



# GENESIS FARM

## Newsletter

Vol. 25, No. 1, Spring 2009

*A Learning Center for Re-Inhabiting Earth*

### Training for Transition Times

“We’re in for enormous disruption, no matter what. The question is how we deal with it and ameliorate its worst effects.”  
David Korten, author and economist

We live in a time of transition—movement into the Ecozoic Era, as Thomas Berry has called it. Signs are increasingly apparent: Peak oil, climate unpredictability, and ecological and economic instability. How are we to live into such a moment with intention and hope? How can we act on our commitment to life and the common good?

Out of Kinsale, Ireland, comes extraordinary possibility. Four years ago, permaculture teacher Rob Hopkins challenged his students with this question: How might we plan for moving from oil dependence to local resilience and community self-reliance? Kinsale town leaders ultimately adopted the students’ Energy Descent Plan, and since 2006, with Rob’s leadership, a community-based process for any locality to create such a plan has been spreading around the world. Over 130 officially designated Transition initiatives now exist—cities, towns, districts, villages, islands. The first in North America was designated last year in Colorado—Transition Boulder County, co-founded by **Michael Brownlee** and **Lynette Marie Hanthorn**.

Michael says the Transition movement “may be the most important, most inspirational movement in the world.” Theologian and professor Timothy Gorrindge from the U.K. affirmed this view recently in New York City, stating “The Transition movement is the most hopeful and practical possibility” he sees. “It puts faith in ordinary people,” he said. “It’s about people shaping their world through conversation and action. Things happen without the local government doing anything. It’s a profound and tremendously hopeful reinvention of democracy.”

*Michael Brownlee, a frequent speaker on sustainability issues, is a founding member of the Boulder County Food and Agricultural Policy Council and a certified trainer for Transition US. Lynette Marie Hanthorn, executive director of Transition Boulder County, has experience in organizational and community development, conflict resolution and mediation, and psychospiritual processes. For more information, see [www.TransitionColorado.ning.com](http://www.TransitionColorado.ning.com) and [www.TransitionUS.org](http://www.TransitionUS.org).*

**March 27, 7-9 pm; March 28, 9 am-8 pm; March 29, 9 am-5:30 pm.**

*Cost: \$225 prior to March 11; \$250 thereafter (includes a DVD for advance preparation).  
Meals: \$30 (2 lunches, 1 dinner). Limited lodging available: \$50 per night (includes breakfast).*

# Circling the Sun with Gratitude



## *Seasonal Celebrations at Genesis Farm*

Genesis Farm has gathered for over 25 years to mark the great seasonal festivals of the Equinoxes and Solstices. We reflect on their ageless and inexhaustible teachings and we celebrate the inner and outer marvels of life on this beautiful planet and strive to reweave ourselves back into the great web of life. These seasonal moments provide us with joy and hope and draw forth our deepest gratitude for the mystery of our existence.

**Spring Equinox**    *Saturday, March 21, 2-4 pm*  
**Summer Solstice**    *Saturday, June 20, 2-4 pm*

**Fall Equinox**    *Saturday, September 19, 2-4 pm*  
**Winter Solstice**    *Saturday, December 19, 7-9 pm*

*Led by **Lori Gold** and other Genesis Farm staff. No cost. Donations are welcome.*

## **Holy Week Retreat**

*April 8-12*

The great seasonal change from winter to spring is the foundation of the sacred holy days in the Jewish and Christian religious calendars. This Holy week retreat invites us to reflect on the meanings of Exodus, Passover and the Christian Paschal mysteries leading to Easter from the perspective of “deep time”. From this evolutionary perspective we can now see profound dynamics which have been at work throughout the journey of the Cosmos and contemplate how they are revealed in the patterns of our human journey from bondage, fear, ignorance and violence toward a vision of unity and love for the total community of Earth’s one sacred life. While Passover and Easter draw us into these historic celebrations of life’s deepest meanings, they are often lost through the busyness and pressures of our lives. We will immerse ourselves in the historic texts of these days woven into communion with the texts of the natural world. We will be out of doors for a good part of this time. Participants should be familiar with the Universe Story.

