

ACTION CHANGE E-MAGAZINE

January 2008 Volume 3, Issue 1

WELCOME

Happy New Year to all Action Change readers! I love a new year... so many possibilities, so many adventures just waiting to happen. At AC we start the new year with articles on keeping cool over summer, help you with making those new year goals, and take you on a trip to the outback. Have a fantastic month!

Christine Butler
Editor

GLOBAL CHANGE : LETTERS FROM THE FIELD: TAKING MUSIC TO REMOTE INDIGENOUS KIDS

My recent trip to the outback to visit remote indigenous communities was a blast. Read about what I got up to.

PERSONAL CHANGE: TEN GOALS WORTH PURSUING

Gary Ryan Blair (The Goals Guy) gives us goals to help form our resolutions for 2008.

THE GOOD NEWS GLOBAL ROUNDUP: Big green gatherings? Nuclear free a possibility? To catch up on all the good green goss, check this out.

WORLD WIDE FIVE-MINUTE ACTIONS: This month you can take quick cyber actions on Facebook, Whaling, Climate Change, and HIV/AIDS.

BITS, TIPS AND HITS: Colin Firth, John Butler and Julien Lennon all feature this month in Bits. Hits is all about safe and friendly sunscreen, and in Tips you can find out how to keep cool this summer without using the juice.

HUMOUR AND FICTION Christmas Carols for the disturbed, just in case you haven't had enough already.

EVENTS AND LISTINGS: What's going on in Oz and around the globe this month.

Global Change: LETTERS FROM THE FIELD: TAKING MUSIC TO REMOTE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

By Christine Butler

I've just been away for a week travelling with a friend who teaches music at remote indigenous schools in the Northern Territory. The group of communities is called Utopia, and it lies around 70 kms (three hours drive on the rough corrugated roads) north east of Alice Springs.

It was amazing living on Aboriginal land for a week, with the massive red desert spreading out for miles around me. Coming from the city, I'm used to light and noise even at night, so the first night was pretty strange – I woke at who-knows-what time, couldn't see my fingers in front of my face, and there was nothing... silence... absolute silence. I walked outside and thought my eyes were still blurry, but in fact the sky was so full of stars they all seemed to bump up against each other. Amazing. If you ever get the chance, head to the desert for a week or two. Your perspective on everything expands.



Utopia spans around 20 000 hectares and there are about 4,500 people living there in 12 different communities. Amongst this are seven schools and learning centres that take names from their communities like Mulga Bore, Clinic (where the medical clinic is) and Soapy Bore. People live in open houses in family groups, and some still live in what we call 'bush camps', which have shade shelters made from tree braches and corrugated iron rooves, and everyone sleeps on mattresses under the stars.

We stayed at 'Homestead', a group of demountable homes where the remote teachers live, and there is a resource centre there as well. The community schools don't have offices, so Homestead is also the place teachers can meet and plan their classes. The teachers in Utopia are incredible. They teach, but they also pick up the kids on the way to school and drop them off again, they make their lunches, they are often the nurse and the community worker if parents or families need assistance navigating the white man's world. Then of course they come home in the afternoon and still do all the planning, the marking, the

preparation that urban teachers do. All in isolation with only themselves for company at the end of the busy day. And they wonder why most teachers don't last very long in the outback. But for those who do, it's the kids they stay for: their laughter, their warmth, and the knowledge that they are making a real difference to the lives of indigenous people.

You see, the kids of Utopia are the first generation to attend school. That in itself is pretty remarkable, and I was surprised at how good the kids are at English (which is often their 3rd or 4th language), and also literacy and numeracy. The teachers are doing a great job out there and they should be paid their weight in gold! It's another reason I was so proud to go out there and be a part of a program that takes music to these kids.



The Music Outback program out there run by Kelly Staines and Matt Hill is often the only time the kids get to play musical instruments through out the year, and see live music played. As music and art isn't considered part of the necessary remote indigenous curriculum by the Education Department, the teachers and kids are a bit starved for resources. So each day of the two weeks we are out there, we drive to a different community school to give the

kids a chance to have live music. This drive can take between 30-45 minutes on the rough red roads each way. Your organs feel like they're in your mouth by the time you get to school each morning!

