

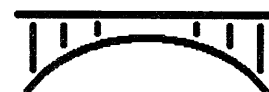
**Winter 1998-1999
New York, New York
Volume 2 Issue 1**

**Transformative
Action inside this
issue: *The State of
the World Forum
and more*——**



The Bridging Tree

Published by The Lifebridge Foundation, Inc.



Grace Cathedral in San Francisco

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The State of the World Forum

By Barbara L. Overby, President of The Lifebridge Foundation

Transformative action seems to be the call of the day as more and more groups are attempting to convert words into deeds. One such group, The State of the World Forum, is positioning itself to be a major force for change while actively exploring the landscape of our world heading toward the 21st Century. Originally a project of the Gorbachev Foundation and now an independent not-for-profit organization, this event seeks to draw the most influential people on the planet into a substantive discussion on the critical problems facing humanity today and how to begin solving them.

Since 1995, the SWF has convened at The Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco where the charter of The United Nations was written and signed. This year, the six day conference offered a broad sweep of topics in the form of plenaries, roundtable luncheons, meetings and various networking sessions. One could attend perhaps only a tenth of what was offered, but by signing up in advance, there was a good possibility to attend a meeting in your area of interest. There was an opportunity for discussion in some of the smaller groups, but not as much as one would hope.

The Forum bills itself as, "a global network of individuals and institutions from around the world and a spectrum of disciplines committed to discerning those principles, values and actions which should

guide humanity as it moves beyond the strictures of the Cold War and into the next phase of human development." Indeed, many presentations were centered around the post Cold War period and how to transform our actions from competitive corporate models into cooperative systems that benefit the whole; or in the words of the Forum, "offering to the people of the world an opportunity to imagine a world that works for everyone." This phrase was repeated many times throughout the conference by the Forum's President, Jim Garrison.

The Forum feels that, "The most compelling issue emerging from these gatherings is whether at this point in history a holistic framework articulating a common aspirational vision and practical programmatic agenda for the future can be developed which honors the multiplicity of the world while at the same time synthesizing it into a whole in which all the parts can find their natural and equitable place." This is quite a tall order in words loaded with meaning and potential, and hopefully it is an honest beginning toward engaging certain powerful people focused toward the goal of "transforming conversations that matter into actions which make a difference."

In the course of the last several years, a larger, more diverse and open group has emerged at the Forum, inclusive of women, minorities and leaders from the

The State of the World Forum (Cont'd)

so-called developing countries. However, I believe there still is a long way to go to include representatives of the poor and struggling working people as the cost of the conference is financially prohibitive for most.

Some of the initiatives of the SWF include, "Investing in Women," "The Whole Child Initiative", "Emerging Leaders Program" and a "Nuclear Weapons Elimination Initiative". One of the most visible is called "Our Common Enterprise: Mission for the Millennium." This is another ambitious project seeking to implement many facets of a sustainable world such as model programs and best practices, civic leadership development, a UN 2000 Forum and transmedia communication and education, using the seven major UN conferences held this decade as "bedrock".

A striking example of real transformative action that came near the end of the conference was a smaller, three hour roundtable discussion entitled "The State of the Leadership Soul", sponsored by the World Business Academy. This group has been quite active in recent years in creating workshops and seminars designed to promote spirituality in business. If this workshop was representative of the Academy's work, there is definitely hope for the world. A spiritual tone was set by the facilitators at the outset that allowed participants to share their deepest values and insights in a truly open discussion. Near the end of the three hours, one "typical" businessman said, "what we really need to do is just love." If all business leaders had this kind of inclusive outlook, we'd really see a transformation in the global economy!

Webster's dictionary defines Forum as, "A public meeting place for open discussion," or "A medium of open discussion," but discussion was one of the elements most lacking in this large conference. In the plenary sessions there was little opportunity for questions or audience interaction. The

closing plenary, called a "Town Meeting", in fact left no time at all for questions or comments from the audience. Perhaps this was an attempt to focus the flow of the conference, but if one of the goals of the Forum is, "to map various future scenarios [in] which the nature of integration is made a societal and political priority," it seems to me that in the spirit of integration and inclusiveness, a greater effort might be made to include more people rather than less, especially in the planning. Commitments billed as "Our Common Enterprise."

All spiritual traditions counsel integration and wholeness, which implies that everyone has a voice, a component that I believe the leadership of the SWF could listen to more sensitively. Our emerging global culture is now examining the concept of interconnectedness and the SWF is working to build a framework that must also be expansively spiritual, challenging people to expand the boundaries of consciousness and spirit. Sometimes these expansions can be a little messy as we break open into new territory, and courage is called for in this changing world as people attempt to hold onto their realities and take responsibility for the state of their own cultures. We need to be able to hear everyone's voice and point of view to create true dialogue.

Transformative action is born from individual inspiration to change the world, help the world and heal the world. Clearly at the SWF, there are serious people who recognize the dire need for wholeness, collaboration and cooperation and an honoring of the "other" in our fractured, diseased and fragmented societies. It is our hope that each individual attending this global meeting of minds went home to begin the slow and steady work of transformation in their own fields and within their own organizations. One by one and step by step, we *can* build a "world that works for every one."

The Bridging Tree

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A Call to Listen

By Larry Elwood Auld

There's a lot going on out there. Around the same time that some were attending the State of the World Forum in San Francisco, others were meeting at a Connecting and Community conference in Seattle, while still others were congregating in Jerusalem to catalyze a healing of the breach between Arab and Jew. Before that, in August, a gathering was held in Klamath Falls, Oregon to create community and celebrate the 500 day mark before January 1, 2000, a date that many around the world have proclaimed as One Day in Peace. All of the above gatherings were attended by either Lifebridge grantees or Lifebridge board and staff members and are reported on in this issue of *The Bridging Tree*.

