

2006 ASPI EVENTS

February 25 - "Beginners Ginseng Growing Workshop," at the ASPI office in Mt. Vernon. Cost is \$25, lunch to be provided. For details or to register, please call the ASPI office.

March 3-4 - "Solar Water Heater Installer Training," at University of Louisville's Shelby Campus (See details below).

June 3 - 23rd Annual ASPI Rockcastle River Day. Our theme will be "Rockcastle River Reunion." We invite you to save the date, plan to attend, and watch for details in our Spring Appalachian Alternatives newsletter.

October 7 - National Tour of Solar Buildings.

October 14-15 - 2006 Bluegrass Energy & Green Living Expo (See details below).

Deb Bledsoe Moves into Director's Position

On January 1st, 2006, Deb Bledsoe officially became Executive Director of ASPI. As Operations Director, Deb has been in charge of much of ASPI's day-to-day operations since early 2005, while Director Ben Perry spent his time organizing the Bluegrass Energy Expo. The Expo has demanded a great deal of Ben's focus and energy for the past 2 years and the success of the 2005 Expo has encouraged an even greater commitment to the project. In addition, Ben will be overseeing the development of a new Bluegrass Energy & Green Living Directory and Website in 2006. The Expo, Directory and Website will all remain projects of ASPI and the KY Solar Partnership, and Ben will continue to help with ASPI's general operations and development work.

Deb came to ASPI in the spring of 2004 as a part-time project staffer and has been so useful she's stayed on ever since. She currently lives in the Cordwood House on the Rockcastle River and is very involved in local water quality and karst (cave) issues. Deb has followed ASPI's activities for over 25 years and she bought her first Simple Lifestyle Calendar sometime in the early 1980's.

In Deb's own words: Ben is to be commended for shepherding ASPI through a big transition, and getting the Expo on the road to continued success. I am pleased to take the helm of an organization with such a long history of environmental advocacy. My background is as more of a



New ASPI Director Deb Bledsoe

generalist but my interests in karst, watersheds, sustainable economic development, and community organizing should serve ASPI well in our efforts with other environmental and social justice organizations in the quest to address complicated and multi-disciplinary issues, locally and regionally. We have assembled a wonderful group of staff, volunteers, and consultants with a huge fund of knowledge and connections, and I am very excited to take a bigger role in coordinating all our diverse projects and efforts.

Planning for Expanded 2006 Expo Begins: Steering Committee Members Wanted

by Ben Perry

The Bluegrass Energy Expo theme has been expanded to include "Green Living" and will henceforth be called the Bluegrass Energy & Green Living Expo. The event will maintain its focus on energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy, and expand to include everything from green building and socially responsible investing to local organic agriculture and greener consumer products and services of all kinds. The expansion was envisioned as a part of the original project from its conception in 2003, and is designed to attract a wider base of support throughout the community, state and region.

Planning for 2006 will begin with a steering committee meeting on February 3rd at the downtown branch of the Lexington Public Library. After the first meeting, we plan to go back to meeting on the 2nd Friday of each month from 1:00 to 2:30 at the library. If you are interested in serving on the steering committee or participating in some other manner, please contact project coordinator Ben Perry at 859-523-4773 (office), 859-327-0924 (cell) or benperry@a-spi.org. We are interested in committee members representing the business, education, government and non-profit sectors, and volunteers willing to commit a few hours of their time and expertise to the cause.

Kentucky Solar Partnership Update

KSP continues to promote the use of solar water heaters through our low-interest loan program and \$500 rebate program. Our marketing efforts for these programs include the distribution of radio public service announcements, radio interviews, articles in regional publications, and presentations at various community gatherings. If you are interested in applying for a loan or rebate, please contact KSP at 1-888-576-6527.

As Appalachian Alternatives goes to press, we are preparing to send a copy of The Kentucky Solar Energy Guide, along with a packet of display materials about solar energy and conservation, to public libraries around the state of Kentucky. This will bring the good news about solar energy to a wider audience in counties across the Commonwealth.

