

The Bullock's Permaculture Homestead

Winter Newsletter 2006-07 (v. 1)



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Newsletter? What Newsletter?

Since this whole newsletter thing is new, we figured we ought to explain a bit... Basically, we recognize that literally hundreds of people have passed through the Homestead over the years and been inspired to incorporate permaculture principles into their own lives. For those folks who would like to keep up on what is happening here we have decided to start writing a quarterly newsletter so people can see the Homestead as it evolves. Enjoy!

Words from the Daver

Here I sit plunking away at my keyboard on a rainy November day on Orcas. It seems that summer has definitely come and gone. It is interesting to think back on the summer and realize that when one is in the midst of the action, one doesn't quite realize how much is really getting done. Looking back, though, is kind of a mind-blowing experience. We got a lot done this summer and had a pretty good time doing it, but I realized that at the end of my second summer here I have yet to see Twin Lakes, camp on Turtleback, or get out in a kayak.

Looking back on a couple years of practicing as a permaculturist makes me think about the permaculture principle that we all tend to violate readily... "start small

and build on success." What makes this phenomenon so interesting is that we all know people who've bitten off more than they can chew. It doesn't seem like much fun. Yet we all tend to do it anyway. Rare is the person in the permaculture world who doesn't have more on their plate than they want.

An epiphany I had recently is about the sustainability of taking on more than we should. Check it out... If one has to keep working beyond a certain point each day just in order to keep things running, they are probably going to give up and be bummed out eventually. That means that trying to keep up on maintenance that is too much to handle, trying to fill five roles when you can

only handle three well, or finding yourself without time to take a hike, go on vacation, or take a shower are all signs that you may have slipped into a mode that isn't sustainable (much less fun). Here at the Homestead, we've all struggled to different extents with this little permaculture conundrum.

There is a lot that needs to be done to get the Earth's support systems back in shape and not enough people working on it. No one will argue with that. However, if those of us who are dedicating our lives to regenerative practices are burning out or wrecking our bodies while we're young, we aren't really modeling the type of lifestyle we seek (a sustainable one).

New Education Director/Intern Coordinator

Over the past few seasons it had become obvious that there were a couple of roles that were going unfulfilled here at the Homestead.



That is why we decided to create a space here for an Education Director and Intern Coordinator. The job of the Education Director will be to handle organizing courses and workshops that are offered here. The Intern Coordinator will act as a liaison between the Bullocks and the intern crew to make sure that everyone's needs are met and everyone has a good experience.

Dave Boehnlein (who many of you probably know if you've been around the last couple years) will be tackling both roles for 2007. Here is a bit of an intro to Dave (aka the Daver).

"Let's see...I'm originally from Wisconsin (yes I love cheese; no I wouldn't make it far as a vegan). I lived in Minneapolis/St. Paul

So, my challenge to all permaculture practitioners who read this is a simple one. If you feel that a permaculturist's life is inherently overwhelming, change it. Make it work for you. Stop working earlier each day. Eat ice cream in the sun for a half hour after lunch. Go bowling. Do something that has nothing to do with systems, crops, and design at least one day each week.

I trust that everyone can figure out a way to make the life of a permaculture practitioner one that works. Let's provide a good example for everyone who is new to the movement and make sure we aren't in over our heads.

for about six years and ended up leaving with a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources and Recreation Resource Management from the University of Minnesota. I spent a few years traveling and working as an outdoor educator for the Student Conservation Association after that.

My travels took me to Central America where I first encountered permaculture (viva la permacultura!). Costa Rica seemed to be an auspicious place to be at that time. I ended up meeting most of the people I am still working with today on the same day and in the same place.

Anyway, I ultimately did a Permaculture Design Course with Doug Bullock and Chris Shanks in Nicaragua. Then and there I decided that permaculture design made so much more sense than any other approach I had seen to our environmental and social problems. Soon after I came to the Bullock's to gain a better understanding of the skills I

would need to do my part for the permaculture movement.

After two years of interning, I find myself with real design experience, real permaculture teaching experience, and a

slew of new skills that I didn't have before. As an organizer by nature I feel like I'll be able to fill these roles quite naturally (my new mantra is the good 'ol permaculture principle, 'Start small.'). Here goes nothing!"

2007 Course Menu

We don't have dates for everything yet, but here is the tentative menu of courses and workshops we're planning to offer in 2007:

- May: Plant Propagation Weekend Workshop (or How to Get Plants Without Going Broke!)
- June: Introduction to Permaculture Weekend Workshop
- July 14 – August 4: Permaculture Design Course
- August 12 – August 18: Permaculture Teacher Training
- September: Introduction to Permaculture Weekend Workshop
- October: Biofuel Energy Weekend Workshop

Hope to see folks at some of these. More info and details will be available soon on our website (<http://permacultureportal.com>).



New Website in the Works



OK, we admit it...our website is in dire need of a revamp. Hopefully the days of dead links and random dinosaur imagery are over (ok, maybe we'll include a few dinosaurs for Doug). Keep an eye on <http://www.permacultureportal.com> for a change in the near future.

Best of 2006

Although not exhaustive by any means here are a few of the highlights from 2006 that make us all smile.

- New pond installed up on the hillside.
- New metal shop up and running.
- Slip straw insulation and earth plaster on the Grandma Cabin.
- Two new tent platforms using pole construction.
- More jam and preserves than I've ever seen.
- Cider press...yum!
- Wireless Internet, baby (who thought that would ever happen?)
- More cucumbers than anyone should have to deal with.
- Irrigation and companion plants for the lonely prune orchard.
- A bar none excellent crew of hardworking interns who made this year what it was.