Kelly and Matt unload the instruments, set up, and then it's time for action! The kids have waited all year to have us back, and they've been talking about it for weeks. First there is the warm up. Matt takes them through some clapping and tapping different parts of the body while singing back to him melodies and funny sounds he makes. This gets the kids focused, used to imitating him, gets them together as a group and gets their bodies moving for the day. Kelly takes them through a game of Find the Leader, where a secret person is chosen to lead the group through various actions and another has to guess who that secret leader is. This gives the kids practice in rhythm and being able to follow instructions, as well as tuning into each other and listening to what's happening in the group (very important when performing!)

Then it's on to vocal warm ups and using vowel sounds and singing melodies to get the kid's voices warmed for the day ahead. You'd think the main aim of the music program would be to have the kids play instruments and have fun with music, but it's also about assisting the teacher's work in literacy and numeracy. As Kelly and Matt reinforce vowels, words, sentences, and numbers through music, it helps the kids remember it all in a fun way.

What I realised being out there for a week though, is that this numeracy and literacy learning is still not the biggest outcome of the music program. The biggest single outcome of teaching the kids music is building their confidence and self esteem. Indigenous people are very shy, and they don't readily participate in activities at school or want to stand out and perform. The gift of music and performing gives them an opportunity to express themselves in front of others, and to feel good about their abilities and talents. Under this umbrella of learning self- esteem, are the other important outcomes of collaboration and participation. The kids work together to keep the beat, to play in the band as one, and while they don't realise it as they're having fun, they are learning that it's ok to participate, that there are no mistakes, that to express yourself in your own way is cool and fun and exciting. And for a shy group of kids, as you're watching all this unfold throughout the day, it's a phenomenal change in character.

This time we are out here to work towards a Christmas Concert to be held at Homestead the following week. The kids in previous years have written and recorded their Music Outback songs onto a CD and a songbook has been collated for the teachers use as a resource for music throughout the year. They write songs about their lives: home, school, hunting, and friends. These new songs about Christmas were written last time Kelly and Matt visited, and needed some good practice with the use of microphones and the band in the hope that next year we will receive funding to record another CD. So this visit was all about practising the songs, having the confidence to sing them in front of an audience, and to form a band to back up the school group. Gradually Kelly gets a group of girls to sing in the microphone, after all the kids have tried the instruments, those who are older and are used to performing with Music Outback over the years, sit with their instruments in a circle, and the school house starts rockin' with Christmas songs!

Sadly then my week in the outback was up and I returned to the city and to work, while Matt and Kelly stayed on to do the final practises and the big finale of the Christmas concert. Apparently it all went swimmingly, and Matt and Kelly left with the usual cries from the kids to come back soon and record their songs so they can play them over and over on their CD players. We're now in the process of finding money to do just that for them next year. It was an amazing week and one I dreamed about for weeks after. I can't wait to get back out there this year, and witness once again the wonderful transformation that music provides for these kids living on remote communities.

The magic about this program is that it is symbolic of the reconciliation process. The whole community is involved: parents will hear the music and come over to the school and watch their kids playing instruments with each other! They come to the concert and see their kids perform, and it builds a great relationship between the school and the community. As Kelly says, going back to the same community year after year is what reconciliation is all about: building

relationships, building trust, and having a long-term positive commitment to change.

ABOUT THE PEOPLE

The people of Utopia live mainly traditionally, eating bush tucker and supplementing this with some meat and vegetables they can buy at the local store. Bush tucker includes kangaroo, goanna, honey ants, lizards, as well as berries, bush coconuts and seeds they use to make a paste or use to make damper. Hunting for food takes up most of the day in traditional camps, and is hard work. In the heat of summer, old people and kids stay back at camp, and this gives the grandparents time to tell stories that teach the children about life and the land.

Relationships are very important. Everyone has a `skin` name so you know how people relate to you. Skin names also stop people in small communities marrying close to their own family, which is considered very bad luck and a punishable crime. Skin names also means that from a young age, you know who you will marry. I was given the skin name Ngwarrey, so I am sister to my friend Kelly who works out there.

Every Indigenous person has an individual dreaming. Traditional painters create different aspects of their dreaming. For instance if your dreaming is the bush plum, you will paint where you find it, how you use it, and what it looks like. Women and men's culture are very separate. Neither can enter into the dreaming of the other, and most ceremonies are kept very secret. The landscape tells the story of their dreaming. The huge ranges that are the backdrop of Alice Springs are called the Caterpillar Dreaming.

