



## **Greetings Members of the Cuyamungue Institute!**

We have several new articles, stories, and announcements as part of our new online newsletter. Preview these features below, and follow the links to our website for the complete stories or for more information.

### **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*by Belinda Gore*

Greetings from the Cuyamungue Institute,

We have just completed the first workshop of the 2008 summer season, an introductory weekend with the "Dream Team" (Jackie Haworth, Rae LeCompte, and Stephanie Stephens), so named by their enthusiastic group of participants. The timing of this workshop aligned with the full moon and the summer Solstice, so the group celebrated and awakened the land with a moonlight session of rattling, drumming, and dancing. Four more workshops are scheduled this summer: Soul Retrieval, Certification Training for Instructors, and an Egyptian Masked Dance. Check out more information on our web site, [www.cuyamungueinstitute.com](http://www.cuyamungueinstitute.com).

The Dream Team are all board members, so we planned to hold our summer board meeting after the workshop. The two-day meeting is summarized later in this newsletter. Highlights include:

- Our second quarter financial report shows us operating with a healthy cash flow that has allowed us to schedule grading the road, maintenance on all the buildings, replacement of the aging computer, and establishing a savings account again.
- We have hired a grant writer to explore funding sources for enhancing the sustainability of our facilities as well as for developing new programs and resources.
- We are developing continuing education workshops for educators in the arts and for psychotherapists using sacred postures in their professional work.
- Expanding our online bookstore to include titles by certified instructor and well-known writer Barbara Hand Clow, as well as books on female shamanism and the development of the intuitive brain.

Special thanks from all of us to

JANET CARTER for her generous gift to the Cuyamungue Institute of a magnificent new energy-efficient refrigerator and a water-saving toilet for La Casa;

DAVID SHARP for lending us his engineering expertise, especially in advising us on maintaining our well

and improving our water;

CHRIS FRY for maintaining our web site and delivering this newsletter to you every quarter; and

HOLLY SANCHEZ for her landscaping and gardening gifts.

As always, I am deeply grateful to FRANCES WILSON, our administrative director, who keeps everything operating smoothly. She is the friendly voice on the phone when you call to register, the person who promptly fills your bookstore orders, and the one who warmly greets you when you arrive at the Institute.

Congratulations to former board member, Judy Morse, whose poetry was recently published in the prestigious Santa Fe Literary Review. I am also pleased to report that Bear & Company/Inner Traditions will be publishing my book, *Longing for Ecstasy: Reclaiming Sacred Postures as Spiritual Practice*. It will be available early in 2009.

As you can see, the Cuyamungue Institute is thriving. Thanks to all of you for your interest and support. We look forward to seeing you at a workshop or hearing from you in our online discussion group, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EcstaticBodyPostures>.

With best wishes,

Belinda

Belinda Gore, President

## **REPORT FROM THE CUYAMUNGUE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*by Stephanie Stephens, Treas.*

The Board of the Cuyamungue Institute met on the land for their bi-annual meeting June 24th and 25th. Among the topics of discussion were accomplishments for the past year, treasurer's report and the minutes from the meeting held in January. Jackie Haworth was re-elected as secretary for the group and Marcela Canon was accepted as a certified practitioner. The board's own Rae LeCompte was accepted as a certified instructor.

Other business conducted included:

Discussion of how to market the use of the Institute to raise funds without destroying the authentic, intimate nature of the place. One action of the board was to limit the size of groups using the land.

Several expenditures were discussed and voted on. The board approved the purchase of insurance for the institute and it's rental property, inflatable twin mattresses for the bunks in the Zia Lodge, a new computer for the institute office, and a futon to replace the foldout couch in Kiva East. It also approved several repairs on the buildings at Cuyamungue, including a heating system for the Adobe House, which is

rented and provides the institute with needed revenue.

Fundraising was discussed and the board employed Laurie Bower, a local grant writer, to look into grant possibilities for the institute.

The good news that the institute had enough extra capital to open a small savings account was discussed and a small celebration ensued.

The board's final action was to set the date for the next meeting. It was set for February of 2009. The board will travel to Clearwater Beach and will be the guests of newly certified instructor Rae LeCompte.

### **POEM: ODE TO MOLES (FOR MARY OLIVER)**

*by Judy Morse*

Under cloudless sky  
under leaf and loam  
with eyes that don't see  
and ears that don't hear  
and paws that don't walk  
you breaststroke through dirt.

Your pink shovel-hands  
sifting the weight of the world  
your sleep black body  
seeing earthworm and grub  
your stubborn nose  
sniffing savory bulb.

Through labyrinth of tress roots  
over rock bed and around granite  
boulder you push again the world  
you dig

and dig

and dig

unaware of the sunlight  
unaware of the moonlight  
your world dark and moist and humid.

Paddle-footed you rub your way  
beneath the unknown world above.

The earth cradles you, awaits  
the day your short stay silently ends.

