



Harbin Hot Springs

1975 - 2025

50 Years

Heart Consciousness Church

Greetings

Geographically, the springs we call Harbin sits in a canyon of the Mayacamas mountains. Harbin is big as springs go, daily pumping out thousands of gallons of water, hot and cold, in a place held sacred as far back as humans have lived in the here. Native tribes passed through this place yearly on their way to the sea and honored it as a sanctuary of peace and healing — no permanent dwelling, a land no human could own, a sacred place beloved by Nature herself. Natives were still welcome to enter for free after Heart Consciousness Church was created at Harbin in 1975.

Harbin, as we knew it in those years before the fire, was a place of great natural beauty. The building that occurred here was done piecemeal, first by Victorians “taking the waters,” then by hippies who gave their love for “two bucks an hour and a meal.” The dream was to create healing centers where people could come to learn a new way of life called Heart Consciousness. Of course everyone had their own unique vision and how to achieve it.

Our founder Ishvara wisely flowed with the Dao. When T.Chris asked if he could build a 42 ft sailboat at the cabinet shop, the answer was “OK.” When Katy Heflin asked to pasture her horses on the mountain and offer horseback treks, the answer was “OK.” When a group asked if they could build a macrobiotic center, the answer was “OK.” It later became the Mountain Lodge, and important workshop venue. Management was by concentric circles and Ishvara said Harbin would be created by whoever came. In an era of idealism and creative freedom, the people who came were extraordinary.

This magazine in part has been put together from pdf’s and scans of the Harbin Quarterly which was published from 1985 (as the Experience) till 2013. It reflects the progress in printing — some is a bit rough.

Welcome as Heart Consciousness Church celebrates our 50th year.

Harbin’s founder, Ishvara, and friend in the Meadow following a Fire Circle event, circa 1975.





1975-2025

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Editor
Ann Prehn

2024 Staff Writers:
Carol Thompson
Diane Aquiana Tulley

Identifiable Photographers 1972 - 2013
Ed Joseph, Helen Frankenthall, Carol Thomp-
son, Tim Baltrusch, Dana
Ullman, Elo Devi Heart, Shantam,
Bob Ritchie, Rich Castle, Ishpa,
Ann P., Daniel Walsh, Peter Tjeerdsma



HARBIN'S FOUNDER,

I was born Robert F. Hartley

in a wealthy, socially advantaged family. I had the best of private education, but was tied in knots from social inadequacy and sexual frustration. I was so scared of girls I never kissed one goodnight until about 25. At Harvard College, I was on probation and was almost expelled... My social and financial advantages felt like disadvantages, for they came with a huge burden of expectation I felt incapable of meeting.

Gradually, my life changed. While at Columbia, I spent three years in psychoanalysis and was president of the small International Students Club. At 27 I went to Mexico, hoping to use my study of international economic development to get a job or join a business... Legal obstacles against North Americans made it impossible to find employment, so while I was deciding what to do next, I started reading... I devoured the books of Erich Fromm [who] became my first real teacher, leading me to Zen, to my first experiments in meditation, and to Alan Watts and Fritz Perls. Wide-ranging study and practice of psychology, philosophy, and spirituality became my main path and remained so until my middle fifties...

At 31 I ... became involved in the movement to create schools like the Summerhill School in England. Part of my stock market profits went to support one such school and to start another, where I went to live and teach...

Fritz Perls, who founded Gestalt Therapy, was the most exciting author I had read. I had tried two times to move to where he was, to Miami and to Los Angeles, only to find that he had moved on. Now he was at the Esalen Institute on the California



"At 27 I went to Mexico"

~ Above: 2 passport photos, one used and one unused. Visa stamps in the passport include Mexico, Brasil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador.

ISHVARA

An Excerpt from Oneness in Living

coast... and my move to Berkeley was partly to be near him. I realized that he would not spend time teaching a psychological mess like me, I needed to make myself ready for him.