But there have been and will be many other gatherings, many other convening conferences. The "natives" are not only restless, they want to communicate. It seems more and more possible that we the people of earth *can do something* to create a better world. At the State of the World Forum where 800 representatives from many countries met to network and exchange ideas, there was not only a sense of commitment and devotion, there was tangible evidence that people are *acting transformatively*. Just take a look at the list on page 14 for a sampling of initiatives.

One of those transformative actions happens between May 11-15, 1999, when The **Hague Appeal For Peace** will be held in Holland. This enormous gathering of world citizens was conceived to mark the 100th anniversary of the first Hague Appeal, called for in 1899 by the Tsar of Russia and the Queen of the Netherlands. This one will be different however. This one will be convened by *the people themselves*. Government representatives are invited to attend, but the peoples of the world are the moving force behind this Hague Appeal. It could be Woodstock taken to the nth power!

Along the same lines, the **Millennium People's Assembly Network**, in association with the NGO Forum of the United Nations, will bring together representatives of cultures from around the world to meet at the U.N. in 2000, an endeavor that was called for by Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the 50th Anniversary NGO Conference in New York in 1997.

Just what is it that the people of earth are hoping for by coming together in ever increasing numbers? Peace, certainly. But peace can mean many things to many people.

So can the phrase "a better world". Better for whom? At what cost? And who calls the shots to get us there? These are important questions and the answers could be considered quite complicated.

Nevertheless, during the youth panel at The State of the World Forum, which presented a number of young people of diverse backgrounds discussing their visions of "peace" and a "better world", one panelist's words stood out as an answer to the conundrum created by myriad perspectives and agendas. The speaker was Hafsat Abiola, a young woman from Nigeria whose father, a former president of that country, died in prison and whose mother was subsequently assassinated.

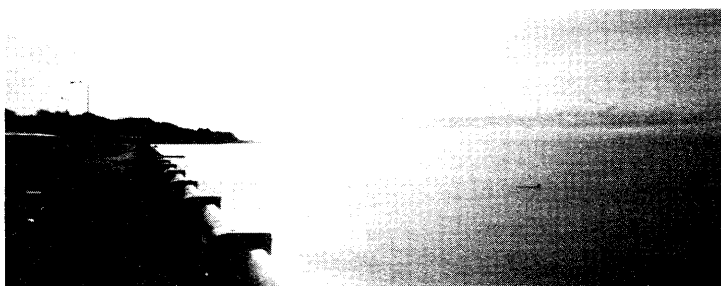
Ms. Abiola said, "You will always find those in [my] society who are considered to be the mad, the crazy nuts who will be willing to think outside of the box, outside of the context and constraints they have known, that are willing to love and share and care. But those people are considered to be the eccentrics in societies like that. Maybe even here [in the U.S.] I don't know. But what I do know is that we need to structure a society that allows such people to be the norm. To recreate a society that has values, that can allow for those kinds of people. It's all about who is rewarded and who is penalized for what conduct. ...And yes, I want very much for adults to support me, my voice, my work and other young people around the world. But what can I do to support them, their voice, their work in the world?"

The moderator, Angela Glover Blackwell, President of PolicyLink, then asked this extraordinary young woman, "Have you found any strategies that are helpful in bridging those divides you're talking about?"

To which Ms. Abiola replied, "Yes. I listen. I really listen."

This simple answer made me realize that we can madly convene and attend conferences and gatherings from now on to the year 2000, but unless there is listening, there can be no communication, no community, no peace, and no better world. So perhaps the greatest transformative action any of us can take to start the new century is to begin to listen, to really listen.

Larry Elwood Auld is Editor of *The Bridging Tree* and Program Director for The Lifebridge Foundation.



Connecting and Community in Seattle

By John R. Stowe



Community. It's a concept we hear a lot about these days -- from politicians, journalists, and people seeking to make positive change in the world. It's usually offered as a much-needed antidote to the widespread alienation felt by much of the world's population. But what exactly is community? Is it the small-town charm of some bygone era -- or can it be relevant in this age of increasing globalization? Does it involve conforming to some idealized set of principles -- or is there room for people of diverse ethnicities and beliefs? I pondered these questions as I set out for the Connecting and Community Conference during the last week in October, 1998.

Fifty people answered an invitation sent out by the Foundation for Community Encouragement (FCE) to gather for three days of sharing and networking at a quiet retreat center in the misty beauty of Washington's Olympic Peninsula just outside of Seattle. We were invited to share a vision of connection and collaboration and to explore how we might build a strong community of mutual support.

The participants come from diverse backgrounds. Many have been involved in other FCE projects -- helping, for example, to foster mutual understanding in areas of severe conflict like Bosnia and the Middle East. Some are team-builders who work internationally in the highest levels of business and government. Several have built strong electronic communities on the internet. Others focus their efforts in education, publishing, drug and alcohol rehab, healing, cross-cultural understanding, racial justice, advocacy for the homeless, and the Y2K phenomenon. This is clearly a group of powerful people.

As we sit in a large circle, our three FCE facilitators -- Eve Berry, Rusty Myers, and Robert Reusing, -- review the principles that will guide our community-building process -- practice mutual respect and conscious listening, speak from your own experience and only when "moved," honor confidentiality, and stay emotionally present. Looking around the room, I sense expectation and eagerness in the eyes of each person.

As the sharing unfolds, the facilitators take a non-directional path, allowing the group process to follow its

own lead. We start each session with music and a brief period of silence. Then, one person after another answers the call to speak. The word "community" comes up again and again. Clearly it is a quality each of us has experienced before, something most hold deeply sacred. Even as I wonder how we'll reach that state here, I feel connections begin to weave through the group, one subtle strand at a time, as people share hearts and visions, wisdom and experience.

We discover quite soon that building community is a profoundly human process. At times, it is difficult to stay focused. There are varying opinions about our goals and our process. Feelings run high. As our exploration deepens, we touch the full range of possible emotions in quick succession. There is pain, joy, anger, frustration, humor, fear, and a strong sense of hope. At times, I want to shout in inspiration. At others, it is all I can do to stay in the room. I marvel at the depth of commitment among these people who have the courage to follow the path toward community even when it leads through challenging territory.

