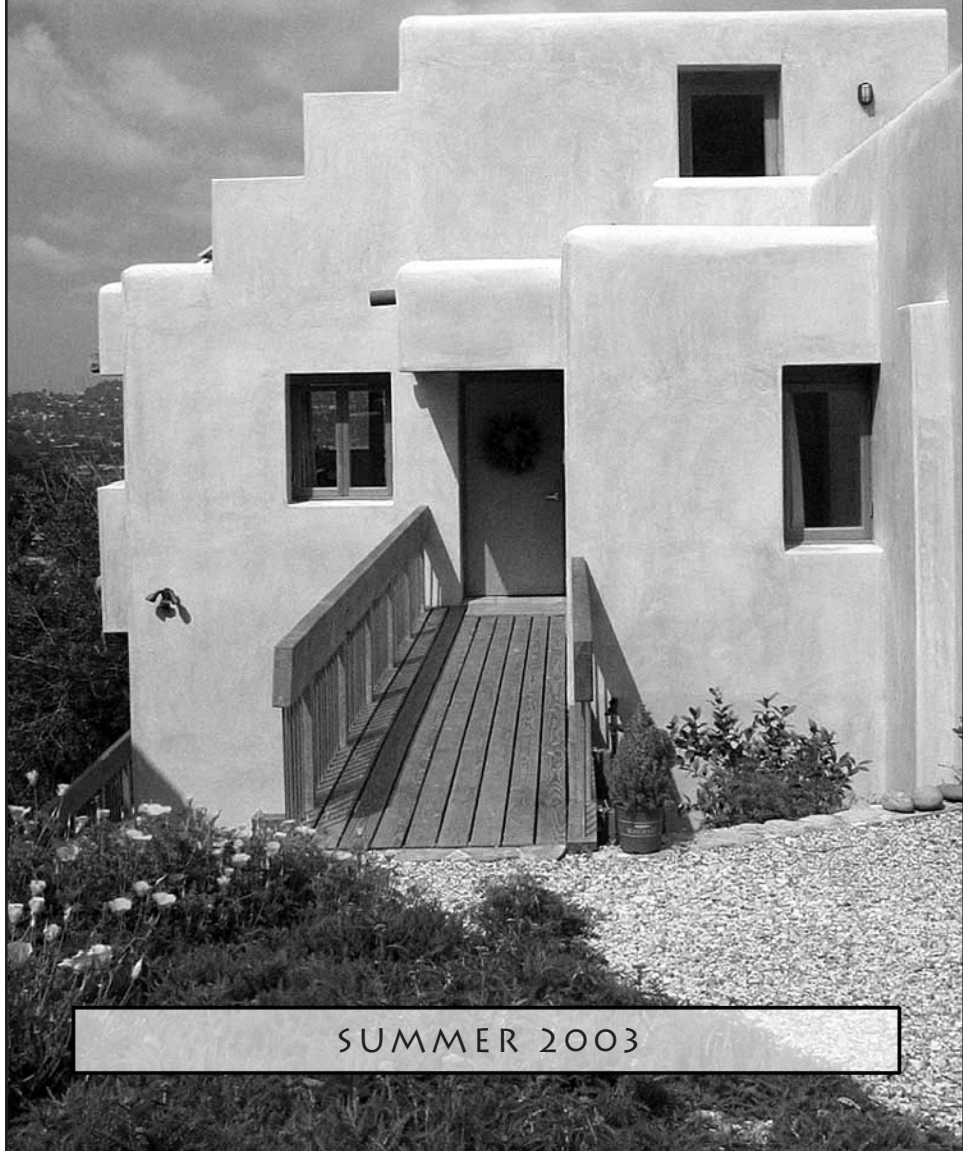


# ECOLUTION

THE ECO-HOME  
JOURNAL

*Bulletin*



SUMMER 2003

# ECOLUTION BULLETIN

E-co-lu-tion is derived from ecology, evolution & solution

Summer 2003

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## ECO-HOME™ MEMBERSHIP ALERT

Can't remember when you last renewed your Eco-Home Network membership? Unfortunately, E-HN is without a Membership Chair, so you probably haven't received a renewal letter (I did send some out a while back.) We finally have these spiffy membership remittance envelopes, one of which should be enclosed in this newsletter, so if the date on your address label is over (or close to) a year old, please help us out and send in your renewal. Remember, your whole household can join for just \$35.00 (or \$25.00 for an individual).



And...as I mentioned, we are without a Membership Chair, so if you have a few hours a month to send out renewal letters, you could be that person. Think how much easier it is on you when you

are notified that it is time to renew - rather than having to "divine" it! If you can help us out (since I am obviously not doing a very good job of it), please call me at (626) 345-9596, or email me at [janhoag@earthlink.net](mailto:janhoag@earthlink.net)

Thanks

**JAN HOAG, E-HN TREASURER & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

(Let me know if you want to volunteer for anything else, too!!)

## ECO-HOME™ MEMBER OPEN HOUSE MT. WASHINGTON AERIE

4113 Sea View Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90065

Sunday, July 20, 1- 4PM

Eco-Home™ Members Free • Guests \$5

Jerry Schneider picked me up at the bus stop at Jessica and Division in his electric blue Toyota Prius hybrid. We wound through the hills and dales of Mt. Washington, to finally arrive at his "eco-home" at 4113 Sea View Avenue. And, indeed, upon walking in the front door the view is of the sea, a far-off gleam beckoning from across and beyond the striated basin of Los Angeles.

The southwestern style home, designed by architect Edmund McCormick, is set solidly into a west-facing hillside, its slightly rounded contours blending nice-



Schneider Home photos:  
Anita Nardine

ly with the topography and native plant landscape surrounding it. Its warm golden beige stucco exterior echoes the color of the sandstone bedrock into which it is anchored. Sandstone rocks from the excavation are used on-site for paving and terracing.

Jerry Schneider is a retired LADWP civil engineer turned Cal Poly Pomona landscape architect graduate. His home and landscape evidence his engineering background, in their many effective systems designed for minimizing environmental impact and maximizing living comfort, and his landscape architecture training, in the aesthetic integration of systems and environmental sensitivity.

Walking across the driveway of permeable concrete and down the gravel path to the front door, Jerry explains that both surfaces allow rainwater to perco-



late down into the soil to help provide moisture for the native landscaping, instead of running off uselessly into storm drains. The abundant California poppies and penstemon along the path nod their appreciation.

Gloria Schneider greets us warmly at the door and escorts us into the entry-



way with sea view straight ahead and vaulted living room to the right, with west-facing french doors and high transom east windows inviting cooling breezes to sweep through on summer evenings.

As Jerry explains how the Sautillo tile floors in the solarium breakfast area absorb the winter sun to add warmth, while the overhang completely shades the same area in the summer, I am reminded again that designing and living in an "eco-home" tunes one into nature's seasonal, daily and even hourly environmental changes that a standard home actually hides from us.

Turning on the kitchen hot water faucet, Jerry invites me to sample the hot water that instantly splashes forth. He explains that thermostatically controlled pumps recirculate water to provide instant hot water at water faucets furthest from the hot water heater. No water is wasted here waiting for it to heat up!

Jerry and Gloria are proud of using a

clothes line for "solar clothes drying" and Jerry's engineering background pops up again as he looks at his watch and says they've missed the optimum time for washing the clothes to get peak solar drying on their line today!

Everywhere we go the upstairs interior is filled with daylight. Gloria points out that there are even rainbows that appear momentarily throughout the house as the sun passes through beveled glass in the stair landing handrail above the entry.

Downstairs is darker, but cozy, as the east side of the lower floor is earth sheltered, excavated into the hillside to provide greater thermal mass and even out diurnal temperature swings. The bedrooms are here, two bathrooms, the laundry room and Jerry's study. Upstairs and downstairs together express the dual need that humans have, as articulated by Jerry, for prospect and refuge.

