



# Sacred Earth Network

Newsletter

Winter 2007-2008

Number 23

This has been a full and exciting year at Sacred Earth Network (SEN). We are more fully implementing the core mission (see page 11) that birthed us almost 20 years ago. Through our workshops, expeditions, exchanges, community programs and retreats we are challenging the deeply-held cultural stories that tell us that humans are isolated from each other and superior to the rest of Creation (to name only two of the most lethal). Many of the people we are interacting with are *knowing*--not just understanding--that we humans are just another miraculous strand in the web of life, which has ignited a stronger passion for working on behalf of Earth.

I recently attended the "Great Turning" conference in New Hampshire where I led a workshop and was inspired by keynote speaker Winona LaDuke. There she gave one of her incredibly comprehensive speeches about sustainability and indigenous rights. She returned again and again to the theme of "my relatives". Her firm tone softened as she spoke about the salmon, the bear, the wild rice, the air, the sturgeon, and the buffalo, and she kept referring to them as family. In looking around at the rapt audience, I noticed the tears on the faces of people being reconnected, briefly yet strongly, to that primordial connection with life...and feeling the innate grief that springs forth from knowing about so many relatives that are lost, endangered, and dishonored.

Only a worldview so cut off from Life could trigger so much destruction... and yet throughout 2007 we met, communicated with, and heard about thousands of people who are doing their best to heed the Elders basic message: listen to your Original Instructions: sow seeds of respect, reciprocity, gratitude, and love. Open to the Great Mystery and in so doing you'll know how to act.



Benjamin Jojola of Isleta Pueblo, co-leader of SEN's Indigenous Peoples Exchange, visiting a class of Native Siberian youth in the Altai.

I believe this is evidence of a groundswell for transformational change that grows in power daily. It reinforces the need for SEN to work for the Earth in two specific ways: support traditional Native culture (which includes the protection of land and sacred sites), and to nurture the direct experience of oneness with Nature (which includes challenging those deeply held "industrial" stories we tell ourselves). These approaches seem to mutually support each other.

Highly respected Navajo Elder and SEN advisor, Leon Secatero said in a

recent phone call: "You can hear it in the wind and notice it in the animals. Be ready! We, the five-fingered ones, are being called to purify ourselves and put aside the negativity. This way we can look at things in a positive, good spirited way and come together for Mother Earth".

All the "news" in this newsletter is about this coming together. Thanks for being a part of this great adventure.

– Bill Pfeiffer

**Waking Our World (WOW!)  
Community Program with Dream Change**

In 1998, SEN Director Bill Pfeiffer attended a workshop with John Perkins (SEN advisor, founder of Dream Change and author of "Confessions of An Economic Hitman") which led to his meeting Llyn Roberts, currently Dream Change's director. Llyn's idea was to work with SEN to co-create an expedition to Siberia, where people could learn about indigenous wisdom there and use that to help change the dream of modern culture. After several very successful trips, Llyn and Bill discussed providing another transformative and action-oriented experience for people living in North America that did not include trans-Atlantic jet travel. What was born out of those discussions was the Waking Our World (WOW!) Community Program.



Bill and Llyn facilitating a WOW! gathering.

WOW! workshops/gatherings are 95% experiential and intended to raise personal and global consciousness; develop and strengthen community; hone intuitive and transformational approaches derived from indigenous wisdom; support sustainable shifts in lifestyle; and empower wakeful navigation of change during this crucial time in human history. WOW! gatherings are conducted at little cost to the participant/community. This makes it possible for anyone to participate and nurture wakeful community in their own back yard - where it really counts!.