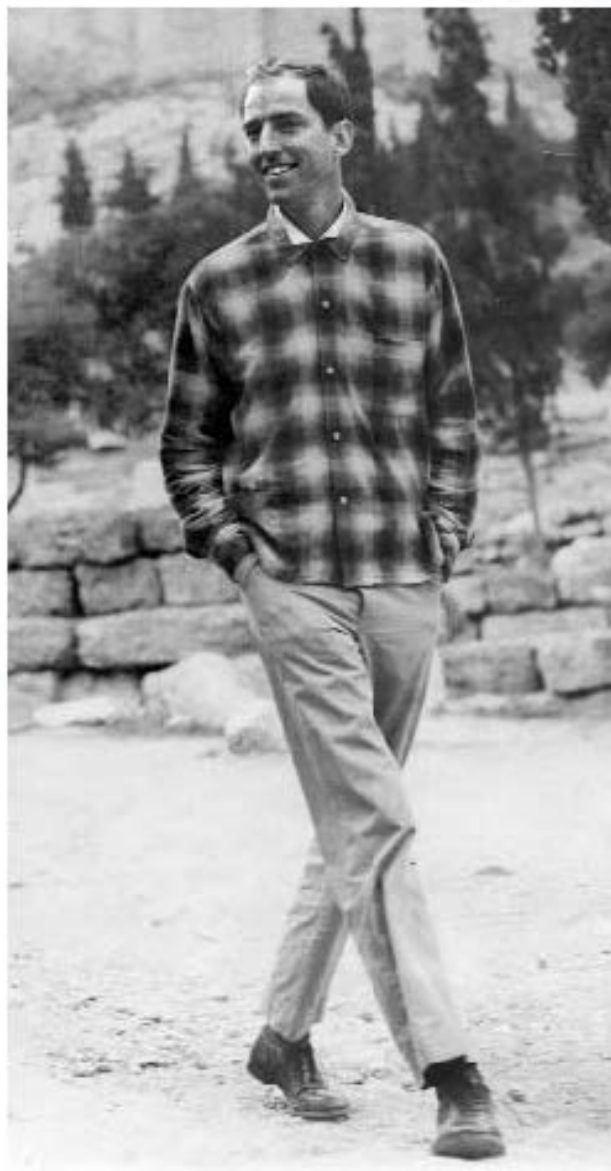
In Berkeley, I attended all sorts of encounter and other groups, the best of which was a "Gestalt Encounter Group." I thought the leader was a genius, until I found that the genius was in the new techniques Perls had invented and described in his new book, *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim*. While his previous writings had been primarily theoretical, this book focused on these new, amazingly effective practical methods.

The discovery of these techniques began a very creative period for me. I worked alone with my dreams by alternating roles with a tape recorder. First I would be the client and tell my dream to the recorder. Then, as therapist, I would listen to the recorded dream, and give and tape an instruction. As client, I would listen to the instruction and carry it out. Taping everything, I would alternate these two roles until the work was finished. This system allowed me to record my dreams when I woke up and work on them later, and I could review and critique both roles whenever I wanted.

With this method, I did not have to worry about incorrect therapeutic interpretations or what the therapist thought of me. I could act stupid or crazy and do embarrassing things whenever the therapy called for it. There were no head-trips about projections onto the therapist, just resolution of inner conflicts. If there is a single event that changed me from being a psychologically troubled person to a person who could resolve problems and move beyond

"The knots of sexual frustration were back after the divorce, and largely to relieve them, I decided to take a trip around the world. I had a strong fantasy of getting married on that trip. In Greece, I saw a Japanese woman, not particularly beautiful, but so feminine and graceful that I resolved to marry one when I got to Japan."

~ Below in Athens





'In Taiwan, I met a young Chinese girl and in three weeks we were married - the only way we could be together.'

sh dances with his sister...



“When I bought Harbin Hot

them, it was this self-therapy...

The teachers at the Gestalt Therapy Institute ...asked to have one of their teachers guide me privately, and I agreed. She approved what I was doing and recommended me as a trainee... The training was a series of group sessions with a few teaching pointers added. It was very helpful, but not nearly as important as my self-therapy and individual sessions with students. Most other trainees were more interested in how they looked than in serious work on themselves, for which you have to be willing to look like an idiot...

I emphasize the Gestalt Therapy period of my life because it changed me from being an inhibited person to a powerful one. It radically revised my idea of what I could accomplish and taught me to adapt to an accelerated rate of growth and development, a rate that has continued and accelerated ever since...

I had bought Harbin Hot Springs in april 1972, but did not move there until June 1973, for it had no housing suitable for my wife and two daughters... [T]he Summerhill-type school I had helped to create and where I had lived was foundering... so I had to act to protect my investment. [T]he school had 120 students and 60 staff, so it was a significant operation, though it had changed from a Summerhill orientation to a medical one. ... I made substantial changes, but at a much slower pace than I thought necessary. My wife was very unhappy to be back, and my kids did not like it either... Moving back to Green Valley School pretty much broke my marriage. ...

When I bought Harbin Hot Springs, it was a run-down mess. The health department had thrown out the previous occupant, a commune, and the property had been thoroughly valdalized... There were seven inches of debris on all the floors made up of broken glass from the windows and paper from the

Springs, it was a run-down mess.”

short-lived commune newspaper called the Harbinger, which was centered on LSD and UFO's...