Where you come from is also important. In European society, we ask people what they do when we meet them. In indigenous culture they ask `where are you from?`

Personal Change: Ten Goals Worth Pursuing

It's New Year's resolution time again, time to use our reflections on the past year to plan for the new one. To help you make the most of 2008, here's a list of goals from the fabulous Goals Guy – Gary Ryan Blair. Happy Planning, and remember, a goal written down has at least double the force of one just thought about.

Ten Goals Worth Pursuing

1. Personal Development

The single best investment any of us can ever make is in our own personal growth and development. The accumulation of knowledge means everything to your future.

2. Excellent Physical Health

Your body impacts everything you do. Take good care of it through proper nourishment, exercise and rest.

3. Rest, Relaxation and Renewal

We must take good care of ourselves without feeling guilty.



4. Building a Loving Family

Family is the emotional core of our lives. We should make constant deposits into everyone's emotional bank account.

5. Intimate Relationships With Your Friends

Surround yourself with nourishing friends. Share yourself with them and let them share themselves with you.

6. Involvement In Your Community

The definition of a life well lived must include a commitment to serving others.

7. Excellence in Your Work

Develop a reputation for excellence. A sincere commitment to excellence is a noble goal.

8. Financial Freedom

Money is important. Exercise wisdom in all your financial dealings.

9. A Comfortable, Loving Home

The single biggest investment most of us will ever make should be comfortable and lined with love.

10. Peace of Mind

There is no substitute for peace of mind. Everything you do either supports it or takes away from it.

From The Goals Guy – Gary Ryan Blair

www.goalsguy.net

http://www.goalsguy.com/Knowledge/t_10_pursuing.html (article)

Great tips on setting goals, keeping them, points of view on success and reality. You can subscribe to his newsletter and buy products on-line.

The Good News Global Round Up

AUSTRALIA: MORE HOP FOR NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE

The defeat of the Coalition government at the November 24 election was a significant step forward for everyone concerned with a nuclear-free future. It will be many years before we again face a concerted push to introduce nuclear power in Australia. The nuclear power issue clearly generated some political bite in the election - over one quarter of Coalition MPs and candidates distanced themselves from the government's policy of promoting nuclear power.

Uranium enrichment was supported by the Coalition government but is opposed by the new Labor government (and in any case it is unlikely that the market for enriched uranium would sustain a new plant in Australia).

There was significant support within the Coalition government for Australia hosting an international high-level nuclear waste repository, but very little if any support within the Labor government. (*Friends of the Earth Australia*)

USA/PACIFIC: ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT LISTINGS PROPOSED FOR SIX SOUTH PACIFIC SEABIRDS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service yesterday proposed protecting six imperiled

seabirds from New Zealand, Fiji, New Guinea, and the Galapagos Islands under the Endangered Species Act. Twenty-three years after first determining these species warranted protection, the Service finally responded to a series of lawsuits by the Center for Biological Diversity and proposed listing the Chatham and magenta petrels (New Zealand) and the Fiji petrel (Fiji) as endangered; and the Cook's petrel (New Zealand), Galapagos petrel (Galapagos), and Heinroth's shearwater (Papua New Guinea) as threatened. (*Centre for Biological Diversity*) www.biologicaldiversity.org

SRI LANKA: FAIR TRADE LABELS ENSURE RETURNS FOR FARMERS

KANDY, Organic farmers in this hilly, central region of Sri Lanka are convinced that they have a simple fair trade model that could be replicated in other parts of the world.

"What we have created is the most sustainable model of fair trade and organic food in the world," insists Sarath Ranaweera, founder of the Small Organic Farmers Association (SOFA), speaking with IPS.

'Fair trade' international trading partnerships help disadvantaged producers, farmers and farmers' societies to get better prices for their goods, while ensuring quality and environment-friendly products. They bring suppliers (farmers/producers), traders (exporters and retailers) and consumers together in an equitable partnership where the consumer pays a premium for the product and part of the premium goes back to the farmer/producer for his social welfare and uplift. (*Alliance for a New Humanity*)

