

GOOD WORK NEWS

The Working Centre, 58 Queen St. S. Kitchener, ON N2G 1V6

Issue 87

December 2006

Subscription: a donation towards our work

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Michelle Dick

An Inconvenient Truth

Excerpts from Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About it*

I have learned much more about this issue over the years. I have read and listened to the world's leading scientists, who have offered increasingly dire warnings. I have watched with growing concern as the crisis gathers strength even more rapidly than anyone expected.

In every corner of the globe, on land and in water, in melting ice and disappearing snow, during heat waves and droughts, in the eyes of hurricanes and in the tears of refugees – the world is witnessing mounting and undeniable evidence that nature's cycles are profoundly changing.

I have learned that, beyond death and taxes, there is at least one absolutely indisputable fact: Not only does human-caused global warming exist, but it is also growing more and more dangerous, and at a pace that has now made it a planetary emergency.

As I've travelled around the world giving my slide show, there are two questions I most often get – particularly in the United States – from people who

already know how serious the crisis has become:

- 1) "Why do so many people still believe the crisis isn't real?" and
- 2) "Why is this a political issue at all?"

My response to the first question has been to try to make my slide show – as clear and compelling as I can. As for why so many people still resist what the facts clearly show, I think, in part, the reason is that the truth about climate crisis is an inconvenient one that means we are going to have to change the way we live our lives. Most of these changes will turn out to be for the better – things we should really do for other reasons anyways – but they are inconvenient nonetheless. Whether these changes involve something as minor as adjusting the thermostat and using different light bulbs, or as major as switching from oil and coal to renewable fuels, they will require effort.

But the answer to the first question is also linked to the second question. The truth about global warming is especially inconvenient and unwelcome to some powerful people and companies making enormous sums of money from activities they know full well will have to change dramatically in order to ensure the planet's livability.

Worth a Second Look

By Don Gingerich

Worth a Second Look Furniture and Housewares grew out of a conversation with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul about transforming the old thrift store at 97 Victoria into a revitalized community venture.

Our goal was to initiate a community-wide effort to decrease the amount of furniture and houseware items that end up in landfills, while creating a welcoming, clean and interesting recycling centre.

Worth a Second Look has evolved as a community tools project that is unique in the way that it is structured and the way that it functions.

The goal of a Community Tool project is the wide involvement of those not able to work in the regular labour market and those wanting to contribute in many different ways.

Those involved do not perceive their efforts as charity but rather as an effort towards contributing to the good of society. The practicality of the projects helps everyone stay focused on the tasks at hand. This way of developing community provides opportunities for individuals to express their creativity and skills in a meaningful way. It is work that facilitates environmental sustainability and the means to help individuals to meet basic material needs and creative desires.

Since January 2006:

- ↳ over 93,789 used items have been recycled
- ↳ 39,634 houseware items
- ↳ 3,754 pieces of furniture
- ↳ 14,227 books
- ↳ Up to 29 individuals volunteer each week, resulting in 11,200 volunteer hours



Come see what Kitchener's largest furniture and housewares recycling centre has to offer this holiday season!

We offer a wide range of quality used goods at affordable prices, including:

**Children's Toys & Games
Tables & Chairs
Art & Crafts
Cookware
Books**

**Christmas Decorations
Music Cassettes & LPs
Small Appliances
Jewellery
And More!**

This year, we recycled over 93,000 items, keeping tonnes of material out of local landfills!

**97 Victoria
Street North
(519) 569-7566**



**Monday - Friday:
9:00am - 5:00pm
Saturdays:
9:00am - 4:00pm**

Twenty-Second Year

Issue 87

December 2006

Good Work News

Good Work News was first produced in September 1984. It is published four times a year by The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen as a forum of opinions and ideas on work and unemployment. There is a circulation of 9,500 copies. Subscription: a donation towards our work.

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The Working Centre is pleased
to announce that

John Jackson

will be Guest of Honour for the
20th Annual Mayors' Dinner

In recognition of his personal commitment to environmental
issues in the Province of Ontario

Saturday April 14, 2007

The Mayors' Dinner is an evening that celebrates individuals
who have made outstanding contributions to our community

John Jackson is a citizen of Kitchener who has worked for almost thirty years as a dedicated environmentalist. He has used his considerable organizing, writing and speaking skills to work with a wide range of citizen groups throughout Ontario, mainly on waste management, contamination issues, and Great Lakes ecology. John has been President for 6 years and a Board member for 25 years of Great Lakes United, which is a coalition of citizens, environmental, labour and conservation groups from Canada, the United States, and First Nations working to protect the Great Lakes. John has also been the coordinator of the Citizens Network on Waste Management, which is a coalition of grass-roots, citizens' groups working on waste issues.

John Jackson has devoted the past thirty years to helping citizens protect their communities from assaults on the environment. He has worked with citizens in all parts of the Great Lakes on a wide range of environmental issues from the push for zero discharge of the contaminants most threatening to human and wildlife health, to preventing the excess use and needless diversion of the waters of the Great Lakes, to promoting waste reduction and preventing needless incinerators and landfills from being built. The Mayors' Dinner will celebrate John's life long commitment to environmental issues through supporting citizen groups to respond to environmental issues.

We invite you to become involved by buying tickets, purchasing a community table for your group, company or church, purchasing sponsorships or contributing an item for the auction.

For more details, please call

Kara at (519)743-1151 x119.

Ecological Restoration Integrated Models of Cooperation

There has been a tradition in the December issue of Good Work News to provide insight into the parallels between work, consumerism and the environment. This year the knowledge of the looming effects of Global Warming are everywhere. How else can one respond but to understand the implications locally. The following article tries to put into context these stark environmental questions using the core ideas of The Working Centre and a description of how the centre is organized as a model for environmental action.