Outside, downslope of the house and lower deck, I admire the large in-ground vermiculture (worm compost bed) installation and the custom designed rainwater drainage and dispersal system integrated into a gracefully curving gravel-filled walk. This elegant system provides additional water for the native black walnut trees and, ultimately, raised vegetable beds below. The vegetable beds hadn't



Rainwater dispersal system

yet been constructed when I visited in April, but we may see them in July during our Open House, if Jerry doesn't get sidetracked with other projects.

Jerry's awareness and commitment to the environment may have started as early as his youth in Boy Scouts and in his hobbies of gardening and propagating native trees. As a civil engineer for large-scale electric generating stations and transmission lines, he was responsible for environmental compliance measures. Gradually he linked his hobbies and work, pursuing environmental site development and ecological restoration of native landscapes. In the Cal Poly landscape architecture graduate program, Jerry learned about regenerative systems design and sustainable development. The project of building a new home became a natural opportunity to showcase this knowledge and "walk the talk."

Through his meticulous attention to fulfilling every opportunity to mitigate impact on the land and in every detail of

architecture, landscaping, equipment and environmental home systems, Jerry's dedication to living consciously within the circle of life is evident. Jerry and Gloria's deep commitment to a home in harmony with the earth has found beautiful and moving expression in their Mt. Washington aerie on Sea View Avenue.

The Schneiders have invited their architect, Edmund McCormick, to be present for the Open House and they are looking forward to sharing their fascinating home with us all on Sunday, July 20, 2003. I'll be there. I hope you will be, too.

**JULIA S. RUSSELL**

**Directions to 4113 Sea View Avenue  
Thomas Guide Page 595, A-2**

**From Glendale:** Exit Glendale (2) Freeway at Verdugo Rd. and follow the direction signs toward Eagle Rock Blvd.

- Turn Left onto Eagle Rock Blvd. and get in the extreme right lane.
- Turn Right onto El Paso Dr. (traffic light) heading east for about 1 mi.
- Turn Right onto Cleland Ave. (stop sign) for one short block.
- Turn Left onto Terrace 49 (stop sign) for one block.
- Turn Right onto San Rafael Ave. (stop sign) and follow it up on what is known to locals as "the Corkscrew."
- At the second Stop sign on San Rafael Ave., turn Right onto Sea View Avenue. (not the Lane) and go about 1-1/2 blocks to 4113

It's the Santa Fe style on the left (sort of straight ahead) as Sea View Ave turns to the right. Parking is best just around this bend on either side of Sea View Ave.

# SUSTAINABLE FEATURES OF

## PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN

- South facing windows with overhang for summer shading and winter warming.
- High thermal mass (tile and concrete) floors
- Retain heat gained from winter sun during day and release it during night
- Retain coolness of summer nights to even-out diurnal temperature swings.

## ADDED INSULATION

- Double thick exterior walls have an air space between outer stucco framing and insulated interior framing.
- Added insulation values, R-30 beneath raised lower floors and R-11 between floors.
- Positive weather seals around all door and windows.
- Dual glazed windows

## EARTH SHELTERING

- A portion of lower floor is excavated into the hillside to provide greater thermal mass and even out diurnal temperature swings.

## CONVECTION COOLING

- Raised ceilings allow warm air to rise above inhabited spaces.
- Outside air is taken in at lower levels and expelled through transom windows set near high ceiling
- Central stairwell acts as a convection chimney encouraging warm air to rise and drawing in cooler air from lower stories.
- A balance between windward and leeward windows allows cooling afternoon



and evening breezes to pass through the house.

## RADIANT HEATING

- Radiant heat is sensed by the body without need for heating and moving heated air through the house.
- Hot water distribution pipes in the floors allow heat to radiate upward from floors.
- The system uses low-grade heat, using domestic hot water through a heat exchanger to transfer 110 degree to 105 degree F water to the in-floor piping.
- There are independent thermostatically controlled zones to allow optimization of heat distribution.

## CEILING FANS

- Wiring is installed in bedrooms and key living areas to allow installation of ceiling fans if needed for additional air circulation.

# THE SCHNEIDER HOME

## ATTIC VENTILATION

- Thermostatically controlled, fan-assisted roof ventilators expel hot air from air space between ceiling insulation and roof
- Soffit vents above upper floor windows and doors allows air to circulate from upper wall air spaces through the attic.

## ENERGY

- Solar Energy Collection systems
- A 1 kW solar photovoltaic system collects solar energy with south facing panels on the roof. The system is connected to the LADWP grid with net metering.
- High efficiency, low profile solar hot water collectors are mounted on the roof to provide preheated water to the domestic hot water heater.
- High Efficiency Lighting and Appliances
- Windows are placed to maximize daylighting.
- Low wattage fluorescent lighting is used predominantly throughout the house.
- Dimmers on halogen lights are used for the variable light intensity areas.
- Dish and clothes washers are "Energy Star" appliances which conserve both energy and water.

## WATER

- Thermostatically controlled pumps recirculate water to provide instant hot water at water faucets furthest from the hot water heater.
- Landscape planting is predominately drought tolerant, low water use species.

- Plantings and irrigation are zoned by sun and water use.
- Supplemental irrigation is by drip system, except for a small wildflower lawn-substitute area.
- Waste plumbing piping is separated for a future graywater system to irrigate fruit trees.
- Toilet water supply is paralleled by separate piping to allow reuse of graywater.
- Roof and driveway drainage is returned to the native trees downslope of the house through a custom-designed retaining wall/gravel walk dispersal system.
- Driveway is permeable concrete and walkways are gravel to minimize runoff.

## OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS

- House situated to preserve on-site mature native black walnut trees.
- Seed collected from native plants and wildflowers in the construction footprint.
- On-site rocks and concrete rubble used in paving and low garden walls to minimize construction waste.
- Non toxic, recycled plastic landscape timbers used for walks.
- Edible plants/fruit trees used in landscaping.
- Kitchen herbs and vegetable gardens in raised beds and roof/deck planters.
- Worm compost bed used for recycling of kitchen and yard green waste.

# FROM THE FOUNDER

## July 20th Open House

Our April 26th Open House was hugely successful! We've got another showstopper coming up in July! Jerry and Gloria Schneider will host us at their stunning Mt. Washington aerie, designed to provide both prospect and refuge. The Schneiders' commitment to environmentally conscious living is evident in every detail. See more on pages 3-7.

## "Green" Realtors?

In the last few months Eco-Home™ Network been contacted by three realtors who have expressed interest in being involved in working with buyers and sellers of "green" homes. I hope this is just a hint of what will become widespread in the near future. The article in the Real Estate section of the May 4th LA Times by Lew Sichelman on Energy Efficient Mortgages, brought to my attention by Jill Ungar, one of the above mentioned realtors, seems to bode well in that regard.

Todd Lethbridge, a realtor with DBL, is embarking on an eco-renovation of his own newly purchased cottage in Pasadena and he's written a little piece about the "green" home marketplace that you'll find on page 20. As Todd has become a business member of the Eco-Home™ Network you'll be seeing his ad in this and subsequent issues of Ecolution Bulletin and also on our website. By all means contact Todd if you are in the market for a "green" home or ready to sell one.

## Bicycle Roadside Assistance?!

Finally, a travel club that provides emergency and other travel services to bicyclists as well as car owners! Better World Travel Club offers this and regu-

lar auto club memberships with an environmental bonus. See page 10.

## Sustainable Birthday Parties

As Ellen Mackey's daughter Alexia's eighth birthday party approached, she shared with me her horror at the commercialization and plasticizing of children's birthday celebrations that is becoming a trend. Stuff (mostly plastic), paid entertainment and fast food in a commercial environment seems to be taking the place of the home-made birthday parties that are so much a part of most of our own fond childhood memories.

I remember being proud and touched by my Mother's beautiful and delicious home-made birthday cakes and the pretty party dresses she made for me. Seeing my home environment specially decorated for my birthday added to the importance and excitement of the occasion. Being the "hostess" in my home was fun, like playing house.