MEXICO: MEXICAN POLICE CONDUCT ANTI-LOGGING RAID IN BUTTERFLY HABITAT

Hundreds of Mexican police raided illegal sawmills near a monarch butterfly reserve last week in "the largest seizure of illegally logged wood in the country's history," according to the attorney general's office. Millions of butterflies travel some 2,500 miles each winter to spend the cold season in the Mexican forest, where illegal logging is rampant. The Mexican government has long pledged to crack down on logging in butterfly habitat, but previous administrations have been criticized for not following through. Within the past year, the current government has closed 59 sawmills and charged 193 people with related crimes; in last week's raid, agents seized some 600 truckloads of wood -- the equivalent of about 1,750 adult trees -- and detained 56 people. Suspects found guilty of illegal logging could face prison sentences of six months to nine years, fines of up to \$13,650, and the eternal wrath of small, winged insects. www.grist.org

USA: HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AND NCAA KICK OFF SOCCER CHAMPIONSHIPS WITH BUILD

Dozens of student athletes are partnering with Habitat for Humanity and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to help build a house during the Division I Women's College Cup, Dec. 7, in College Station, Texas.

Student-athletes from Texas A&M and other nearby schools will construct a frame for a home near the soccer fields where the championship games will be played. The frame will be a part of a house for a family whose home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The house will be located in the Bryan/College Station area where the family has relocated.

The build in College Station is part of the NCAA Home Team, the NCAA's national response to the devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This three-year, \$2.5 million partnership with Habitat for Humanity has helped nearly 20 families rebuild from the Gulf Coast storms, with more than 800 student-athletes volunteering on the builds at numerous NCAA championships. (*Habitat for Humanity*)

AUSTRALIA/USA: CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS ENFREN THIS YEAR

Green is the colour of Christmas this year. The world famous Rockefeller Christmas Tree in New York City took a bold green step this year, boasting energy efficient LED lights powered by solar panel energy array set up through the Rockefeller Center.

Sydney's own tree in Martin Place made similar efforts to be environmentally friendly. The 22 metre tree underwent a \$380,000 facelift that includes 58,000 brand new energy efficient LED lights making it greener and brighter than ever before. http://www.greenpagesaustralia.com.au/index.asp?page_id=139&C=1

EUROPE: BIG GREEN GATHERING A SUCCESS

Some 20,000 people attended this year's Big Green Gathering, the largest green festival in Europe. Set in the breathtaking Mendip Hills, at Fernhill Farm, above the Cheddar Gorge in Somerset, this five day Gathering is uniquely powered entirely by solar, wind and pedal power.

Alongside all the information stands, exhibitions and films, there were non-stop talks and workshops on practical green living: food and farming, permaculture, green enterprise and business. For those who were keen to learn about traditional skills, experts in the green crafts field taught such things as wood and stone carving, rug-making and pottery. There was also a chance to try out a variety of treatments in the Healing Fields.

The magic of the Big Green Gathering is that it fulfills everybody's dreams, with amazing music such as reggae, hip-hop folk and world music. Key issues of the day were dissected at The Speaker's Forum, on Green Radio and in the Campaigns Talks Tent, whilst the latest alternative films were on show at the Renewable Energy Cinema. To top it off, cart horses and carriages transport-ed equipment and people across the fields – one entire area was allocated to traditional wooden caravans.

Website: www.big-green-gathering.com

(From: <http://www.todaysgoodnews.tv> and www.positivenews.org.uk)

CANADA: CANADA SETS ASIDE HUGE TRACTS OF LAND FOR PROTECTION

The Canadian government plans to set aside 25.5 million acres of northern boreal forest and tundra as protected land, off-limits from resource development. The total acreage (hectareage?) of the protected area is 11 times the size of Yellowstone National Park -- or, in Canadian, about twice the size of Nova Scotia and more than five times the size of Prince Edward Island. www.grist.org

INDIAN OCEAN: 19,000 HOMES BY THE END OF 2008

On Third Anniversary of Indian Ocean Tsunami, Habitat for Humanity on Track to Provide 22,000 Families with Permanent Housing

Three years after the world's attention was focused on the massive destruction caused by the deadly Indian Ocean tsunami, Habitat for Humanity continues to meet the challenges of rebuilding the homes, lives and communities of survivors and their families. Habitat for Humanity programs in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand are on course to ensure an estimated 19,000 families will have permanent, safe, secure housing by the end of 2008, rising to 22,000 by the middle of 2009 – at the expected completion of Habitat's post-tsunami reconstruction response.