Outside the circle, connections happen more casually. During conversations over meals or walks along the dock, during early-morning yoga or social time in the evenings, we discover each other. Who are you? What do you do? Do you know ...? Have you ever tried ...? This weaving is easier, yet surprisingly deep. There is very little small talk. Probably because of what we're doing in the circle, even the casual connections are more meaningful. Indeed, the two faces of our process seem inextricably linked. Each complements the other in feeding and strengthening the overall sense of connection.

Still, it isn't easy. Indeed, we stay with the community building process longer than planned, carrying it through our entire time together. By Sunday morning, the energy has shifted. There is a strong overall sense of commitment and unity within the group. It is obvious that there has been deep bonding among members of the circle and many of us are inspired to apply the principles we've learned to our work back home. Suddenly, as the time to leave approaches, there is a flurry of promises to stay in touch, to share information and support in the coming months.

Building community is quite apparently a vital part of making the world healthier. The action that FCE and Lifebridge have taken here was indeed transformative. The task of building community is not necessarily an easy one, but as I leave the conference I feel a deep respect for the patience and commitment of the people who have dedicated themselves to it.

John R. Stowe is a Lifebridge grantee. His book, Gay Spirit Warrior, will soon be published by Findhorn Press. Website: <http://earthfriends.home.mindspring.com>

500 Day CountUP: Gathering for a Better World

by Robert Alan Silverstein

Tree Island Millennium Gathering

Celebrating the 500 Day CountUP to
One Day In Peace, January 1, 2000!

Klamath Falls, Oregon, August 18-20, 1998

January 1, 2000 is a unique opportunity for a quantum leap in the evolution of human consciousness towards a more peaceful, just and sustainable future. This is one of the beliefs that brought 60 leaders of *millennium projects for a better world* together for the Tree Island Millennium Gathering. Some of us had worked together through the Internet for 2 years, since planning local events for the 1000 day CountUP, but were meeting in-person for the very first time.

We shared many activities and events together, but one of the most inspiring was the local Jefferson Street Children's Theatre's presentation entitled "Creation of the Universe" which showed the evolution of human consciousness from its primitive beginnings, through the use of aggression, to a higher understanding of the power of love, unity and harmony. While this brought tears of joy, a series of skits entitled "Y2K? Kids Tell It Like It Is" filled the auditorium with laughter and insights into an often confusing time as perceived through the eyes of children.



On Day 500 (August 19) the entire city of Klamath Falls was invited to participate. The *Rainbow Maker*, Fred Stern, and the local fire department created an awe-inspiring giant 500 Day CountUP Rainbow. The beauty and joy brought the several hundred children and adults together in a bond of community. A butterfly release continued the transformative experience. Then a peace pole dedication, as it has in hundreds of thousands of such dedications throughout the world, helped unite the gathering in the universal wish: *May Peace Prevail On Earth!*

The community-building experience of the Conference helped solidify bonds between participants that will result in ongoing collaborations in this Millennium Alliance for a better world.



Tree Island

The Conference was named after Klamath Falls resident Linda Grover's exciting novel. In the story, the world is transformed on January 1, 2000 by a human family reunion that links all the millennial celebrations around the world. The resulting sense of togetherness motivates hundreds of millions to adopt a unique year-long program of personal and global growth. <www.treeisland.com>

Millennium Gifts

The Millennium Institute's *Millennium Gift campaign* was one of the many projects shared at the Conference. Organizations, corporations and communities around the world can help shape the future by giving a gift to mark the Millennium. Millennium Gifts make lasting improvements for a sustainable world. <www.igc.apc.org/millennium/gifts/>

Millennium Communities

Another hopeful idea from the Millennium Institute is creating Millennium Communities - cities and towns that are prepared to cross into the next century. Millennium Communities see this millennial moment as a time for reflection, renewal, and reimagining the future. They start programs and projects that will creatively engage all religious, ethnic, racial, and economic groups to observe the turn of the millennium and work toward a sustainable community in the years beyond.

Year 2000 Community Celebrations

Will New Years 2000 be just the world's biggest party, or will it be celebration with a purpose - to bring communi-

500 Day CountUP (cont.)

ties and our world together for a positive future! For the 300 day mark in March 1999, Millennium Vancouver 2000 will host a conference for New Year's 2000 city celebration planners from around the world. This will be a unique opportunity to share ideas, resources and goals for creating positive community-building celebrations for New Year's 2000. <millennium@vancouver2000.bc.ca>

Y2K Sustainable Community Preparations

No one really knows how important the Y2K computer bug will be. While some promote Y2K hype and fear, local Y2K preparation meetings are bringing neighbors together to create more sustainable communities, so that not only will they be prepared for Y2K, but they will have chosen new directions to create stronger communities far beyond 2000. <www.CountUP2000.com/y2k.htm>

One Day In Peace, January 1, 2000

A worldwide movement for a day of peace in our homes, our communities and between nations is a cornerstone of the many positive millennial movements for a better world. When we live in peace for One Day we will see that together we can work out all of our problems, one day at a time. Chaired by Dr. Robert Muller, Chancellor of the UN's University for Peace, and endorsed by more than 22 Heads of State and over 700 organizations in 120



nations, the latest One Day In Peace initiative is a Proclamation campaign. With a simple letter, you can convince your Mayor and even your Governor to declare a proclamation for One Day In Peace, January 1, 2000. During the CountUP to One Day In Peace (and Beyond) we can make every day count. <One Day In Peace, January 1, 2000, Box 90352, Santa Barbara, CA 93190, Fax: 609-443-5786 www.oneday.net, info@oneday.net>

Hague Appeal for Peace 1999 – Time to Abolish War

Civil Society Conference * The Netherlands * May 11-15 1999
c/o WFM * 777 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel: 212-687-2623 * Fax: 212-599-1332
E-mail: hap99@igc.org * Web: www.haguepeace.org

A Global Voice of Youth

WANTED:

Young people with a profound desire to make the world a better place.

