation: Starbucks, Amazon, Microsoft and Boeing.

But the cost of living in the city is high and rising. People who work in low-wage nonprofessional jobs here—restaurant workers, for example—find it increasingly difficult to afford the rising cost of food and housing in the city. As is true across the United States, many low-wage workers have to supplement their full-time salaries with government assistance like food stamps in order to have both rent and groceries.

Momentum for the new minimum-wage ordinance began in SeaTac, Wash., a small blue-collar city south of Seattle that's home to the region's major airport. In November 2013, voters in SeaTac approved

a ballot initiative raising the minimum wage for airport workers to \$15 an hour.

The voters' approval of Proposition 1 encouraged the minimum-wage movement in Seattle. So did the concurrent campaign for Seattle City Council of Kshama Sawant, a socialist who ran—and won—on the promise to work for a \$15 minimum wage. The energy behind her campaign pulled in mayoral candidate Ed Murray, who was also elected in November after promising to support raising the minimum wage.

One of Mayor Murray's first acts in office was to convene an Income Inequality Advisory Committee of representatives from business, labor and community groups, charged with delivering a plan for raising the minimum wage in Seattle. The final draft of the ordinance they negotiated makes some concessions to business interests, including a phase-in of the \$15 minimum wage. Businesses with more than 500 employees will be required to

pay workers \$11 per hour by April 2015, rising in increments to \$15 by 2017. Larger businesses that provide health care for employees will be required to pay \$15 per hour by 2018.

But despite the phase-in and several exceptions to a blanket minimum wage, less than a year after her election Kshama declared the city's new minimum wage ordinance a victory.

If so, it's a victory shared by all who pushed for it. Most visible were young activists in their twenties and thirties who moved directly from Kshama's campaign to support her new minimum-wage activist group, 15Now, launched in January 2014.

15Now held marches and demonstrated in front of fast-food restaurants. Their demands for a \$15 minimum wage were reported extensively by local news, including network TV affiliates.

By the time Mayor Murray and the national municipal policy network Local Progress hosted an income-inequality

symposium it appeared that a \$15 minimum wage for Seattle was an idea whose time had come. City council members from San Jose, San Diego, Chicago and New York City spoke at the symposium about the struggles of low-income people and the need to raise the minimum wage in their communities.

Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, West Virginia and the District of Columbia have all passed minimum wage increases this year. The minimum-wage campaign movement includes 15Now chapters spreading to more than 20 cities across the U.S.

Breaking news: Later in June, Vermont approved legislation to increase their minimum wage to \$10.50.

More Information:

Reported by Yes! Magazine



In Praise of Idleness

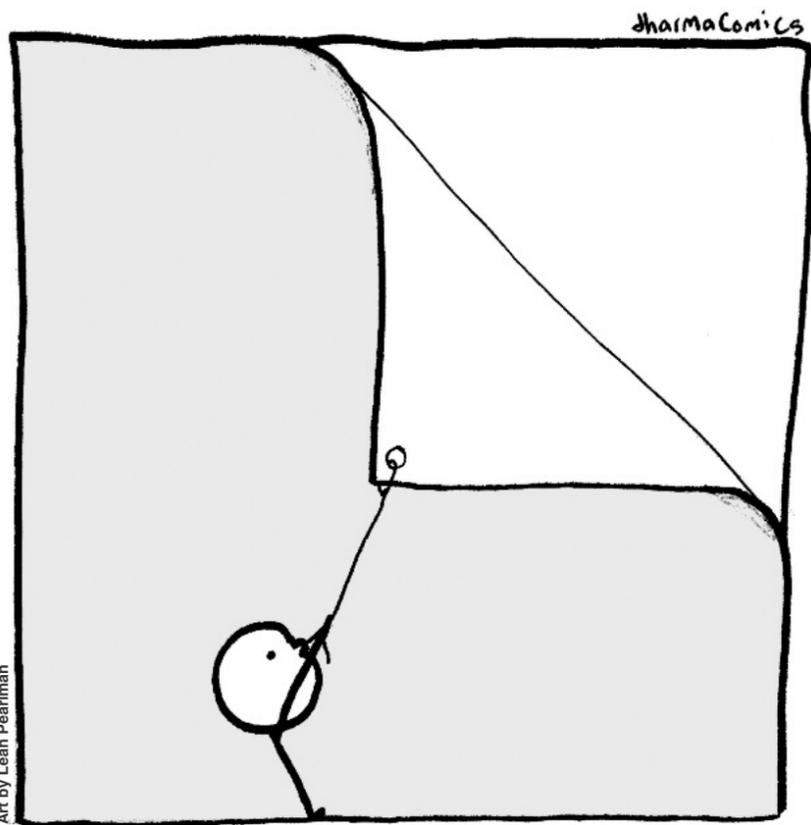
by Bertrand Russell (1932)