By Joe Mancini

It is hard to escape the warnings about how fragile the earth's ecosystem is. While it may be easy to ignore or deny such warnings, when we take the time to review the literature of environmentalists and scientists, the realities that they write about are staggering. (Some of these books are featured on pages 6 and 7). They cut into the heart of what we call our western standard of living. They warn us that the wealth that is enjoyed is a direct result of "drawing down nature's capital by overusing our soils and forests, over fishing the oceans and pouring immense quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere."¹



Thomas Homer Dixon has just published a multi layered book that documents the wide ranging ecological crisis, while exploring theories of the way societies collapse (almost always by ignoring dire environmental pressures). **The Upside of Down, Catastrophe, Creativity and the Renewal of Civilization** is a warning on many levels of how "population imbalances, energy shortages, environmental damage, global warming and widening gaps between rich and poor" are like the tectonic stresses that cause earthquakes. They are slowly colliding against each other until a catastrophe is unleashed that is impossible to ignore.²

We are left observing and sifting through troubling crises that pile on each other with little resolution. Homer-Dixon, who makes his home in nearby Fergus, is a University of Toronto Political Science Professor and is the Director of the Trudeau Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. The realities he has been writing about for 15 years leave him no choice but to question the West's reliance on false economic growth strategies which have successfully lifted much of the West beyond the grim reality faced daily by 80% of the world's population.

This approach allows us to believe that tar sand oil production that takes nearly thirty cubic meters of gas to produce one barrel of oil, is good for the economy³; or that we need all this oil to subsidize the increasing availability of consumer items, manufactured further and further away in low wage

countries. We start to believe this wasteful use of energy is normal and inconsequential. We think it is helping the 'poor', when there is little documented evidence to support this.

"All this consumption and movement needs a lot of energy. The energy is produced mainly by burning oil, coal and natural gas, which generate carbon dioxide. In most rich countries, wealth has grown faster than energy efficiency, which means total energy use has risen too, as have total emissions of carbon dioxide."⁴

For over 20 years we have been locked into an unsustainable twin demand of maintaining economic growth through extracting energy resources. Homer-Dixon quotes common sense theory to remind us "that the longer a system is 'locked in' to its growth phase, the greater its vulnerability and the bigger and more dramatic its collapse will be."⁵

Rather than fixating on a path that worsens the problem, our challenge is to grasp alternatives. This fall, Gregory Baum, speaking at the St. Jerome's Centre for Catholic Experience, noted that up to the 1940's, the Catholic Church, many intellectuals, and most of the general public worried about rural people migrating to the city searching for factory work. This disrupted long established patterns of mutual aid that had held families and villages together. John Dewey in the 1920's feared the long term implications. "The significant thing is that the loyalties which once held individuals, which gave them support, direction, and unity of outlook on life, have well nigh disappeared."⁶

Now 100 years later, we have gone from questioning the modern project to fully embracing it - to our detriment. Cars have become our symbol of freedom, happiness is walking in a mall to buy stuff, and the idea of work as craft becomes more and more remote.

There is a myth that people can maximize their pleasure through consumption. Up to now the system not only delivers the goods but also an ever rising standard of living for the few. But what happens when this growth is increasingly less likely or the very cycle that will make the situation worse?

Ecological Restoration

How we walk on the land is a simple way of understanding the personal significance of environmental issues. Is it possible to recreate communities of work and support that are less dependant on oil fuelled growth? Or as Wendell Berry puts it, "Can we change the ways we live and work so as to establish a preserving harmony between the made and the given worlds?"

I am increasingly struck by the na-

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continued from page 2
 ture of The Working Centre community where the work each day is concerned with creating places where people can meaningfully contribute through mutual aid and acts of preservation.

The Working Centre has become a social architecture of support that links the many who are not able to participate in the regular labour market with opportunities to participate in projects that help others to live with less money, that support skills building through informal learning, that provide small earnings potential, that support acts of restoration in multiple environments, and that enable the helping of others in countless ways.

We provide the buildings, leaders who act like servants, the actual tools to make the projects function, a knowledge base of community development and design, and above all a commitment to support individuals through their stories and pain.

Integrated Models of Cooperation

The 97 Victoria project is an example of what can be achieved by challenging the myth that there is only one bureaucratic model of production or that people are satisfied sitting on the sidelines not able to contribute.

From the moment the project started, in May 2005, we had an overwhelming task of completely stripping down an old two storey 15,500 square foot building, while starting up a new thrift store concept and planning for the new St. John's Kitchen in its own space with enhanced services. At every stage new volunteers, job cafe workers and JCP workers (paid through E.I. on a work experience grant) came forward to fill identified gaps.

Worth A Second Look was blessed with over 50 volunteers, many offering hundreds of hours to launch the furniture and housewares recycling store. The construction project moved in rhythm with the planning process as the potential for St. John's Kitchen realized itself in the evolving space. How do we design an open kitchen, a bright calming dining area, public access washrooms, showers and laundry area?

In July 2006 as St. John's Kitchen moved in to its new space, the realization of the project's potential was clear. An old, spent building had in little more than a year been completely transformed into a space where over 300 meals are served each day; where a medical clinic provides primary care; where soon showers and laundry would

continued on page 6



Meg Crocker-Birmingham

St. John's Kitchen

The Meaning of Hospitality

This talk was given by Jennifer Mains, coordinator of St. John's Kitchen, to the congregation of St. John's Anglican Church on Sunday, June 25th, celebrating over 20 years of serving meals at St. John's Kitchen. This special mass was followed by a walk from St. John's Church to the new St. John's Kitchen at 97 Victoria.

By Jennifer Mains

I would like to spend a few moments to celebrate and reflect on the relationship between the congregation of St. John the Evangelist and the community of St. John's Kitchen.

