



Johnny Ipil-Seed News

The quarterly newsletter of Trees for the Future

Woodcutting of John Chapman
courtesy of J.J. Lippincott

Spring 2005 Vol. XIII, No. 1

from southern Asia: MAYBE ONCE IN A THOUSAND YEARS...

...could a disaster of this magnitude happen. As we were still celebrating Christmas, an earthquake off the coast of northern Sumatra caused a tsunami that spread out and raced across the Indian ocean at speeds over a hundred miles an hour. It smashed through fishing villages on the beaches and on into towns as far away as Somalia in East Africa.

Initially over 160,000 people dead. If it's not possible to control the epidemics that will surely follow, the toll may eventually be more than a quarter million. In the immediate wake of the battering, the quick response has been emergency relief supplies. The world has been extremely generous in providing food, water, medicines and temporary shelter. Americans gave over a billion dollars, most of it private contributions, thereby saving many thousands of lives.

Now comes the hard part: giving the survivors the means to carry on. For in southern Asia, nobody says "life is a beach". The sea offers a life of hardship and unending poverty. Even in the best of times, always the chance of a sudden violent death.

Life's experiences make these people especially resourceful. They'll soon scrounge up enough materials



Banda Ache - when people could still smile.

Dave first began planting trees in Banda Ache in 19xx.

to build some kind of a shelter, but what about a livelihood? Their wooden boats are smashed,

their fishing nets gone. When the relief supplies are finished, what will they eat? Even if they can find a way back to the sea, will the fish be there?

TREES expects to play a major role in helping the people of these communities regain control of their lives. It's here that multi-purpose, fast-growing trees work for a number of especially important roles to bring stability back to a community.

Much of this has to do with sustainable income. Because firewood is usually the only fuel available to, and within the economic reach of, people in these lands, it has a ready market throughout the year. Within a comparatively short period of time after the seedlings are planted, they also produce wood for construction, poles, fences and other uses.

Our own experience is that in such communities, a typical family has the space and resources to plant about 200 trees. By selling the several wood

continued on page 3

Inside this issue

- p. 2 How Projects Spread
- p. 3 Real Global Cooling Vehicles
- p. 4 Haiti Update: *No More!*
- p. 5 News at the Ruppe Center
- p. 6 A Village Called Yalanka
- p. 7 Opinion - Globalization or People
- p. 8 New Partnerships & Many Thanks

Johnny Ipil-Seed News is a quarterly newsletter of TREES FOR THE FUTURE, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people of the world's poorest communities to begin environmentally beneficial, self-help projects.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper with soy-based ink and is sent to all supporting members to inform them of recent events, plans, financial matters and how their support is helping people.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. John R. Moore,
Dr. Peter Falk
Mr. Oscar Gruspe
Mr. Dave Deppner
Mr. Hank Dearden

FOUNDERS

Dave and Grace Deppner

PROGRAM MANAGERS

John Leary, West Africa
Fritzie Manuel,
Outreach Coordinator
Bedru Sultan, East Africa
Chris Wells, Asia
Gabby Mondragon, Philippines
Melissa Kolb, Honduras
Omar Ndao, Senegal

If you wish to receive this newsletter, or would like more information, please contact:

TREES FOR THE FUTURE

The Loret Miller Ruppe
Center for
Sustainable Development
9000 16th Street,
P.O. Box 7027
Silver Spring, MD 20907

Toll Free: 1-800-643-0001

Ph: 301-565-0630

Fax: 1-301-565-5012

info@treesftf.org,

WWW.PLANT-TREES.ORG

How Projects Spread

The first year is critical. Local communities contact us for help in returning tree cover to their degraded lands. Our technology must be simple and clear. The seeds must have a high germination rate. The seedlings must be easy to transport and plant. The success rate must be anything but low. We do our best to ensure communities are well-prepared because success breeds expansion.