In 2007, Llyn and Bill facilitated programs in Maine, New York and New Jersey with great success, much appreciation, and a strong desire for more. There are also plans to train other facilitators in order to widen WOW!'s impact. If you'd like to sponsor a program in your community, please contact Llyn or Bill at [info@dreamchange.org](mailto:info@dreamchange.org) or [info@sacredearthnetwork.org](mailto:info@sacredearthnetwork.org)

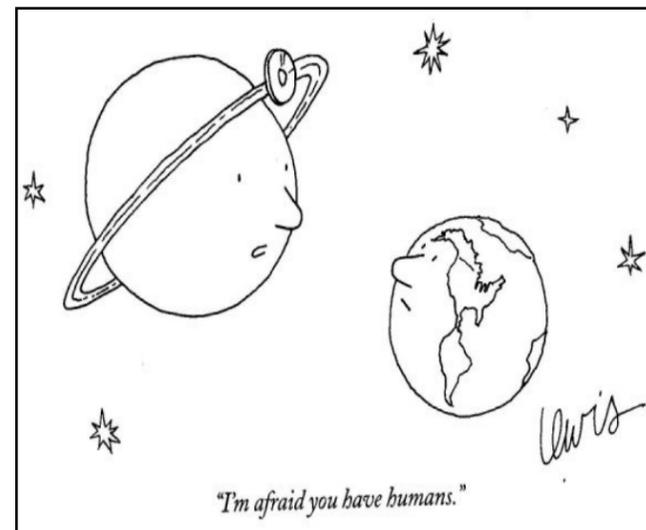
Here are a few testimonials:

*"Llyn and Bill are gentle giants leading us through the depths of despair to a renewed sense of hope - for ourselves, our communities, and for our planet. A terrific and important workshop!!"* -Peggy Woodcock, Gray, ME

*"I came away with spiritual and psychological sustenance long missing from my life. I have experienced deep despair and deadness over our desperate world situation. Since the surprisingly subtle experiences in this workshop, I now feel deeply rooted and connected. I feel alive, confident and focused. A remarkable change in just two days! Thank you."* -Mariah Williams, Liberty, ME

*"The WOW! Community Program format and content brought me to a new strength of self that feels completely natural and powerful. Thank you Llyn and Bill for having love and concern for the Earth and all of those upon it, and for having the wisdom to create such a peace-transforming workshop."* -Michelle Douglas, Richmond, ME

*"The WOW! Community Program workshop was wonderful! It is the perfect next step after Pachamama Alliance's Awakening the Dreamer symposium. WCP! gets people out of their heads and into their hearts"* -Bill Grover, Boston, MA



*After 7 years, Sacred Earth Network has two Native champions of its Indigenous Peoples Exchange Benjamin Jojola and Beverly Billie both from the Pueblos of New Mexico. Below, Benjamin reports on a recent planning trip that they both initiated to the Siberian "hub" for these kind of activities: the Altai Mountains of Siberia. The long term plan is to make this a completely "Native owned" project. The full article is available at our web site.*

**Winter Snow in the Altai  
by Benjamin Jojola**

My journey from the Pacific Northwest to the Altai Mountain villages of south-central Siberia was a whirlwind of plane rides, van shuttles, meetings and translators. The purpose of this trip-- the fruition of months of planning-- was to meet with the Altai people to discuss future possibilities for the next stage of the Indigenous People Exchange (IPE). This next stage would bring together youth, administrators and traditional elders from around the globe to share and learn from one another in our common struggles and shared vision.



Benjamin and Beverly meeting with Native Siberians in the Altai Mountains. Discussions focused on socio-political issues during our round table with the adults on topics such as: Native reservation status, the number of reservations in America, government census procedures, and the pros and cons of using natural resources as a source of income for tribal members.

The vibration softened when we met with the youth in a small classroom. Beverly utilized her background in experiential learning to engage the youth in large group activities that brought out the wide smiles of the young people. It was at the second school that a youth joined in the cultural discussion.

The second day was another full session meeting with department heads of education, nature preserve parks, as well as musicians, activists, community members and elders. At this table there was more of the same dialogue about reservation status, population of the Native Americans, land rights on reservations, legal protection of sacred sites and enforcement of these laws. I commented,



inviting the politicians to come together and learn through a... how some time and go unnoticed... on. Beverly ended always seem as d." This was an... ded clarity to the group and led to the introduction of proposed experiential education curriculum and planning of two summer camps. The first Indigenous Peoples Exchange of Native American youth, tribal leaders and elders is planned for July 2008. The second Indigenous Peoples Exchange would consist of indigenous youth, administrators and traditionalists of the Altai region in October 2008.