In our secular society we place great emphasis on defining ourselves in terms of roles. We are mothers, fathers, labourers and plumbers, to name a few. A great many hours are spent defining these roles and measuring their effectiveness. In the workplace, binders are brimming with job descriptions, protocols, and evaluations. But in the midst of this flurry of words we often miss those roles that truly define us.

I am not sure that the congregation of St. John the Evangelist realizes the role they play in the broader community. Your church is considered "radical" – in the best sense of the word – meaning from the root – the root being the gospels.

I hear this comment when I speak with other church or community groups. They say they do not know if they can take the risk to be radical. Your congregation has taken the risk – to invite into your building 300 people a day so that they can be fed. You are considered exemplary for you have taken to heart the words of the gospels – and the gospel vision is not an easy one.

As Christians we are called to create Christ's vision of the kingdom. The hungry must be fed, enemies loved. This may sound simple but we all know that it takes great risk. We must invite strangers into our midst, people whose lives differ vastly from ours. This can cause fear, and aggravation for it can disrupt our lives. This vision of Christ's, this vision of a new kingdom is a challenging one but as a congregation, you acknowledged its importance in your church life, you struggled with it, and for 21 years provided a place to feed the hungry and

supported this work in many fruitful ways.

I would like to refer to one of my favourite Psalms, Psalm 27

"I believe I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

This is, of course, an old Testament precursor to Christ's concept of the kingdom on earth. I chose this passage because it best reflects one of the most poignant teachings I learned at the Kitchen. This passage reflects the belief of many people in the community of the kitchen. They believe that because you are Christians you are a group of people who hold to a set of beliefs that reflect a vision of a better world – a world where we see the goodness of God in our lives. They believe that you will protect them, that because you believe in Christ's teachings you will honour the poor, bless the most wretched, give dignity to the most downtrodden, that you will work to uphold this vision.

I remember when the Eaton's building behind the church was being renovated. There were rumours that the owner of the building was petitioning the mayor to have St. John's Kitchen moved – we didn't fit the new image. One man came to me, actually several spoke to me about the rumour – but this

97 Victoria Street North Open House

October 19th was the date for our grand open house attended by close to 400 people to celebrate the completion of renovations at 97 Victoria. Many took the opportunity to tour through the completed space to see the new location for St. John's Kitchen and Worth A Second Look. The evening was highlighted by a special recognition for the contributions of hundreds of volunteers who work in these projects everyday. Their work and effort make these project



It has come to our attention that from time to time individuals claim to be raising funds for St. John's Kitchen by collecting money door to door. While we do drop flyers door-to-door, we have always asked that donors mail or drop-off donations directly at the Centre.

man's comments stood out. He said, "the church would never allow them to kick us out." This man's belief is not naïve – it is simply – a sincere hope that there is goodness beyond the brokenness of our governments, our agencies and our own lives.

I love to quote Jean Vanier because he speaks so eloquently about the human condition. He says, "We are all fundamentally the same. We all belong to a common broken humanity. We all have wounded and broken hearts."

On behalf of the community of St. John's Kitchen – we thank you for the many years of generosity and hospitality you have shown us and we hope to continue, in new ways, in this relationship of risk that exemplifies Christ's vision of the Kingdom on earth.

To close, I would like to quote again from Psalm 27:

The Lord is my light and my salvation
 Whom shall I fear.

possible. It was also an opportunity to thank the many donors of financial and inkind support that supported the revitalization project. Greetings were offered by Mayor Zehr, Barry Verbanovic, Tom Galloway, Ken Seiling, John Milloy MPP, Harold Albretch MP and Niel Aitchison represented the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

We are very grateful for all the support we have received to make this project a reality.



A Benefit Concert for St. John's Kitchen

Directed by
Timothy Corlis

Music by
 Timothy Corlis, J. S. Bach,
 Enya, Peter Tchaikovsky,
 and Benjamin Britten

Featuring
 Jennifer Enns *mezzo soprano*, Brandon
 Leis *tenor*, Ben Janzen *bass*,
 Ben Bolt-Martin *cello*, Dawna
 Coleman *harp*, Tod Schiedel
 & Joel Brubacher *percussion*

Sunday Dec. 17, 2006

at 4:00pm

St. John's Kitchen
 97 Victoria St. N (new location)
 Kitchener, Ontario

Adults \$20
 Seniors, Students & Unwaged \$10
 Tickets available at the door
 or in advance at (519) 747-9625
 All proceeds will be donated to
 The Working Centre

Sponsored by
 Mennonite Savings and Credit Union
 The Village of Winston Park

A Voice in the Wilderness

Joyful choral works celebrating the birth of Christ

Downtown Street Outreach

Over the past three years, The Working Centre has been part of an extensive community effort to develop outreach services in Downtown Kitchener. This work, initiated by the Kitchener Downtown Business Association, has resulted in two Downtown Street Outreach Workers supporting over 300 individuals

per year by providing immediate crisis support in the downtown, assisting the homeless, those with mental health problems, and those with addictions in a way that reduces frustration, respects dignity, and attempts to solve immediate problems.



Goals of the Outreach program:

- ◆ support individuals in distress
- ◆ build trusting relationships
- ◆ connect individuals to services and resources to address major problems
- ◆ help people recognize acceptable standards of civic behaviour in the downtown
- ◆ respond to calls from local businesses to deal with potential issues
- ◆ provide services and strategies tailored to meet individuals' unique needs and characteristics
- ◆ support individuals with mental illness and addiction issues

Outreach Workers are well integrated within the network of social service providers in the downtown, and with other Working Centre projects including St. John's Kitchen, and the programs listed below.



The Psychiatric Outreach Project

This exciting initiative provides a patient-centred, community-based approach to mental health care for members of our community who are facing the challenges of poverty.