### **INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP A GREAT SUCCESS!**

*Frances Wilson, Director*

The introductory workshop that kicked off the season did so at summer solstice, a very sacred time of year,

a time for the fullness of our personal solar power to bloom. The three board members who facilitated the event were Rae LeCompt, Jackie Haworth and Stephanie Stephens.

With nine attendees, three instructors and a very busy cook, Cuyamungue was awakened, fed and nourished by all of who came to share the ecstatic experience, the land and the community.

Some highlights from our evaluations were about the ease of the group, the cohesion and cross-fertilization that developed, the openness of the instructors, including vulnerability and accessibility, the warmth, the holding and offering of possibilities, the support, inviting, embracing, allowing, celebrating were superb! The sense of community, awakening Grandmother pow-wow drum on solstice and a love of the land.

From all of us at the Cuyamungue Institute, thank you for your hearts, your special gifts, your generosity and presence.



## **AN EXCERPT FROM: THE LOCKED DOOR OF PARADISE: CLOSED VERSUS OPEN RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS**

### **Thirteenth International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternate Modes" of Healing 1996: San Rafael, California**

*by Felicitas D. Goodman, Ph.D*

The speakers we have heard until now have, by implication taken us to the beginning of life, even before one-cell beings appeared on earth in the oceans. I don't want to take you that far back. Instead, I do want to take you back about one million years, to a time, when, as our Native American stories say, humans and animals were still as one. This was the time of the hunters and the gatherers, when humans were part of the natural world. The women took care of the daily sustenance and the men hunted about three hours a

week. A senator once remarked, ".....and then, we came along and wanted to improve on that system."

However, something happened and we don't know why, and this is what I am going to talk about. Roughly ten thousand years ago humans abandoned this particular way of life and took up another one which we have to come to name in anthropology, "agriculture." Nobody really knows why "agriculture" came about.

When I was a graduate student, there were a number of calculations published about the food and its availability (Cohen 1977). There was no food crisis in pre-history. The hunting and gathering way of life had a regular track. People went around and exploited about ten per cent of the available food and then they moved on. By the time they came back to the same spot, nature had taken care of replenishing. Everything was plentifully present. It is foolish when people interpret hunting and gathering rituals as rituals asking for fertility. They did not need any rituals to increase fertility. Yet, ten thousand years ago, people, in many instances, abandoned this wonderful life of paradise and took up a different one. In this new way of life, eventually everything changed, women became chattel, the moral system of appropriateness was changed into a system of good and evil; the Lower World, the womb, the sheltering of humankind was turned into hell and heaven became an empty space. Everything changed. Why? There was no crisis. As researchers have found, there was no food crisis at that time.

As Ruth-Inge told us this morning, myth is a report of prehistoric events. In order to understand, why humans turned from a life in paradise to a life of toil and eventually destruction of the earth. we have to consult collections of myths. But, in doing so, I could not find out why agriculture came about What I found instead in the mythology of the tribes that still have the way of the hunters and gatherers and the horticulturalists was emptiness--no information at all about why this sudden earthquake came about which was the beginning of the end. In addition, there is no indication about what happened after this catastrophe.-myths are silent on that. There are, however, some myths that tell us about the results.

One of the stories about the results of this change is very familiar to Westerners. It is the story of Adam and Eve in Paradise. When you look at the story with the eye of the storyteller as I am, what happened? Eve made friends with the snake which was perfectly understandable. The snake is a very charming animal and the two were talking about, what women talk about.

"Where do you get something to eat?" Eve asked.

And the snake said, "Here is this tree, it has wonderful apples." "You think they are good?"

And the snake said, "Yes, I am sure. I tried them and they tasted good. Why don't you?" And Eve tasted them. After all, she had taken care of that tree. She had brought it water.

So she ate an apple, Adam was some place away. The gossip, among the animals, was that Adam had another wife in the bushes, by the name of Lilith. He obviously spent more time with Lilith than with Eve which Eve did not take very kindly to. So eventually Adam came by and said, "Hey what are you doing there?" And Eve said, "The snake said this is a good tasting apple. Why don't you also try it?" And Adam tried it and he probably thought that he could take one of those apples to Lilith who apparently did not know about this tree.

Anyway all of the sudden, there came a very angry spirit and demanded that people call him "God." He

said. "Didn't I tell you that you were not supposed to eat those apples?" Eve said, "She never heard of anything like that. And Adam was not around to defend her. He was probably off with Lilith. The snake slinked down into the bushes. And here was poor Eve with this angry spirit who was absolutely furious. He took Eve by her hair and threw her out of Paradise and then went after Adam and threw Adam out after her. The god put up a gate and on the gate he attached a rotating sword that spewed fire all over and he slammed the gate shut

That was the story of slamming the gate to Paradise, and Adam and Eve just could not figure things out. We cannot figure out either what made this spirit that called himself God so angry. That is the crux of the matter.

Reference:

Cohen, Mark Nathan. *The Food Crisis in Prehistory: Overpopulation and the Origins of Agriculture*. New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press, 1977.

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