Overall, there was much sharing between Beverly, myself, and the indigenous Siberians on environmental, cultural, spiritual, archeological, historical and experiential education issues. All the participants came away enriched and eager for more. Beverly and I left the Altai with the sense that anything is possible, that we have allies with a shared vision, and that these programs will benefit the indigenous people of the Altai and North America.

Time seemed to stand still in the wonderful snow capped mountains of the Altai region. I am sure that I am not the only person to reflect on the similarities between my culture and that of the Altai people. In some ways when I am there it feels like I have traveled back to a time when the traditions are less fragmented, the community more connected, the language still vital and the beliefs held strong. It is easy to forget that it is 2007 and not 1907 or even earlier. And so this causes me to consider how much of my own culture has been preserved and what has been lost. It is this that fuels my desire to build connection with the Siberian people.

North American Natives can help indigenous people of Siberia by sharing our experiences - the struggles and the triumphs. In turn, we can continue to be inspired by their courageous lives. Together, we move forward, fueled by

our common life sustaining values. Much love, honor and respect to the elders that teach the young ones their traditional languages, so that their culture will stay strong and alive for future generations.



### Thoughts From Beverly Billie After Her Trip To the Altai

To me, feelings come from the spirit, the soul. If your community does not take care of your spiritual and emotional health, then you have young people committing suicide. It is a quality of spirit that will show the success of our program.

This trip took me to another realm of spirit. I truly recognized that spirit lives forever. Right now we're here in this body on borrowed time. We are a small piece of something much greater. We are a connection to the Creator on behalf of others. The way I looked at loss and grief before the Altai trip was very hard emotionally. I'm a widow, I've lost three brothers, and I'm about to lose my parents. Upon returning, I realized I'm not losing anything. When a loved one dies and journeys to the other realm, I'm gaining a spirit who is empowered in that realm to guide me in this realm to do the work I do here. I'm an instrument of the Creator, being used as a small part of something much more powerful and greater than myself. I'm being given this direction and this voice. The work needs to be done.

In the Altai region I felt a closeness and spiritualness in the land that I'd never felt anywhere else before. In my home I feel it in sacred sites. When I was in the Altai it was just shown to me, because I didn't know where to go to find it. It gave itself to me. It was winter there, and everything was bare. I saw Mother Earth as vulnerable as she can be. It was as if she were saying, "Help me." We are all children of Mother Earth, and I am also a mother. When Mother Earth asks me to help her, she is asking other mothers to help her, for the sake of the Earth itself but also for the people of the Earth and all other beings, her children. We all must respond.



Beverly and Benjamin with shaman Olga Erekhonova.



### Interview with Susanne Moser

*This is the first in a series of SEN interviews with people who are on the frontlines of sustainability, indigenous rights, and cultural change efforts but are not on the front pages. These full-length interviews will appear on our web site [www.sacredearthnetwork.org](http://www.sacredearthnetwork.org)*

*Susanne Moser, Phd, is an action-oriented researcher whose work focuses on the social impacts of climate change. She published an anthology on the topic, entitled: **Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change** (Cambridge University Press, 2007).*



*From 1999-2003, Susanne was a staff scientist for the International Union of Concerned Scientists working in the trenches of effective climate change communication and social mobilization. She is also a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)*

*made up of over 2000 of the leading climate-related scientists in the world.*

*Bill Pfeiffer met her for the first time in March in Boulder, Colorado where she works at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. She has been a member of Sacred Earth Network for many years. Their short, but exciting, chat led to this interview. Here is a short excerpt:*

**Bill Pfeiffer:** For the non-scientist, can you summarize where you believe humanity is at in relation to climate change?