Eben Mensah, leader of the Save Our Earth Network in Ghana, West Africa, first contacted us in 2002. After a number of emails and packages, four communities took part in the original campaign. They are now harvesting organic fertilizer, fuelwood, poles for building, and animal forage . . . and of course seeds . . . from thousands of *Leucaena* trees. Success is breeding expansion. Now the project grows as we and the Save Our Earth Network are facilitating the distribution of high quality seed of fast-growing multipurpose trees to communities around Accra, the capital.

This has also been the case in India and Uganda. After our local partners conducted successful tree planting campaigns in the early 1990's, the news spread. We now have over sixty participating organizations in Uganda and India alone. Fortunate enough, our regional pocket of tree planters in India lies in the Tamil Nadu region (see cover story Fall 2004) which was recently hit by the Tsunami. Since the tragedy, as communities plan reconstruction, we have been overwhelmed with requests

for help from neighboring communities who saw, as MSNBC reported, that tens of thousands of trees - originally planted as a wind barrier along the coast (see the Fall 2004 story on Windbreaks in India, p. 5) - actually served as a water barrier. The project grows.

Now as winter fades and we in North America start to think about what we'll plant in our gardens, community leaders and farmers around the world are planning their tree planting campaigns.



Members of the Save Our Earth Network in Ghana show British Volunteers how to harvest seeds from fast-growing trees

Forty (40) new groups - in India, Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, El Salvador, Congo, and throughout East Africa - have heard of our work and are asking to join our life-giving program. Another year, another several million trees!

-John Leary

products such trees sustainably produce, they can expect a continuing annual income of 25-30 cents per tree. A boost to annual income of around \$50 may not sound like much but it amounts to a month's average family income to people along these coasts.

While trees don't grow well on a beach, they do contribute greatly to bettering conditions for the entire community. Planting large numbers of these trees can reduce daytime temperatures as much as 5 degrees for the whole town.

As this tsunami proved, such plantings also greatly reduce the force of the wave, thereby saving lives.

But it's what's under these first trees that makes the greatest difference: the leaf-fall from such trees rebuilds soils, adding humus that holds water on the land.

Together, these factors allow people to grow food and cash crops right at population centers. That will be a most important concern because the tsunami brought salt to many nearby farm lands.

The focal point of our work will be in the Tamil Nadu State of southern India. The number of socially concerned organizations we assist has almost doubled, to 29, since the tsunami struck. They serve hundreds of villages, thousands of tsunami victims. While the major focus of this joint effort remains environmental, bringing livelihood opportunities goes right along with that.

We've assisted many groups, in India and worldwide, to develop income-generating projects. Our experience tells us such projects must be sustainable. And they must be designed so the participants themselves can manage them and sell the resulting products. Otherwise, the programs don't grow and don't even last long.

But your program, responding to the felt needs of the devastated communities, will continue to grow, continuously bringing both economic and ecological benefit in the most cost-effective manner possible. We hope you'll help us reach as many communities as we possibly can.



~~~~~  
~~~~~

THE REAL GLOBAL COOLING™ VEHICLES: TREES' CAR DONATION PROGRAM

Just before Christmas we received a call from a lawyer in nearby Montgomery Village asking if we would accept the donation of a car. Before revealing she had a beautiful Lexus, she drilled us with every question imaginable. "Why should I donate to you? What makes you special? Are your Board of managers skimming off airplane fares and nice restaurants?" We passed the test with flying colors.

She wanted to dispose of her car in a way that would help people. Which it surely will. That car is going to plant trees in at least ten villages in Haiti this year.

In the past we have been hesitant to get into the car donation business. Something about it just didn't seem right. Now the law is somewhat changed and we feel better about it. One of our long-term supporters, Luis Lora, who has considerable experience with cars, has kindly offered to build the program.

At this point we're accepting vehicles in fairly good condition from the local area and hope this will allow us to help many new communities start projects.



Our First car! This lexus will help plant over 50,000 trees.

Haiti Update: No More!

No more landslides. No more lost villages. No more emergency aid. No more will the lack of technical knowledge seal the fate of communities throughout this desperate Nation. TREES' work in Honduras showed that mountainsides covered with trees withstood Hurricane Mitch - those without trees perished like the communities in Gonaives, Haiti.

