



# RIDGE RUNNER

the newsletter for the enright ridge  
urban ecovillage community

SPRING 2007

what are the  
neighborhood  
committees that  
i can get  
involved with  
anyway?

HOUSING  
EGG  
FUNDRAISING  
COMMUNICATIONS  
MARKETING/PROMOTIONS  
LONG RANGE PLANNING  
MEMBERSHIP  
YOUTH

how do i join?

YOU MEAN WE HAVEN'T  
KNOCKED ON YOUR DOOR  
YET? ANY RESIDENT OF  
ENRIGHT AVENUE CAN  
BECOME A MEMBER OF  
ERUEV AND  
PARTICIPATE ON OUR  
EVENTS AND  
COMMITTEE MEETINGS.  
PLEASE CONTACT  
IMAGO.

## *love letter to enright ridge*

sharon wilson

Sitting by my window, watching the first substantial snowfall, I am struck again by the good fortune that has brought me to the Enright Ridge Urban Ecovillage. It is not just that the cemetery is breathtaking with the snow cover, or that the deer tracks are so much more noticeable in the snow. My neighbor, as he usually does with a heavy snow, has put his plow and salt spreader on his truck and is now clearing the street. Enright will not need to worry about getting out for work or school. If someone is ill, a trip to the doctor or hospital can occur. Fire trucks will make it down the street, groceries can be purchased and backs spared the agony of pulled and strained muscles from all the shoveling. Maybe this happens on many streets, but not in my friends' experiences. Thank you, Joe. We have a chance to build a wonderful community on this street.

Neighbors have contributed a great deal to each other, even providing electricity to help someone stay warm. Pancake breakfasts, luminaries, and potluck progressive dinners all with adults and kids working hand in hand. Some folks are proposing an even more positive initiative for the street.

The news has indicated that Ohio has the second highest rate of housing foreclosure with Cincinnati at the highest rate for Ohio cities. We have had a number of foreclosures on our street, a street with over an 80% rate of home ownership. As we watch the decline of streets around us in Price Hill, we must be concerned about this. Purchase of foreclosure homes for rental as section eight can bring the same instability to our street. We have witnessed the arrest of some folks from a section eight house near the entrance to the street for drugs and weapons. I shudder when I think that the story of the use of the storefront may be true -- prostitution on our street. (Continued on next page)

We have the opportunity to purchase the foreclosed homes and then to rehab and sell them.

We have Americorps VISTAs, part of a 40 year old federal program committed to civic and humanitarian service, working and helping us to rehab, and a skilled contractor who even donates some time. When the homes are sold, the profit goes back into the purchase of more homes if the need arises. Who knows what skills and connection a new family may bring!

The rehabbing is fun, yes really. Muscles may get worked but laughter eases the pain. Jean and I have become experts at windows - cleaning that is. While some work is paid to contractors, "sweat equity" provides the rest. Dennis is trying to see how much paint

he can get on his clothes. As we rehab, we also provide a chance to be a role model community to volunteers from private high schools and colleges, kids who have heard 'horror' stories about Price Hill.

Boy, how my heart expands when I think of this and as I watch Joe plow. Beautiful snow fall and a wonderful community. I think this is a love letter to Enright Ridge. Thanks.

**SHARON CAN BE REACHED AT 471-7172 OR 686 ENRIGHT.**

# g r a t i t u d e

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT WHEN YOU SEE THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE/GROUPS TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO MAKING THE NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTHIER, SAFER AND MORE FUN.

**IMAGO:** For letting us use the building and a thousand other resources, large and small.

**JOE BELL:** We'd probably all be still snowed in if it weren't for his kindness in plowing the street numerous times! Thank you Joe for being such a thoughtful community member!

**BIKE COOP:** Tim McDonald and Ed Digman are working on bikes! Keep an eye out for affordable bikes for sale come spring!

**ANONYMOUS LITTER PATROL:** For each of us who pauses

a moment to pick up trash on the street.

**HOUSING COMMITTEE:** Innumerable folks from ERUEV and also outside the neighborhood have put in incalculable donated hours fixing up the storefront at the corner, and especially 744! These buildings are being rehabbed to rent or sell to individuals and families who will be assets to our community, while preventing absentee landlords and speculators from purchasing the houses. Any profits will be used to buy other buildings on the street. More about our rehabs on the next page.

**JERRY & SCOTT:** Without your swift and diligent craftsmanship, there would be no rehabbed storefront, and thus, no Zen Center. Kudos for making it happen.