After having been owner at the Florida school and in some other situations, I did not want to live in a community as the property owner. I called a meeting of those who seemed interested in more than a place to live, six in all, and we decided what kind of place it was to be. I created Heart Consciousness Church in 1975 and donated the property to it. After the first few months, I was its secretary and later its president...

While progress at Harbin Hot Springs was rapid to most people, it was slow compared to my dreams. I did not feel fulfilled. Years earlier I had said, ostensibly jokingly, that my ambition was to be both a Buddha and a billionaire. I had given up personal fortune, but I was creating wealth for Heart Consciousness Church. The Buddha part was not happening...

Yogeshwar Muni taught Kundalini Yoga, which had interested me for years, but I had never met anyone who really knew about it. From my reading... it seemed the highest and most powerful form of Yoga, avoided for that reason by most yoga students and teachers... After nine months of practicing, what he then described as kundalini awoke,

"My wife was very unhappy to be back, and my kids did not like it either... Moving back to Green Valley School pretty much broke my marriage."



"When people ask me for pointers about starting a community, I always stress two things. First is the difficulty of county government regulation. Second is the difficulty of finding a form of community ownership and government that is safe and fair for all, and which can last through disputes and changes in membership."

"As the property was cleaned up and construction done, more capable and dedicated people arrived. Roger Windsor became head of administration, taking over much of what I was doing. Ray Testman started a serious construction program."





Above: Harbin in the mid 70's.

“Each time I failed
- frequently better

and I was on my way to more advanced stages. I was now meditating eight hours per day, which he said was the maximum one should do. Two and a half years after I started, I was told of secret practices that rapidly took me past the next two stages. In my fifth year, I went through a very difficult stage which made me

sicker and weaker than ever before in my life, but I continued to practice.

After four more years, I was feeling stuck. An excellent psychic said I would die soon if I continued what I was doing. Other psychics said similar but less threatening things. Later I learned that I was making a serious error: in trying to follow what I thought was an instruction, I was forcing rather than surrendering. In these circumstances, I eased up my meditation, so I thought, but I was wrong again and was actually stopping it.

Without the heavy drag of purification induced by my meditation, my life became more active, and in 1989 I was married again. In early 1994, Yogeshwar Muni returned to the United States and gave a seminar on his yoga. My previous errors became clear and I resumed my meditation... and continue at an even more intense level today.

Meditating is now my biggest activity. It has so much momentum, I cannot imagine being without it...

When I was young I wanted to undertake the greatest and noblest work I could find, especially if no one else was doing it. I did not expect to blaze trails in the spiritual realm, because others seemed so much more qualified - I would have been laughed at to think otherwise! The book Summerhill inspired

Below: Harbin's first workshop celebrates in the Warm Pool



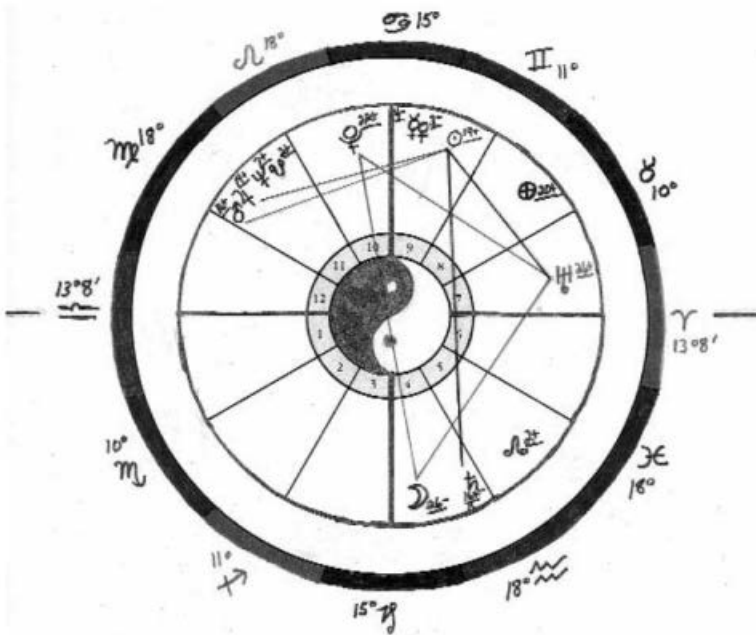
I came out all right
than if I had succeeded.”

the main goal I chose: to create a more humane and effective living environment than most people thought possible. ...