The **ONE DAY Foundation** is looking for youth leaders and young people to be involved in the **UNITED NATIONS YOUTH ASSEMBLY PROJECT** and the process of building a **Global Voice of Youth**.

The **UNITED YOUTH CONFERENCE**, a prototype for a proposed United Nations Youth Assembly, is scheduled to take place July 18-25, 1999 at San Francisco State University. Potential youth Ambassadors are asked to apply. For more information and to complete the on-line application, please visit the **ONE DAY** web site (www.oneday.org).

As part of the process of Building the Global Voice of Youth, the ONE DAY Foundation has launched an **INTERNATIONAL ESSAY & ART CONTEST**. With almost \$20,000 in prizes, this Contest is open to young people in every country between the ages of 15 and 24.

For further information, please contact the **ONE DAY Foundation** or Benjamin Quinto, Youth Development Director and U.N. Youth Assembly Project Director (benjamin@oneday.org).

"Young people now represent the largest unrepresented faction of society. Let us work together to provide youth a platform from which their voices, ideas and concerns can be heard." — Benjamin Quinto

Please copy and distribute to the youth in your networks.

ONE DAY Foundation

P.O. Box 1052, Sedona, AZ 86339, U.S.A.
Tel: (800) 580-9350, Fax: (520) 204-1216
Web: <http://www.oneday.org> e-mail: info@oneday.org

Hague Appeal for Peace Youth Program

c/o International Peace Bureau
41 Rue de Zurich * CH-1201 Geneva Switzerland
Tel: 41.22.731.6429 * Fax: 41.22.738.9419
Email: hapy@ipb.org

Light Links in Jerusalem

By Michael Lightweaver

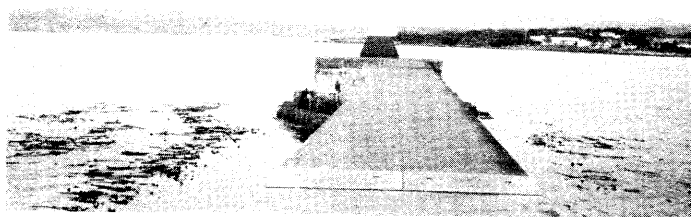
I've just returned from the first Mideast Light Link Network gathering which was held in an Arab/Israeli Peace Village near Jerusalem. A few days before I left for Israel, I sent an appeal to everyone on my mailing list requesting your energetic support as we came together - Palestinian, Israeli, American and Cypriot light workers - to get acquainted, explore avenues of cooperation, strengthen communication and create a new vision for the Mideast for the Third Millennium. We received well over a hundred e-mails of support from all over the world, which we shared with the 40 participants, and we were aware of the thousands of you who were supporting our gathering with prayers, meditations, ceremonies and visualizations.

I knew that this was a profound opportunity to create an energetic shift, not only for the individual participants, or even just the region - but for the whole planet. Time will tell whether a major energetic shift resulted from some of the very focused interdimensional work we did during our four days together. But some results were immediately apparent.

The tremendous pain, suffering, fear and frustration of both the Palestinians and Israelis was acknowledged and honored. There was no attempt to gloss over the current reality in the region and the experiences of some participants who had participated in violent extremist organizations, both Palestinian and Israeli, and who had been jailed and tortured by both sides.

There wasn't much talk of ET's, Earth Changes, Y2K or Secret Governments. But there was a lot of talk about opening our hearts, transcending history and creating a new reality. As one who was born in the USA, and an outsider, I saw people - and fellow light workers - who had lived through the nightmares of their darkest fears, and emerged with heart and hope intact. I gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of the true meaning of the "New Age."

As I saw former enemies tearfully embrace in acknowledgement of their essential Oneness; as I saw the excitement of two young men: one Palestinian and one Israeli, bonding in friendship and planning a joint film project for peace; as I saw two mothers - one Arab and the other Jewish - making plans to visit one another's families and participate in joint outings with their children; at that point I knew that I had already stepped into the 21st Century, the



Third Millennium, The New Age. For those four days we were already there, living it.

Leaving wasn't easy. Trying to put the experience into words, even less so. On the last evening, as we went around the circle for a final sharing, the repeated sentiment was "I'll never be able to really tell others what I have just experienced. There just aren't words."

The history of the region is a concentration camp of dogma, fear and frustration in which the political leaders and most people are still imprisoned. But for those four days in October, a handful of visionaries - who had "paid their dues" - came together, created a time machine, and touched down into a potential future in which the prisons of the past were only archaic relics of a nightmare long forgotten.

And now the work truly begins.

Michael Lightweaver coordinates **Network 2012**, an international networking effort of light workers started soon after the Harmonic Convergence in 1987. It was created on the premise that the earth is undergoing a major transition at this time; politically, culturally, spiritually, ecologically and geologically. According to many ancient Native American traditions, including the Hopi, Incan, Mayan, etc. we have come to the end of an age. The Mayans indicate that we came to the end of a 26,000 year cosmic cycle in 1987. In the year 2012 we begin a new 26,000 year cycle. We are now in an intense 25 year transition period comparable to a birthing - the birthing of a new era.

Whether one accepts this paradigm and these dates literally or metaphorically, the fact is apparent that we are in the midst of rapid planetary change and the year 2012 serves as a good target date toward which we can work in accomplishing certain goals pertaining to this transformation. Hence the name **Network 2012**.

For more information, please contact Michael Lightweaver at: lightweave@aol.com or visit **Network 2012** on the Internet: www.n2012.com

Two American organizations, Bridges to Community and International Communities for the Renewal of the Earth (ICRE), along with the Kenyan organization The Greenbelt Movement, all working to expand cross-cultural relations between diverse people, brought a group of Americans to Kenya during the first two weeks of August, 1998.