John is working to build a strong coalition of Haitian-Americans to address their homeland's environmental crisis. His message is simple: We solve a wide variety of problems and produce a number of valuable products by planting contour lines of trees, shrubs, and grasses. We minimize erosion, we produce plenty of fuelwood for use and sale, we grow a lot more grains and vegetables, and we channel rainwater back into the ground - not into the ocean.

We have the seeds and the technical knowledge. Haitian-Americans have the connections and long-term dedication. Together we will plant thousands of trees in Haiti in 2005.

On an invitation from the **Association of Haitian Professionals**, John spoke on the panel at the **Forum for the Environmental Crisis in Haiti**. We made some great partnerships with individuals and organizations in the Haitian-American community; partnerships that will plant at least an additional 20,000 trees this year. We'll keep you posted.



*Above: John speaking at the Forum on the Environmental Crisis in Haiti at Howard University in Washington, DC.
Below: Contour lines of vetiver, napier grass, and leucaena and grapefruit trees will protect Haiti's mountainside communities from heavy rains in late 2005.*



Saving Haiti's Mountainsides

News at the Ruppe Center

Our New Outreach & Asia Program Coordinator

Fritzie Manuel was born and lived her early life in the barrios of Luzon in the northern Philippines. She grew up in a rural area where she gained a great deal of experience working with many types of tropical fruit trees, thanks to her grandfather who, while paralyzed and nearly blind, had a gift for tree planting.

When she was thirteen, her family moved to the United States, first to Georgia, then Florida and on to Maryland. She takes over the work of Chris Wells, who has lately been touring south and Southeast Asia and now plans to continue his studies, probably in Japan.

After completing her studies, Fritzie worked for seven years with the Maryland/National Parks Planning Commission, helping maintain the parks around suburban Washington.

Fritzie has inherited some of her grandfather's love of trees and respect for nature. She also recognizes the relationship between saving the environment and helping people. "I like the idea of being able to bring a brighter future to poor people, especially the children. We should all feel happier knowing we've given people the ability to survive," says Fritzie. Her experience, growing up in a poor community of a developing country will help us develop even more beneficial projects.



*Two new members of our team, **Matt Budiansky**, left, and **Fritzie Manuel**, right, pose for a picture with **Sylvie** in front of the Ruppe Center.*

New Ethiopia Field Rep

Matt Budiansky, who recently began working as a philosophy instructor at Unity University College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is going to be joining our program as a field representative, working as a point of contact for program development in Ethiopia and assisting current efforts by Greener Ethiopia and other partners.

Visitors

Rabbi Binyamin Biber of **The Washington Congregation for Secular Humanistic Judaism** approached us for our help in implementing an educational program for Tu Bishvat. Tu Bishvat is a Jewish holiday in late January that celebrates the importance of trees. It has played a great role in helping Israel turn the desert into a green, productive area (just what we're trying to do in Senegal).

With seeds, children's tree books, and directions on planting, **Rabbi Ben** took the program to the people, helping local kids and their families to start over 100 tree seedlings.

The President of **Mama Sita** brand foods also visited us this winter. **Mama Sita** foods are bought from Philippino farmers practicing sustainable agriculture practices, and they are marketed through Philippino and other Asian stores here in the US. We are now determining how a partnership can plant more trees and help more farmers.



***Dave**, **Rabbi Ben**, Fritzie, and **Bedru** discuss local and international tree planting efforts at the Ruppe Center.*

A Village Called Yalanka

Here at TREES, we often work within a program of our government called Farmer-to-Farmer (FtF). Mostly it operates in developing countries of the tropics, where our skills are in real demand.

The program helps build our own organization, providing us free air-fare and on-site living expenses, usually a two-week assignment, allowing us to help people begin new projects, to provide technical support to new groups, and to make new contacts for future work in these countries. We've all served tours, in Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Jamaica, the Philippines and elsewhere.