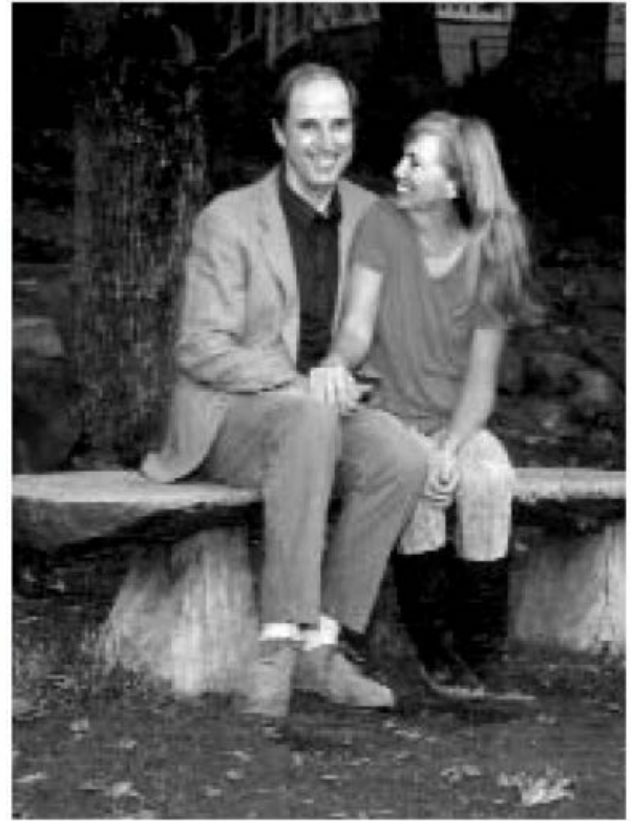
Many are better endowed than I. At Harvard, I was below average in intelligence, diligence, maturity, and ability to focus. To the extent I have risen since then, it is because I am willful, bold, flexible, and persistent. Accomplishment is far more a result of will than of natural, social, or financial endowment.

I have taken what seem like great risks. Each time I failed, I came out all right - frequently better than if I had succeeded. Failure often guided me to see and give up mistaken thinking, and to "Turn adversity into opportunity!" I have found that whenever I fail, I can always, and I means always, see the situation in such a way that I gain instead of losing. Someone who thinks this way and acts on it can never be kept down.

My love to you all.



Ishvara: June 10, 1933 - 2:00 p.m. EST - Washington, D.C.



Above: With third wife Jane in 1989. Below, his daughters attend the Harbin wedding...

Below left: The Sabian Symbols for Ish's Sun, Moon, & Rising:
"Radiant Sprite Dances Upon the Mist of a Waterfall."
"Proper Adjustment to the Rhythm of Nature."
"Prodigal Distribution of Life Resources."



HARBIN ROOTS: Aurora House



Everyday miracles are what remnant saints talk about...

I am the Vine, She (Sidhe) said.

About ten years ago when I came back to Harbin, I noticed the orange tubular flowering vines were almost dead. I stopped to pray many times that they would come back, as I loved them so when I planted them twenty-some years before. The next spring both were noticeably stronger, one especially on the Stonefront window seemed ravenous for love. The other, by the office garden, needed more tending and I was sad about it. A few years later it too began to grow, and is happy and strong today. The invisible landscape is inhabited by faeries, I am told; perhaps they heard me....

[Near the Conference Center parking lot, there is a small cluster of Harbin resident housing, fondly called the I2-bi, the I6-bi, and Aurora House. They seem unremarkable, but were actually part of an innovative and ambitious joint project with Esalen Institute for a drug-free psychosis treatment center at Harbin. ~Editor]

Aurora, the dawn, was the name I would have chosen for my first daughter. Instead it became the title of a joint project in which I worked with David Purseglove, a Gestalt therapist from New York, and Dick Price from Esalen Institute. Aurora was David's 'baby', the kind of project he'd always wanted, so when Dick Price and Esalen made such a project available, he jumped on it. Outlined were several objectives with a transpersonal orientation which grew out of the Spiritual Emergency Network (SEN) protocol, created at Esalen by Stanislaus and Christina Grof. We were attempting a merger of progressive minds, to create a treatment center for those undergoing breaks with reality without the use of drugs. We were all involved in Holotropic Breathwork, created by the Grofs: a transpersonal developmental theory and breathwork process. What better place than Harbin, with its open space and warm healing waters?