The Americans spent a week living in a rural village in which The Greenbelt Movement has been working for a number of years to help the villagers help themselves by planting trees and traditional indigenous food crops to insure food security. The week was spent with a loving community of people whose lives have been improved by their own hard work and cooperation. The local school children gave the group a heartfelt send-off with song and dance and the entire village turned out to wish the group a safe journey back to Nairobi. It was during this peaceful, loving ceremony that the bomb exploded at the American Embassy in Nairobi.

Founder of the Greenbelt Movement, Wangari Maathai, past Director of the Kenyan Red Cross, made inquiries as to how the group of Kenyans and Americans could best help. She found that the rescue workers needed to be fed, so within days of the blast, the group was serving dinners for the workers and security personnel on site. Later, the group gathered at the "Freedom Corner" of Nairobi's Uhuru Park for a tree planting ceremony. Three "Peace Trees" were planted, one in memory of the Kenyans who lost their lives, one in memory of the American dead and one to the firm conviction that non-violence and peaceful actions, such as planting trees, are more powerful and long-lasting in their effects than are violent actions such as the planting of a bomb.

The following is a personal account of the trip and its aftermath written by Charles G. Overby, Treasurer and CFO of The Lifebridge Foundation, who was traveling with Bridges to Community and The Greenbelt Movement (both Lifebridge grantees) at the time.

Talk About What Moves You

By Charles G. Overby II

When our group returned from Kenya we brought with us numerous and varied experiences. We experienced life and the community of people in a rural village, the wide expanses of the Masai Mara and its wildlife, Nairobi's streets and its urban dwellers, and the aftermath of the U.S. Embassy bombing. We saw how the Kenyan people live and work, how they manage in their political climate and how they struggle to deal with economic, social and inter-tribal issues while striving for better living conditions and social justice. We saw how the people of Kenya, and indeed of the whole world, immediately responded with aid and relief to Embassy bombing victims and their families during monumental rescue efforts in the face of horrible tragedy. We saw people endeavoring to reclaim their cultural identity after years of colonialism

and corrupt governments, and doing so with a deep sense of inclusiveness, community and the life of the whole.

Even before we left Kenya, one of the most important issues we discussed was how these experiences affected us and what we could "do about it" when we returned to our respective homes. All of these experiences seemed too important and relevant to be kept to ourselves, it seemed necessary to talk to people, to tell them what we had seen and what it meant for all of us in our interconnected world. Many times questions were asked such as "What can we do?" and "How can we help?" When these questions were directed toward our Kenyan Greenbelt Movement hosts the answer was "Tell our story." Often the way we can help, and what we can do, is to talk about what "moves" us. If something moves us strongly enough to talk about it, that will in turn move others as well.

When other people found out that some of the members of the group were willing, and indeed happy to discuss the trip and our experiences, they called friends, newspapers, radio stations and TV stations themselves because they also were moved! In this way, quite a number of newspaper articles, newsletter articles, a press conference, two radio interviews and a short television spot on the local TV news, were produced, all of which focussed on how events, issues and people all over the world have a direct and lasting impact on our individual lives and how our culture in its turn affects the entire world. We all have something that moves us, something that we can share with others and thereby we can "make a difference" and serve humanity.



Charles G. Overby of The Lifebridge Foundation, with Wangari Maathai, Director of The Greenbelt Movement in Uhuru Park, Nairobi, Kenya. Three trees were planted in the park in August, 1998, two to commemorate those who died in the American Embassy bombing, and one as a Tree of Peace to encourage nonviolent resolution of all conflicts in the future.

The Lifebridge Foundation Grantee Section

Winter, 1998-1999



Transformative Action New Grantees – Arts & Culture

Common Boundary

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Bethesda, MD 20814

Tel: 301-652-9495

Fax: 301-652-0579

connect@commonboundary.org

Web: www.commonboundary.org

Mariann Payne, Director

Common Boundary publishes a bi-monthly magazine, holds an annual conference, and offers transformative learning experiences throughout the year that integrate mind, body,

and spirit. It builds community among individuals and organizations through small, in-depth educational experiences utilizing a wealth of resources in the fields of psychology, spirituality, creativity and ecology. Common Boundary received a project grant for an education series based on Anne and Charles Simpkinson's book, *Soul Work: A Field Guide for Spiritual Seekers*.

Re-Grants

A.P.P.L.E. Inc.

Louisville, KY

appleinc@aol.com

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New York, NY

publisher@parabola.org

www.parabola.org

The Pearl Theatre Company

New York, NY

www.pearltheatre.org



Transformative Action New Grantees – Science

CANHELP

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Tel: +46 413 22550

Email: canhelp@swipnet.se

Web: <http://home2.swipnet.se/~w-29844/ugwb/>

Ingemar Warnstrom, Director

CANHELP was founded by scientists, researchers and thinkers who believe that the world can become a better place to live in if - with science as a basis - we generate a world view that values life more than matter. In September 1998, CANHELP inaugurated its Global University for Well-Being.

BRUNO DUROUX

Boisseuil, FRANCE

Email: duroux@unilim.fr

Bruno Duroux believes that extra-sensory perception could be a new kind of communication that would bring people closer together. This project is a simulation of remote-viewing and clairvoyance tasks in a virtual reality environment and simultaneous correlation in real time with selective brain recording in Functional Brain Imaging with gifted and non-gifted subjects.

The Earth Pledge

I pledge to protect the earth, and to respect the web of life upon it,
And to honor the dignity of every member of our global family.
One planet, one people, one world, in harmony, with peace, justice, and freedom for all.

See page 14 for more info on The Earth Pledge

Transformative Action New Grantees – Youth



Catalyst Youth Network for Sustainable Community

11426 Rockville Pike, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20852

Tel: 301-231-6006

Fax: 301-468-9612

Email: catalyst@igc.apc.org

Web: www.millenniumfirst.com

**Royce Bernstein & Chris Murray,
Co-Directors**

The Catalyst Youth Network for Sustainable Community is the educational component of **Pole to Pole 2000**, a global trek of 15 young people throughout 1999 promoting environmental awareness and spreading a message of hope for the next millennium. Catalyst will conduct activist workshops at all stops and will build a Millennium Trail, a walk-through labyrinth which displays young people's ideas for sustainable community building. Catalyst is committed to mobilizing youth to mark the turn of the millennium by leading their communities' transition to a sustainable future.

