

March 2007

Dear friends of the Alliance,

The way of peace is based on the same thing that ushered in the age of science: a leap in consciousness. When they witnessed demonstrations of steam engines, electric lights and vaccines, people adapted to them at the level of their own awareness. The idea of being a human could no longer be consistent with reading by candlelight, traveling by horse, suffering through high rates of death in childbirth, short life spans, and the ravages of disease. A leap in collective consciousness took place. The way of peace, I believe, can change the future in the same way.

Deepak Chopra

Author, *Peace is the Way*

Pub. by Harmony Books

Alliance Action

The New Humanity Forum

We've had a great response to this new section of the newsletter - many thanks for all your contributions! If you're involved in a project that's making a real difference to others, then please don't hide your light under a bushel, send in your story! But keep it brief - we want to include as many as possible.

From next month we will be starting another new section: an events diary. If you're involved with an event which fits with the aims of the Alliance and you think would be of interest to other members – send in the details!

Responding to Educreate

I have been an educator for the past 31 years and the last few years have been with the New York City Board of Education. It has been this experience that compelled me to begin my new project, Enchantment Industries: www.enchantmentindustries.com

Our Mission is to raise conscious awareness of children and their families through specifically designed programs that teach how focused energy creates the nature of reality. We feel the urgency to bring these teachings to the mainstream, at as early an age as possible, in order to establish global peace and global awareness of environmental issues affecting future generations.

Through qualified and certified teachers, healers and therapists and incorporating break through teaching modalities, we will work with children and their families in schools, after school programs, children's hospitals, and wherever future possibilities welcome our intentions.

Elly Molina

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Oxford Bridgemakers

I am in the process of developing the first "Bridgemaker Group" which is to be in Oxford. "Bridgemaker Groups" consist of families or couples from different communities in the same city or town who come together to share their understanding of everyday life and overcome in a modest way the divisions within our society. They meet each other in their own homes and share a simple snack, learn how to "affirm the other" and help to create a culture of peace at the grassroots.

The idea originated while I was Headteacher in Bradford, experiencing the simple hospitality of Asian families but also the increasing segregation in our society. In January 2005, I was inspired to set up my Oxford Steering Group to establish the principles, aims, objectives and to prioritise tasks.

I have now received some funding to make a DVD/video of the project – simple, say 5 or 6 minutes with people from the project meeting each other over a snack.

Richard Thompson

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Envision a New America

I just launched this web site and movement, and I seek to promote it worldwide in every way made available to me. The entire planet needs to join in for the sake of our survival. This is a non-commercial web site that comes from my heart, with love of the country that gave it birth and love for all countries that interact with it. www.envisionanewamerica.org

Kosta Makreas

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Turning Back the Desert

In the dust-choked, barren region of Guidan Bakoye, Niger, millions of trees are beginning to flourish thanks to local farmers whose simple methods for planting and nurturing trees are paying dividends – not least in the improved rainfall the region that is now covered with 7.4 million new trees is receiving. Recent satellite images have shown that Niger is far greener than it was 30 years ago and the vegetation is densest in some of the most densely-populated regions of the country, proving that each individual can do their bit to protect the environment.

The successes local people have achieved by the simple action of planting trees proves that desertification can be remedied and soil fertility improved through relatively small changes in human behaviour. Once farmers realised that encroaching desertification and receding tree cover are inextricably linked, instead of weeding-out saplings from their land as they had done previously, they began to plant around them, sowing millet, sorghum, peanuts and beans in the

vicinity of the saplings. A change in the law Turning Back the DesertTurnialso means that instead of being owned by the state (thereby giving no incentive for farmers to protect trees), any trees on a farmer’s land now belong to the farmer, who can sustainably crop the tree to add to the family income.

Small steps in redressing ecological imbalances have huge benefits for this struggling region and empower local people to see themselves as prime agents for positive change.

More...

Eco-Renovation

The remarkable renewable energy house in the heart of Brussels.

Deep in the heart of Brussels’ EU quarter sits an apparently ordinary-looking nineteenth-century townhouse which, at first glance, appears no different from most of the office buildings in this corner of Europe’s capital. But this unassuming building at 63–65 rue d’Arlon is in fact one of the most environmentally friendly offices in the world, and its creation has all the hallmarks of a fairy tale.