[Dick Price co-founded Esalen Institute, opening the Big Sur grounds to course leaders and students in October 1962... Dick Price had undergone an episode of psychosis, and he was committed to a mental hospital for a year and a half until released on Thanksgiving Day of 1957. Price saw in Esalen an alternative to current mental health practice, especially the practices of mental hospitals, a place where inner process could move forward safely and without interruption... ~ wikipedia]

Sometimes it takes years to understand the weave of how we have become intertwined in life's threads. The rainbow ribbons of the entity we call Harbin, where invisible landscaping of ideas is continually reborn and evolving, appeared in coherence in the early eighties through the SEN project. Several notable people were on the board of directors, an impressive connection we'd hoped to bring to bear in a center for those undergoing 'breaks with reality', which might otherwise be classified as psychotic episodes. One man, a Jungian therapist, John Perry, had such a center, very effective and approved by the state for many years, known as Diabasis House in San Francisco.

Another reknown person that set the dynamic for the staff was R. D. Laing: theorist, philosopher, teacher, and pro-

& the Esalen Connection

By Elo Devi Heart (edited by Ann Prehn)

lific author, including The Politics of Experience. Laing was the founder of The New School of Psychology, setting the trend in London during the sixties. As a staff member of the fledgling Aurora Project, I was sent to see Laing speak before a group at Stanford University. It was quite a thrill - his teaching both enlightened and amused. Both these outstanding minds, John Perry and R.D. Laing, have influenced many. Blessed be, as they are no longer with us.

[Ronald David Laing (October 7, 1927 - August 23, 1989), was a Scottish psychiatrist who wrote extensively on mental illness and particularly the experience of psychosis...It is notable that Laing never denied the existence of mental illness, but simply viewed it in a radically different light from his contemporaries. For Laing, madness could be a trans-formative episode whereby the process of undergoing mental distress was compared to a shamanic journey. The traveler could return from the journey with important insights, and may even have become a wiser and more grounded person as a result. ~ wikipedia]

Another innovative guy is Jeff Ordover, then director of the Kundalini Research Society. Ordover was very instrumental in setting protocol with which to understand someone who is having a break with reality, otherwise called 'kundalini arousal state'. As an initiate into a kundalini order with Harbin's founder, Ishvara, I found this information valuable. I was pregnant at the time of initiation - my daughter was born with a large mole at the bottom of her spine, clearly exhibiting signs of kundalini at a young age (as I write, she is in Canada running the Ironman Triathlon). Holotropic Breathwork in its developmental conception evokes an awakened state of awareness, evolving through 'the matrix' process, often sparking a kundalini experience. My own special project, as part of the SEN protocol we were establishing, was a garden project, as well as morning yoga for setting 'the Ground' (Michael Murphy, Future of the Body), and collecting the spiritualized process during the psychic release and opening of the client, establishing the 'body clock' through connections with the earth.

[Holotropic Breathwork is a psychotherapeutic approach developed by Stanislav Grof, M.D., Ph.D. and Christina Grof, believed to allow access to nonordinary states of consciousness. Holotropic breathing has some similarities to rebirthing, but was developed independently. Holotropic Breathwork is used by practitioners as an approach to self-exploration and healing that integrates insights from modern consciousness research, anthropology, various depth psychologies, transpersonal psychology, Eastern spiritual practices, and mystical traditions of the world. The name Holotropic means "moving toward wholeness" (from the Greek "holos"=whole and "trepein"=moving in the direction of something). ~ wikipedia]

Kundalini is envisioned as a serpent coiled at the base of the spine... Kundalini is said to "rise" upward, piercing the various centers until reaching the crown of the head, resulting in union with the Divine.
~ wikipedia]



(Elo came with Ishvara in 1972 and was Heart Consciousness Church's first president.)

HARBIN ROOTS, continued



Elo, 1976

One of our most supportive friends of the SEN was an older woman who organized the first tool and equipment room at Harbin, Polly Horn. She became my mentor and friend for many years. Absolutely brilliant, as we held our resolve in a world struggling with overwhelming health issues, we were part of an ongoing effort starting with the SEN program, and later JFK University. Polly gave David and me support in the ongoing work that created Aurora House, and nearby outbuildings, the physical center for the Aurora Project.

[An anonymous donor gave Price \$10,000 to help establish Aurora House at Harbin, and a double-wide trailer was purchased to house the staff, initially a psychiatrist and a director for the program. Two structures were built - one 12 by 12 feet, the other 16 by 16 feet - to serve as therapy rooms. The buildings were leased from HCC, and Esalen began publicizing the project internationally.

~ Ellen Klages, Harbin Hot Springs: Healing Waters, Sacred Land.]