Ellen and I brainstormed some ideas for "sustainable birthday parties" and in a short time she called me to let me know what Alexia and she had planned for her birthday. Ellen's description of Alexia's Tibetan themed birthday party starts on page 17. I attended and can vouch for the great fun that was had by everyone as well as the gift of expanded knowledge and compassion that they took away from the party.

The E-HN Board agrees that helping others to create sustainable parties is a great new program for the Eco-Home™ Network. I love it, too, because it reminds us that we're about more than just sustainable building design and construction - we're about sustainable living!

We'll be posting resource information for sustainable parties on the website.

## Green Weddings



Though weddings are typically an extravaganza of wastefulness, there's an encouraging sign of environmental and social consciousness creeping into our culture even here. See page 19 for more good news.

## Kitchen Eco-Renovation

As promised, you'll find the first installment of my true confessions of a mismanager starting on page 21. It just was too long (even in its abridged form) to fit into one issue of this newsletter. I hope you will find it helpful and maybe even get a chuckle or two out of it. I actually found myself chuckling a bit as what I was writing began to remind me of a one-person "Three Stooges" script.

## Sustainable Energy Expo and Conference (SEEC)

The Sustainable Energy Expo and Conference is coming to the Los Angeles Convention Center on October 1-3, 2003. Its goal is to educate large-scale consumers of energy such as businesses, industries, government agencies and other institutions about the advantages of sustainable energy. Immediate access to the technologies will be provided by the many vendors presenting their products and services at the Expo.

The SEEC is international in scope. Last year it was held in London, this year, here in Los Angeles and its next venue will be Singapore. When I first learned of it early this year, I was inspired to do what I could to see that Los Angeles made a good showing on the international stage as a leader in the development, promotion

and deployment of sustainable energy.

So, although we will not be holding the "Homes for the Future Tour" this year, we have been working with the producers of the SEEC to help make it a rousing success. A tour of Colorado Court in Santa Monica and the showcasing of the photovoltaic installation at KCET are two special features we facilitated for the Conference Board members Ellen Mackey and Joe Feinblatt will be making a presentation at the Conference on Marketing to Residential Customers.

## As the Garden Grows

Every year and every season the garden is different than any year or season before. Circumstances and conditions, including my state of mind, differ each planting time. This spring I planted the summer vegetables early enough so that many of the winter vegetables were still bearing. It didn't make sense to me to pull them out, just because I was ready to plant for the next season. So I planted my peppers, tomatoes, squash, beans and cucumbers in between the remaining broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbages, cauliflower, beets, chard and even peas. New tomato plants went into cages that still supported some growing pea vines. I can't say it's the most attractive garden I've had, but I like the fact that I'm still harvesting food from a prior season (without canning!) while waiting for the next season's food to ripen.

New little lettuce and pea plants are sprouting like weeds around the garden, progeny of some I let go to seed. When food plants start naturalizing in the garden I see living proof that the Garden of Eden is here, now!



Have a luscious summer!

JSR

# A GREEN ALTERNATIVE TO THE AAA

Most car owners belong to an automobile club, typically the Automobile Association of America (AAA). Its member services endear it to drivers, but its other activities are less benign.

According to Michelle Nijhuis in an article appearing in the online *Daily Grist* on May 8th, environmentalists who battle AAA's team of lobbyists in court claim the group uses its clout to promote an agenda that is ecologically irresponsible.

AAA spokespeople have criticized open-space measures and opposed U.S. EPA restrictions on smog, soot, and tailpipe emissions. According to a 2001 article in *OnEarth* magazine by Michael A. Rivlin, the AAA even bashed the 1990 Clean Air Act, saying the law served to "threaten the personal mobility of millions of Americans."

The group is also a member of the auto industry-dominated American Highway Users Alliance, a powerful pro-pavement lobby. Although AAA spokesperson Mantill Williams says his group doesn't support all AHUA positions, critics argue that the AAA's credibility often helps the highway alliance get what it wants at the expense of public transit, rail and bicycle transportation infrastructure needs.

## Better World Travel Club

The good news is that AAA's near monopoly may be coming to an end as it faces competition from an environmentally

friendly new company, Better World Travel Club offering emergency assistance, trip insurance and travel advice.

Owners Mitch Rofsky and Todd Silberman are both seasoned entrepreneurs – and committed environmentalists. Rofsky and Silberman are betting that a substantial number of people want a travel club that isn't in cahoots with anti-environmental lobbies.

Last May, Rofsky and Silberman started selling memberships in the Better World Travel Club to family and friends. The following month, the club officially opened for business, and it now has about 20 employees and 5,000 members.

Better World offers emergency assistance, trip insurance, and travel advice. Road America, a national network of about 55,000 towing companies, provides emergency services for the new club; the network successfully responded to its first call from a Better World member last summer. Members can also call Better World to get road-trip advice (staffers encourage members to use electronic maps rather than the paper versions), and the company's travel consultants can make domestic and international plane, hotel, and rental car reservations.

## Bicycle Roadside Assistance

And Better World offers the nation's first bicycle "pick-up" service! Better World Travel Club will provide this service nationwide. It works just the same as their emergency roadside assistance pro-

gram for automobiles. They'll take you and your bike to the nearest repair facility, or home, within 30 miles from pick up. A bicycle membership is a full service membership, with the same discounts on hotels, restaurants, and other travel services as an automobile membership. Go to [www.betterworldclub.com](http://www.betterworldclub.com) and click on Bicycle Assistance Program.

## Contributing To a Better World

Better World gives one (1) percent of its annual revenues to environmental causes. You can also help Eco-Home™ Network by signing up with Better World. (See sidebar)

This new green travel club currently donates \$11 to its "carbon offset fund" each time a club member makes a plane reservation. Money from this fund is now helping to replace outdated boilers in the Portland public schools. Rofsky says it will eventually go toward environmental cleanup efforts in members' destinations: "If people are flying to Colorado to go skiing, we'll find a group in Colorado to donate to."

Through discounts and promotions, Better World also encourages its members to rent hybrid vehicles, stay in environmentally responsible hotels, and sign up for eco-tours.

Yet, its critics say Better World is still about people traveling, which has an environmental impact. "We get asked if people should really be traveling," says Rofsky. "But I think it's progressive to travel. The worst thing in the world would be for people to never leave home. We're trying to help them travel as lightly on the Earth as they possibly can."

Contact Better World Travel Club at [www.betterworldclub.com](http://www.betterworldclub.com) or call 866-238-1137.

*Based on an article that appeared on May 8th in the DAILY GRIST, an online magazine. To subscribe to DAILY GRIST, go to : [www.gristmagazine.com/signup/subgrist.asp?source=daily](http://www.gristmagazine.com/signup/subgrist.asp?source=daily) or send a blank email message to: [daily-grist-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:daily-grist-subscribe@yahoo.com).*

## JOIN BETTER WORLD — HELP ECO-HOME™ NETWORK!

Better World will pay Eco-Home™ Network a referral fee for each new Better World membership sold through our publicity. Sales can be generated by clicking through to the Better World site <[www.betterworldclub.com](http://www.betterworldclub.com)> or by filling out an enrollment form with Eco-Home's affiliate code: **EHOM**

**Bike Only or Bike Plus: \$5.00**

**Basic or Basic Plus Membership (with or w/o bike add on) : \$5.00**

**Premium or Premium Plus Membership (with or w/o bike add on): \$10.00**

### Bonuses and Promotions:

- Better World offers a bonus of \$500 if we generate 100 new members within a calendar year.
- Better World offers E-HN members a special "promotional offer" such as \$5 off a first year membership or "13 months for the price of 12".