Children of the Earth, Inc.

PO Box 217

Newfane, VT 05345

Tel: 802-365-7616

Fax: 802-365-7798

Email: coevt@aol.com

Dr. Nina Meyerhof, Director

Children of the Earth's mission is to create opportunities for young people to become informed and active world citizens. The *Children of Vision Symposium* will take place in 1999 at the United Nations to help build a coalition of children's groups, and plan the next steps in establishing a unified movement for the empowered and informed voice of children.

Cecily Miller

New York, NY

Ms. Miller is compiling *Children's Messages to the World*, a book written and illustrated by children from around the world, voicing and expressing their vision, wisdom and heartfelt feelings of a unified humanity & world of peace.

YES! (Youth for Environmental Sanity)

420 Bronco Road

Soquel, CA 95073-9510

Tel: 831-465-1082

Fax: 831-462-9790

Web: www.yesworld.org

Ocean Robbins,

Founder & President

YES! is a youth-run non-profit organization that gives young people support and skills to work cooperatively and effectively for positive change. More than half a million high school students have participated in YES! programs. YES! Action camps bring together diverse youth and give them an experience that can change their life - and help them to change the world. The World Youth Activist JAM will take place in the summer of 1999, bringing together 40 of the world's leading youth activists from 22 countries.

Transformative Action New Grantee – Interdimensional



Paul Devereux

Lower Brailles, UK

Email: paul@liminal2.demon.co.uk
devereux@aol.com

Paul Devereux has spent most of his adult life seeking and mapping information about the ancient mind from the sacred monuments, markings and traditions it has left behind. A richly illustrated and accessible book of these "shamanic landscapes" will be published in the year 2000.





Transformative Action — New Grantees -Community Service

Cynergetics Institute

265 Lorraine Court

P.O. Box 6130

Colorado Springs, CO 80934

Tel: 719-444-8644

Cynthia J. Groom, Director

Cynergetics' *Mind'Scape* program helps support prisoners and those on probation and parole to bring about positive behavioral changes to atone for their crimes, and enables them to know the essence of who they are and build a life that adds value for themselves and others.

Occidental Arts & Ecology Center

15290 Coleman Valley Road

Occidental, CA 95465

Tel: 707-874-1557

Fax: 707-874-1558

Web: www.oaec.org

Doug Gosling, Director

The Occidental Arts and Ecology Center (OAEC) is an educational institute and intentional community. Founded in the summer of 1994 by a group of biologists, artists, activists, educators and horticulturalists, OAEC serves as a multi-purpose gathering place for people seeking innovative and practical approaches in the social, economic, environmental and spiritual challenges of our day. This project grant is for a community garden for people with AIDS.

The Positive Futures Network

P.O. Box 10818

Bainbridge, WA 98110

Tel: 206-842-0216

Fax: 206-842-5208

Email: yes@futurenet.org

Web: www.futurenet.org

Frances F. Korten, Director

The Positive Futures Network was founded based on a belief that humanity is in a period of profound transition. All natural and human systems are in crisis or transition, from the family to global institutions,

from education to health care, from natural ecosystems to the sources of meaning in cultures throughout the world. In this fluid environment, people's individual choices have a tremendous effect in shaping the future. Through the Network's quarterly publication, *YES! a Journal of Positive Futures*, we see that not only do we have choices about our common future, but a great many throughout the world are deliberately choosing, through their ideas and their actions, to create a future based on the values of justice, sustainability and compassion.

Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos

313 Front Street

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Tel: 408-457-8208

Fax: 408-457-0389

Email: barrios@cruzio.com

Alejandro Vilchez, Development Director

Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos is dedicated to the prevention of violence and intentional injury among youth, primarily in the Latino communities of Santa Cruz County. Barrios Unidos teaches that bringing peace to the community is a spiritual movement in which individuals who are in the process of making changes, need a method of coping with the "madness" of the streets. Their mission is "to bring peace to the barrio" through a multi-faceted approach of Community Outreach, Leadership Development and Community Economic Development.



Transformative Action — New Grantees - Environment



Co-op America

1612 K. St, NW, Suite 600

Washington, DC 20006

Tel: 202-872-5307

Fax: 202-331-8166

Email: elizabeth@coopamerica.org

Web: www.coopamerica.org

Alisa Gravitz, Executive Director

Dana Harmon, Project Director

Co-op America is dedicated to fostering an integrated, just and sustainable society by helping individuals and businesses seek out new ways to live, think and act - ways that are more in harmony with the planet and all of its inhabitants. Their **Wood-Wise Consumer Initiative's** goals are to: 1) shift consumer demand from forest-destroying products to forest-sustaining products; 2) build, and in some cases, create market demand for forest-sustaining products; 3) reduce consumer use of products and practices that destroy forests.

EarthLight

111 Fairmount Avenue

Oakland, CA 94611

Tel: 510-451-4926

Fax: 510-451-3505

Email: kurtlauren@earthlight.org

Web: www.earthlight.org

Lauren De Boer, Editor

EarthLight sees the heart of the environmental crisis as a crisis of spirit. To meet the challenges this presents, the embodiment of a sacred ecology (the merging of spirituality and the ordinary) is needed in all faith traditions, education, family life, economics, politics, the growing of food - in every sector of human society. EarthLight seeks the co-creation of an eco-spiritual way of life which renews human society at a profound level. Key themes of EarthLight are "Kinship with the Sacred Earth," "Spirituality in the Everyday," "The Quest for a Sustainable Future," and "Science and the Creative Cosmos."