Solar Water Heater Installer Training

March 3-4, 2006, Louisville, Kentucky

The Kentucky Solar Partnership (KSP) and the Energy Center at the University of Louisville are sponsoring a two-day workshop to train installers of solar water heaters. This workshop covers solar water and pool heating system design, installation, maintenance, and servicing techniques. The course is designed for plumbing and heating contractors and other interested parties.

The workshop will be held at the University of Louisville's Shelby Campus. Registration is \$95 if received by February 24, 2006, or \$115 if registered after this date. Scholarships are available upon request. Registration includes a solar water heater installer's manual, a copy of The Kentucky Solar Energy Guide, and lunch both days.

The workshop will be presented by Bob Ramlow of Artha Renewable Energy in Wisconsin. Bob has been the core solar thermal instructor for the Midwest Renewable Energy Association since 1990 and is the author of the solar thermal manual used in this workshop. Bob is the lead solar thermal consultant for the Wisconsin Focus on Energy Program, a public/private Wisconsin State renewable energy program.

Call 1-888-576-6527 for more information or to register.

The Appalachian Ecology Program

The Appalachian Ecology Program presented at the Mary E. Fritsch Nature Center is one of the most valued projects we have at ASPI. Nature Center Director Andri Kukas visited schools and presented the program to over 400 students in the fall of 2005, and many of the students made a field trip to the Nature Center. Sadly, not all of the classrooms were able to visit the Rockcastle River site for a field trip because some school systems have cancelled all travel due to high fuel costs. We hope to be able to serve an additional 100 or more students this spring, and we will be looking for funding for their travel.

Our condolences and special prayers go out to the family of longtime supporter Mary E. Fritsch, mother of ASPI founder Father Al Fritsch. Mrs. Fritsch passed away in early November and will be missed, but her love of gardening and the outdoors will be memorialized in the opportunities the Nature Center presents for local kids.



Notre Dame Volunteers

Volunteer Program

by Laura Wick & Deb Bledsoe

The close of 2005 brings a look back at the first full year of ASPI's renewed Volunteer Outreach Program. We hosted several groups in the Spring, and then two more in the Fall, a student group of 11 from Notre Dame's Appalachia Program at the Center for Social Concerns, and a group of 12 Wilderness Volunteers hailing from all over the eastern US including Maryland, Illinois, Missouri, Texas, New Jersey, Indiana, and Kentucky.

Wilderness Volunteers completed a number of projects in and around the ASPI facilities, including the setting up of projects for other volunteers to complete, the rehab of our electric car, and the cataloging of our Appropriate Technology Library. They helped with trail

maintenance and rebuilding, tire removal from the Rockcastle River, electrical and telephone wiring repairs and general cleaning at the Nature Center.

Our Notre Dame group participated in illegal dump and stream cleanup, as well as picking up litter from roadsides in Rockcastle County. These enthusiastic students collected nearly 300 bags of trash and 28 tires, working along Hammons Fork and US 25, and in the streambed of Roundstone Creek at the Sinks of the Roundstone. In their off-hours, our fall groups visited local hiking and caving spots, learning about our karst topography, Civil War history, and water resource issues.

The New Year is off to a busy start here at ASPI! We have several groups already signed up to work with us this spring, and have received quite a few inquiries from groups wanting to serve this spring and summer. Students from the University of Notre Dame will be returning in March to spend a week with us during their spring break, as well as students from Loyola University in Chicago who will also serve for a week this March. HighSight, a high school mentoring group from Chicago, has also expressed interest in returning this summer for a service project. We are hoping for a repeat group from Wilderness Volunteers as well.

We are thrilled to have so many folks interested in working with ASPI and we're busy organizing projects to help improve the facilities here at ASPI and also creating projects to help further our mission of promoting sustainability and appropriate technology. Again, we do have several wish list items that will help us improve the volunteer program, including 10 sleeping cots, and 3 or 4 large institutional size pots and pans. If you are able to provide any of these items please contact Deb Bledsoe at the ASPI office for more specifics.

We send a hearty thank you to all the groups and individuals who have given their time and talents this past year, and we look forward to working with many more volunteers in 2006.