**Susanne Moser:** Oh, always a tough question. Today I feel optimistic. Maybe a better way of saying that is to say I feel empowered vis-a-vis the great forces that shape our lives. But some days I get really desperate myself. In any case, I think, we have to be realistic.

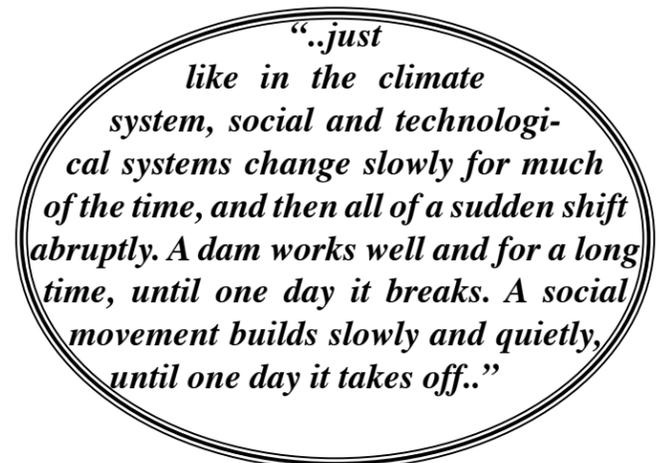
Let me give you an example: We know, for example, with great confidence that global warming leads to global sea-level rise - partly due to the expansion of ocean water as it warms, partly because of the melting down of land-based glaciers and ice-sheets. Recently scientists have observed a very rapid break-down and melting of the Greenland icesheet - so fast, in fact, that it's causing a revolution

in our thinking about how large icesheets work. No one until recently believed that they could melt as fast as what we're observing right now. Well, if Greenland were to melt down completely, the added meltwater would raise ocean levels all over the planet by about 20 feet. This won't happen over night, but over the course of a couple of centuries. Still, much faster than historical sea level rise since the last ice age. What's critical here is to know that if air temperatures rise above a certain threshold (and no one knows exactly where that is!), then this total collapse and meltdown can't be stopped.

The point I'm making is this: our climate system has some long lag times built into it - it reacts slowly and over a long time to our "poking" it with our emissions. But then there are thresholds (most of which we don't know or can't predict), when it can react so quickly, it will be catastrophic for society. We know we've been poking the climate for a long time, and we are destabilizing it, and it could shift abruptly. But we don't know for sure whether and when it will.

So, from that point of view, I'd say, humanity is at a critical juncture vis-a-vis global warming. Will we destabilize it further or try to reduce our impact and reduce the chances of catastrophe?

What I find encouraging is what I have learned in my work about social change: just like in the climate system, social and technological systems change slowly for much of the time, and then all of a sudden shift abruptly. A dam works well and for a long time, until one day it breaks. A social movement builds slowly and quietly, until one day it takes off and major political changes become possible. We're witnessing the building of such a climate protection movement right now. What we don't know is when the American public will get up in large enough numbers and say "Enough!" Social change can happen fast, too.



### Altai Expedition 2007

In July of this year, five intrepid souls traveled to the Altai region of Siberia with SEN trip leader Bill Pfeiffer. Bill has traveled to Russia nearly 40 times and commented that, "Instead of these trips becoming boring or routine, they are becoming more fascinating. Our relationship with the land and people keeps getting stronger, especially in the Altai. I can't wait to go back!"

The itinerary was similar to previous trips but had some new twists and surprises. The group established themselves at the east end of the 800 square mile Uch-Enmek Nature Park, where they were welcomed by SEN's main indigenous Altai partner and guide, Danil Mamyev. After visiting and blessing many sacred sites at Uch-Enmek they met with shaman Olga Erekenova who blessed them on their next day's journey to the remote and serene Arikem Lake. They spent a night at Arikem, which the locals revere as particularly sacred, and which is fed from underground springs warm enough to swim in.