*Begins at 3 pm on Wednesday and ends with Sunday brunch.  
Led by **Miriam MacGillis** and **Lori Gold**, Genesis Farm staff.  
Cost: \$420; includes lodging and all meals.*

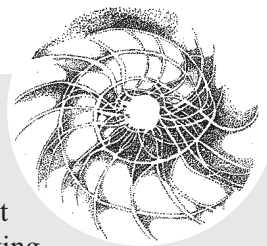
## **Holding the Dark, Calling the Dawn: A Retreat Into Deep Time**

*December 4-6*

In the northern hemisphere winter brings dark nights and the retreat of Earth’s vibrant life into dormancy, rest and expectation of the return of the Sun. In the Christian calendar, the four weeks leading up to Christmas mark the holy time of Advent. In the Jewish calendar the dark nights of winter before Hanukkah prepare for the ancient Hebrew Festival of Lights. This time of seasonal change in the outer world touches on our human experiences of loss and recovery, death and re-birth, longing and hope. Join us as we open these traditions to “deep time,” and reclaim their sacred meanings from the frenzied pressures of the commercial world. They unlock grace and powerful energies for living into the uncertainties of the 21st century. Participants should be familiar with the Universe Story and be prepared to spend time in the out of doors.

*Begins at 4 pm on Friday and ends with Sunday lunch.  
Led by **Miriam MacGillis**, founder and director of  
Genesis Farm.  
Cost: \$250; includes lodging and all meals.*

# Earth Literacy Programs at Genesis Farm



An inadequate understanding of our place and purpose as humans in the natural order of things has brought us to the current reality of Earth in severe crisis. Industrialized societies are unraveling Earth's fabric of life. This unraveling is not simply due to a failure of religious or moral values. It is, rather, our framework for thinking and action that must change. Seeing our context as a continuously developing Universe suggests a radically different understanding: Earth is a living planet and our human species is a single thread in a seamless garment of life.

Based on the insights of geologist Thomas Berry and mathematical cosmologist Brian Swimme, these programs provide contemporary scientific understandings of the evolution of the Universe, Earth, life, and human consciousness as a single unfolding process. Through the perspective of this new cosmology, we can understand both *why* and *how* we must change direction to participate in the healing and flourishing of life.

## Introduction to a New Cosmology

*Two weekend options:  
May 22-24 or October 2-4*

This weekend overview explores the enormous shift in understanding evoked by the story of an evolutionary universe and our embeddedness in Earth's web of life. It will offer new expansive understandings of the human capacity to shape an ecologically viable future for the good of the total planet.

*Begins Friday at 4 pm and ends after dinner on Sunday.*

*Cost: \$255 for the weekend program; includes lodging and all meals.*

*Stay for an additional day on Monday to integrate your learning: \$60; includes breakfast and lunch.*

## Immersion in the New Cosmology

*August 3-19*

We immerse ourselves in an intensive 16-day experience that empowers us to re-think the meaning of our lives within the context of Earth and Cosmos. Practical personal, professional, and societal changes that can help re-invent our human activities are explored. There is time for field trips and hands-on experiences in the garden and kitchen, with space also for journaling, reflection, and time in the natural world.

*Begins Monday at 4 pm and ends after lunch on Wednesday.*

*Cost: \$1,680; includes lodging and all meals.*

*Presenters: Miriam MacGillis, Genesis Farm founder and director; Larry Edwards, Ph.D., Genesis Farm staff. Larry received a Ph.D. in chemical-physics at Harvard University. He worked at the National Science Foundation for 17 years and taught at the American University of Beirut, California State University-Northridge, and the California Institute of Technology. He is now on the faculty at the California Institute of Integral Studies.*

*Visit Larry's website at [www.earthliteracyathome.org](http://www.earthliteracyathome.org).*

## Exploring a New Cosmology

*July 9-14*

### Deepening the Great Work

*July 16-21*

Highlights of the 16-day **Immersion in a New Cosmology** program in two 5-day sessions. Live and learn in the context of a mutually-enhancing relationship with Earth, as we examine the full scope of the 13.7 billion-year Universe story, as well as its implications for our lives and creative work. Register for both, or take the first and return for the second at another time.