**MARKETING COMMITTEE:** Everyone enjoyed the holiday event organized by the Marketing Committee. The luminaries donated by Lydia Stec gave the street a festive look and added to the charm of our now-annual caroling despite the rain.

**BIRTHDAY PARTY PLANNERS:** What a terrific birthday party for Mary Dansizen! You know it's a great street party when you run out of chairs! Of course, we are also grateful to Mary herself for her wisdom and humor.

**PLEASE JOIN US AT THE PROGRESSIVE DINNER!**

**SATURDAY MARCH 24 FROM 5:30-9PM.**

**APPETIZER AND DRINKS, SALADS, MAIN COURSE AND DESSERT.**

**4 DIFFERENT HOUSES TO VISIT.**

**4 DIFFERENT MEALS TO ENJOY.**

**MORE THAN...**

**4 DIFFERENT NEIGHBORS TO TALK WITH.**

**WHAT MORE COULD YOU ASK FOR?**

**CONTACT AMANDA AT 921-5124 OR EILEEN AT 921-1932 TO RSVP OR IF YOU WANT TO HELP.**

# SAVING OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

The Enright Ridge Urban Eco-village Association (made up of any resident who wants to join) has an housing committee whose goal is to ensure a stable neighborhood on Enright Avenue. We accomplish this through purchase of foreclosed properties that would otherwise be bought by 'investors' as rental property. These properties have been bought by Imago for the neighborhood. The committee is rehabbing these houses using professional help when necessary, volunteer help whenever possible. The houses are made energy efficient and as healthy a place to live as possible for their new owners.

## SO WHAT'S *REALLY* HAPPENING ON ENRIGHT?

Imago bought the storefront building and the above apartments at the corner, 3647 W 8TH ST. Many thanks go to **JERRY** and **SCOTT**, who through hard work, patience, and diligence, have transformed what was an extremely run down building into a fresh, clean, rentable space. We are all excited to have the **CINCINNATI ZEN CENTER** as new neighbors! We have rented two of the apartments above the Zen Center to tenants who are interested in the ecovillage. We are in the final stages of several tedious and drawn out evictions of former tenants who have not paid rent since we've took ownership of the building.

ERUEV, plus the sweat and elbow grease of many a volunteer and resident, have brought 744 to near completion. The house has been rehabbed with the earth in mind and we look forward to finding **THE RED HOUSE** a new home! Thanks to all who have come out to complete 744's rehabs! We're almost there!

With 3647 and 744 at near completion, we're getting antsy for a new project, so we're moving onto 684 next. Our contractor is a real trooper, the outdated electrical system in the house gave him a decent zap! But we're persistent, and confident that with the same tenacity and hard work that 684 will

become our next success.

**YOU MAY BE ASKING YOURSELF -- WHY ARE WE DOING THIS? WHAT IS OUR AGENDA? ARE WE MAKING A PROFIT?**

The bottom line is that we bought the buildings with Imago's help because foreclosures are prime target for investors. Foreclosed houses are ones you see with "For Rent/Sale" signs or boarded up windows. According to a study in Chicago relating to neighborhoods like ours, each house that is bought by an investor lowers property values by 1.5%. ERUEV has saved four houses that were foreclosed (two we purchased, two individuals bought) – which would have led to a 6% drop in the value for each of our homes! **This influences the quality of life and the property value of every resident on Enright Avenue. We invite any resident to become involved.**

Our agenda is very simple -- to buy at-risk properties, rehab them in an environmentally friendly manner, and then sell them to people of a like mind. We are trying to strengthen homeownership, a sense of community and belonging, and most importantly, increase awareness and employ strategies to reduce our collective footprint on the Earth through sustainable building, gardens, shared resources, and other methods.

## HOW DOES A NONPROFIT MANAGE TO DO THIS?

For starters, it is not easy. Imago borrowed money from the Hubert Foundation to purchase and rehab. We have to be able to pay back the loans. Our goal is to **break even** on the houses, since we do not have any money to cover a loss. Should we make a profit this money goes back into the community. **This is the reason why volunteers are so important and why we make our presence known.** If each household would volunteer just one morning or evening a month, we would have enough help to get the work done! Please consider volunteering. Together, as a community, we can save our neighborhood.

# NEW ERUEV STAFF AMANDA JOHNSON

Amanda Johnson is the new Americorps VISTA replacing Kate Kinney. The ERUEV Executive committee members are excited that she will be concentrating her efforts entirely on the eco village. A recent Antioch College graduate, Amanda brings strong program development and communications skills to her work staffing the Marketing and Communications Committees as well as the Long range Planning Committees.