## CONFERENCES

### June 18-20 Where Significance Meets Success: 7th LOHAS Market Trends Conference

Omni Interlocken Resort  
Broomfield, Colorado

Register by March 28 — save \$200  
Register by May 15 — save \$100  
Regular conference price is \$995

Join key leaders and top speakers for three days of high-level networking, education and exhibits as we explore business building strategies for companies serving 63 million values-based consumers in the rapidly growing \$230 billion Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability (LOHAS) marketplace. [www.LOHASjournal.com](http://www.LOHASjournal.com) or call 303-442-8983 to register and for more information

### June 19-22 International Symposium on Environmental Health: Molds, Mycotoxins and Chemical Sensitivity, Dallas, TX

Sponsored by the American Environmental Health Foundation  
214-361-9515, [www.aehf.com](http://www.aehf.com)

### June 21-25 Solar 2003, Austin, TX

Sponsored by the American Solar Energy Society.  
303-443-3130  
[www.solarenergyforum.org](http://www.solarenergyforum.org)

### August 7-10 Ecological Design: The Unstoppable Wave Berkeley-Oakland, California

A global interdisciplinary conference on the next great wave in architecture.

ECO-WAVE 2003 program organizers:  
The San Francisco Institute of Architecture, Merritt College Environmental Studies Program, Academic Resources Foundation  
[SFIA@aol.com](mailto:SFIA@aol.com). (Send one page of plain E-mail text, do not send attachments or pdf.)

### August 24 Integrating Sustainability, Social Justice & Spirit

Seattle University Ballroom, Seattle, WA  
A participatory conference co-hosted by Seeds of Simplicity and the Simplicity Forum.

\$25 per person with free parking.  
Send check to Seeds of Simplicity, P.O. Box 9955, Glendale, CA 91226  
1-877-UNSTUFF  
[seeds@seedsofsimplicity.org](mailto:seeds@seedsofsimplicity.org)

### September 28, 2003 WORLDVEST '03

Woodley Park, Van Nuys, CA  
Mark your calendar now! Save the date!  
Live music all day, celeb appearances, cruelty-free food & products! Solar-powered! Bring friends!  
[marr@madcowboy.com](mailto:marr@madcowboy.com)

### October 1-3 Sustainable Energy Expo and Conference (SEEC)

Los Angeles Convention Center  
Conference and tradeshow that covers all the sustainable energy technologies in one place. Developed to promote the adoption and commercialization of sustainable energy, it offers vendors a unique mainstream platform to present sustainable energy as a realistic option for commercial end users.

Contact: Ellen Greenfield, Marketing Director, 212-661-3500 ext. 3256  
[www.sustainableexpo.com](http://www.sustainableexpo.com)

### October 15-18 EEBA 2003: Excellence in Building Conference

Chicago, IL  
Sponsored by the Energy & Environmental Building Association.  
952-881-1098  
[www.eeba.org/conference](http://www.eeba.org/conference)

### October 21-22 Restoring Native Ecosystems Nebraska City, NE

Sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation.  
888-448-7337  
[www.arborday.org/RNEcoconference](http://www.arborday.org/RNEcoconference)

### November 12-14 USGBC Int'l Conference & Exposition Pittsburg, PA

Sponsored by the U.G. Green Building Council with AIA-COTE, CSI, and ULI.  
202-828-7422  
[www.urgbc.org](http://www.urgbc.org)

## COURSES

### July 6-25 Challenging Globalization: Alternative Models

Schumacher College, South West of England  
With Vandana Shiva, Juliet Schor & Prasanna Parthasarathi

Each course is limited to 25 people to ensure the best possible learning experience.

More information about the College and all courses is available at:  
[www.schumachercollege.org.uk](http://www.schumachercollege.org.uk)  
Includes application forms and details about bursaries to cover course fees.

### Institute of Social Ecology (ISE) Plainville, VT 802-454-8493

Three concentrations — on-site study  
Ecological Building  
Social Theory and Action  
Ecological Land Use

Spring 2003 offerings include a wide array of courses and facilitated study, noncredit workshops, and intensive practica.  
[www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=149](http://www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=149)

### Summer Institute Programs: Sustainable Design, Building, & Land Use

Using the Institute for Social Ecology's 50-acre site as a laboratory, this program provides instruction in permaculture, organic agriculture, community design, ecological building, and forest ecology, while fostering a critical understanding of the social and political contexts in which these alternatives may be applied.

[www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=145](http://www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=145)  
Arts, Media, Activism,  
& Social Change

This fourteen-day program is intended for artists, activists, and media makers who wish to create and examine socially engaged art and media projects. Over the course of the program, students will receive hands-on experience and exposure to a wide array of activist art and media, including spoken word, culture jamming, puppetry, audio and video production, radio production, and web-based media and art.

[www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=146](http://www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=146)  
Ecology and Community

This program is intended as an intensive educational experience in the field of social ecology. This interdisciplinary, college-level program explores social ecology, nature philosophy, community development, political theory, social movements and activism, popular education, radical agriculture, capitalism and globalization, racism, feminism, and more.

[www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=147](http://www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=147)  
Theoretical Inquiries in the Age of Globalization

This eight-day intensive focuses on areas such as philosophy, social and political theory, and history as part of a scholarly inquiry into the "age of globalization." By theoretically exploring the past as well as the present, this continuing studies program hopes to deepen students' understanding of dynamic social phenomena such as capitalism, statecraft, racism, and the devastation of the natural world, to

## BULLETIN BOARD · BULLETIN BOARD

name a few. This intensive is intended both to rekindle students' desire for further study and offer intellectual inspiration for ongoing activist work.

<http://www.social-ecology.org/jump.php?id=148>

For further information on programs, contact the ISE by email at [info@social-ecology.org](mailto:info@social-ecology.org), call 802-454-8493, or [www.social-ecology.org/](http://www.social-ecology.org/).

### **IBE Building Biology Online Study Program. How Electromagnetic Radiation (EMR) Interacts with Building Design**

First in a series of 15 Course packs tackling all aspects of sustainable building and design created by the International Institute for Baubiologie & Ecology, Inc. You can view a sample program at <http://baubiologie.us/learn/sample>

New upcoming Course Packs include:  
Electrical Home Wiring, and  
Indoor Climate

For further details call 727-461-4371  
[baubiologie@earthlink.net](mailto:baubiologie@earthlink.net)  
or <http://baubiologie.us>.

To register please go to  
<http://baubiologie.us/secure/register.cfm>

### **URBAN SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS**

**Sponsored by the Los Angeles Eco-Village and the Cooperative Resources and Services Project (CRSP)**

August 9-10  
August 16-17  
August 30-31  
September 6-7  
September 20-21  
September 27-28

Urban Permaculture Design Certificate Course with Larry Santoyo, Bill Roley, Toby Hemingway and others.

Los Angeles, CA

Sponsored by the LA Eco-Village and CRSP. We are seeking co-sponsors and hosts to

assist in conducting this course in Los Angeles County. In exchange for scholarships to the course, we are looking for marketing assistance and comfortable venues where we can conduct our weekend sessions and accommodate 30-40 people (just for the day).

\$225 per weekend or \$1,200 for whole course. Pre-registration required.

Contact: Larry Santoyo, 805-528.3763  
[info@earthflow.com](mailto:info@earthflow.com)  
[www.earthflow.com](http://www.earthflow.com)

### **PERMACULTURE EVENTS**

#### **South Coast Permaculture Guild and Santa Barbara Permaculture Network**

224 E Figueroa St #C  
Santa Barbara CA 93101  
[lakinroe@silcom.com](mailto:lakinroe@silcom.com)

#### **Permaculture Discussion Group in Ojai Monthly Meetings**

Contact for monthly meetings Jodi Womack, 805-646-4450 x2,  
[Jodi@davidco.com](mailto:Jodi@davidco.com)  
and Dorothy Wallstein, 805-646-0752,  
[dwallstein@uncommonconsulting.com](mailto:dwallstein@uncommonconsulting.com)

#### **June 23 - December 13**

Advanced Permaculture: Practical Skills for Bioregional Sustainability  
Golden Bay, South Island, New Zealand

#### **Three Modules:**

23 June - 13 September

Design for Organic Lifestyle Properties

3 October - 13 December

Design for Sustainable Human Settlement

Further Information and Prospectus:

P.L.A.N.E.T. Organic, c/o Earthcare Education Aotearoa, PO Box 130, Takaka, Aotearoa/New Zealand  
[planetorganic@excite.com](mailto:planetorganic@excite.com)  
[www.planetorganic.org.nz](http://www.planetorganic.org.nz)  
phone/fax: Overseas: (0064) 3 525 8334

## BULLETIN BOARD · BULLETIN BOARD

**June 17 - 22**

#### **Permaculture Camp & Skillshare**

Skywater Center - Garberville, CA

(See above for contact information for Permaculture Institute of Northern California)

**July 5 -12**

#### **Strawbale Workshop**

Taos, NM.