Like most of my generation, I was brought up on the saying: 'Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do.' Being a highly virtuous child, I believed all that I was told, and acquired a conscience which has kept me working hard down to the present moment. But although my conscience has controlled my actions, my opinions have undergone a revolution. I think that there is far too much work done in the world, that immense harm is caused by the belief that work is virtuous, and that what needs to be preached in modern

not demand only such amusements as are passive and vapid.

At least one per cent will probably devote the time not spent in professional work to pursuits of some public importance, and, since they will not depend upon these pursuits for their livelihood, their originality will be unhampered, and there will be no need to conform to the standards set by elderly pundits. But it is

“I think that there is far too much work done in the world, that immense harm is caused by the belief that work is virtuous...”



making space for 'nothing'

industrial countries is quite different from what always has been preached. [...]

It will be said that, while a little leisure is pleasant, men would not know how to fill their days if they had only four hours of work out of the twenty-four. In so far as this is true in the modern world, it is a condemnation of our civilization; it would not have been true at any earlier period. There was formerly a capacity for light-heartedness and play, which has been to some extent inhibited by the cult of efficiency. The modern man [and woman] thinks that everything ought to be done for the sake of something else, and never for its own sake. [...]

[Instead, in a world where there is adequate leisure,] above all, there will be happiness and joy of life, instead of frayed nerves, weariness, and dyspepsia. The work exacted will be enough to produce exhaustion. Since men will not be tired in their spare time, they will

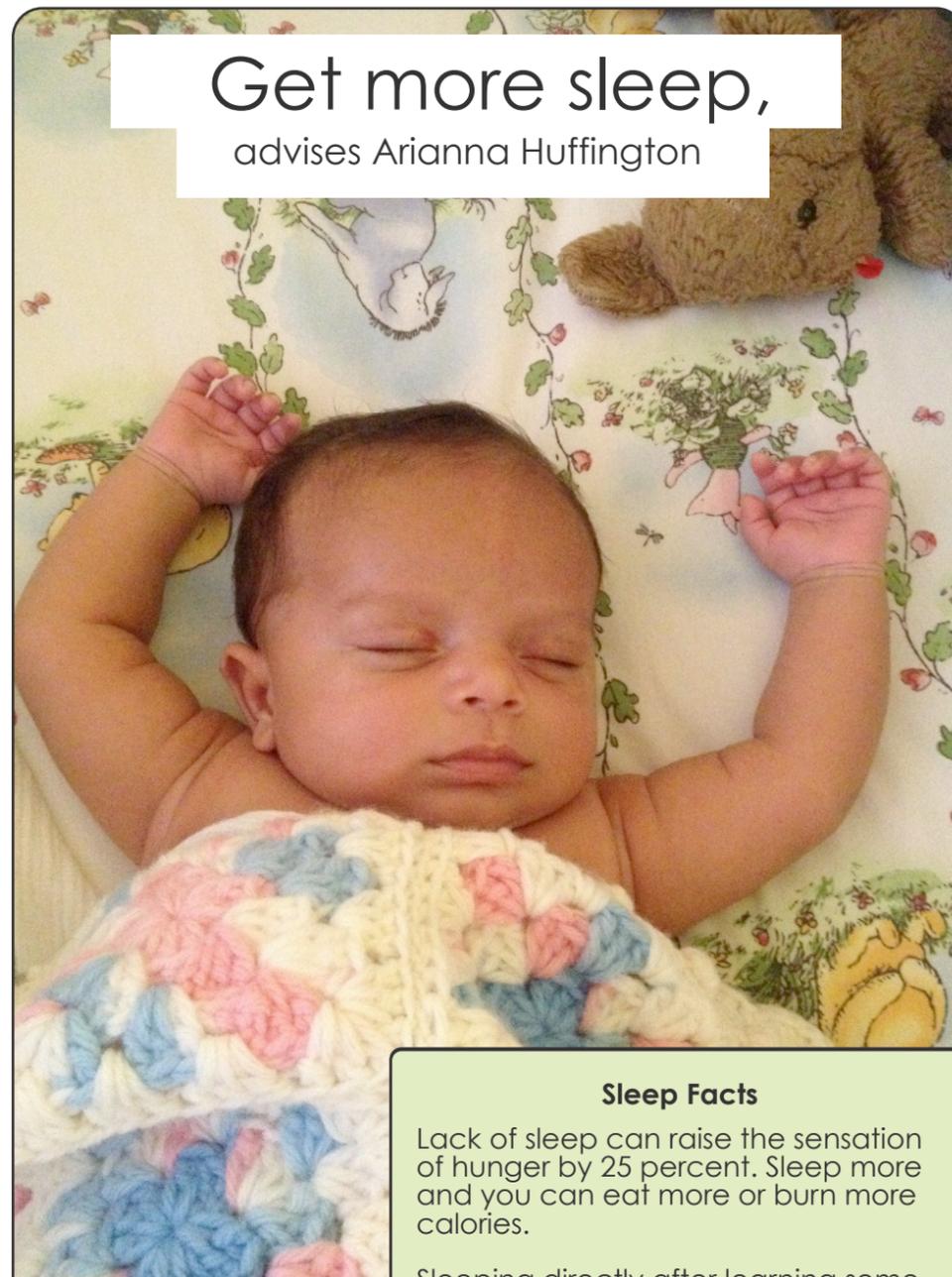
not only in these exceptional cases that the advantages of leisure will appear.