Please welcome Amanda as she goes door to door to meet folks and invite you to become members of ERUEV.



## events calendar

**MARCH 18 - Spring Equinox Celebration at Imago, 7pm, Free.**

**MARCH 24 - Progressive Dinner on Enright Ave. Suggested to bring beer/wine or dessert.**

**MARCH 30 - The Public Library, including the one down the street on Warsaw, will be giving out free red oak saplings in celebration of Arbor Day. Go get a book and plant a tree!**

**APRIL 21 - BIG VOLUNTEER DAY AT IMAGO!!!**

**APRIL 22 - Earth Day**

**APRIL 28 - Western Wildlife Corridor Wildflowerathon. Contact: Jim!**

**MAY 26-28- Permaculture Forest Gardening with Dave Jacke. Contact: Nancy Sullivan, 859 240-6140 or e-mail [sullivan@fuse.net](mailto:sullivan@fuse.net).**

**JUNE 8-10 - Imago's Earth Spirit Rising conference in Louisville. See information on last page of newsletter. Contact : Louise at Imago.**

### ONGOING & PLANS

**WORKDAYS - Wednesday Evenings 6-8pm and Saturday Mornings 9-2pm are workdays for housing rehabs. Contact Amanda or Scott at 921-5124 for more information about how to help out.**

**FIRST FRIDAY CONVERSATIONS - Come join us at Imago for community conversations about various topics & a catered dinner -- first Friday of each month, 5:30. Suggested donation: \$10.**

**SPECIAL MEETINGS - Representatives from the Center for Sustainable Engineering and the Rain Garden are planning to come to the ecovillage to discuss long term civic planning.**



**N E W N E I G H B O R S**

**C I N C I N N A T I Z E N C E N T E R**

ERUEV would like to extend a warm welcome to the new tenants on the corner: The Cincinnati Zen Center. This is exciting news and ERUEV is thrilled to have them as allies in the community. You can find information about their practice at:

<http://www.cincinnati-zen-center.org/>

*Welcome !*

## **SO WHAT REALLY MAKES OUR REHABS ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY?**

**SO WHAT THINGS HAS ERUEV BEEN DOING WITH OUR REHABS THAT REALLY HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS? HERE'S A LIST OF MATERIALS ERUEV HAS USED IN EFFORTS TO BE MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY.**

- \* Recycled carpet squares used in Zen Center
- \* Fluorescent light bulbs used throughout all rehabs. Fluorescent bulbs use much less electricity than normal light bulbs.
- \* Compost heap and recycling at Imago.
- \* An air locked (interior porch) is installed at Zen Center
- \* Co-op bike drop-off point at street corner
- \* Recycled glass blocks used in Zen Center windows

- \* Energy efficient argon windows put in storefront of Zen Center
- \* Insulated hot water heater, double pane windows, insulated walls and ceilings and energy efficient furnace at 744
- \* Low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) paint used on the inside of Zen Center
- \* Brick walls are insulated with fiberglass and rigid board insulation
- \* Recycled lumber and insulation at Zen Center, corner building apts, and 744.
- \* Recycled paint used at building apts. and 744 basement.
- \* Investigating on demand hot water heater for corner building, and solar hot water heaters.

# focus on food

nancy sullivan  
enright resident to-be

**W**hy should The Ridgerunner focus on food choices -- both what we eat and where it comes from? What does food have to do with having an Enright Ridge address?

The short answers to complicated issues:

- \* we want to live healthier lives, closer to the earth;
- \* we want to live responsibly, recognizing our food choices have a ripple effect through our community and the wider world.

## FIRST, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:

- \* How many folks stopped eating spinach or mixed greens after the big e. coli scare this fall?
- \* Do you worry about possible poisons, (pesticides and herbicide), on food from far away?
- \* Do you remember your grandfather's delicious tomatoes, or maybe your aunt's famous pie that won a prize each year at the county fair?
- \* Check old cookbooks and more modern ones: you'll see that the amount of vitamins and other nutritious contents of fruits and vegetables has dropped constantly over the past 40 years.

## THE BIGGER PICTURE:

Knowing who grows something, (myself or a local farmer), means I can personally check to be sure it is grown safely both for me and for the land- not polluting local water sources, creating erosion, etc.

"It's the economy, stupid", was the theme in a recent presidential race. Why?