Psychiatric Outreach Emphasizes:

Building Relationships
Education
Accessibility
Individual Determination

The Psychiatric Outreach clinic is based at St. John's Kitchen at 97 Victoria St. N. and operates Thursdays from 9am-12pm.

All individuals want the opportunity to participate in the labour market.

The Job Café Project connects individuals who are unable to work in the full-time labour market to part-time work opportunities in and around the community.

Operating from the belief that the individuals being served have much to offer the community, Job Café provides support and encouragement to help people realize their potential.

This year, Job Café has employed 178 individuals to sweep streets, shovel snow, work on 97 Victoria and 66 Queen construction crews, help at Worth a Second Look, and perform other small jobs around town. In total, \$45,900 was paid out to workers.

This program works well within the Outreach program in that it aims to build strong connections with individuals who have been traditionally excluded from the regular labour market.



The Housing Desk supports people in need of housing through the process of finding and establishing a new home.

The Housing Desk helps people:

- ⇒ Find temporary shelter
- ⇒ Search for an apartment
- ⇒ Problem solve through issues and frustrations involved in the housing search
- ⇒ Connect to our 20 Integrated, Supportive Housing units
- ⇒ Link to community services providing:
 - legal support
 - food & clothing
 - social assistance
 - furniture & housewares
 - employment counselling
 - addiction or mental health supports

The Housing Desk has helped over 400 individuals find housing this year.

Integrated, Supportive Housing

The Working Centre offers shared integrated supportive housing to assist those at risk of homelessness. People come to us primarily for the concrete supports we provide within the context of affordable housing. Our integrated formal support services offered within a context of a teaching model helps people move away from the problems that can lead to homelessness, and helps them

move towards stable housing.

Our 20 units provide the homeless and those at risk of homelessness with safe housing. This housing is located in our buildings on Queen Street and in two houses. One 5 unit home is for women. 5 more units are nearing completion at 66 Queen. Our model of shared housing provides immediate shelter and an opportunity to search for work and long-term housing.

Outreach Develops in Downtown Kitchener

By Joe Mancini

Everyone in Kitchener and Waterloo has an opinion about the Kitchener downtown. Over the last thirty years we have watched shopping malls, entertainment, schools and power centres establish themselves out of the Kitchener core. When established retail businesses started leaving, many buildings were either empty or partially used. Building owners chose to let their buildings decay rather than face major renovation costs that would make their second and third storey spaces rentable.

The cycle of decay seems to have peaked by the mid 1990's and only slowly have new approaches been developed. You can see these changes in the university campuses, lofts, and condominiums that are being established.

Kitchener's Upper Storey Renovation Program is a creative way to help building owners overcome the renovation cost of refurbishing an old building. The Working Centre's 66 Queen building has been granted support towards the five units of housing we are building on the second floor.

In the summer of 2002, a community building process called the Kitchener Downtown Community Collaborative started taking shape. The initial goal was to involve different sectors of the downtown including businesses, social services, City of Kitchener staff, neighbourhood associations, churches, and police. The first meeting was convened by the Kitchener Downtown Business Association and was held at the Walper Hotel. The main concern was to address questions such as pan handling and homelessness. This issue tends to result in two different points of view. On one hand many believe that these issues are the result of a downtown that is no longer prosperous and others believe that when homelessness spills onto the main streets the situation for downtown businesses will only worsen.

The discussion started by focusing on the fact that the downtown is the home to many individuals suffering from homelessness, mental illness and alcohol and drug addiction. Often social service agencies provide only minimal support for a variety of reasons. Business owners wanted solutions but realized how complex the issues are. It was quickly established that blaming individuals or social services would not be productive. As the discussions developed a new approach took hold.

The new approach that was fully supported by the Kitchener Downtown Business Association and the City of Kitchener would be to find ways to build community and develop supports to make the downtown a better place. New projects would integrate individual initiative, mutual co-operation and self-help and develop a spirit of commitment to the downtown and its street people.

In September of 2002 a subcommittee of the Kitchener Downtown Community Collaborative was formed called the Writing Group that

over time developed the research and commitment to implement the Downtown Street Outreach Worker project and Job Café. The Writing Group was made up of the Executive Director of the Kitchener Downtown Business Association, Marty Schrieter; the Safe City Coordinator for the City of Kitchener, Julie Dean; the Manager of Kitchener Housing, Karen Kwiatkowski; and I myself representing The Working Centre.

Over the last four years we have continued to oversee the Downtown Street Outreach Worker position. This project has made a significant difference in the downtown. Over time we have worked with over 400 individuals recording over 1600 contacts per year, supporting them through homelessness, addiction and social assistance issues. This project has been able to provide concrete support to downtown businesses to help them deal with specific issues around homelessness.

At the same time, The Working Centre has expanded its outreach work to compliment the Downtown Street Outreach Worker. The Job Café was embraced by the Kitchener Downtown Community Collaborative and has operated continually since 2002. During this period, Barb Chrysler and Lynn Randall at the Region of Waterloo helped to establish the Psychiatric Outreach Project that has slowly established itself at St. John's Kitchen. We will describe the development of this project in more detail in the February issue of Good Work News. The Housing Desk was established at The Working Centre to give us the means of working more closely with the many individuals who use our services. In conjunction with the Housing Desk has been the development of what we call the Integrated Supportive Housing – the model that makes creative, practical use of over 20 units of housing for those most in need of support. We are grateful to the City of Kitchener, Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Region of Waterloo for providing financial support towards these initiatives.

The model of outreach in downtown Kitchener has helped to identify problems. Groups and individuals have worked hard at solutions. There is a recognition of the hard work that is necessary to walk with people through the major issues that they face.