To date more than \$50 million of donors' funds have been spent, and millions more are earmarked for continuing projects. As of November 2007, Habitat and its partners had built, repaired, rehabilitated houses and provided other assistance for approximately 13,500 families.

AUSTRALIA/ANTARCTIC: JAPAN HOLTS WHALING

Japan's whaling fleet in the Antarctic will avoid killing humpback whales for now, but will press on with plans to catch about 1,000 other whales by early in the new

year, a government official said on Friday. The move follows an announcement by Australia on Wednesday that it would send a fisheries patrol ship to gather evidence for a possible international court challenge to halt Japan's yearly slaughter.

www.enn.com

GLOBAL: GOVERNMENTS RESOLVE TO SUPPORT 'COMFORT WOMEN'

Since the success of US resolution 121, more parliaments around the world are adopting "CW" motions. On 19 November, the motion in Dutch parliament was passed during Amnesty International's EU speaking tour. On 28 November, the Canadian parliament unanimously passed motion 291. Watch Canadian MP Olivia Chow's remarks on YouTube:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CU5isHP0g1E>. On 13 December, the EU parliament passed resolution P6_TA(2007)0632. For the full resolution see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2007-0632&language=EN&ring=B6-2007-0542>.

(From 'Friends of Comfort Women in Australia' newsletter. To subscribe, write to Anna at fcw_australia@hotmail.com)

World Wide Five-Minute Actions

Only have five minutes but wanna save the world? Click on one of these cyber actions and be a part of some of the great changes happening around the globe. Think how good you'll feel!

MAKE THE BIG SWITCH FROM YOUR FACEBOOK

The Big Switch will reduce 1kg of greenhouse pollution for every Facebook user in Australia with this application by investing in renewable energy with Climate Friendly

The Big Switch will commit to purchasing a maximum of 100,000kg worth of renewable energy. Help us get there!

For more ways to take action on climate change visit www.thebigswitch.org.au

SIGN THE PETITION TO END WHALING

Welcome to Whales Revenge, an ambitious campaign to gather 1 million signatures for a petition to stop whaling.

Every year thousands of precious mammals are slaughtered in the name of so-called 'scientific research'.

Add your voice by signing this campaign then forwarding it everyone you know. Please help us stop the killing.



Target: International Whaling Commission
Current Signatures: 724032
Signature Goal: 1,000,000

<http://www.whalesrevenge.com/>

WRITE TO THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

Dear Activist,

Much has been written about the catastrophic implications of a rise in the world's temperature of just two degrees. What is often forgotten is that it's the poorest people living in the developing world who will suffer the brunt of this climate chaos.

Despite some tremendous stories of people's adaptation to rising sea levels, increasing storm damage, reduced rainfall or devastating floods, it is clear that the world community needs to take action to help people further adapt to changes in climatic conditions. For this reason, Oxfam Australia has identified climate change and its terrible impact on people living in the developing world as a key campaign issue for 2008.

We welcome the new Labor Government's signing of the Kyoto Protocol, attendance at the climate change conference in Bali and agreement to commit to longer-term targets to cut greenhouse gas pollution in Australia. However, committing to targets of at least 30 percent cuts in emissions by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 is urgent and essential. As the world's third largest per capita greenhouse gas polluter, Australia also has a particular responsibility to encourage world leaders to commit to a global fund to help poor communities

adapt to the negative impacts of climate change.

Encourage our government to commit to just and equitable action to tackle climate change by [writing to the Prime Minister](#) today.

Link through to:

- . [Write to the Prime Minister](#) calling for a just and equitable climate change response
- 0. [Send a climate change e-card](#) to friends and family
- 0. [View stories of adaptation](#) to climate change in some of the world's poorest countries
- 0. [Have your say](#) on Oxfam International's climate change blog
- 0. [Find out more](#)
(Oxfam)

TAKE ACTION TO SUPPORT INTEGRATED, COMPREHENSIVE HIV AND AIDS PROGRAMS

In the 25 years since it was first diagnosed, AIDS has claimed more than 25 million lives. In 2003, the United States launched the largest investment ever made by any nation to combat a single disease – the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). This initiative has led to substantial increases in the total number of people receiving AIDS treatment, care and HIV prevention information.

