

ECOLEADERNEWS

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FOR ECOLOGY AND THE ECONOMY

SONOMA COUNTY, CA

SPRING 2006

Institute Bids Farewell to Sundergill, Welcomes Narath

Congratulations to Ron Sundergill. After heading the Institute for over two years, he accepted a position as the Pacific Region Director of the National Parks Conservation Association in San Francisco.

"Ron was indefatigable in working to fulfill the mission of the Institute, said Board Chair Rick Theis. "It has been a great pleasure for me to work with Ron and see our vision blossom under his direction. Needless to say, we regret losing him, but are ecstatic about this major step forward in his career."

Under Ron's leadership, applications for participation in the Institute's flagship program, Leadership Training for a Sustainable Future, doubled. He also mounted the North Coast's first conference on smart growth and sustainable development.

With his encouragement and support, Fellows of the Institute lead the Junior College Neighborhood Association and the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition to secure improvements in Santa Rosa Junior College's garage development that will provide greater pedestrian and bicycle safety.

During his tenure, the Institute also launched the Village Renaissance program under the direction of Fellow Joe



Class of 2006, Day 1, hike to Annadel State Park

increase the spirit of community in neighborhoods.

He brought several volunteer interns on board to help him carry out his work, including one who developed a report on the negative economic impacts of big box stores on the local economy.

"Best of all," Theis said, "he raised the money to hire a Program Director. His choice of Tanya Narath, a Fellow of the class of 2005, was brilliant and prophetic, as she proved totally capable of filling his very big shoes."

Ron began working for The National Park Conservation Association at the end of November. Their mission is to protect and enhance our National Park System for present and future generations. Ron's region includes the Redwoods National

Park, Death Valley, the Mojave Desert, Sequoia-Kings Canyon, the Channel Islands, Yosemite, and Hawaii's Haleakala (Ron has reminded us that somebody's got to do it). More information is at www.npca.org.

Ron and his wife Helen continue to reside in Windsor. The Institute wishes them both the best of luck.

Get Community Smart!

The Leadership Institute has recently registered with the Community Smart program—a card-based program that generates funds for local schools and nonprofits when consumers use their cards at participating merchants. The program is free, offering three types of cards—credit, debit, or non-payment cash card. When a consumer uses the card at a participating merchant, the merchant donates a portion of their proceeds to the designated school or nonprofit.

Local participating merchants include Fiesta Market, Oliver's Market, Pacific Market, and many other local restaurants, shops, and services. Just by swiping the card at qualifying transactions, the merchants will donate a portion of your purchase. Join online at www.communitysmart.com and register the Leadership Institute for Ecology and the Economy as your beneficiary.

SR Placemaking Project Underway

The Leadership Institute's new program—Santa Rosa Placemaking—is taking on the JC neighborhood, as it's first project. Under the guidance of Joseph Kennedy, a fellow of the Leadership Institute, the project is modeled after a similar City Repair of Portland, of which Kennedy was involved with in 2001.

A public presentation held in December drew an audience of over 75 community members including State Assemblyperson Noreen Evans and Santa Rosa City Councilmember Steve Rabinowitsh. The plans have also been well-received by Santa Rosa's Mayor Jane Bender and City Manager Jeffrey Kolin.

The project intends to engage residents of the JC neighborhood in the design and construction of a public art project, bringing together neighbors of all generations and acting as a symbol of neighborhood cohesion. Kennedy encourages local neighborhood themes like Luther Burbank for the Burbank neighborhood or Italian themes for the West End and says the neighborhood residents will decide themes by way of public design brainstorming processes. Suggested art projects are intersection paintings, benches, kiosks, or gardens that can become gathering places for the community.

Recent controversy over the new SRJC parking garage has highlighted the need and desire for a more pedestrian friendly neighborhood. Informal gathering places add to community vitality and give residents a sense of place.

"My vision is that the resulting projects will be largely generated by local people, designed and built by them with professional guidance, and demonstrate local initiative, use of sustainable materials, and deep engagement with the community," Kennedy says. The project is to be constructed with recycled, donated, and/or natural materials build during a multi-day workshop.

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Tanya Narath,
New
Executive
Director



Ron
Sundergill,
Former
President



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www.ecoleader.org

Mission:
Educating leaders to create public policy that is environmentally friendly and socially equitable for a healthy economy and a sustainable community.

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CALENDAR

For all events listed below, contact the Leadership Institute office at (707) 578-9133 or ecoleader@ecoleader.org for more information or to register.

April 7, 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Sustainable Enterprise Conference, 1212 Valley House Drive, Rohnert Park. For more information, see www.sec2006.com

April 13, 9:45 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

Grand Tour of Rail and Ferry Services, led by Lionel Gambill. Enjoy the following services— Larkspur Golden Gate Ferry, San Francisco Light Rail, CalTran equipment, Alameda/Oakland Ferry, Amtrak Capitol Corridor, Altamont Commuter Express, BART. \$50, includes lunch at Jack London Square. For reservations call 707-578-9133, 707-837-8814. Sponsored by the Leadership Institute, Friends of Smart, and Sonoma County Conservation Action.

May 10, 9:45 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

Grand Tour of Rail and Ferry Services. See information above.