The Kitchener Downtown Community Collaborative has achieved much in almost four years. As the downtown becomes more vibrant this work will continue to be integral part of the downtown.



Are you looking for work?

Our Job Search Resource Centre at 58 Queen Street South offers the following services:

- ✓ Access to computers for resume preparation, online job search, access to email, researching your occupation and local employers
- ✓ Assistance with preparing resumes and cover letters
- ✓ Help preparing for interviews
- ✓ Individual employment/career counselling
- ✓ Newspapers, fax machine, photocopier, & telephones
- ✓ Exploring ways to make your job search more effective
- ✓ Access to job leads and employment opportunities
- ✓ Links to local employers
- ✓ Specialized supports for New Canadians
- ✓ Workshops on job search, interview preparation, portfolio development, researching your occupation in Canada, and more.

Start your small business with the help of the **Waterloo Region ASSETS+ Project**



A Service for Self-Employment, Training, and Support

We have a specific focus on women, New Canadians, those who are working in low-income jobs, and those living on a limited income who are not eligible for other small business supports.

This project offers:

- ✚ Ten Week Business Training and Entrepreneurship Readiness Course: This course will assist you in completing a simple, comprehensive business plan. Both start-up entrepreneurs and existing business people can benefit from the information and planning this program provides.
- ✚ Business Technical Assistance: Sessions are provided on specific topics such as marketing, product development, bookkeeping, financial statements, tax preparation, management, etc.
- ✚ Business Loans: Assistance with accessing small loans, marketing assistance, and other supports for your business.
- ✚ Mentorships/Networking: Learn from a wide network of existing business people who can offer mentorships, advice, and observerships as you develop your own business.

Next program begins mid-January, 2007. Classes held once a week on Monday evenings.

For information or to register, contact:

wrap@theworkingcentre.org
Bob Shantz
(519) 743-1151 x 206
Beth Weisberg
(519) 743-1151 x 104

The Waterloo Region ASSETS+ Project is a partnership between The Working Centre and the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) - Waterloo Chapter

Technical assistance provided by MEDA International



Full ten week Business Training Course fees based on income.

RECYCLE CYCLES

COMMUNITY BIKE SHOP ESTABLISHED 1993



Recycle Cycles offers:

- Refurbished bicycle sales
- A shop for repairing your own bike, with volunteer support
- Volunteering and skill-building opportunities

PUBLIC HOURS:

- Tuesdays: 11am-4pm
- Wednesdays: 1pm-4pm
- Saturdays: 10am-2pm

VOLUNTEER HOURS:

- (to help refurbish bicycles)
- Thursdays: 1pm-4pm
- Fridays: 11am-2pm

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH BIKE REPAIRS!

43 Queen Street South, Second Floor, Downtown Kitchener
(519)749-9177 ext.222 ♦ recyclecycles@theworkingcentre.org

Access to Technology



Public Access Computers

The Working Centre offers 18 Internet-ready, free public access computers at our 58 Queen Street South location.

Computer Training

Introduction to Computers: This 8-week course provides fundamental knowledge of computers to students who have had little or no computer experience. The next series of classes begins January 17th, 2007 at 4:00pm.

Self-Directed Training: We offer a wide range of online tutorial courses, with simulations, exercises, and quizzes. Courses offered include: Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, and Powerpoint, Computer Basics, Typing Skills, CompTIA A+ hardware training, CompTIA Network+, and HTML.

For information or to register, call Jess at (519)743-1151 ext. 236.

Computer Recycling

Computer Recycling gives computers a second life by refurbishing old systems and providing people with access to affordable computers. Volunteers can help repair your computer for a small donation.

Public Hours: Wednesdays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Volunteer Hours: Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30am to 4:00pm.

Volunteers are always needed to help repair and refurbish old systems.

For more information, call Charles at (519)749-9177 ext. 225.

Queen Street Commons Café

Coffee & Culture & Community

43 Queen Street South

Downtown Kitchener

(519)749-9177 x227



Music at The Commons: Live music:

Every Wednesday evening

Common Songs:

Tuesday nights starting at 7:00pm. Registration at 6:30pm.



Unique Gift Shop:

The gift shop offers items made by local artisans, including clothing, jewellery, pottery, pillows, Paperkraft handmade paper products, handbags, and herbal products from Grow Herbal

Our menu items are made with local, natural, vegetarian ingredients, and include:

Daily Soup Specials
Quesadillas & Burritos
Pizzas & Assorted Salads
Cookies & Desserts
Fair-trade Organic Coffee
Specialty Coffees
Fresh Herbal Teas



Café Hours:

Monday: 8:30am-5:00pm
Tuesday: 8:30am-9:00pm
Wednesday: 8:30am-8:00pm
Thursday: 8:30am-8:00pm
Friday: 8:30am-5:00pm
Saturday: 10:00am-4:00pm

BarterWorks is a network of local businesses, individuals, and community groups, where members exchange labour, goods, and services,

WITHOUT THE NEED FOR CASH!



Benefits of Trading:

- Members can purchase goods and services using **less cash**
- Assists individuals working towards **self-employment**
- Brings people together around the common goals of **skills exchange and cooperation**
- Reduces individuals' dependence on conventional employment
- Keeps resources within the local trading community, **strengthening the local economy**
- Promotes **personal and trusting relationships** between members

How It Works:

- Members price goods and services with a local currency called "BarterDollars" (B\$)
- Members earn or spend B\$ by providing or purchasing services to or from other members
- Each member has an account indicating their B\$ balance
- Sell your services to one member, then spend the earned B\$ on a service from another member
- Advertise in the Directory and use it to find out what services are being offered by other members

BarterWorks Fairs (held at 43 Queen St. S.):

January 27th
BarterWorks Garage Sale

February 24th
BarterWorks Market Day

For more information or to become a member, call (519)749-9177 ext.304

Ecological Restoration

continued from page 3

be available to the homeless; where thousands of goods were being picked up, delivered, sorted, fixed, priced, and sold; and where Job Café workers are sent out on jobs. And all of this was made possible by a dedicated group of staff and volunteers who all are willing to go the extra mile to complete the tasks at hand.