Unfortunately, the insurance system did not back us up. There were several financial problems that led to a near collapse in the project, with Ishvara and Heart Consciousness Church rescuing. Aurora did actually open, with several referred clients and with a French clinical psychologist then coming through Esalen, René Abouaf. (René later became well-known to all as he joined the 'red road' and led native sweats for years, becoming another Harbin grandfather.)



René today

[...the licensing process was time-consuming and costly. Jane Hawes [co-founder of SEN] and Ishvara brainstormed for several months and communicated with Dick Price to see what could be done about the situation from Esalen's end, but nothing happened...In April of 1982, the project was abandoned. ~ Ellen Klages, Harbin Hot Springs: Healing Waters, Sacred Land.]

Letting the water work weave its spell....we come to terms with our vulnerability, recovering in the dark calm spirit, deepening a delicate dance. It's fascinating that the evolutionary collective mind at Harbin as an inner landscape appears to be a manifestation of many metaphorical languages, but which grow from the seed thoughts we've planted and our mutually ethical exploration. The Harbinger of the New Age, the inner landscape reappears, reweaves, and reorders microcosmic self-regenerative energies, transforming pain to rapture. Breath becomes therapy, rage becomes bliss - kundalini, archaic revival. The many become 'the One' - infinitum.

In the early rainbow days was another brother, Jonathan Dameon, homeopathist, teacher, and community organizer, who also worked with the same project in London, The New School of Psychology. He taught a number of us about holistic healing and earth wisdom in the early 70's, connecting with the Merkabah of evolutionary counseling, and planetary healing, which he named an Aesclepius School of healing, revealing angelic presences, imparting wisdom, redeeming the sense of transparency - now part of everyday Harbin experience.



Ishvara, Late 1970's

These people who came forward at this time, when evolution was considered a phenomenon, pioneered a new consciousness - a psychology which grew into a movement beyond its singularity, revivifying noesis.

In love and light, Elo Ma Devi



Harbin's First Workshops - 1976

When Homeopathist Dana Ullman was arrested for practicing medicine without a license, 400 people arrived at Harbin for 4 days of 40 outside workshops (few buildings were habitable) to raise money for his defense. The effort was successful and Dana won his case, helping to legalize alternative health care.

Thanks to Elo Devi (Michelle) Heart and Dana Ullman for these photos.



The Early Days



Excerpts from The Big Bang and the Harbin Experience by Sajjad

I arrived at Harbin on September 1, 1981 somewhere around 3 P.M. in a 1972 green Chevy Malibu. At the time there was no gate house, no formal security, and no parking cards. The idea of wheel locking devices called “boots” had not then appeared in anyone’s mind. I walked around and checked things out. After getting a sense of the scene I wanted to leave within minutes of arrival. The place was just too damn rustic, dusty and rundown. I stayed for three weeks, left for three months, and then returned to stay for a while. ...

[I]n those days, you could practically just walk in and check yourself into one of the rooms in Azalea or Walnut. No questions asked - not even how long have you been out of prison and what kind of drugs are you on? This open door policy where anyone could walk in and become a resident resulted exactly in that. Harbin became a Mecca which attracted all sorts: plain vanilla search for meaning people, people into some sort of food trip - macrobiotics, raw food eaters, people who would drink water and people who wouldn’t, and people who wouldn’t drink water or eat food (breatharians). There were some religious nuts. There were people on the borderline and then there were the sociopaths, alcoholics, druggies, maniacs, depressives, lunatics, raving lunatics and psychotics - everybody got a chance to come in through the door. If I am leaving someone out, it’s not out of disrespect of their affliction. God gave me just so many mega bytes of random access memory. No one was denied the chance - even though they might have been ‘outahere’ the next day.

Harbin as it exists today wasn’t even an idea in anyone’s mind at that time. There was no filtration system. Water entered through the Hot Pool came into the Warm Pool and out it went. By week’s end it would turn green from algae and other stuff till you could not see your feet.

The large swimming pool was in a state of disrepair. It was also a flow through pool. It was fed by a spring, which entered the pool from the west side. There was no Heart Shaped Pool or the concrete work. It looked like a hippie landscaped area. The area where the Azalea lawn and walkway are was a parking area. Residents used to leave their vehicles there. There was the Stonefront building but no restaurant. The health food store used to be run out of a closet in Azalea three afternoons a week. You could order stuff and then pick it up later.

The original Fern dressing



room had curtains, There was only one hot shower at the Pools (and the rest of Mainside). You had to wait about ten minutes before the hot water which was routed from the hot springs could make its way to the showers. The original Fern kitchen was in no better shape. It was a cramped old place and very rustic.