The ICSEE

12 Red Barn Road

Wayland, MA 01778-1122

Tel: 508-358-7661

Fax: 781-736-2915

Email: lange@brandeis.edu

Robert V. Lange, President

The International Collaborative for Science, Education, and the Environment, supports grassroots projects in science and environmental education, sustainable development, and environmental protection. The Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, has expressed the need for the clergy of the Orthodox Church, as teachers and leaders, to equip themselves better for the long struggle to work to save the environment. With The ICSEE, an international Symposium on Religion, Science, and the Environment (The Halki Institute) will be launched in the spring of 1999. This three-week educational retreat will include priests, teachers and students from the countries of the Black Sea region who will learn environmental skills and help develop plans for effective work in their home areas after the institute. This initiative will help join religion and science to protect the earth and its abundance and diversity.

Interfaith Partnership for the Environment

A Project of the United Nations Environment Programme (Regional Office for North America) (UNEP/RONA)

The Interfaith Partnership for the Environment was organized for the purpose of involving the world's religions in the growing struggle to preserve the Earth's environment for future generations. An environmental Sabbath was held in June 1987, and a book "Only One Earth" was created for the event. Over 10 years, 60,000 copies of the book have been given free to religious organizations, universities and schools throughout the world. An updated version is now being created.

"Though tongues may differ, yet consciousnesses aspire to the same goal." — AUM #76 Agni Yoga

Transformative Action — New Grantees — World Goodwill



Bridges to Community, Inc.

210 Orchard Ridge Road

Chappaqua, NY 10514

Tel: 914-238-8354 Fax: 914-238-3432

Email: Brdgs2Comm@aol.com

Carter Via, Director

Bridges to Community, Inc. is a non-profit, community development organization which takes groups of volunteers to developing countries to work, learn and reflect. Through the process of living and working with others on construction, health and environmental projects, Bridges To Community promotes cross-cultural learning and a deepening awareness of our global interdependence. In August, 1998, Bridges to Community joined with another Lifebridge grantee, **The Greenbelt Movement**, to travel to Kenya. While there, the U.S. Embassy was bombed in Nairobi. Lifebridge Board Member Charles G. Overby, who traveled with the group, writes about his experiences on Page 8.

Millennium People's Assembly Network

PO Box 328

Scotland, PA 17254-0328

Tel: 717-264-5036

Tel/Fax: 717-264-0957

Email: robineagle@hotmail.com

Web: www.netreaction.com/mpan

Rob Wheeler, MPAN Coordinator

The mission of the Millennium People's Assembly Network is to encourage and facilitate a strong voice of the people in global decision-making; to create a process by which we, the citizens of the world, can improve our lives and communities by supporting and actively participating in the work of the United Nations; and to work towards establishing global democratic institutions. MPAN is establishing a network of people's assemblies in order to enable the "voices of the people" to be represented in all arenas of global decision-making. They are participating in the planning for the Millennium NGO Forums, which will be held around the world at the local, national, and continental levels and will meet at the United Nations in the year 2000.

The M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence

650 East Parkway South

Memphis, TN 38301

Tel: 901-452-2824

Fax: 901-452-2775

Email: gandhi@odin.cbu.edu

Web: www.cbu.edu/Gandhi

Joe Simpson, Development Coordinator

Laura Pietrangelo, Director

The M.K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, founded by Gandhi's grandson, Arun, teaches and applies the principles of nonviolence as a positive force, and helps prevent and resolve personal and public conflicts. Their publications focus on education as a way to advance the application of nonviolence. In commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, the Institute published a collection of essays from diverse contributors about nonviolence entitled, *World Without Violence: Can Gandhi's Vision Become Reality*. A newly edited version is being reprinted so that these messages will reach more readers than ever before.

The Tree of Peace Society

188C Cook Rd.

Hogansburg, NY 13655

Tel: 518-358-2641

Fax: 518-358-9101

Web: www.earthway.net/treeofpeace/

Chief Jake Swamp, Director

The Tree of Peace Society aims to foster and encourage environmental protection, with a focus on American Indian reservations, including the preservation of endangered species and the development of sustainable agricultural and alternative energy systems. It also seeks to facilitate community development among the American Indian nations, and promote cultural understanding among all peoples through Tree of Peace planting ceremonies performed throughout the world.

More Transformative Actions

The Lifebridge Foundation receives hundreds of letters from organizations and individuals requesting financial assistance. We are also introduced to many endeavors at meetings such as the State of the World Forum and others. Being a small foundation, we unfortunately have to say no many more times than we are able to say yes. But we're constantly looking for other ways to help. The following initiatives represent a very small sampling of some whose concepts we applaud but whom we have not been able to help financially. Please keep in mind that although they may have impressive names like foundations and institutes, they all represent people with vision whose budgets are much smaller than the visions to which they have dedicated themselves. It is our hope that among the readers of The Bridging Tree, there might be some who can help now.

Artsgenesis

310 East 46th Street – Suite 241

New York, NY 10017

212-696-ARTS

artsgen@pipeline.com

www.artsgenesis.org

Artsgenesis ignites creativity and accelerates learning. The methodology – The Chrysalis Principle – uses multiple intelligences and the arts to educe an individual's creativity and extend his or her perceived limits.

Global Energy Network International (GENI)

P.O. Box 81565

San Diego, CA 92138

Peter Meisen, President

619-595-0139

geni@cerf.net www.geni.org

GENI grew out of R. Buckminster Fuller's "World Game" simulation which posed the question: "how do we make the world work for 100% of humanity in the shortest possible time through spontaneous cooperation and without ecological damage or disadvantage to anyone?" GENI's contribution to the answer is "the linking of renewable energy resources around the world." Among others, Walter Cronkite has endorsed GENI's approach saying, "The GENI initiative offers hope for all humanity."