The group then headed west to Ust-Kan to visit the museum of the well-known Altai scientist Nikolai Shadoev, with a detour northward to visit two shamans that had rarely met Westerners. Both shamans had a strong impact on the group in different ways. Before heading south towards Mongolia, the group stopped at the famous White Stone cave (a.k.a. Yeti Cave in Altai). The Russian archeological guide there confirmed human habitation in the cave being upwards of 200,000 years (!) more than three times what was previously thought.

About 4 hours south of Yeti Cave is the juncture of the Katun River and the Chuya River. Not far down the road is a nature park called Chu-Oozi where Galina and Ruslana Toptigina have been offering their generous and warm hospitality to SEN staff and guided groups for years (see small grants article on page 9), It is in this region that the Altai landscape gradually turns from mostly forested to mostly desert. Many stone circles, petroglyphs, and monoliths can be seen not far from the main road.

Half-way from Chu-Oozi to the Mongolian border the group went east into a new area for Bill, the Ulagan region. Danil said that the particular Altai clan inhabiting this almost inaccessible region, the Telengit, had a similar reputation as the Apaches, very tough on their enemies, very friendly to their friends. Rumor has it they shot down a Soviet helicopter in the 80's... Fortunately, the SEN group was in the latter category and they were treated like celebrities at a huge cultural pride festival near the town of Ulagan.



The final highlight was visiting the shaman Maria Amanchina at the furthest point south who has really dazzled groups with her good-natured humor and spiritual power. She commented, "There is still tremendous value in practicing the 'old ways'. When you [Westerners] respectfully explore my homeland and take the time to thank the Spirits it makes our people feel good. The Russians [modern people] want us to live in the cities where our youth want cars and money. When you come you remind us that our traditional life is worth something."

Here are some comments from a few of the trip's participants:

"Everything was simply amazing, it was wonderful to be on a trip where every place we visited held so much magic. Nothing stood out as being exceptional because everything was so special in its own right...just being on the land was incredibly healing and nurturing and encouraged an openness in me. The other thing that really struck me was the real sense of trust established between the group and the shamans and wisdom-keepers that we visited with... we were received because we came with an intent to learn and serve." - James Powell

"The Altai, and I'm sure all Siberia, is a powerful place and the people are the most open and giving anywhere. Anyone who is able should leave the comfort and familiarity of their usual lives and lifestyles and let the place and the people touch their hearts like they've never been touched before." - Diane Lipartito

"I am SO filled with Gratitude and Honor for the Embrace of the Altai, and All I met there.... There is no single experience but All Experiences, strung together like a string of sacred pearls, that have allowed this trip to SO resonate within my Heart...The Hospitality, the Welcome, the Profound Silence, the Laughter, have left an indelible mark which I celebrate each day... I am transformed, as only Powerful trips might do, that even the way I see the ordinary is extraordinary... I notice when I look at trees or a bird, or hear the story of wind on my face, there is a difference, and I Feel the Altai with me, and I smile.." -Vincent Nuccio

"Being able to share this trip with an absolutely loving, supportive and joyful group was key. They made everything flow smoothly and joyfully. Being able to connect with and experience the beauty and power of the horses was amazing, and to actually ride one, was an absolute dream come true. Seeing the throat singer Elbek [who had a stroke since 2006] made me realize how important it is to acknowledge, accept, practice, and be grateful for the gifts God has given to me. Even though I really don't want to accept them because of fear, I have faith that God knows me better than I know myself..." -Charline Souffrant (her third trip to Siberia with SEN!)



## “Into The Heart of The Desert”

They came from the Four Directions; Canada, Mexico, California, Massachusetts, and from Michigan too! An amazing group of nine adventurous souls gathered in Albuquerque in late September to embark on an expedition exploring the teachings of the land and medicine people of the Southwest. The group was guided by myself, Cathy Pedevillano and Bill Pfeiffer. We were excited to share this sacred land and its people so precious to us both. We were initially greeted by the wisdom and graciousness of Steven McFadden at his home in Santa Fe where we were able to get to know each other and set our intentions. The next day we met with Anna Maria Perez and Gloria Valencia, two native medicine women from northern New Mexico, who blessed us in ceremony on Gloria’s powerful and beautiful land, and the road was open

From there, we journeyed to Taos Pueblo where we encountered an annual Feast Day with hundreds of people gathered to celebrate abundance. We experienced the true meaning of generosity as Pueblo residents opened up their homes and shared a specially prepared food with whom ever stopped by. Sacred clowns painted in black and white entertained the crowd and enacted an ancient tradition of scaling a 50-ft high pole; not an easy task. The day ended with traditional dancing and chanting.