The leadership demonstrated by PEPFAR has contributed significantly to the fight against AIDS globally – yet given its scale, much more needs to be done to turn the tide against the pandemic. Tell your legislators to combat HIV and AIDS by:

- 0. Investing in the wide variety of sectors that play a role in stopping the spread of HIV – including food security, microfinance, reproductive health and education;
- 0. Focusing on women in developing countries who are particularly vulnerable to HIV – those who are less able to negotiate sexual relations and victims of sexual violence; and
- 0. Allocating sufficient funds to comprehensive prevention efforts, and removing policy and budget restrictions such as the abstinence-until-marriage earmark on these funds.

The current PEPFAR legislation is set to expire in 2008, and Congress soon will be hard at work authorizing a new bill. This provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to share experiences, learn from mistakes and improve strategies to yield more significant and sustainable results. Learn more about the lessons and

realities of PEPFAR by reading CARE's new policy brief ***PEPFAR and the Fight Against Global AIDS***.

Please write your legislators today and tell them to support integrated, comprehensive HIV and AIDS programming.

Programs that comprehensively address the social, economic and cultural reasons that make people vulnerable to HIV – and don't focus on the health dimension alone – have the most promise to fight this devastating disease. **Take action now to support integrated, comprehensive HIV and AIDS programs.**

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Helene D. Gayle, MD, MPH President and CEO, CARE

Newsy Bits

Colin Firth Acts on His Eco Consciousness

Colin Firth has opened a new eco store on Chiswick High Road in West London. It's called Eco and it will be Britain's first ecological destination store, which means it not only sells fair trade and enpren products, but also offers enviro services for homeowners and businesses. Firth is no stranger to sustainable business, as he already owns two cafes that serve only fair trade coffee.

Waging Peace

Peace is breaking out all over.

If you get your news from mainstream TV and radio, you probably haven't noticed. But here are a few startling statistics the networks have overlooked in their rush to promote the usual stories of crime, corruption, terrorism and war.

- * More lasting peace initiatives have been successful in the last 15 years than over the last two or three centuries combined.

- * More individuals and private groups are involved in effective grass roots peace-making and conflict resolution efforts that ever before.

- * Thirty years ago the great majority of the world's governments were autocratic, totalitarian regimes with democracies far in the minority. Today approximately 70% of world governments are democratic.

With our attention fixed on "the problems," we rarely hear stories like the one about the philanthropist who subsidized a group of 8,000 Transcendental Meditation practitioners to engage in group meditation twice a day from 1988 to 1990, near New Delhi, India.

During this same period, the seven year war between Iraq and Iran came to an end. The Soviet Union's brutal invasion of Afghanistan was called to a halt. In 1989 the Berlin Wall fell, the Soviet Union dissolved, and the Cold War, which had held the world teetering on the brink of extinction for forty years, simply evaporated. Coincidence? Not hardly.

There is a technology of peace, and many organizations and individuals have been utilizing it for a long time.

By Cate Montana, in the Global Intelligencer newsletter

<http://www.theglobalintelligencer.com/dec2007/soc-health/waging-peace>

John Butler and Keith Urban get "Funky Tonight" for Close the Gap

At the 21st ARIA awards, Oxfam Australia supporters John Butler and Keith Urban delivered an incredible performance of "Funky Tonight". Unsurprisingly, the performance received a standing ovation!

This live recording is now available as an exclusive [download on iTunes](#) with all proceeds going to the Close the Gap campaign – so you can listen to a great track and support a fantastic cause in the process.

It is so encouraging seeing two music heavy-weights getting behind the campaign, and the funds raised by this initiative will help Oxfam continue to work with Indigenous groups to advocate for equal health rights for Indigenous Australians. You can watch the live "Funky Tonight" performance on YouTube [here](#) and download the track from iTunes [here](#).
(Oxfam)



Calling All Who Care for the Planet

The film Whale Dreamers, a Julian Lennon production, is the winner of eight inter-national awards at film festivals around the world. It was shown at a special preview screening at Millers Academy, Notting Hill, London, prior to its UK release in November.

Whale Dreamers is a personal odyssey for director, Kim Kindersley, who explained that the film was over 10 years in the making. With breathtaking cinematography, the story follows The Mirning, an aboriginal tribe on a powerful journey, assisted by the wisdom of elders from around the world, to help them reconnect with their heritage, Sacred Earth and their spirit animals – the whales.

Whale Dreamers is a truly thought-provoking film with a deep message of peace and transformation – a rallying call for humanity to widen its circle of compassion and learn to embrace all living beings and the Earth itself.