Meanwhile, within the whole Working Centre project we have witnessed the growth of new initiatives and projects that amplify this spirit of restoration. Over the last two years we have been involved in the revitalization of 66 Queen St. S - a further 15,000 square feet of renovations. This spring we expanded the Job Search Resource Centre and employment counselling as this area of our work continues to grow. Maurita's Kitchen, our community kitchen located at 66 Queen is operational and is filled with volunteers learning and participating in food preparation. The Queen Street Commons Café, also new this spring, is rapidly becoming an important third place of exchange and conversation in downtown Kitchener. The Housing Desk at 66 Queen compliments our 20 units of integrated supportive housing.

The Downtown Street Outreach Worker and the Job Café are projects that continue to support people in important ways.

Thomas Homer-Dixon fears for the lack of resilience in the way our economy is structured. We are all dependant on an oil shock or an economic implosion. In such a situation how would we earn a living or care for our communities? The answer is not more efficiency, but rather integrated models of cooperation that reuse and rebuild social supports. **The Upside of Down** forecasts an end to bigger is better. This means that we can focus on small initiatives that will build community, relearn the importance of simple living, develop respect for the environment, and a love for work that builds human dignity.

1. Homer-Dixon, The Upside of Down, 2006 p147
2. Homer-Dixon, The Upside of Down, 2006 p269
3. Homer-Dixon, The Upside of Down, 2006 p93
4. Homer-Dixon, The Upside of Down, 2006 p135
5. Homer-Dixon, The Upside of Down, 2006 p225
6. Lasch, The True and Only Heaven, 1991 p368
7. Berry, The Way of Ignorance, 2005 p72

Alternative Work Catalogue

Our Ecological Footprint

Reducing Human Impact on the Earth

Mathis Wackernagel & William Rees

Could everyone on the planet live like North Americans do today? Can we reduce our resource consumption and still improve our quality of life? This book cuts through the talk about sustainability and introduces a way to determine humanity's impact on the Earth. It presents an exciting tool for measuring and visualizing the resources required to sustain the way we live.

176 pages SU06 \$17.95 softcover

The Dream of the Earth

Thomas Berry

We are returning to our native place after a long absence, meeting once again with our kin in the earth community. For too long we have been away somewhere, entranced with our industrial world of wires and wheels, concrete and steel, and our unending highways, where we can race back and forth in a continual frenzy. In this groundbreaking book, Berry uses historical context to address the subjects of culture, consciousness and ecology in a series of essays that describe the earth as dynamically fluid and interconnected.

264 pages RL05 \$21.00 softcover

An Inconvenient Truth

The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About It

Al Gore

In An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore argues that our climate crisis is not occurring slowly over a long period of time, but rather very quickly, and has become a planetary emergency. He questions why the world's leaders are not taking actions needed to address our environmental crisis, and are instead ignoring realities simply because they are 'inconvenient'. Inconvenient truths, Gore says, do not go away just because they are not seen; their significance grows.

325 pages CC50 \$25.95 softcover

The Lichen Factor

The Quest for Community Development in Canada

Jim Lotz

The collected wisdom of "a very wise man" describing how community development, governments and individuals can work together to create better societies. Reviews the history of community development as he has seen it and explores its potential and limitations using practical experience combined with vision.

288 pages WC04 \$22.95 softcover

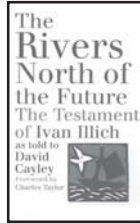
People, Land, and Community

The E. F. Schumacher Society

In this forward-looking book, experts in the field of ecological economics consider the impact of environmental and community degradation. Starting with the ideas set forth by E. F. Schumacher in *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, the contributors discuss how current economic systems must adapt to work within the Earth's limitations, and suggest ways for citizens to halt further social and environmental degradation.

328 pages SB11 \$26.50 softcover

Alternative Work Catalogue



The Rivers North of the Future

The Testament of Ivan Illich

David Cayley

Based on a series of interviews between Cayley and Illich exploring Illich's views of Western civilization as a corruption of the New Testament. Christ set love higher than law, as illustrated by the Good Samaritan, but when love was made into law an entirely new type of power was produced, institutionalizing, and managing Christian vocation. Illich calls this, "The corruption of the best is the worst." Illich's analysis of contemporary society as a congealed and corrupted version of Christianity draws heavily from historical contexts, and serves as an invitation to believers to revise and renew their understanding of Christianity.

252 pages GB01 \$24.95 softcover

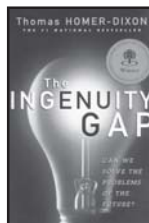


Dark Age Ahead

Jane Jacobs

A Dark Age is a culture's dead end; a result of a society gone awry. Jacobs argues that our own culture may soon be facing a dark age as we move from an agrarian economy to an increasingly technological one. How do we make this shift without losing ourselves in the process? Jacobs identifies several key aspects of society that are slowly degrading, and suggests that to reverse the decay, we must hold on to those key cultural values.

241 pages GB07 \$29.95 hardcover



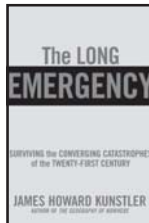
The Ingenuity Gap

Can We Solve the Problems of the Future?

Thomas Homer-Dixon

In this persuasive book, Homer-Dixon looks at whether we as a people can create and implement solutions to address the large-scale problems - environment, social, and technological - quickly enough to save us from them. This ingenuity gap is one of the critical problems we face today, in a world whose complexity is exceeding our intellectual grasp. Those ideas that have been at the core of western culture - ending technological and economic growth - are no longer sufficient to deal with mounting environment and social ills.