More...

Robotic Lives

In this era of instant connectivity, we may be losing connection with ourselves.

Our world is changing radically right under our very noses in ways that have never before been experienced by the human nervous system. In light of the enormity of these changes it might be a good idea to reflect on just how they may be affecting our lives.

My guess is that we have hardly been noticing. We have been too caught up in adapting to the new possibilities and challenges, learning to use the new technologies to get more done and get it done faster, and in the process becoming completely dependent on them, even addicted. And whether we realise it or not, we are being swept along in a current of time acceleration that shows no signs of slowing down. The technology, so touted to produce gains in efficiency and leisure, threatens to rob us of both if it hasn’t already done so. Who do you know who has more leisure?

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Fair Fashion

To ensure that the fashion and clothing industry respects worker and environmental rights, we must tell them that this is what we want.

In the past two years, the issue of 'ethical fashion' has captured public imagination. The growth of internet shopping has benefited small clothing companies, many of which have ethical principles at their core. Meanwhile, on the high street, major stores have responded by introducing ranges of 'ethical' fabrics such as organic cotton and Fairtrade Cotton – which is cotton (but not finished clothing) made under Fairtrade conditions. So far, a range of fairly traded cotton has been brought in by Monsoon, Sainsbury's and Marks & Spencer. Others will undoubtedly follow.

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In brief:

Knowledge for Iraqi Women Society

Voted Person of 2006 by OneWorld members, Dr Rashad has been working tirelessly with the women of Iraq to hold families together through the terrors of war. Find out more about the situation for women in Iraq and the incredible work being done by some very inspiring people there. OneWorld are holding a week-long 'chat' with Dr Rashad Zidan from 1st March. "If you listen to the people who are in the midst of the conflict, they will help you better understand how to end the violence and suffering because they have firsthand knowledge and experience." Rashad Zidan

More...

Wake-up Call to World Leaders

"Global warming is here, but our leaders just won't wake up". Now you can sound the alarm. The leaders of the world's most polluting countries will be meeting in Germany this June and the priorities for this summit are being decided right now. Watch the new video on climate change from avaaz.org and tell world leaders to act now.

More...

Bishop Says "No!" to Flying

The Bishop of London, the Right Rev Richard Chartres, has pledged not to fly for a year. This follows his controversial statement last year that using an airline to go on holiday was sinful. He will now be using buses and trains to get to all his engagements, including those in Europe, and said, "I can see myself spending a lot of time on drafty railway platforms."

Holy Orders

Sister Patricia Daly, a Dominican nun, has been battling for nearly thirty years to make business socially responsible. She is the executive director of the Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment, a network of faith based organisations that has invested \$110 billion in companies, and pushes the case for socially responsible leadership at shareholders meetings. Their tactics are successful because the coalition makes the case that doing the socially responsible thing

pays better financial returns. Ford, General Electric and ExxonMobil are just three of the companies that have come under the Coalition's spotlight.

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On trial for speaking out

Lieutenant Ehren Watada faces trial for a second time for refusing an order to fight in Iraq and for speaking out against the war. The first court martial stopped abruptly when the judge declared a mis-trial, but two weeks later the US army refiled charges against the Lieutenant. Lt Watada is the first officer to be prosecuted for publicly criticising the war since an army captain was court martialled for speaking against the Vietnam war in an anti-war demonstration.

Young Armenians make news

A new newspaper for young people in Armenia has recently been launched with the intention of publishing new ideas. "This is not going to be just another political newspaper," said the 26 year old youth leader who started the project, Arthur Ghazaryan. Young Dilijan is a monthly, tabloid-sized newspaper that covers national news as well as tackling much tougher issues like the country's education policies.

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Going Carbon Neutral

The Cheshire village of Ashton Hayes (pop. 1000 approx.) in the UK is aiming to become the first small community in England to achieve carbon neutral status. Everyone is getting involved, from the school, to the pub to the local Women's Institute. Find out about their progress:

More...

Send us your news!

Are you a change maker? We want to hear from you!

We'd like to share your stories of positive change in this newsletter. If you have a story to tell, email it to Rachel Marsh, editor of The Alliance e-newsletter, Resurgence: <mailto:rachel@thecupoftea.co.uk>