Onward we traveled to the home of Apache potter, Felipe Ortega. Felipe shared some of his personal story with us while molding special clay from his land into one of his famous and sought-after bean pots. We had the chance to explore his sacred land and do a shamanic journey on the top of the mesa. We also took an excursion to Ojo Caliente mineral springs and bathed in the warm healing pools.

On our travels, we continually blessed the land and the spirits with offerings of cornmeal and tobacco, holding in our hearts our sacred intentions of healing and learning from the Earth, the people we met and each other. And we were certainly blessed in return in so many ways. Over time, the group bonded into a strong and loving tribe, which allowed deep healing and transformation.

At the “heart” of our trip was a three night stay in Chaco Canyon where we were immersed in Power and Beauty. We watched sunrises and sunsets, hiked to ancient ruins, did shamanic journeys, ceremony and sharing circles; gazed at stars, planets and the full breadth of the Milky Way; learned of Chaco’s ancient inhabitants, saw their symbols in the rocks, and were reminded that Mother Earth is the greatest teacher and healer of all. We were also supported by the love and nourishing cooking of our

Navajo friends, Marcia and Carmen. Gomo Martinez, a Navajo medicine man visited us one evening by the fire and told his people’s creation story to a backdrop of distant lightning and thunder and a spectacular starry sky. Our experience at Chaco was beyond words, extended through the dimensions, and left a lasting imprint on all of us.



The group exploring Chaco Canyon.

we hiked to Spence Hot Springs and found a secluded spot amidst boulders and tall pines to powerfully integrate all we had experienced through drum journeys and a sharing circle.

We traveled back to Albuquerque for our final evening together, sharing openly and deeply what was in our hearts and minds, and prayed for a good way ahead. Bill and I reinforced the idea that trips like these are not just “feel good” experiences but enable us to access our deeper truth and become more aligned with our greater service to Earth and humanity. Experiences like this also provide the opportunity for us to re-evaluate our lives and decide where to focus our time and energy for the greater good, which hopefully is toward a less consumptive and more Earth-honoring culture.

In the words of a few of the participants:

*“The journey was beyond my expectations. The land was powerful and we connected to it everyday. The people that we met were inseparable from the land and we learned much from them. The rituals, journeys and hikes were amazing. Bill and Cathy arranged everything with much care. Each day flowed in a spontaneous way whether everything went as planned or Spirit opened other doors. There are no words to express how powerful and meaningful this trip was.”* -Masha Fellman

*“I still have no words that could convey how deeply moving and significant the experiences both were--and still*

From Chaco we traveled to the peaceful and beautiful town of Jemez Springs where we spent a restful and rejuvenating night.

The next day

*are--for me. Just writing these words re-connects me to my own heart. A balance was achieved between moving us along as a group, yet within that, allowing each of us personal space for our own experiences.”* -Marilyn Geddes

*“Our recent trip to the desert spoke to me on so many different levels. Meeting some of the Native peoples and feeling their open hearts and generous natures; the wonderful cohesiveness of the group; the beauty of the land and feeling the spirits of those who had walked there many years before us. To single one thing out, it would probably be the ceremony that we had inside the kiva on the last day. It was powerful beyond explanation. I don’t believe the trip... could have been improved upon.”* - Tom Mabie

*“The Journey into the Heart of the Desert continues to spiral in my life and affects my choices and my reactions to external events. Sleeping in Chaco Canyon under the sheer rock façade, heart to heart with the Mother, remains intensely imprinted in my body. I recall it and I feel it. My journeys with the drum in that sacred place and my subsequent dreams connected me to Source. The connection remains intact and viable in my life.”* -Deborah May