The Humanity Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 2488 – 36 North William Street

Tisbury, MA 02568

Tony Balis, Editor and Publisher

508-693-7300

oneworld@humanity.org

www.humanity.org

The Humanity Foundation publishes *Humanity* magazine whose mission is to encourage an understanding of this planet as a common home, believing that "...solutions to our profound social, economic, and environmental challenges must be built on the bedrock of mutual understanding and respect for eternal differences..."

The Institute for New Leaders (formerly YouthConnect International)

Judith Thompson, Director

P.O. Box 1081

Cambridge, MA 02140

781-646-1276

inl@ziplink.net

www.youthconnect.org

The INL is a global organization, led by and for young people, which supports, activates and encourages youth leadership for human rights and social transformation. These young people are dedicated to the principles of activism, community building, reconciliation and non-violence. Valuing acts of courage which embody these principles, they also believe in addressing human rights violations as well as their root causes, in order to build a world-wide community of compassion and justice.

One World Inc.

P.O. Box 2542

Sausalito, CA 94966

John Ince, President

415-810-7497

johnince@web-of-life.to

Since 1995, well over a million school children have taken **The Earth Pledge** (see page 9). One World is dedicated to creating an awareness of interconnectedness and, along with The Earth Pledge, has created other transformative initiatives, including The Web of Life, an internet portal and web tv network for socially responsible business, cultural creativity, and new paradigm thinking.

TribalLink International

435 Marquesa Drive

Coral Gables, FL 33156

305-667-6399

innervoice@internetcni.net

www.tribalink.org

TribalLink seeks to unite the Spirit of Humanity, a vision that carries respect of the will of the people from the East, the West, the North and the South. It provides a link between the modern media and the diverse traditional cultures, lands, and teachings of tribal people. TribalLink believes we are all co-creators of a better world for tomorrow through our positive actions today.

UN REPORT

By Dr. Ida Urso



All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 1: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

After thorough scrutiny and 1,400 rounds of voting on practically every word and every clause, on December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Spelling out individual rights and freedoms for every human being, the unprecedented Declaration has been referred to as a "Magna Carta for all humanity" and the conscience of the world. "Everyone," states article two of the Declaration, "is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."

We know today, after the resolution of the conflicting opinions expressed at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 that the governments of the world accept the universality of human rights as envisioned by the 58 States who initially adopted the Declaration. Today it is a globally accepted fact—as it was in 1948—that these rights are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent. We know too that human rights are essential to the promotion of peace and security, economic prosperity and social equity. Full human dignity means not only freedom from torture, but also freedom from hunger. It means freedom to vote and the right to education. It means freedom of expression and the right to health. Thus, the theme of this 50th anniversary year, All Human Rights for All, reinforces the idea that human rights—civil, cultural, economic, political and social—should be taken in their totality and not disassociated from one another. Our aim, states Secretary-General Kofi Annan, is to create "a situation in which all individuals are enabled to maximize their potential, and to contribute to the evolution of society as a whole."

However, let there be no mistake. This 50th anniversary year is not a celebration. In a talk given at Oxford University in November of last year, Mary Robinson, the past President of Ireland and the current UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, frankly stated that she sees this anniversary as an occasion to recommit to the principles of the Declaration and not as a time to celebrate. Her assessment is that if you "count up the results of 50 years of

human rights mechanisms, 30 years of multi-billion-dollar development programmes and endless high-level rhetoric...the global impact is quite underwhelming."

Today, as generations before us, we continue to experience violence, cruelty and greed. Millions throughout the world suffer some serious violation or deprivation of their basic rights and freedoms. These deprivations include everything from torture, rape and corrupt judicial systems to bonded labour, hunger and lack of access to health services, housing, sanitation and clean water. We still have widespread discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religious belief and sexual orientation. And, genocide is still with us. In the last decade alone, more than four million people have been killed in violent conflicts that have left one in 200 people refugees from their native countries. Additionally, over one billion people live in conditions of extreme poverty.

The fact that we are aware, as we never have been before, of these blatant abuses of human rights all over the world represents in itself an achievement. Because of the conscientious and steadfast work and the sacrifice of those who have even given their lives to protect the human rights of others, there is today an increased awareness of human rights and a growing expectation of the realization of "all human rights for all."

Our challenge today is one of implementation. Recognizing this need, the fifty-first annual United Nations DPI/NGO Conference held in September of this year, chose as its theme, "The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: From Words to Deeds." At this conference Secretary-General Kofi Annan referred to the chasm that remains between the standards set by human rights laws and the situation on the ground. Throughout the three-day conference many echoed this thought and called on all people everywhere to become better aware of the relevance of this document to our daily lives because, it was pointed out, today's human rights violations are the root causes of tomorrow's conflicts.

The involvement of civil society and non-governmental organizations in fighting for and demanding recognition of basic rights has played a central role in the advancement and promotion of human rights around the world. Much yet remains to be done.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth a vision of the world as most of us would like it to be. Is there anything that could bring about personal and global transformation as surely and profoundly as the full implementation of this Declaration? In our loftiest of imaginings, can we envision what life on our planet might be like if everyone were treated "in the spirit of brotherhood?" Would not the resulting freedom from fear and strife truly bring about the liberation of the human spirit?



The Lifebridge Foundation Statement of Purpose



***“Promoting the oneness
of humanity and the
interconnectedness of
all life...”***

The Lifebridge Foundation, Inc. was established in 1992 for the purpose of supporting organizations and individuals who, through cultural, educational, and/or scientific means, are dedicated to creating bridges of

understanding among all people by bringing to realization the concepts of one humanity and the interconnectedness of all life.

***“Bridging the chasm
between the spiritual
and the so-called
mundane...”***

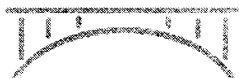
We seek to find those groups and individuals

whose innovative projects reflect these concepts; whose work exemplifies a global vision, demonstrates a spirit of inclusiveness, and fosters transformative action in a changing world.

***“Facilitating the
integration of an
emerging holistic
consciousness into
daily action...”***

The Bridging Tree

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One Day in Peace January 1, 2000!