Once in a while we're asked to do something very different. Last fall, I was asked to make a trip to Russia. It seems the organizations sponsoring that program needed a technician with an MBA in agribusiness who also could provide technical support for growers of turkeys and chickens.

In their search through all of cyberspace, they found me the only person with such a strange combination of credentials: any normal person with an MBA doesn't want to be anywhere around chickens or turkeys (just as chicken raisers look away when Colonel Sanders talks about "finger-licking good").

The next thing I knew, I'm in Moscow getting briefed, then taking the overnight train to Saratov, about 500 miles south and east along the Volga River to meet my translator, Natalya Lorinova. Then we traveled with the cooperating farmer, Vishislav Dorozhkina another 200 Km. in his car which had been locally made many years ago but was still able to rattle down the highway. (Things made in Russia often look strange but they do work, usually for a long, long time.)

Vischislav and his wife Tatyana, made us right at home in their home. They introduced us to the 160 turkeys they have produced this year, and to neighbors asking to join the program (turkey is a new food to most Russians but the market is there and they want to learn how to develop it).

It was a wonderful week, exploring marketing ideas, finding ways to develop more, and better, product while also cutting costs, learning Russian foods, which use a lot of potatoes, cabbage and cheese, and especially, learning how people in that vast countryside look at things. In other words, as always, Dave learned much more than he could possibly teach.

Then on to a bigger town called Dergoshi where, for Dave, it was much like being back in Somalia (only cooler) as he was once again challenged to take what had apparently once been a massive state-run collective, trying to turn it into a business that works.

The farm had 100,000 laying hens, over 100 employees, and plenty of problems, for which the directors needed answers. Again, it was a challenging job but an opportunity to see things from some new directions and, working together, we found some answers.

We didn't get any trees planted but, on those barren plains, we found people with real love for working with wood and a great respect for things made from trees.

Dave was asked to come back and said he would - but make it next spring. Before leaving Moscow he managed to learn to ride the subway to Red Square and, while there, had lunch at McDonalds. From Korea in the 1950's to a Big Mac at the Kremlin a half century later. Who says we're not making progress?



Dave xxxxxxxxxxxx



Opinion: Globalization of People - Your Choice

Two experiences on the same day in a Russian Village stand out in my mind: First, the translator, Natalya, and I were taking our daily stroll down the muddy road when an old woman, a "babushka", came out to ask who this obvious foreigner was - and why I was there.

After Natalya explained, she asked me: "why are you here?"

There's nobody in this village but old people. There's nothing you can do to help us."

She made a good point. The children there go to school in old cement block buildings. They want to learn to speak English. Their teachers work hard to make that happen.

The reason? They're heading for the bright city lights - just as fast as they can get out of there. That's sad because, even without modern facilities, such villages have a certain magical, offering special experiences and time to contemplate, to enjoy and love, to think, that they'll be lucky to find in Moscow.

Later that evening I saw one reason they're getting out when I met with some farmers planning to join together to raise turkeys. They asked what a loan for that purpose would cost an American farmer. I answered that a production credit association would probably make the loan for about 6-7% interest. They sat in stunned silence. Finally one said he had taken out such a loan from an international bank in the city of Saratov at 24% annual interest!

On the way to that village, we passed more than a hundred kilometers of deep, rich soils. Miles of flat land. Plenty of rainfall. I asked how anybody in Russia had ever gone hungry. They answered: "That's what we want to know".

Now I knew, as I'm sure they do also. All these families wanting to work together to improve their lives by producing food. Yet nothing was happening because a foreign bank had a hold on the region and was practicing usury.

This is globalization as the world's poor see it, and many not so poor. It's nothing new. The so-called "Green Revolution" of the 1970's was such an exercise, dumping our supposedly superior farming technology on people whose needs we didn't understand, who couldn't/wouldn't, use it. It didn't feed the poor -it vandalized the land.

People of the land understand that to make it continu-

ously meet your needs requires constant attention, always giving something back. These modern global corporations, on the other hand, seem more interested in the fast buck. They take - and then they leave.