In one of the film's many powerful moments, Julian Lennon is presented by Tribal Elders with a white feather. It is revealed that his father, John Lennon, said to him shortly before he died: "If anything ever happens to me look for a white feather and you'll know I'm there, looking out for you."

It is still possible to invest in Whale Dreamers and share in the anticipated success of this important movie.

by Caroline Whittle

Contact: David Blake,
Whale Dreamers Co-Producer,
Tel: +44 (0)7990 696884
Email: blake_david@yahoo.com
Website: www.whaledreamers.com

(From www.positivenews.org.uk)

What's in my Green Product?

Tired of wading through environmental claims? With sustainability being the hot issue of our time, it's no wonder that companies are looking to jump on board and green their image. But can you really trust the eco labeling?

One of the easiest ways to ensure the products you're buying are actually green is to do your own research. The Environmental Working Group is an excellent resource to find out just what is in your product and more importantly, the effects they have on your health.

Visit www.ewg.org for more information

From The Green Pages Newsletter <http://www.greenpagesaustralia.com.au/>

Product Hits

Sunscreens: safe, effective, and enviro friendly

Looking for a safe, effective, and enviro friendly sunscreen this summer. Check out the ranges from...

Alba Botanical: Alba Organics Hawaiian Green Tea SPF 30+ Sunscreen is perfect for daily wear. This non-greasy sun shield, with green tea antioxidants and certified organic aloe vera absorbs quickly and effectively with a light, fresh scent.

All Terrain: All Terrain AquaSport is a performance sunscreen designed specifically for water sports offering protection under the most extreme conditions. AquaSport offers natural broad-spectrum protection from both harmful UVA and UVB rays. AquaSport contains no animal derived or unnecessary ingredients and is never tested on animals.



Baby Avalon Organics: Baby Avalon Organics Natural Mineral Sunscreen, SPF 15 is a non-greasy cream that protects vulnerable skin with effective titanium dioxide, a natural UVA/UVB reflective barrier, and soothes with a certified organic blend of chamomile, aloe, jojoba & sunflower.

Check them out at your nearest health food store, or online at http://www.kokogm.com/Green_Market/SunCare.html

Green Tips

Staying Cool and Green

Want to stay cool this summer without pumping out the air con? Try these green tips for staying cool...

1. Keep your water content up with lots of water, juices and tea throughout summer. Sometimes cold drinks aren't the best, as they take a lot of energy to get the body back to normal temperate, causing you to become hotter
2. Eat small light meals with high water content like fresh fruit and veggies, especially now all the amazing tropical summer fruits are in season



- and available organically. Think thick slices of cold watermelon, fruit salads of peaches and nectarines, and berry parfaits with yoghurt. Mmmmm.
3. To cool you on the outside, use fans to circulate the air and keep windows open where the sun don't shine to let the breeze through. Stay on the bottom floor of buildings if possible, and avoid glare and heat from concrete and tiles. Shade windows with heavy curtains, or drape wet sheets over open windows to provide the most natural air con there is.
 4. Turn off lights, electronics and computers that cause heat when not in use. It's summer, so relax away from all the gadgets!
 5. Take a nice cool bath filled with mint leaves or rose petals. Aaahhh.
-

The Wit Bit

A Little Bit More of Christmas.... In case you didn't get enough last month

CHRISTMAS CAROLS FOR THE DISTURBED

* 1. Schizophrenia --- Do You Hear What I Hear?

* 2. Multiple Personality Disorder --- We Three Kings Disoriented Are

* 3. Dementia --- I Think I'll be Home for Christmas

* 4. Narcissistic --- Hark the Herald Angels Sing About Me

* 5. Manic --- Deck the Halls and Walls and House and Lawn and Streets and Stores and Office and Town and Cars and Buses and Trucks and Trees and...

* 6. Paranoid --- Santa Claus is Coming to Town to Get Me

* 7. Borderline Personality Disorder --- Thoughts of Roasting on an Open Fire

* 8. Personality Disorder --- You Better Watch Out, I'm Gonna Cry, I'm Gonna Pout, Maybe I'll Tell You Why

* 9. Attention Deficit Disorder --- Silent night, Holy ooh look at the Froggy - can I have a chocolate, why is France so far away?



Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust
Organisation: United Nations
Website: www.un.org/events/calendar/

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