"Living Green"

by Laura Wick

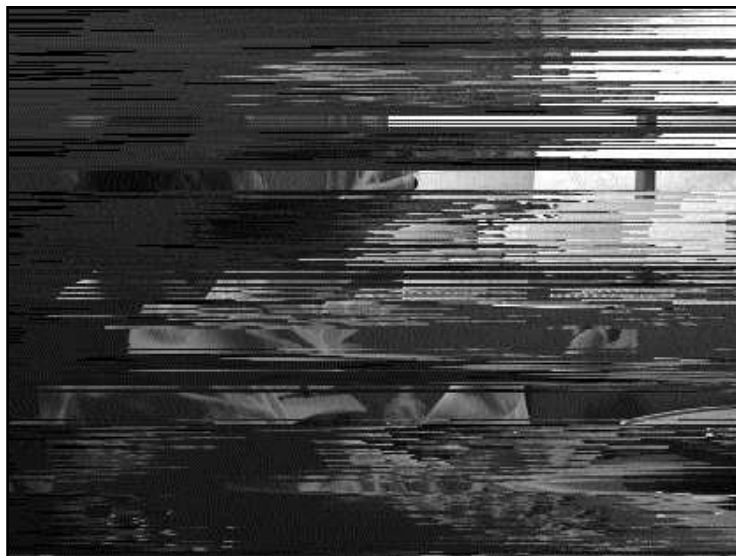
This past holiday season, while searching for websites that offer "green" holiday gift ideas, I stumbled upon an organization called The Center for a New American Dream. I found their website, www.newdream.org, to be outstanding. The site is chock-full of ways to lower your impact on the earth by being a responsible and conscientious consumer, and offers ideas for taking action on a variety of issues. Although many of us are probably already doing the things mentioned on the New Dream site, it's refreshing to see another organization dedicated to promoting sustainability and a new way of looking at consumerism and materialism. For those of you who, like me, are trying to be wise consumers on a tight budget, check out the weekly column "Living Green Below Your Means." Here's to a New Year of conscientious, lower-impact living!

Notes From The Loidl Laboratory

by Jack Kieffer

The beginnings of the Loidl Laboratory go back to ASPI's work with the forest and its protection from clear cutting. Al Fritsch, then executive director of ASPI, in discussions with staff and consultants, recognized ginseng as an excellent means to promote forest protection. In order to grow healthy, wild ginseng plants a good dense forest cover is needed, which would cause forest owners

to protect the trees from removal as a cash crop. Since ginseng is a more valuable crop which can be harvested much sooner and more frequently than the forest, without destroying the trees, it was decided to promote virtually wild ginseng growing to the small farm owner, and the Appalachian Ginseng Foundation was started. Syl Yunker has been a key consultant for ginseng growing and harvesting.



Jack Kieffer examines a thin layer chromatography plate

Even though ginseng can be harvested sooner than the trees of a forest, ginseng plants, in particular the root, is not desired by buyers until it is twelve to fifteen years old or older. For the farmer of a small forest this is a long time to wait for a cash crop. As a result, ginseng leaves were investigated as a source of the active ingredients in the mature root, known as ginsenosides. Since the leaves feed the root, it was thought that the leaf would also have the ginsenosides. A literature search on ginseng surfaced a few articles discussing the extraction of ginsenosides from the ginseng leaf. ASPI decided to develop this extraction procedure and a facility was needed for this study.

We selected a small tool shed on the ASPI demonstration site to be converted into a chemical extraction laboratory, and a generous donor from Germany, Oswald Loidl, supplied funds to make this possible. While this was being accomplished by Eddie Stallsworth, Mr. Roger I. de la Rosa, a Jesuit volunteer with a doctorate in chemistry, was doing further literature search on ginseng and obtaining chemicals for the laboratory. A small centrifuge, other laboratory equipment, and glassware was available from previous work that ASPI had done on pollution testing in streams. Later, Al Fritsch and the author attended a University of Kentucky auction and obtained a scale, cell homogenizers and glassware and other laboratory equipment that have been very useful in the extraction process. The laboratory is used winter and summer to produce extracts and refine the extraction process.