Ordinary men and women, having the opportunity of a happy life, will become more kindly and less persecuting and less inclined to view others with suspicion. The taste for war will die out, partly for this reason, and partly because it will involve long and severe work for all. Good nature is, of all moral qualities, the one that the world needs most, and good nature is the result of ease and security, not of a life of arduous struggle.

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) was a British philosopher, logician, mathematician, historian, social critic and political activist. At various points in his life he considered himself a liberal, a socialist. This passage was excerpted from his essay, "In Praise of Idleness".

More Information:

To read the full essay:
www.zpub.com/notes/idle.html
Reported by Awakin.org



Get more sleep, advises Arianna Huffington

by Nigel Stephenson

HAY-ON-WYE, Wales - Money and power are all well and good but if you really want to live a successful life, get more sleep and turn the phone off.

That was the message on June 2 from Arianna Huffington, founder of news website *The Huffington Post* and one of the world's most prominent—and wired-in—businesswomen, to an audience at the Hay Festival of Literature and the Arts.

Political and business leaders across the world, and the people who work for them, are often living lives of sleep deprivation and burnout in pursuit of the two traditional measures of success: money and power, Arianna said.

But those who chase these two goals alone are likely to come crashing down. "This is like trying to sit on a two-legged stool. Sooner or later you fall off," she said.

Arianna should know. Seven years ago, she collapsed from overwork and exhaustion, banging her head as she fell.

"By any sane definition, when you come to in a pool of your own blood ... you are not successful."

Sleep Facts

Lack of sleep can raise the sensation of hunger by 25 percent. Sleep more and you can eat more or burn more calories.

Sleeping directly after learning something new will improve your ability to remember it effectively.

The 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill off Alaska, the Challenger space shuttle disaster and the Chernobyl nuclear accident have all been attributed to human errors in which sleep-deprivation played a role.

Experts say one of the most alluring sleep distractions is the 24-hour accessibility of the internet.

Even if you can't fall asleep for a nap, just lying down and resting has valuable benefits.

Arianna has captured her thoughts on how to live a better life in her latest book "Thrive: The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Life of Well-Being, Wisdom and Wonder," which was published in March.

The book recommends four things: well-being (including a good night's sleep), a capacity for wonder, wisdom and giving.