Placemaking

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Kennedy, director of Village Renaissance, a non-profit working with the Leadership Institute on the Placemaking project, personally led four projects with City Repair in Portland including a small gathering place called the "Solar Sanctuary" and a bench and sculptural tower in commemoration of the life of bike activist Matt Sheckel called the "Memorial Lifehouse."

City Repair has been very successful in Portland, leading city officials to legalize the placemaking initiatives. Positive results have resulted in greater social interaction between neighbors,

increased sense of local identity, neighborhood beautification, lower crime rates, reduced traffic speed, and an overall increased tolerance and diversity.

Kennedy hopes that the initial project in the JC neighborhood will spur others not just in other Santa Rosa neighborhoods, but in neighboring towns as well. Already Kennedy has presented the idea to the Sebastopol City Council and held a series of meetings with Sebastopol's Mayor Larry Robinson. He plans on giving public presentations in the coming months to promote the project.

Vandalism is an important issue that, Kennedy believes, needs to be addressed with the

Leadership Course Completes Seventh Class in Series

March 1, 2006, members of the 2006 Leadership Training for a Sustainable Future completed their seventh class on the topic of Smart Growth: Transportation and Land Use. Students heard presentations on the future of transportation and land use in the bay area, Sonoma County's transportation plan, and an update on the Sonoma-Marina Area Rail Transit (SMART) project. Fellow Lisa Moore, Cotati City Council Member, and Janet Orchard, Mayor of Cotati, gave students an overview of Cotati's downtown specific plan and a walking tour of Cotati.

Highlights of the February class on Government and Education included an overview of CEQA by Tom Lanphar, Fellow '02, followed by a panel discussion on EIR's. During Dr. Carl Wong's update on education in Sonoma County, reporters from TV 50 arrived to interview Dr. Wong about the just-released feasibility study on consolidation of West County school districts. After a lively Q&A session, TV 50 interviewed several of the class members on-camera to capture their views on the topic of school consolidations.

January's class on Water Ecology and Policy occurred right after the massive storms that hit Sonoma County. Fortunately, the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant was able to host the class again this year in spite of the flooding. In addition to presentations from a variety of experts on water ecology and policy, Denise Cadman gave the class a fascinat-

ing tour of the wastewater treatment plant.

Accepting Applications

The Leadership Institute is now accepting applications for our seventh annual Leadership Training for a Sustainable Future, a 9-month program promoting sustainability in public policy. The program is designed for current and potential community leaders who want to become more effective in shaping public policy in Sonoma County and the North Bay. Classes are taught by locally recognized leaders and experts from government, business, labor, educational, environmental, and community organizations.

The course covers a broad spectrum of issues, from local to global. Ecological, economic, and social equity aspects of each topic are presented within the overall framework of sustainability. Topics include: agriculture, planning and land use, housing, transportation, watersheds and ecosystems, principles of sustainability, ecological economics, social justice issues, the role of government, influencing public policy, effective leadership, and more.

The class meets for a full day on the first Thursday of each month beginning on September 7, 2006. Cost is on a sliding scale, \$500 to \$1,000 based on income, for the full 9-month course, including transportation, binder and all materials. A limited number of openings are available at a reduced fee based on financial need. Space is limited to 30 participants; the application deadline is July 1. For more information, contact the Leadership Institute at (707) 578-9133, or visit www.ecoleader.org.

Leadership Institute Welcomes New Director

The Leadership Institute would like to welcome it's newest director, Charles Evans. Currently, Evans is a member of the Santa Rosa Housing Authority and Santa Rosa Redevelopment Agency. Previously, he served ten years on the Santa Rosa Planning Commission and was chairman of Santa Rosa Art in Public Places.



Charles Evans, new to board of directors

University and is a local real estate investor and developer.

hopes to instill a deep sense of ownership of the project by the community and have each project "adopted" by a small group of residents who will take care of cleaning and maintenance.

For Kennedy, "this concept is a new one and ever evolving. It is up to us to determine how it goes."

Partnering organizations to the project include Santa Rosa Junior College Neighborhood Association, City Repair, Daily Acts, Vital Systems, New College of California, and Santa Rosa City Councilmember Steve

Campaign Workshop a Success

November 12, the Leadership Institute hosted an all-day non-partisan Campaign Workshop attended by 30 students.

Moderators included Jim Leddy- District Director for Senator Wes Chesbro, Terry Price- Campaign Consultant, and Craig Litwin- Sebastopol City Council

We've Moved!

The Leadership Institute has changed headquarters and is no longer located at 50 Santa Rosa Ave, Suite 308.

Our new office is at:
555 Fifth Street, Suite 300A
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Our telephone remains the same, (707) 578-9133.

member.

Panelists included Caroline Baneulos, Debora Fudge, Janet Orchard, Pat Wiggins, Pam Torliatt, John Sawyer, David Keller, Leah Gold, Noreen Evans, Steve Rabinowitsh, and Jake Mackenzie. Campaign Consultant Guy Conner also gave a thorough presentation on campaign planning. The day concluded with an American Idol election contest.

Major Donors

Following is the list of donors who gave \$100 or more to the Institute in 2005.

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