Covering post and beam design, rubble trench, electric and plumbing, owner builder and contractor relationships, interior and exterior earth plasters & mud floors. This format will provide ample opportunity for folks starting personal projects to bring their own plans or for those just interested in getting some hands-on experience.

Included: Breakfast and lunch, on site camping, running water, shower and toilet facilities.

[yelargrl@laplaza.org](mailto:yelargrl@laplaza.org)

**July 6-13**

#### **Build Here Now 2003**

The Fifth Annual Natural Building & Permaculture Convergence

At the Lama Foundation, Taos County, New Mexico

Contact: Lama Foundation, 505-586-1269

[www.lamafoundation.org](http://www.lamafoundation.org)

[info@lamafoundation.org](mailto:info@lamafoundation.org)

Early registration for Build Here Now 2003 is advised.

**July 13-26**

#### **Permaculture Design Intensive -Certificate Course**

San Luis Obispo, CA

With Larry and Kathryn Santoyo and Guest Instructors

Contact: Larry Santoyo: (805)528-3763

[info@earthflow.com](mailto:info@earthflow.com)

[www.earthflow.com](http://www.earthflow.com)

**July 19 -26**

#### **Passive Solar Strawbale Greenhouse Workshop**

Taos, NM.

Covering design and building, includes lectures on permaculture, gray water use, native & local plants & composting. This format will provide ample opportunity for folks starting personal projects to bring their own plans or for those just interested in getting some hands-on experience.

Included: Breakfast and lunch, on site camping, running water, shower and toilet facilities.

[yelargrl@laplaza.org](mailto:yelargrl@laplaza.org)

**August 23-31**

#### **Cob Cottage and Natural Building with Michael Smith**

Santa Cruz Mountains

\$475 til March 31, \$550 thereafter.

Permaculture Santa Cruz

831-763-3848, [permasc@sasquatch.com](mailto:permasc@sasquatch.com)

#### **PERMACULTURE FILM SERIES Sites Needed**

I am embarking on an ambitious video series about sustainable communities and permaculture systems. I would be interested in hearing from anyone (particularly in Southern California — but I would be willing to travel to very special and unique projects elsewhere) who currently has a complete permaculture system, passive solar house, earth sheltered building, straw bale home, innovative water catchment systems, food forests, or any other system that demonstrate aspects of sustainable living. I am also seeking individuals who are planning any type of such systems and about to begin the design phase. Designers, teachers, and other experts in the above field are also needed to lend their expertise to the program.

Participants would be expected to appear on camera to explain their system and take our small video crew on a tour of it and each one will get a finished copy of the video.

## BULLETIN BOARD • BULLETIN BOARD

Designers, teachers, and technical experts who are interested in participating in the development of this project are invited to also get in touch and become involved. Those who lend a significant amount of time to the project will be granted licensing rights to the completed series, depending on their level of involvement. Please address all replies to Paul Racko: PERMACULTURE SERIES (in the Subject line) [pracko@earthlink.net](mailto:pracko@earthlink.net)

### The 7th Elfin Permaculture Design Course Online

This six-month course includes weekly sets of lectures sent by email, reading assignments, four reports from each student including a full permaculture design report and class discussion of all this work via email. Instructors include Dan Hemenway, Cynthia Hemenway, CNM, and Dr. Willem Smuts. For details, download (separately), the course protocol, the course reading list, and the course assignment schedule from <http://barkingfrogspc.tripod.com/frames.html>

### Internships Available at the Hope Farm Oregon

"Food not Lawns" has leased some outbuildings and several acres of land on a local well-established organic farm here in the Willamette Valley. The land is also home to more than 800 fruit trees and a five acre filbert orchard, as well as chickens, ducks, cows, dogs, cats, some other farmers and a horse.

Can accommodate two interns at a time (no dogs or kids), May through October.

Internships will run from 4-16 weeks long and include camping space, some meals, individualized instruction and free admission to all of the workshops while you are here. No indoor sleeping space available.

Internship Application Procedure: Apply via email to Heather Coburn: [foodnotlawns@yahoo.com](mailto:foodnotlawns@yahoo.com) [www.hopefarm.net](http://www.hopefarm.net)

### Volunteers and Ecovillagers needed in Bolivia

Here in Bolivia we have achieved enormous progress with the building of the ecocenter and the development of the ecovillage. 320 visitors in 2002 and almost a 100 volunteers have made it possible. We have room and board capacity for about 60 people at El Poncho today... no problem. We have also 6 plots of land of a little over an acre each (1/2 a Hectare) for sale. The cost of the land, including water rights from a well we will dig is \$20,000 US a plot. El Poncho Ecovillage is growing and beautiful people want to join. We are interested in people joining the courses and coming to be a part of El Poncho.

Contact: Enrique Hidalgo  
Phone: +591 4260974/264693  
[ilpermacultura@hotmail.com](mailto:ilpermacultura@hotmail.com)

El Poncho Ecovillage  
Marquina Correo Central Cochabamba  
P.O.Box 3727, BOLIVIA

[www.gaia.org/services/Profile/The\\_Americas/South\\_America\\_Northern/Bolivia/detail\\_1215.asp](http://www.gaia.org/services/Profile/The_Americas/South_America_Northern/Bolivia/detail_1215.asp)

### Summer 2003

Living Earth Culture Village is accepting applications for 15 positions for women who have experience in art, environmentalism and/or community development for a unique 4 month summer intensive experience in alternative architecture, sustainable living, archeology, craft, language, song and ritual. Duration of residency is flexible, Ten (10) 4-month subsidized positions are available.

A full residency syllabus is posted at the St. Norbert Arts Centre, Winnipeg, Canada, website: [www.snac.mb.ca](http://www.snac.mb.ca).

Contact: Louise May at [lmay@snac.mb.ca](mailto:lmay@snac.mb.ca) or 204-261-6279  
fax: 204-261-1927 for more information.

## A SUSTAINABLE BIRTHDAY PARTY



Flown indoors or outdoors, prayer flags release various blessings into the environment: red for fire; blue for water; green for earth; white for sky; and yellow for the dharma path.

### By Ellen Mackey

My daughter, Alexia was anticipating her 8th birthday and we were debating the possibilities for a birthday party. Last year we had a fairy birthday in her native plant secret garden. For this year we were also looking for options to celebrate her birthday in a sustainable way.

As a family we are fighting the expansion of our local landfill and are very aware of the final destination of many disposable products, including plastic party favors, paper party settings, and plastic toys. I discussed with Alexia the issue of plastics, including her population of Barbies and Kens. "Do we really need more plastic or paper products or toys, soon to become waste destined for the landfill?" Since we had just received a fundraising letter

from Heifer International, Tibetan Project, I suggested that we have a fundraiser instead. Alexia, who had given Heifer Int'l Christmas presents, loved the idea. (See sidebar for information on Heifer International.) We decided to bring in other partners. We contacted:

- 4H of Sunland, Eastside Kids, to bring farm animals. They brought animals typical of those sponsored by Heifer including goats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and bees. My daughters showed their ducks. Children were able to touch, pet, feed, and lead the animals. They got a sense of scale and affection for these very useful animals.
- Tibet Nepal House restaurant in Pasadena donated food for sampling. Momos (steamed dumplings), butter tea, and khir (spiced rice pudding).
- Dreams of Tibet, Kathmandu

Imports, the store adjacent to the restaurant, loaned a Tibetan costume for display — a chupa, Nepalese shirt, malas (Buddist rosary), and silver and china coral necklace (see picture).