More Information:

Content from Global Good News

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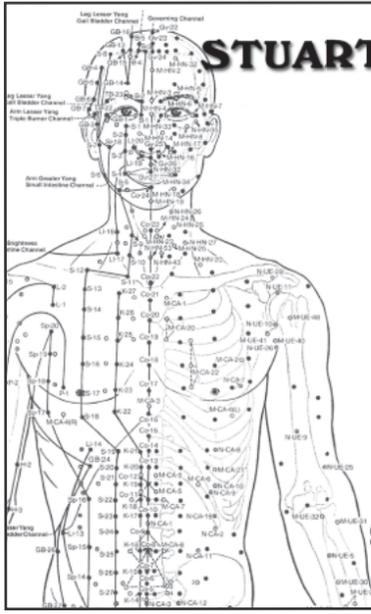
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~ Daliya Robson



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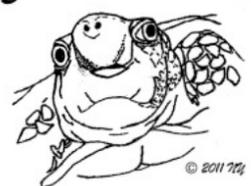
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The New Language of Social Change



The increasing number of voices articulating a positive vision of the future are a welcome antidote to the 'anti' approach, reports Lucy Purdy

The general mood during The People's Assembly Against Austerity march held in London this June felt engaged, but largely 'anti'. This was about anti-austerity and angry placards. Music and togetherness yes, but it was all against something, not for something. Last to speak on a line-up of mainly trade union leaders and stalwarts, it was uncertain how British comedian Russell Brand would relate to this crowd. But he did.

"I know there are no answers in fame, fortune or superficial pleasures," he said. "I know that the answers and happiness come when we connect with one another, when we join together to look after one another. It's time for

us to take back our common unity. This will be a peaceful, effortless, joyous revolution."

Several of the other speakers anticipated Russell's focus on the positive. Disability rights campaigner, comedian and author Francesca Martinez said: "We need to re-define what is sacred. To me, life is beautiful and precious. We are not economic commodities. We are all here for, and we have an equal right to, happiness, health and opportunity."

"We must have a message of hope, of courage and of solidarity," added author and political commentator Owen Jones.

Russell helped cement this vocabulary, and in doing so, he changed the tone. He re-instated the importance of having a positive vision for the future, not simply a denunciation of what we've got. He wasn't ignoring people's suffering—Ann from Cardiff who told me her benefits had been cut, or Angela from Liverpool whose son can't afford the



600 people formed a human banner at Kuta beach, Bali, Indonesia

bus to college—but actually coming at the problem from the most human of angles. The best way to reject a system that allows these things to happen is to envisage a new and better one, and nurture the values that will underpin it.

It isn't just Russell and others from the anti-austerity march who are making these connections; the language of change is shifting. Author and environmentalist George Monbiot proved himself capable of painful self-reflection recently when he said that saving the world should be based on promise, not fear.

"I've been engaged in contradiction and futility. For about 30 years," he wrote. "Almost everyone in this field is motivated by ... the love and wonder and enchantment nature inspires. Yet, perhaps because we fear we will not be taken seriously, we scarcely mention them. We hide our passions behind columns of figures."

Whipping up people's fears, George explained, triggers an instinctive survival response, nurturing self-interest instead of the common good. He now realizes that hope inspires people and is most likely to prompt positive action.

What a simple, yet game-changing shift. Because this negativity epidemic is evident in so many areas of life: in the mainstream media, in a political system which seems incapable of articulating any sort of positive vision, even in schools, when the food chain is taught in terms of the accumulation of pesticides instead of the beauti-

ful diversity of life and where waterways are taught through our pollution of them.

My own experience tells me this is true. When I think about a lot of protests, the aims of which I often share but which hang heavy with the language of rejection and anger, I feel hopelessness. When I think about things I love, walking in beautiful woods or being outdoors with friends and family, I feel hopeful and excited about the future. Many people seem to exist in this precarious spot: feeling a profound love for our world, but with horror and fear often eclipsing their joy.

Russell is not the answer, but he might be a fast-talking, hip-wagging conduit to an answer for some. But for most, the shift to believing in a more beautiful world will come from deep inside ourselves. From doing what we love, from cherishing the people and the planet we hold dearest—and from acting from our most human and intrinsic values.

More Information:

Story from Positive News UK

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