*Begins Thursday at 4 pm and ends after lunch on Tuesday.*

*Cost: \$575 for each program; includes lodging and all meals.*

# *Opening windows of understanding and hope*

## **2009 Film Series**

**Join us for another season of Wednesday night films  
hosted in collaboration with  
the Sustainable Ridge and Valley Alliance.**

*Featured films followed by a discussion begin at 7:30 pm and are preceded by a film clip on the New Cosmology at 7 pm.  
No cost. Donations welcome.*

### **Wednesday, April 15**

#### ***The 11th Hour***

Presents our current state of life on Earth as the critical last moment when we can change course and stop our rush toward global ecological collapse. This moment of choice is presented by juxtaposing images of natural disasters and growing mountains of waste with images of exciting new ideas and technologies for a sustainable future.

### **Wednesday, September 2**

#### ***Good Food***

Documents the comeback of family farmers in the Pacific Northwest who are enabling regions to produce more of their own food. Visits farmers, farmers' markets, distributors, stores, restaurants and public officials who are developing a more sustainable food system for all.

### **Wednesday, May 6**

#### ***Too Hot Not to Handle***

In the last 100 years, mass consumption of fossil fuels, especially in the U.S., has contributed to dangerous global warming with adverse impacts on the community of all life. Ignoring these warning signs—melting glaciers, rising sea levels, and migrating viruses, among others—will only increase the damage. This cautionary documentary offers a guide to the impact of global warming and the measures that need to be taken to reverse this trend.

### **Wednesday, October 7**

#### ***Flow***

Investigates what experts label the most important political and environmental issue of the 21st century—The World Water Crisis. Examines the growing privatization of the world's dwindling fresh water supply, focusing on politics, pollution, human rights, and the emergence of a dominating water cartel. Portrays the people and institutions providing practical solutions to the water crisis, setting the stage for a global and economic turnaround.

### **Wednesday, June 3**

#### ***The Global Banquet***

A two-part documentary examining the politics of food. Part 1 asks "Who's invited to the global banquet and who is doing the inviting?" It reveals the power and self-interest of giant international food producers, national and international trade organizations and global financial institutions in controlling the world's food supply. Part 2 asks, "What's on the menu?" It examines dominant food production and food-distribution practices and policies that place monetary gain for the few above the health of the Earth and the rights of humans.

### **Wednesday, November 4**

#### ***Texas Gold***

This film profiles the brave actions that have earned Diane Wilson—mother of five and 4th generation fisherwoman—the title of "unreasonable woman." Waging multiple hunger strikes, starting up a business bottling toxic water taken from a superfund site, and chaining herself to a DOW chemical tower, Diane believes that "...putting your life at risk is where change happens."

**Speaking of films...***The Awakening Universe* with Brian Swimme is still available. This 15-minute story of the Universe has been in great demand. Send a \$25 donation to receive a copy. Outside the U.S., send a U.S. postal money order or bank check in U.S. dollars, and add \$5 postage.

*on the great concerns of the 21st century...*

## Sunday Brunch at the Farm

*We continue our popular brunch program featuring delicious local foods and visionary speakers.  
Brunch begins at 12 noon. Cost: \$25. Lecture begins at 1:30 pm. Cost: \$15.*

**Sunday, September 20 Bert Cohen**

***Becoming an Eco-Municipality:  
The Story of Portsmouth, NH***



***Bert Cohen  
University of  
New Hampshire***

In 1991, Bert Cohen read an article in *In Context Magazine* (now *YES! Magazine*) describing The Natural Step. His life has not been the same since, and his energies around grass-roots organizing and sustainability eventually contributed to the city council of Portsmouth, NH voting unanimously in 2007 to become an eco-municipality. You will find his story both inspiring and empowering. Here are some

of the questions he will ask us to consider:

*Is there a lens we can use to bring a sustainable future into greater focus?*

*Are we atoms or field phenomena?*

*What does bottom-up/top-down mean anyway?*

*Are kindness and networking really so important?*

Join us for an exciting engagement on a topic of vital importance.