There was a very large construction department. There wasn't much of a housekeeping department. There was hardly a landscaping department. The office trailer was mostly resident housing. There was no roof over the office entrance. Reception comprised of a chair and a desk with a clunker of a cash register.



The guests mostly camped. The ones who stayed in the rooms brought their own bedding. Towels were not provided. There was no Health Services Dept. and no massage staff to speak of. Massage appointments were made on a hit and miss basis - when the guests ran into a massage practitioner. No one in particular did security. Night time security was a cottage industry. You could collect money and keep half of it. People from Middletown and neighboring areas would try to sneak in. On cold nights we would hang out at the office. We would hear the cars come on

property and see things light up in the distance. The cars would stop. The engine and the headlights would be turned off. The trick was to catch them as they came over the Magic Inn road, charge them, and so leave their wallets somewhat lighter. Occasionally Middletown people, while drunk, would come on the property at night, create some sort of ruckus and then leave.

There was no Auto Shop nor was there any Cabinet Shop or Warehouse. The Village was barely livable. We did not have any houses in town or the Shady Grove property.

At the time there were only about forty residents. Most of us lived in Walnut and Azalea. Both Walnut and Azalea had old yellow paint. There were no hot showers in the buildings. The rooms and bathrooms were remodeled at a later date. The Walnut bathroom had large holes in the ceiling for several years.

When I returned in December '81, I moved into Walnut #23. Walnut kitchen at the time was the hub of activity. It was truly a multi-use area. This is where residents cooked and hung out. There were activities that cannot be put into writing for public consumption. And, yes, I found people in the kitchen sleeping sitting up. At the time there were up to twenty-two residents using the kitchen. It was a much tighter community, perhaps because of its smallness. Nobody had a phone, and one or two people had TVs!

The gods of smoking reigned supreme. It was still cool to smoke. People used their god given right to smoke with abandon. The condemned deck in front of Azalea used to be the smoking deck and what a scene it was. It became the site for a combination of activities including socialization, therapy, Dharma combat, spiritual revival, meeting chicks and setting dates for late night rendezvous. People would appear and disappear at designated times to make the place a happen'n thing. It made nonsmokers social outcasts and made them cry for not smoking. ...

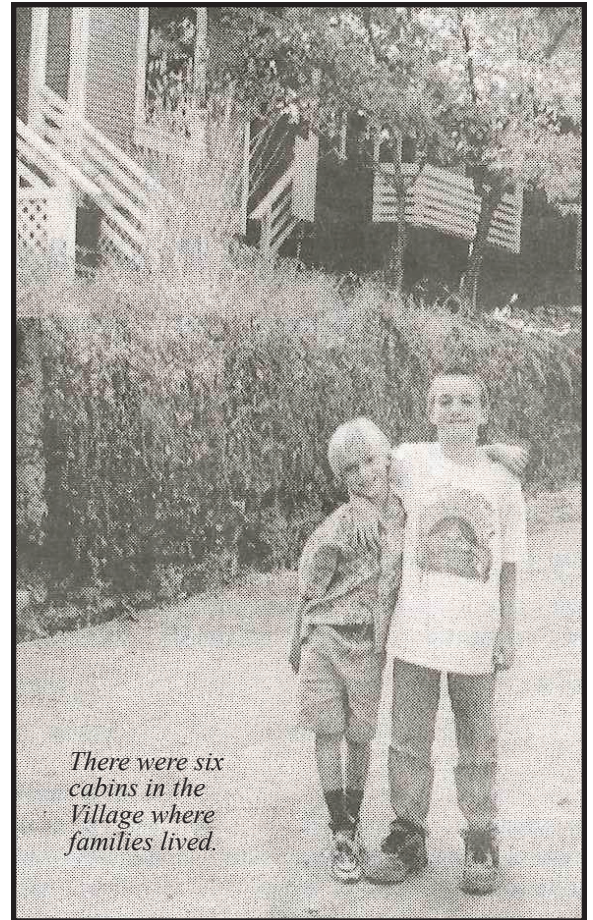
My room was 12x10. It had a flimsy brown carpet and old paint. It was rather dull and drab. One of the refrigerators outside Walnut kitchen predated human history or perhaps was the very first refrigerator sold commercially. The rest of the appliances and Harbin owned devices were not far behind. Someone had left a mattress in Walnut 23. When I moved in I had very few possessions. I somehow found a bed cover. I had brought a couple of pillows and a sleeping bag. I was in hog heaven.