It happens here and around the world. North America and Europe continue to lose family farms at the rate of 4,000 a week. Our tax dollars subsidize corporations that dump farm products at depressed prices, crippling the weaker economies of developing nations.

We brag about producing one pound of beef using seven pounds of grain that could directly feed people. We grow chickens faster by adding low levels of antibiotics and growth stimulants to their feed. The pork "factories" of North Carolina make you wonder about eating their products.

Just as the logging corporations stripped and burned the land, here and in developing countries, suppliers of agricultural products put profits ahead of people and the land's resources. Genetically engineered seed, commercial fertilizer, modern pesticides and herbicides offer a short-term economic advantage to the corporate farm that can afford them. They increase the production per acre for now - at a terrible cost to people and the land.

Too often, we find our program running contrary to what the corporate raiders are attempting, even in the most impoverished villages of the world. Where programs of our own government provide chemical fertilizer, we've been taken to the woodshed for showing small scale farmers how they can plant trees that will give them more, and better, organic fertilizer; how these same tree leaves feed their animals, giving them the protein to grow faster, healthier, without chemical additives.

While much of this happens far from here, it comes to all of us in ways we would never expect. Last December Wangari Maathai received the Nobel Peace Prize for establishing the Women's Greenbelt Movement which planted more than 30 million trees in Kenya.

Why the Peace Prize for tree planting? Because, as she observed, wars are being fought in Africa, and elsewhere, over the natural resources. Most of us see petroleum as such a resource. It should not be hard to see that people also fight and kill for food and drinking water.

More and more, wars are being fought by people who have been left out of the development process - people who globalization finds no reason to help. But people who depend on the land and who desperately seek ways to maintain the land and their way of life. That's where your program is at work.

Please keep helping us help these people.

New Programs and Partnerships



Make Calls, Plant Trees

www.Betterworldtelecom.com

If you are looking for any of these phone services, sign on to **Betterworld Telecom** and **Trees for the Future** will receive a monthly commission

Long Distance: Any-day, any-time just 4.9¢

Toll Free 800: 4.9¢ per minute for state-to-state

Calling Card: Calls from any phone in the U.S. for just 12¢ per minute

Dial-Up Internet Access: Just \$17.95 per month

Conference Calling and more

Call us 1-800-643-0001 to get the new bumper-sticker (3.5" x 11" white and green)

PLANT-TREES.ORG
Global Cooling Vehicle

Many Thanks

On behalf of the staff and all the people starting projects around the world, we offer our most sincere thanks to all our good friends who helped make 2004 a very productive year. We especially want to thank the following people and organizations for their wonderful generosity:

C. Minor Barringer, Working Assets, Bolton Family Foundation, The International Foundation, Jane Pauley Trudeau, NuLux Corporation, Plant-It 2020 Foundation, New England Biolabs, Charles Delmar Foundation, Hope Mauran & Fred Walsh, Ethiopian Community of Chicago, Miriam Cable, William & Eileen Stephens, Mary Drazy, Margaret Law, Jadetree Foundation, Deborah VanVechten, Tryon Family Trust, Mark & Ruth Dundon, The Children's Fund, Charles & Kimberly Wheatly IV, Hank Dearden III, Ardmore Rotary Foundation, Carl Kohls, Philip Andryc, Dr. John Moore, Angel Rosenthal, Steve Hopkins, Joan Daschbach, The Glickenhau Foundation, Nancy Accola, Mary, Queen of Peace Parish, French Broad Food Coop, Miriam Jencks, Spiritual Cinema Circle, Charles Merrill, Jr. Foundation, Cottonwood Foundation, and Lynn Heller.



Loret Miller Ruppe Center

P.O. Box 7027

Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Presorted
First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 7651
Silver Spring MD

Address Service Requested

Address change ?
Duplicate Mailing?
 Change as shown
 Remove from List
Mail Changes or Call
800-643-0001

Printed by wind energy on recycled paper with soy ink