***Bert Cohen*** is adjunct professor in the department of natural resources at the University of New Hampshire, where he team-teaches classes in *Sustainable Living and Systems Thinking for Sustainable Living*. He is co-founder of the *Piscataqua Sustainability Initiative*, a grassroots movement creating a constituency for sustainability in the New Hampshire and Maine Seacoast. He lives in Portsmouth, NH where he is a member of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Sustainability. During his 40-plus years of teaching, he has been actively exploring how to form learning communities both in the classroom and in the civic realm.

**Sunday, October 25 Sarah Hearn**

***Building A Local Economy with Local  
Currency: BerkShares-A Case Study***



***Sarah Hearn  
E.F. Schumacher Society***

Sarah will explore a time-tested way for communities to create local currencies as a tool for sustainable economic development. Widely used in the early 1900's, local currencies are being revived as a tool for mitigating the destruction of imploding global and national economies. She will describe how people in the Berkshire region of Massachusetts have created Berkshares as a way to maximize the healthy circulation of trade within their community.

Over 370 businesses and 12 branches of five local banks have worked together to build stronger relationships and affinities between the business community and citizens of the region, circulating over 2.2 million Berkshares. The E.F. Schumacher Society of Great Barrington, MA has been a leader in creating the rationale and development of this exciting program. Sarah will describe its vision and potential for other communities.

For more information, visit [www.smallisbeautiful.org](http://www.smallisbeautiful.org).

***Sarah Hearn*** is on staff at the *E.F. Schumacher Society*, named for the British economist and author of *Small is Beautiful*. The Society promotes the building of strong, local economies that link people, land and community. Sarah is heavily involved in the administration of the *BerkShares* local currency program. Sarah is also a co-founder of *Think OutWord*, a peer-led training in social and economic ideas for young adults.

## *Engaging ourselves and our children in our place in the universe,*

### **Symposium: Awakening the Dreamer- Changing the Dream**

*Saturday, April 25 or Saturday, October 17, 9 am-3:30 pm*

Genesis Farm hosts this symposium developed by The Pachamama Alliance in San Francisco. The focus links three of humanity's critical concerns: environmental sustainability, social justice, and spiritual fulfillment. Using video clips from some of the world's most respected thinkers along with inspiring leading edge information and dynamic group interactions, the Symposium offers new insights into the nature of our time, and the opportunity we have to impact the future of our planet through our everyday choices and action. For more about the Symposium, see [www.awakeningthedreamer.org](http://www.awakeningthedreamer.org).

*Cost: \$25; bring a bag lunch.*

*Overnight lodging available; \$50, includes breakfast.*

### **Children's Summer Camp**

*August 3-7, 10-14, 9 am-12 pm*

In the context of Thomas Berry's wisdom that "Earth is the primary teacher," children will immerse themselves in the story of the universe—galaxies, stars, sun, Earth, water, air, trees, plants, animals—developing their inherent capacity to be fully present in the natural world. For ages 5-12.

*Camp leader **Lynn Wulff** has served the Genesis Farm summer children's program for 10 years. An experienced outdoor/adventure educator, Lynn loves using awareness activities and play to encourage children's connections with the natural world.*

*Cost: \$130 per week; \$250 for 2 weeks.*

### **Feng Shui: Wind and Water**

*Saturday, May 31, 10 am-4 pm*

In this one day workshop, Renae Jensen will lead us in exploring the 3000 year old art of placemaking and demonstrating why it is still a vital tool, especially in today's harried and cluttered world. We will learn basic concepts such as chi, the five elemental theory, the concept of good fortune, the bagua, or energy map of a house and so much more. This class is designed for those of us new to Feng Shui and will empower us to begin making positive changes in our lives and personal spaces.

*Renae Jensen is editor and founder of Conscious Design Magazine. She is a Certified Master Feng Shui Professional and is a board member and Marketing Director of the International Feng Shui Guild. She is actively involved in her local community as well as in the promotion of green building and sustainable energy.*

*Cost: \$45; includes lunch.*



*in the community of life, and in the spaces we create...*

## **Wild Foods and Medicines Walk**

*May 25, Monday, Memorial Day, 10 am-3 pm*

Join us for this unique opportunity to explore the woodlands and marshes of Genesis Farm with plant enthusiast Frank Cook. Learn to identify food and medicine specific to our Ridge and Valley bio-region, and gain insight about plants worldwide and the healing traditions surrounding them.