- Lamu, a Tibetan and member of Los Angeles Friends of Tibet, presented information on the culture, costumes, food, dolls, and religious artifacts of the country.
- Eco-Home™ Network supported the project as a pilot study for sustainable parties and presents.



Alexia when another child hit and opened pinata

As sustainable birthday party alternatives to paper cups, plates, dinner-ware, and latex balloons, we used thrift store glasses, lunch plates, 2 dozen spoons, and Tibetan prayer flags. Rather than large garbage bags full of trash, the non-recyclable trash from our sustainable party filled only half a standard plastic grocery bag!

The party raised \$340 for the Tibetan Project, more than enough for a yak! Alexia was thrilled and sent 'thank you's' to inform contributors of the outcome.

For those who may be concerned that a child could feel deprived by the absence of personal presents, let me assure you that Alexia received some plastic-free presents from family including:

- a tin of games with a wooden game board,
- a subscription to Ranger Rick magazine (from the National Wildlife Federation),
- since her mother sews, she is also received several cotton dresses,
- a wooden bird house kit (for her secret garden), and
- the beautiful Thai costume she wore to her party (made from reused saris).

Two weeks prior to the party, I took three Heifer Int'l films to Alexia's school so the children would understand the reason for the fundraiser birthday party. The children watched them over a one week period and discussed them with their parents. Parents and children were asked to make a small contribution instead of buying presents to bring to the party. Alexia's target was to raise enough funds to sponsor a yak to be given to a Tibetan family through Heifer International. Some of the parents were not quite sure about the concept of the party upon arriving, so we played the films for the parents also. The films, the displays and the presentations helped them understand by the time they left.

Alexia prepared a basket for cards and contributions for Heifer International. She wrote her presentation and practiced her delivery with a Playskool microphone. I prepared a poster showing a map of Tibet (the highest country in the world), the yak's form and size, the Tibetan flag, and the Dalai Lama. Of course, piñatas are an integral part of parties in So. Cal. So, I found a cow and pig-shaped pinatas, both animal species given by Heifer Int'l, and filled them with chocolates. The birthday cake also shared the Heifer theme with a number of toy farm animals arranged on the cake by the birthday girl.

One of our goals was to get people to think differently about parties and gift giving. In this commercial, disposable world, a sustainable party is an intellectual exercise I welcomed. We'll add as little as we can to landfills and support a wonderful cause as well.

#### Contact Info.

Heifer International: [www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org)

4H of Sunland, Eastside Kids:  
818-352-0864

Tibet Nepal House: 36 E. Holly Street,  
Pasadena, CA 91103, 626-585-9955

Dreams of Tibet, Kathmandu Imports:  
20 E. Holly Street, Pasadena, CA  
91103, 626-585-8100

L. A. Friends of Tibet: 310-289-4653,  
[www.latibet.org](http://www.latibet.org)

*ED: At this time when so many of us feel overwhelmed by frightening world and local conditions, a celebratory occasion that gives participants the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of others as well as to have fun provides hope and a sense of empowerment when it is most needed.*

## HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

Heifer International is a nonprofit organization that provides families in need all over the world with livestock, such as goats, cows, chickens and others to supplement the families' diets with animal products like, milk, cheese and eggs and earn some income. The families are trained in sustainable care of the animals and their obligation is to pass the gift on by giving the offspring of their animals to others in their villages.

You may sponsor an animal gift to a family through Heifer International.

Contact:

Heifer International  
World Headquarters  
P.O. Box 8058  
Little Rock, AR 72203

Tel.: 501-907-2600  
800-422-0474  
[www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org)

## GREEN WEDDINGS

Traditional weddings are infamous for being ostentatiously wasteful and highly resource-intensive. With costly gowns worn once and never again, hundreds of invitations, excessive food and drink, flowers, throw-away paper and plastic decorations, the average wedding ceremony costs \$20,000 and who knows how much landfill space!

But Suzanne Gerber in the *Green Guide* claims weddings are a great opportunity to support markets for local, organic, recycled, and recyclable goods and offers the latest advice on how to have an eco-friendly wedding on the *Grist Magazine* website: [www.gristmagazine.com](http://www.gristmagazine.com). Click on "A Nice Day for a Green Wedding."



# A REALTOR SEES GREEN



**DBL**  
REALTORS  
EXCEPTIONAL HOMES

As a realtor in the Pasadena area, I'd not been much aware of the "green" building movement. But, with the recent purchase of my own Pasadena cottage I found my interest in all things natural being reactivated. I discovered the Eco-Home™

Network and with its help began developing the overwhelming sense of how important it is to make our homes healthy, non toxic and energy efficient.

I've discovered that the benefits to doing this are threefold: First, your costs as a homeowner actually can go down. At the time of purchase, an energy efficiency inspection is performed and an energy efficient mortgage is obtained. The costs of doing these upgrades are bundled into the mortgage payment. The payment will increase but you can save more on utilities than that increased amount. Second, the home becomes worth more.

Appraisers tell me that energy efficiency is a line item on an appraisal and it increases value. And third, obviously, energy efficiency is good for the environment!

This past April, with the assistance of the Eco-Home™ Network's Julia Russell, Ellen Mackey and Larry Byrnes, I held an "eco inquiry" at my new home. (To contact Larry Byrnes, see below.) It was a day-long conversation about some of the many healthy and efficient products and systems available to homeowners.

I had started by encouraging the growth of south-side shade trees, installing solar tubes and double-paned windows, removing a concrete patio to allow greater rainfall infiltration and planting vines on a rear wall.

The house became bright enough to eliminate need for daytime lights. Birds, squarrels and a skunk began to visit my yard. The incoming air from an open window is fresher (except when the skunk comes by). The new windows enhanced the thermal mass properties of the plaster-covered interior walls which cool off at night, helping to keep the home cooler during the day and then warm up during the day, adding warmth at night.

Ellen, Julia and Larry were kind enough to offer their wisdom during the open house and we displayed some environmentally preferable products and printed material on environmental products and services. I can clearly see that interest in this area is dramatically increasing.

I am now a Pasadena realtor with an awareness of the value of environmental home improvements! If anyone is interested in working with a realtor (buying or selling) in the Pasadena area, who shares their "green" interest, call me. I'm assembling tradesmen who can help you with the transformation of the home you buy or if you are selling, imagine how appealing to buyers your home might be if a few "geen" changes were made.

**TODD LETHBRIDGE**  
626-345-1273 • tlethbridge@dbl.com

Larry Byrnes • Environmental Homes Improvements  
North Hollywood • 818-508-1415 • LarryByrnes@earthlink.net

# KITCHEN ECO-RENOVATION

It's been so long since I've reported on the eco-renovation of the Eco-Home™ kitchen, I'm recapping some of the steps that were fully described in previous issues of Ecolution. I have cited them and also had them posted on our website [www.ecohome.org](http://www.ecohome.org)

In the Spring 2003 issue of Ecolution I promised a full confession of my mismanagement of the eco-renovation of the Eco-Home™ kitchen. After writing the full confession, I decided I didn't really need to drag you all through the muck and mire of it. For those who want the gory details, I will e-mail or mail it to you on request. What you have here is an abridged version including those aspects that I think will be helpful to others.

During the summer of 1994, with the help of many professionals who gave generously of their time and expertise, I drew up plans and elevations of the dream kitchen for Eco-Home™. (See figures 1-3 on page 21-22) For a list of our Team, see "Eco-Home™ Eco-Renovation Team" on our website, or pg. 5 of the Fall/Winter '94/95 Ecolution.

First steps were taken in Fall 1994 when I invited Mary Cordaro and Kathryn Metz to perform a Baubiological and Feng Shui



South view of kitchen before renovation

analysis of Eco-Home and make recommendations. This is described in the Fall/Winter '94/95 issue of Ecolution, pages 14-16. (See "Eco-Renovation Log, Fall '94/95" on our website.)