*“The trip was planned and handled with heartfelt spiritual purity. It was (IS) an oh so important catalyst to the fine tuning of my energy on my path. Now I can better share and spread the Light that is at the core of the spiritual metamorphosis taking place and taking hold worldwide!”* -Dan Biron



## Small Grants

**Thanks to the Save Our Spirits Fund** and several other private donors, SEN was able to give away a series of small grants (\$200-\$1000) totaling over \$7000. These grants encourage those usually outside of mainstream funding channels to continue their valuable work. They have all been involved in SEN’s projects.

2007 grantees in the order given were:

**Elizabeth Babin**, is a Canadian Ojibway grandmother and medicine woman, who narrowly missed the Indigenous Peoples Exchange (IPE) in June of 2006.

**Maria Amanchina** is a Siberian Altai shaman. She uses solar panels to provide lighting to the house she built herself.

**Steve Copeland** is creating a film called the “Shift of the Ages” about the life and mission of Guatemalan Mayan elder Don Alejandro.

**Erjen Khamaganova** is a Buryat ecologist working on sacred site protection/restoration. She is also one of the two main partners SEN works with in Siberia.

**Danil Mamyev** is the other main SEN partner in Siberia and has been featured in numerous SEN newsletters.

**Benjamin Jojola** from Isleta Pueblo has been a leader on three IPE Exchanges (see article on page 3)

**Valery Yelizarov** is a Tuvan artist who paints shamanic themes with outstanding sensitivity and insight. See <http://yelizarov.ru/>

**Bogdan Popov** is a permaculturist focusing on traditional Ukrainian building methods.

**Tatyana Kobezhikova** is an Hakassian shaman. One of her many projects is restoration of traditional Hakassian culture through the creation of an “eco-ethnological” village.

**The Mowa brothers** living on Hopiland’s Second Mesa are working tirelessly to keep the traditional ceremonies alive

**Don Alejandro Cirilo Perez and Oxlaj Elizabeth Araujo** are well-known Mayan elders. Don Alejandro is recognized as a primary keeper of the teachings, visions and prophecies of the Mayan people.

**Ruslana and Galina Toptigina** are a mother and daughter team protecting cultural and biological diversity through the indigenous Nature Park, Chu-Oozy in Siberia, that they founded in 2001.

**Leon Secatero** is a well-known Navajo elder (Canoncito Band) recovering from a stroke. He has almost finished his much anticipated book.

**Mikhail Shishin** has been working with SEN since 1994. The grant will support the organization of a gathering of professors and students of eco-design and architecture from all four countries of the Altai region.

## New England SOS

In the cold of a New England February, Bill Pfeiffer led a mini-workshop on "Indigenous Perspectives and Sustainability" as part of a one day conference entitled "New England SOS, Sustainability and Open Space". The term "Open Space" refers to Open Space Technology which is a wonderfully inclusive and flexible way for people to self-organize around any issue. Frank Deitle, co-director of Earthlands and SEN's neighbor on Glasheen Road, did a fine job of both organizing and facilitating this event.



"Indigenous Perspectives On Sustainability" Mini-workshop.

der told Bill about the Ohlones who lived along the extremely fertile region stretching between what is now San Francisco and Monterey in California. The Ohlones lived sustainably on that land for 4,000 to 5,000 years. Malcolm Margolin describes their experience of the world in his book, *The Ohlone Way* which expresses the heart of a sustainable worldview:

*"The Ohlones lived in a world perhaps somewhat like a Van Gogh painting, shimmering and alive with movement and energy in ever-changing patterns. It was a world in which thousands of living, feeling, magical things, all operating on dream-logic, carried out their individual actions. . . . Power was everywhere, in everything, and therefore every act was religious. Hunting a deer, walking on a trail, making a basket, or pounding acorns were all done with continual reference to the world of power."*

When Bill finished his introduction there was a discussion on how this worldview, cultivated in the modern era, can affect and inform daily, practical actions. All the participants were in favor of SEN organizing a weekend event in 2008 where contemporary Native elders would discuss this concept in depth with the New England sustainability community.