**Frank Cook** is a graduate of Duke University and internationally-known herbalist. He has spent over a decade following his passion for being a repository of plant knowledge. Studying with herbalists, shamans, doctors, professors, and medicine people around the world, he has been initiated into many ways of walking with plants and has developed a deep-rooted network of people dedicated to plants, healing, and ways to create a better world. He leads a simple life, communicating, teaching, reflecting, and delving deeper into the mysteries of the plant kingdom and our place in the web of life. Visit his website: [www.wildroots.org](http://www.wildroots.org).

*Cost: \$40; includes lunch.*

## **Cooking Class**

*Wednesday, September 9, 6-9 pm*

Join Delia Quigley for an adventure in cooking creative, delicious and nutritious meals using the highest quality locally-grown ingredients.

**Delia Quigley** is a nutritional counselor and natural foods chef. She developed The Body Rejuvenation Program, based on more than 25 years of practice and teaching whole foods preparation, internal body detoxification, yoga and meditation. She is the author of seven books: *The Body Rejuvenation Cleanse*, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Detoxing Your Body*, *Superfoods*, *Starting Over: Learning to Cook with Natural Foods*, *Cooking Healthy with One Foot Out the Door*, *Simply Smoothies*, and *Empowering Your Life with Meditation*.

*Cost: \$50; includes dinner, of course!*

## **Food Preservation**

*Saturday, August 29, 10 am-3 pm*

Learn how to make the most of the harvest's abundance by preserving some of it in safe and delicious ways that will nourish you throughout the winter. The best techniques for drying, canning, pickling, and freezing will be covered, and you'll have a chance to help make several recipes, all the way from preparing the ingredients to sealing the jars.

Presenter **Leda Meredith** teaches at the New York Botanical Garden (from which she holds a certificate in ethnobotany), the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and Adelphi University. A local foods activist, Leda has given food preservation workshops for many organizations, and her articles have appeared in *Pointe Magazine*, *The Herb Companion*, and the *BBG Handbook Series*. Her book, *Botany, Ballet, & Dinner from Scratch*, was published by Heliotrope Books in 2008.

*Cost: \$45; includes lunch.*

## **Wild Mushroom Walk**

*Saturday, September 26*

*Saturday, October 10*

*9:30 am-1:30 pm*

Encounter mushrooms of amazing shapes and colors. Learn to identify some of the most common fungi in this bioregion, as well as characteristics of different fungi and how to collect, clean and prepare mushrooms for eating. Bring a basket with handle, pocket knife, a few small food storage containers, sturdy shoes, and a bag lunch for eating at the pond.

Led by **Lara Greenspan**, who has been foraging for wild mushrooms for over four decades. She regularly leads walks about wild mushrooms and wild plants in the Eastern Forests. She also leads vision quests and has a music studio for practiced and beginning pianists.

*Cost: \$30. Bring a bag lunch.*

**Register for Genesis Farm Programs.** Please register as early as possible, as space is limited. Send the form below with your deposit. For programs under \$100, please send the full amount. For programs over \$100, please send 50% of the program fee; the balance is due two weeks prior to the program start date. Deposits will be refunded less a \$25 processing fee up to two weeks prior to the event; please let us know at the earliest possible date. A 10% discount is given to couples. Some scholarship funds or work-study options may be available; please inquire: 908.362.6735 or [info@genesishfarm.org](mailto:info@genesishfarm.org).

Please make checks payable to Genesis Farm. For those outside the U.S., please pay in U.S. funds (a U.S. postal money order or bank check in U.S. dollars). Mail to Genesis Farm, 41-A Silver Lake Road, Blairstown, NJ 07825.

Program Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your email address! \_\_\_\_\_

*Email newsletters are sent monthly.*

I have enclosed a deposit in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I have special dietary needs: \_\_\_\_\_

I want to make a donation; enclosed is: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  I would like to volunteer at Genesis Farm.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

[www.genesishfarm.org](http://www.genesishfarm.org)

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Genesis Farm



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