One of the first steps in the kitchen eco-renovation was installation of a Sun Pipe to bring daylight through the roof and ceiling into the darkest interior area. That was a big improvement. An article about its installation appeared in the Spring/Summer 1995 issue of Ecolution. (See our website for the article, Let There Be Light.)

Due to the extensive research necessary to try to find the building materials that both met our environmental criteria and fit within our budget, there was a 2-1/2 yr. delay before more actual physical labor was started on the job. For a description of this stage of the kitchen renovation see pages 16-18 of the Fall 1997 issue and pages 20-22 of the Winter 1998 issue of Ecolution. On our website See "Eco-Renovation Fall 1997" and "Eco-Renovation Winter 1998."

The renovation had to be done incrementally as I only had enough funds to do it piece by piece. There was a hiatus of several years, while I refinanced the house to pay for the completion of the project and recuperated from the stress



Northwest view of kitchen before renovation

of the first stage of the kitchen remodel. Whatever people say about the ordeal of renovation, it can never be fully communicated in words.

In fall of 1999, as I prepared to embark on the second phase of kitchen renovation, it became evident through a growing hole in the bathroom floor that the bathroom eco-renovation had to take precedence. See pages 16-19 of the Spring 2000 issue of *Ecolution* or "Bathroom Eco-renovation" on our website.

The bathroom renovation went so pleasantly and well, I was lulled into a false sense of my own competence as a project manager. In retrospect I see that it had much more to do with the character and personality of the contractor, Javier Hernandez. A primary lesson I've learned in this process is that the character and personality of the people you work with, as much as their skills, make a project a pleasure and a success or a nightmare.

If you have the time - and even if you don't have the time, make it - work on a relatively small, but real project with your prospective contractor or workman, to see how your personalities mesh, how they react under stress, their reliability, their integrity, as well as their skill, of course.

Unfortunately, Javier wasn't available to work on the next stages of the kitchen renovation. So I was susceptible to the siren call of Denise Bonfilio. I didn't know Denise well, but had seen her at "green" events for years and admired a business she started under the name of Eco-Junction that sold beautifully designed and crafted wood furniture made of recycled wood. At one point she had arranged, unbidden, to have \$1,500 donated to the Eco-Home™ Network. I saw her as a true friend of Eco-Home™.

When I mentioned to her that I was looking for a contractor to continue the eco-renovation of the Eco-Home™ kitchen she

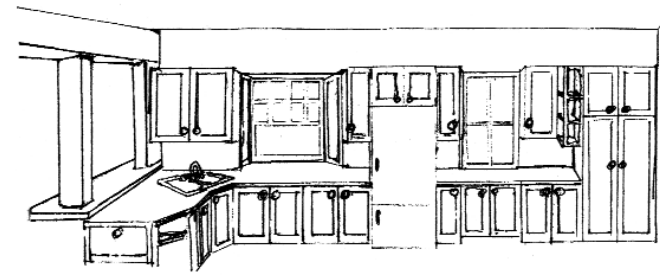


Figure 2: Elevation - east view

said she was a contractor and would like the job. She offered me a very good deal. Better than any I had yet obtained. I was thrilled and jumped at the chance and hired Denise Bonfilio and her company, Eco-Junction, to do the rest of the kitchen renovation with only the most cursory checking with a couple of her former clients. I paid her a large sum to begin.

A major part of creating the new kitchen in the image of my drawings was still ahead. The old cabinets, sink and existing window had to be removed, a new bay window with dual-glazed panes built and installed, a new sink installed in a different place, the plumbing moved, a new fridge bought and installed, two windows removed, new cabinet boxes, drawers and doors built and installed and walls and cabinets painted.

From December 2000, when the job was

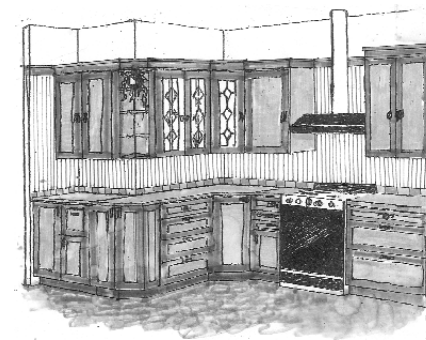


figure 3: Elevation west view

started through to July 4th, 2001, when I terminated the contract with Denise for breach of contract, all that was done was removal of the existing cabinets, sink and window, relocation of

some pipes and faulty installation of a new, unglazed bay window. The entire six months had been fraught with endless broken time and performance commitments, verbal conflict, accusations of racism (Scouts honor!) and the stress of a winter spent trying to live in a largely deconstructed kitchen with exposed, un-insulated walls and flimsy plastic taped to cover a large missing window.

I finally sent Denise a letter itemizing the work her workmen had done and a fair price for that work and asked for a reimbursement of the balance of the \$8,000 I had paid her up front. I never heard another word from her. Nor was a dollar ever returned to me by her.

I belatedly followed up on her credentials and found:

- She had no construction contractor's license. Her only license was a defunct landscape contracting license.
- Her company, Eco-Junction, wasn't registered with the state or the city.

I took her to Small Claims Court. She didn't show up for the hearing, I won a judgement for \$5,000 against her. But it's up to me to collect. Letters to her are unanswered. I don't have the time to seek her out. I don't have the funds to hire someone to track her down. I won but I lost.

Whom can I blame for this debacle? No one but myself. May you take heed and

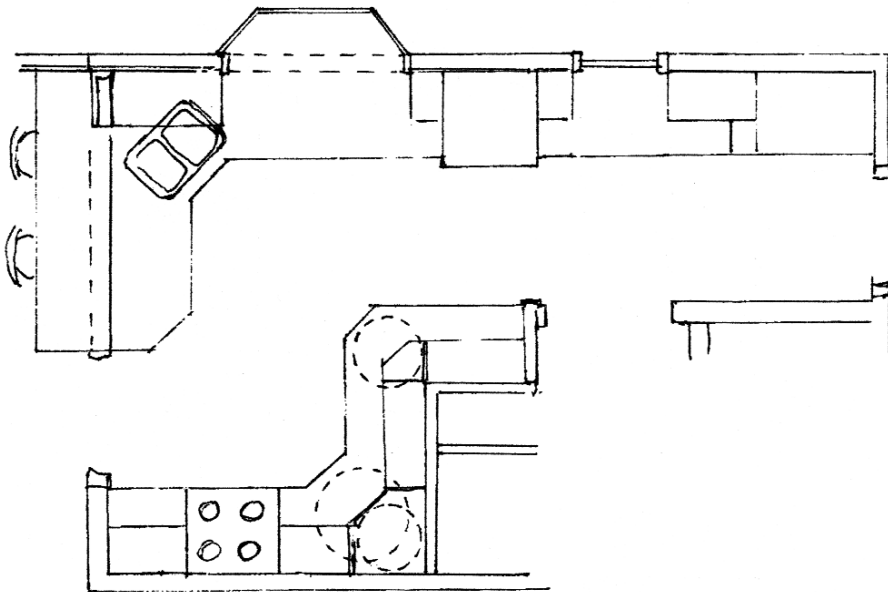


Figure 1: Plan view of kitchen renovation

avoid the pitfall of un-professionalism:

- Check with the League of California Homeowners, (909) 931-1653, for their list of approved contractors and their 10 Tips To Keep Your Remodeling On The Right Track. Join the League while you're at it! It's a true friend to the homeowner.
- Check on the contractor's license with the Contractor's State License Board (CSLB) (800) 321-2752\_or [www.cslb.ca.gov/](http://www.cslb.ca.gov/)
- Ask for proof of insurance from the contractor.
- Check with the City's Office of Finance (213) 626-9271 to find out if a business is registered to do business in Los Angeles.
- Follow up on the references you're given.