480 pages GB08 \$22.95 softcover



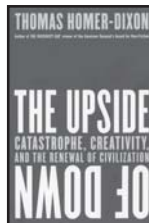
The Long Emergency

Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-First Century

James Howard Kunstler

James Howard Kunstler is a witty author whose writing has taken aim at suburban sprawl - namely the destruction of small communities in favour of endless tracts of housing and strip malls. His small town sensibilities make it obvious to him that auto dependant suburban development based on cheap oil and natural gas is a losing proposition. His book postulates a Long Emergency from the inevitable oil and gas shortages and the resulting economic dislocation.

324 pages RW06 \$17.95 softcover



The Upside of Down

Catastrophe, Creativity, and the Renewal of Civilization

Thomas Homer-Dixon

In this essential book for our times, Thomas Homer-Dixon describes his understanding of the urgent problems that confront our world, and clarifies their scope and deep causes. The Upside of Down paints a vivid picture of the immense stresses that are simultaneously converging on our societies and threatening to break our very civilization apart. This vitally important book shows how, in the face of ecological and societal breakdown, we can renew our global civilization, and avoid catastrophe.

416 pages GB09 \$37.00 hardcover



Ideas That Matter

The Worlds of Jane Jacobs

Jane Jacobs

Jane Jacobs changed the way cities look - and the way we think about the economy. This book gives insight to how her ideas evolved. Including unpublished letters, essays and speeches by Jane Jacobs. Reactions, analysis and praise from 82 contributors. And 53 photographs - public and private.

213 pages SB12 \$24.95 softcover



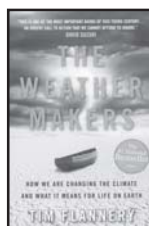
Heat

How to Stop the Planet from Burning

George Monbiot

In Monbiot's book Heat, he explains that global warming can in fact be stopped by demonstrating how humanity can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 90% - without losing the comfort and security of our modern society. While offering practical suggestions, it is made clear that the necessary changes will require enormous effort on the part of governments, which none seem prepared to take. In exposing the cowardice of politicians to act, and the destructive greed of corporations, Monbiot wages war on bad ideas and the status quo while offering well developed solutions to the problems they create.

277 pages GB10 \$29.95 hardcover



The Weather Makers

How We are Changing the Climate and What it Means for Life on Earth

Tim Flannery

In The Weather Makers, Flannery argues that human-caused pollution - in the form of ozone destroying chemicals and greenhouse gases - has altered not only global weather patterns but has increased the potential for extreme weather events. This book is both an urgent warning and a call to action, describing the history of climate change, how it will develop over the next century, and what we can do to prevent a global catastrophe. Flannery offers specific suggestions for action by individuals and lawmakers that can potentially reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 70%!

356 pages GB11 \$34.95 hardcover

Alternative Work Catalogue



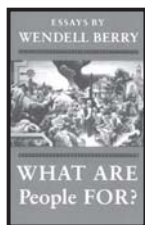
A Great Gift for Someone Searching for Meaningful Work

Gift Certificates for the Alternative Work Catalogue are available this holiday season. We will send the certificates to recipients, after which they can order books through Good Work News, Queen Street Commons at 43 Queen St. S., or www.theworkingcentre.org. The certificates are ideal for:

- supporting small and home business entrepreneurs;
- helping people through job search and career change to find their most inspiring and rewarding work;
- encouraging community and spiritual development.

You can place orders by mail, fax or phone - see the back page order form. We try to ship all orders within a day or two depending on availability. Feel free to call us about special orders.

All proceeds from this Catalogue go to Working Centre projects.



What are People For?

Wendell Berry

"However destructive may be the policies of the government and the methods and products of the corporations, the root of the problem is always to be found in the private life." In this popular collection, Kentucky farmer, Wendell Berry proposes and hopes, that people can learn again to care for their local communities to begin a healing that might spread far and wide.

210 pages WC01 \$19.50 softcover

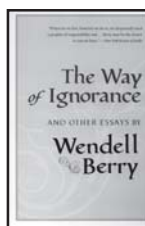


Citizenship Papers

Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry he is one of those faithful, devoted critics envisioned by the Founding Fathers of America to be the life's blood and very future of the nation they imagined. Adams, Jefferson, and Madison would have found great clarity in his prose and great hope in his vision. And today's readers will be moved and encouraged by his passion and his refusal to surrender in the face of desperate odds. Citizenship Papers, a collection of 19 essays, is a call of alarm to a nation standing on the brink of global catastrophe.

189 pages GB06 \$21.00 softcover



The Way of Ignorance

Wendell Berry

Modern American culture, says Berry, can be characterized by divisive anger, profound loss, and danger. Berry responds to these elements with hope and intelligence in this series of essays. He poses questions such as: Whose freedom are we considering when we speak of the 'free market'? What is really involved in National Security? What is the price of ownership without affection? He answers them with clear and passionate prose, providing the reader with some of his finest cultural criticism.

180 pages GB03 \$21.00 softcover

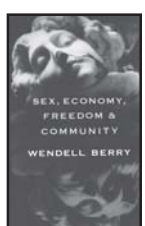


Another Turn of the Crank

Wendell Berry

This thought-provoking collection of essays concerns the order and harmony of the earth and its inhabitants. Here Berry focuses on the importance of local communities, arguing that "modern national and global economies have been formed in almost perfect disregard of community and ecological interests." Only local communities can provide the affection, care, and understanding essential to maintaining society and the environment. Berry suggests ways for communities to become more self-sufficient and healthy, such as by supplying local needs primarily from local sources.