At the close of the mini workshop one of the participants, Stephen Brandon, read a poem he wrote on the spot:

Wild balanced heart  
Sustained by spirit  
Crashing thru  
To the mysterious  
Ancient future where all my relations  
live authentic  
and ever hopeful  
for the children



### Note on Workshops and Expeditions

In the introduction to this newsletter, we said that one of the ways SEN serves the Earth is by "nurturing the direct experience of oneness with Nature." We do this primarily through our workshops and expeditions.

As you may have noticed by reading some of the testimonials from participants, there is a growing demand for more of them. One of the biggest differences in how individuals view the planetary socio-ecological crisis is their personal sense of empowerment. Is the situation hopeless or can they make a difference? When someone feels the life force flowing within, their heart wide open, and a deep sense of connection towards the natural world, they usually sense they are ready for some kind of uniquely personal wise action.

This type of action-oriented experiential education is still rare among environmental not-for-profits. Member donations are helping this part of SEN grow. Right now, workshops and expeditions pretty much break even financially but we are hoping they can provide income over time. Thank you to those who have contributed their time as a participant, or their money, or both!

**Sacred Earth Network would love your support. If you are not a member, please join us. If you are, please show this newsletter to a friend and ask them to be a part of our unique and ever-growing network of concerned individuals and organizations.**



## About Sacred Earth Network...

*Sacred Earth Network (SEN) is a non-profit (501(C)(3)) international organization based in Petersham, Massachusetts. We are part of a planetary groundswell deciding to build a balanced and sustainable culture despite numerous negative trends. Our focus is connecting with the Earth and remembering indigenous wisdom.*

*Our activities are rooted in two core beliefs:*

*\* that all of Nature is sacred and must be treated with respect and honor, and  
\* that it is possible to "Restore the Hoop of All Nations" on this miraculous, interconnected living system we call Planet Earth.*

*Many, if not most, people in the industrial countries seem to be lost in a trance of consumerism that ignores the sacredness of Nature and the critical issues of the day. These countries "economic interests" completely disregard disappearing species, climate change, radioactive waste, and the whole plethora of threats to the biological foundation of Planet Earth. Correspondingly, a certain socialized numbness, denial, and resignation can plague even the most active among us.*

*Medicine is needed. To this end, we have been leading workshops, expeditions, and indigenous peoples exchanges that help both seasoned activists, and those just beginning to realize our interdependency, to practice ways of re-connecting and plugging in with renewed joy and vigor.*

### A special thanks to the following organizations and individuals for their generous support in 2007:

Dream Change	Ann Kaplan
Earthways Foundation	Eliza Klose
The Roy A. Hunt Foundation	Lucian Kragiel
Save Our Spirits Fund	Burt Lazarin
	Diane Lipartito
	Hal Litoff
Anonymous	Fran & Joanna Macy
John Bell	Deborah May
Peter J. Benson	Jon & Shea McGovern
Bruce and Elsa Bonaceto	Mariyam Medovaya
Deanne Bosnak	Edwin Meyer
Stephen Brandon	Steve Moeller
Terry Brodsky	Susanne Moser
Larry Buell	Paul Moss
Bill & Sara Caile	Leslie Myers
Donald Carew	Hasita Nadai
Barbara Chutroo	Beth & Philip Nicholson
Elizabeth Coe	Vincent Nuccio
Harriett Crosby	Anastasia Nute
George & Lucy Cutting	Shen Pauley
Susan Cutting	Igor & Jasmina Pavlin
Earthstory	Diana Peters & Sheldon Ross
Lyn & Leonore Fine	Naomi Pfeiffer
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**Winter Retreat For Earth-Lovers  
January 18-20, 2008  
Earthlands, Petersham, MA**

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# “Into The Heart of the Desert” 2007



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