The Organic Consumers Association "Organic Bytes" Issue 95 notes that:

- Local businesses and farms produce more income, jobs, and tax receipts for local communities than big box stores do.
- Local businesses and farms are more likely to utilize local ads, banks and other services.
- Local businesses donate more money to nonprofits and are more accountable to their local communities.
- Supporting local businesses preserves the economic diversity of our communities and the unique character of our neighborhoods.
- Supporting local businesses and farmers is good for the environment, because it cuts down on fuel consumption. Buying locally produced goods reduces the need to ship goods from thousands of miles away and also cuts down on the distance we travel to shop.

How much does it really cost to transport our food? Remember that jets, ships and trucks also have to buy fuel. If the cost of gas has squeezed your wallet lately, what about them?

## WHAT DOES OUR FOOD REALLY COST?

You may not travel much, but your food does. Ever wonder how we get fresh grapes in February? A farmer far away where it is a lot warmer right now grows and ships them.

What's wrong with that? It takes a lot of energy to move food from thousands of miles, whether by air, others by water or by truck, burning oil and adding to global pollution.

Just how much does it take? A Costa Rican pineapple uses about .3 gallons of oil on its ocean cruise to a US harbor. However, the only way to the continent from Hawaii is by air, so a Hawaiian pineapple represents an incredible 2.8 gallons of gas.

Love baked potatoes? From farm to your table, a big Idaho potato uses 1.3 cups of gas, but a small farmer near Cincinnati will use no more than a tablespoon of fuel to get the same sized potato to Findlay or one of the local tailgate markets. Similarly, each Washington State Red Delicious costs a cup of gas to make it to a Cincinnati grocery store.

But local apple growers are selling much fresher apples and more varieties with far lower transportation costs, which means less air pollution and global warming gases. Food is fuel -- fuel for our bodies. Doesn't it seem crazy that we use approximately five calories of energy as gas/oil to produce one calorie of food when most grocery store food travels an average of nearly 2000 miles to our table? Buying from local farmers and markets makes a lot of sense.

### **GROWING LOCAL**

Don't stop at buying local, what about growing local? ERUEV has a community garden where we can grow our own food and enjoy the companionship and know-how of our neighbors. Plan now for how you can claim your patch! Call Jim Schenk at 921-1932. He and other neighbors are already sprouting seeds, imagining the pleasure of sun-sweet peas and juicy tomatoes this summer.

### **GROWING YOUR OWN... LIKE A FOREST??!!**

Does gardening for food make you tired just thinking about neat rows of vegetables, bare earth, constant digging and weeding, dragging hoses around? How did the folks who lived here before Europeans come manage to thrive, not just survive, in the middle of a great forest intersected with small prairie-like openings?

Unlike traditional gardens, healthy forest ecosystems are self-maintaining, self-fertilizing, and self-renewing. No one plows, fertilizes, waters, weeds, etc. Wouldn't it be fantastic to grow food this way in your back yard? Well, you can! "Edible forest gardening" is the design of gardens that mimic the structure and function of natural forests, but grow food, fuel, fiber, fodder, fertilizers, and "farmaceuticals."

Permaculturist and author Dave Jacke will be giving a three day workshop at ERUEV over Memorial Day weekend on how to design and implement your own "edible forest garden". We'll be meeting at newly-rehabbed 534 Enright Avenue and using the 1.2 acres of this property as a real-life example.

All ERUEV members receive a 25% tuition discount for this outstanding program. Please contact Nancy at 859-240-6140.



**EarthSpirit Rising**  
Return to Earth Wisdom

**June 8-10 in  
Louisville, Kentucky**

We live in a time of great change. We are just beginning to move from competition to partnership, from greed to caring, from a place of wanting to a sense of sufficiency, from seeing the world from a mechanistic view to seeing the world as a living system, and very importantly, from perceiving life as based in separateness to seeing life as based in wholeness and interconnectedness.

This shift is a change towards Earth Wisdom. It represents a movement towards recognizing that nature provides the ultimate answers to the questions of our times. Come to the 2007 EarthSpirit Rising Conference as we celebrate this movement by exploring the theme: Return to Earth Wisdom. Join us as we offer participants hope, education, inspiration and tools for transformation — all from a planetary perspective.

Join us for Earth Spirit Rising as we work and play together to create a sustainable and compassionate future.

#### **Who should attend....**

This conference is for spiritual leaders, educators, business leaders, social workers, artists, environmentalists, social entrepreneurs and other concerned citizens of Earth.

#### **Return to Earth Wisdom is a gathering for . . .**

- people interested in building a sustainable and compassionate future
- people wishing to foster the emergence of a global consciousness
- people seeking a deeper sense of meaning and enthusiasm in their lives
- people who dream big and take their dreams seriously