109 pages GB04 \$19.95 softcover



Sex, Economy, Freedom, & Community

Wendell Berry

In this collection of essays, Wendell Berry continues his work as on of America's most relevant social commentators. In this book, Berry addresses some of the most significant challenges facing our society today, outlining how the modern process of community disintegration is at the heart of the social and economic problems we face. Berry argues that as people turn away from their communities, they conform to a "rootless and placeless monoculture of commercial expectations and products," buying into the very economic system that is destroying the Earth, our communities, and all they represent.

177 pages GB05 \$18.00 hardcover

Wendell Berry - People, Land, and Fidelity

By M. A. Grubbs

In a commencement address delivered in June 1989 at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine, Berry gave some advice that to most modern graduates would sound old fashioned, indeed backward. But the advice he gave was timeless, and his reminder seems apocalyptic in view of the world's current environmental crisis and, as Berry sees it, America's cultural crisis. In a sense, Berry's deliverance of such a critical message parallels Moses' deliverance of the Ten Commandments, for Berry's advice is also a prescription for cultural healing through the imposition of a set of laws. The laws Berry delivers, however, seem to be Nature's laws. He closed his address (later published in Harper's as "The Futility of Global Thinking") with a series of ten commands, which, he said, "is simply my hope for us all" (22). These instructions are at the heart of Berry's personal and literary world, and collectively they express the thesis informing all of his work, a canon now in excess of thirty books of essays, fiction, and poetry:

1. Beware the justice of Nature.
2. Understand that there can be no successful human economy apart from Nature or in defiance of Nature.
3. Understand that no amount of education can overcome the innate limits of human intelligence and responsibility. We are not smart enough or conscious enough or alert enough to

work responsibly on a gigantic scale.

4. In making things always bigger and more centralized, we make them both more vulnerable in themselves and more dangerous to everything else. Learn, therefore, to prefer small-scale elegance and generosity to large-scale greed, crudity, and glamour.
5. Make a home. Help to make a community. Be loyal to what you have made.
6. Put the interest of the community first.
7. Love your neighbors--not the neighbors you pick out, but the ones you have.
8. Love this miraculous world that we did not make, that is a gift to us.
9. As far as you are able make your lives dependent upon your local place, neighborhood, and household--which thrive by care and generosity--and independent of the industrial economy, which thrives by damage.
10. Find work, if you can, that does no damage. Enjoy your work. Work well.

Viewed in the context of Berry's canon, this sequence represents far more than a neo-romantic or agrarian appeal to return to "simplicity." To think of his advice in this way is to misinterpret it, for it is more of an oracular warning; either rethink our attitudes toward each other and the natural world, Berry implores, or continue on a path toward natural-, cultural-, and self-annihilation.



Community and Growth

Jean Vanier

This book is essential reading for anyone who has ever thought of "community" as a way of life or a deep communion with others. Vanier writes from a wealth of knowledge and experience gained through real community involvement, sharing in the hard work and day-to-day obstacles faced by the community, as well as the joyous celebrations and hard-won accomplishments. In the end, Vanier conveys the value of community, and shows the reader that without struggle there can be no success.

331 pages GB02 \$37.95 softcover



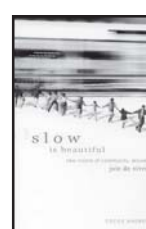
Live Simply

A Simplicity Circle Study Guide for Waterloo Region

Edited by Fiona Heath

A study guide for small groups (6-10) to learn about voluntary simplicity and put it into practice in their own lives. Information to start a circle of your own with organizational and facilitation tips. The guide provides 10 sessions, with discussion background information, international and local authors, local resources and examples.

90 pages SL07 \$15.00 softcover



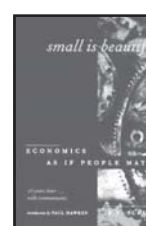
Slow is Beautiful

New Visions of Community, Leisure, and Joie de Vivre

Cecile Andrews

Slow is Beautiful explores the notion that the frantic pace of modern life is resulting in a major decline in the happiness of the general population. Troubled by destructive lifestyles devoted to money and status, our society is affected by subtle consumer, corporate, and political forces which are stamping the joy out of our existence. Andrews suggests ways of building a more fulfilling life through caring communities, unhurried leisure, the development of personal connections to others, and the slow-down of life in general.

244 pages GB12 \$19.95 softcover



Small is Beautiful

Economics as if People Mattered

E. F. Schumacher

Small is Beautiful is the perfect antidote to the economies of globalization. As relevant today as it was when it was first published, it is a landmark set of essays on humanistic economics. This 25th Anniversary edition expands on Schumacher's ideas by adding the commentaries of contemporary thinkers who have been deeply influenced by his work and thought.

286 pages SB09 \$17.95 softcover

To the Readers of Good Work News

Dear Friends,

We represent vital projects in the downtown that support over 500 individuals daily. The projects of The Working Centre and St. John's Kitchen provide innovative supports that create a spirit of neighbours looking after each other. These projects and the ideas behind them continue to grow. Since its foundation in 1982, The Working Centre has supported grass-roots, cooperative, self-directed, skill-based learning. A school where people gain competencies in word-processing, resumé writing, job hunting, computer repair, sewing, cooking, gardening, papermaking, retailing, construction, renovation, bicycle repair, and other skills.

We rely on your contributions to make this creative work possible. This work of community, from serving meals, to providing housing, to recycling bikes is primarily supported by volunteers and financial donations.

For your contribution to our work you will receive our quarterly newspaper, Good Work News that reports on ecology, book reviews, the changing nature of work, and inspiring stories of the time honoured methods of self reliance. We are asking for your support because our work is so important to the many people who rely on us. We hope that you are able to make a donation at this time to help sustain us throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Joe Mancini
Director



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Alternative Work Catalogue Order Form

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