Syl Yunker in Kentucky and a friend of Paul Gallimore in North Carolina collected leaves last fall for extraction and testing in the Loidl laboratory. Testing of the extracts on an LC/MS (liquid chromatograph/mass spectrometer) are being done in the Biochemistry Department of Berea College by students of Dr. Matt Saderholm. With this combination of instruments students will be able to analyze for the ginsenosides in the samples. That is, they will be able to separate out the ginsenosides in the LC and determine which ginsenoside is in each of the samples in the MS. These ginsenosides are the active ingredients in ginseng which promote healing, protecting and regulating the health of the people who use it. The results of this work will be published in a future newsletter.

A TLC (thin layer chromatography) plate was recently run of samples extracted over the last several months in the Loidl Laboratory. Some of the extractions were done in just water and some in methanol/water. The methanol/water samples extract the most ginsenosides, however the water extraction samples pull out one or two unique ginsenosides. The LC/MS study will identify the ginsenosides in a sample and eventually we hope to be able to correlate what is found on the TLC plate with the LC/MS study.

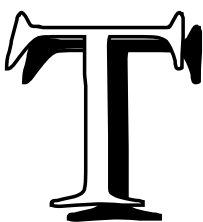
Photographs needed for 2007 Simple Lifestyle Calendar - *Appalachian Wonders*

We are looking for donations of good photos of Appalachian Wonders and everyone is encouraged to submit their work. Photos can be black-and-white or color, old or new, digital or printed.

won*der (wun'dr) *n.* **1.** a person, thing, or event that causes astonishment & admiration; marvel **2.** the feeling of surprise, admiration, & awe aroused by something unexpected, incredible, etc. **vi** **1.** to be seized or filled with wonder; feel amazement; marvel.

The following are examples of images to give a sense of what we're looking for: community gatherings; a special family moment, such as the expressed wonder of childhood; pure bliss of some experience available only in the country; a transformative religious moment - a face that shows wonder; appalachian dance; wonder, when the underdog ascends, when the poor arise, wounded are healed, local pragmatic government prevails, etc.; audience at a magic show or country fair; creation; natural wonders - wildflowers, natural scenes, special sunlight, etc. Let your imagination run wild!

General tips for sending digital photos - Continuous-tone (grayscale or color) images should be scanned to provide a final printed output at between 225 and 275 dpi. Final image dpi is the resolution in dpi of the original scan, divided by the enlargement or reduction factor. For example, a 600 dpi scan enlarged 250% provides a 600/2.5 or 240 dpi final image, & falls comfortably within our recommended range. Remember, our calendar photos generally are 8" X 10" horizontal shots. **Please submit printed photos by March 15, 2006** to Mark Spencer, 50 Lair St., Mt. Vernon, KY 40456. Submit digital photos (March 15 - deadline) to m Spencer@a-spi.org. Please provide a brief description (location, event) for each photo.



THANKS

9-29-05 to 1-18-06: Marie Cirillo, University of Notre Dame, Ruben Angel, Nancy Jackson, Philip & Terrie Curd, Leonard Levine, Mother Paula Seiple/Holy Redeemer Monastery, Rustum & Della Roy, Syl

Yunker, Sr. Joyce Gros/Dominicans of St. Catharine, Ian Rudick, Robert & Esther Gieser, Kelvin Yee, Wendell & Tanya Berry, Bill Goolsby, Joyce Ogden/Sisters of Mercy for Ellen O'Bryan, Sharon Fradenburgh & Joe Taylor, Sally Chappell, Dr. Pat Kenschaft, Jonathan Kern, Mariana D'Amico, William Wach, Phyllis Jenness, Howard Stovall, Carpenter Warren Ins.

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Wilderness Volunteers at work

Wish List

Energy and environmental reference/design books, fire-box or fire-proof safe, paper shredder, recent model PCs and monitors, digital projector, a flat-bed utility trailer (12' ideal), sawdust, mulch and manure, and tools (shovels, rakes, mattocks, etc) for trail maintenance.

HELP SUPPORT ASPI through DISCOUNT COMMUNICATION SERVICES

New Discounted Internet Service - Receive up to 150 hours a month of internet usage for \$14.95 and designate \$2.25 per month to ASPI (at no cost to you). To sign up, visit aspi.visp-net.com or if you don't currently have internet access, call 800-803-5726, *and be sure to mention ASPI so we get credit for the order.*

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