As mentioned above, do work on a smaller project with your prospective hiree before hiring them for a large job.

Do NOT pay a large amount up front. Ten percent of budget is pretty standard. Do include a completion date in your contract. And do hire a professional project manager if you don't have the time or the temperament to oversee the work being done, daily, even hourly at certain critical times.

One would think that I would have learned all these lessons by this point. But given my subsequent actions, I am forced to face the fact that I am simply not qualified to oversee a construction or rehabilitation job. Rather than facing facts, however, I went into a frenzy of activity. I was possessed by the NEED to complete this kitchen renovation.

Once again I refinanced the house to pay for the completion of the kitchen renovation, which I had to do because I had thrown away \$8,000 of what I had obtained from the former refinancing.

The refinancing paperwork dragged on. I was impatient. I was told the refinancing wouldn't take more than two months and would probably take much less. So I withdrew \$8,000 from my IRA, substantially depleting my account. No problem. I'd put it right back as soon as the refinancing came through.

As the weeks and months progressed and the paper work for the refinancing just dragged on and dragged on, I became panicky. But it was too late to do anything about it. I had already spent most of what I'd withdrawn from my IRA. The 60 day deadline for me to return the \$8,000 to my IRA to avoid tax penalty came and went. I won't go into the gruesome ramifications of this missed deadline here.

Suffice it to say I was in a less than optimal state of mind to continue forward with the project. But I went ahead anyway. I had to make decisions about the kitchen cabinets. I interviewed several carpenters. Their estimates were way beyond my budget. And they complained about the unusual angles in the cabinet design. They tried to get me to change them, always promising me lower costs if I would. I very much didn't want to change the angles in the cabinet design. When I looked at sketches with the angles altered to something more conventional - square corners - it looked far less graceful, comfortable and functional. After all I had been through with this kitchen the thought that I would have to settle for something that would be a constant reminder of my dis-empowerment was unacceptable to me.

I looked into IKEA cabinets. They advertised that their wood furniture was made of certified sustainably harvested wood. I worked with their kitchen designer to fig-

ure out what I would need for the kitchen and it came out to -----\$6,000, much less than any estimate I had been able to get for custom cabinets. I was ready to go! But I asked the kitchen designer to confirm in writing that the cabinets I was ordering were fabricated from certified sustainably harvested wood. He referred me to the CEO of marketing. The CEO said he could not guarantee that the cabinets were made of sustainably harvested wood because they didn't have complete control of the "chain of custody" of the product. Alas! Foiled again. I couldn't install wood cabinets in Eco-Home that were not verifiably made of certified sustainably harvested wood or recycled wood or some environmentally benign material.

I should point out that my experience with IKEA took place several years ago. Forest certification is growing rapidly, and it may well be that IKEA is now able to guarantee in writing that their wood products are entirely certified sustainably harvested. It certainly would be worth checking out if you're in the market for wood furniture or cabinetry.

Metal had been suggested, but I don't like metal cabinets in the home. Somehow my association to metal cabinets is schools, hospitals and offices. It's not what I want in my home.

Meanwhile, I had found Meier Brief, a licensed contractor/carpenter whose estimate for the kitchen cabinets was within reach AND HE DIDN'T ARGUE WITH ME ABOUT THE ANGLES!

And at this point of high suspense, I must pause and invite you to tune in to the next issue of Ecolution Bulletin for the exciting and welcome conclusion to this mis-adventure in eco-renovation.

JSR

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Carol Lamkins, kitchen designer:  
714-738-7171

Mark Schoen, carpenter:  
818-342-8648

Mary Cordaro, H3 Environmental  
Bau-biologist, healthy home consultant:  
818-766-1787

Kathryn Metz, Feng Shui practitioner:  
KMetz@aol.com

Javier Hernandez, Javo's Home  
Improvement: 323-280-3593

Richard Ayerst, Maxwell Pacific,  
Recycled wood: 310-457-4533

Larry Byrnes, Environmental Home  
Improvement: 818-508-1415

I.M. Cabinets, Meier Brief:  
323-853-8009

## SOLAR BELLS AND WHISTLES

BP Solar is focusing on California homeowners. Would an indoor display screen allowing you to monitor energy production, attractive financing options, access to CEC rebates, planning, installation and commissioning services motivate you to go solar? Call 1 (866) BP-SOLAR if they do.

Before you do, though, you might want to check out their online Solar Savings Estimator at [www.bpsolar.com/homesolutions](http://www.bpsolar.com/homesolutions) to calculate your cost, potential energy savings, payback period and environmental benefits from installing PV systems of various sizes.

# ECO-HOME™ BOOKSTORE

**A HOUSE OF STRAW:** A Natural Building Odyssey, by Carolyn Roberts, Chelsea Green, 2002, 20.94

**A PRIMER ON SUSTAINABLE BUILDING,** by Barnett and Browning, Rocky Mtn. Institute, 1999, \$19.82

**ACHIEVING ECO-NOMIC SECURITY ON SPACESHIP EARTH,** by Jim Bell, 1994, \$17.54

**ALL ABOUT LANDSCAPING,** Ortho Books, 1988, \$11.72

**BACKYARD COMPOSTING,** by John Roulac, \$8.27

**BUILDING PROFESSIONAL'S GREY-WATER GUIDE:** The Guide to Professional Installation of Greywater Systems, by Art Ludwig, 1995, \$14.67

**CHOOSE TO REUSE,** An Encyclopedia of Services, Products, Programs & Charitable Organizations That Foster Reuse, by Nikki and David Goldbeck, 1995, \$18.54

**EARTH USER'S GUIDE TO PERMACULTURE,** by Rosemary Morrow, 1999, \$16.02

**ECO-RENOVATION:** The Ecological Home Improvement Guide, Edward Hartland, 1994, \$19.00

**GAIA: A NEW LOOK AT LIFE ON EARTH,** James Lovelock, 2000, \$18.06

**GAIA'S GARDEN,** A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture, by Toby Hemenway, 2001, \$27.53

**GAVIOTAS:** A Village to Reinvent the World, by Alan Weisman, 1995, \$25.60, hardcover

**SALE! GUIDE TO RESOURCE EFFICIENT BUILDING ELEMENTS,** 4th

Edition, Center for Resourceful Building Technology, 1994, \$10.00

**HEALTHFUL HOUSES,** How to Design and Build Your Own, by Clint Good, \$13.14

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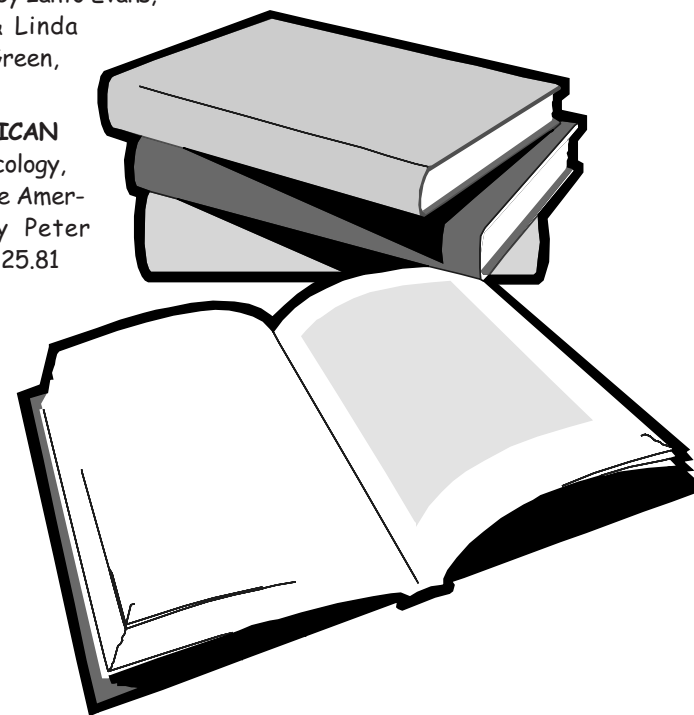
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