Ann Prehn's room in Azalea, 1987

As witnessed by Sajjad in 1983: *"The gods of intoxication had their throne above Cabin 6 in the Village. It was called Buckhorn Gardens. Here the construction guys had made a horseshoe pit. The altar and throne was made of empty Buckhorn beer cans - hence the name Buckhorn Gardens.... These were rough and tumble times."*



There were six cabins in the Village where families lived.



Mainside, 1987

20 Years Ago...

Reflections on the Harmonic Convergence

by Ann Prehn

1987 was the year of the Harmonic Convergence. It was also the year I came to Harbin. Pluto, still a planet, was in Scorpio, and expectations of expansive evolution were high. The heavens would crack open and there would be miracles - we weren't sure what that meant, but we were certain it would happen.

That the Harmonic Convergence garnered any attention at all was a miracle in itself: Its meaning and purpose were etherial; It was an idea put forth by one man, Jose Arguelles, who was largely unknown - the ancient authority he evoked was Quezalcoatl and his Mayan calendar. And yet it caught on, and became a worldwide day of prayer, spontaneous celebration and great hope for peace. It was headlined in the Times, lampooned in Doonsbury. Since then, there have been many calls for mass prayer, but none has been heeded like the Harmonic Convergence - it was the woodstock of spiritual gatherings.

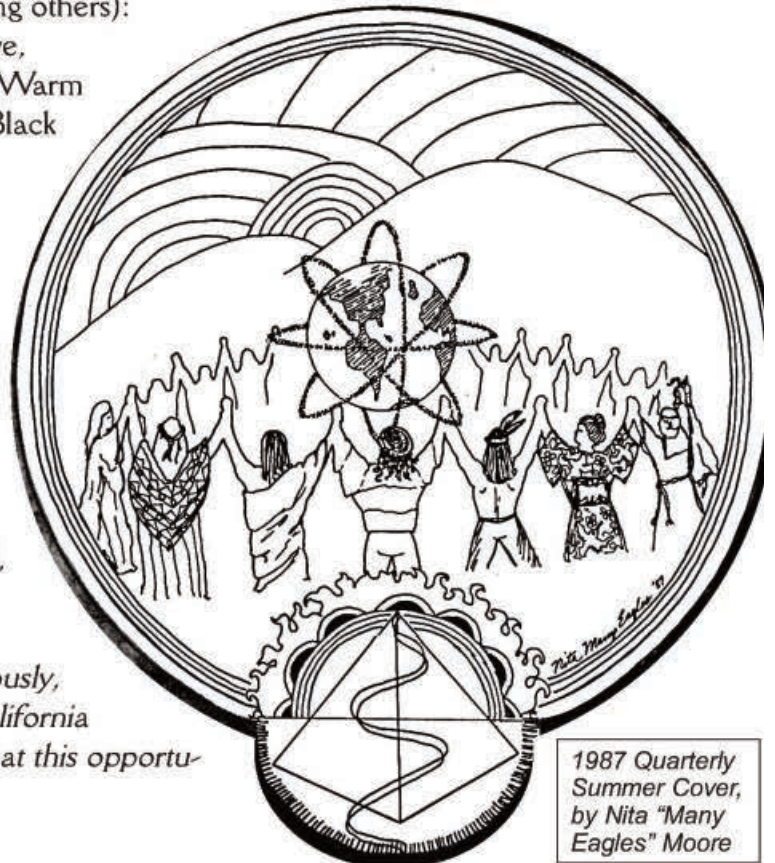
Harbin was, at that time, still wet behind the ears, but at age 14 had already outlasted most intentional communities and was poised to become an important New Age center. Harold Dull and his School of Shiatsu and Massage had just invented/rediscovered Watsu. The workshops being offered in the Spring '87 Quarterly included (among others): Professional Hypnotherapy, Mathematics with Love, Macrobiotic Cooking, Yoga/The Shaman Within, Warm and Cold Rebirthing, Sacred Time with Wallace Black Elk, Sierra Club, and Women's Summer Solstice Camp. Swami Beyondananda was scheduled to appear in the newly finished Conference Center.

Also in the Spring issue were the following notices:

"Starting May 1, 1987 we will be providing complete bedding in our rooms,"

and

"Grandpa's Coming - 94 year old medicine man moves to Harbin. On March 14, 1987, Grandpa Roberts, the well-known Cherokee/American Shaman joined the Community at Harbin Hot Springs. Previously, Grandpa was living and teaching at the California School of Herbal Studies. We are excited at this opportunity to share his wisdom and healing arts. Welcome home, Grandpa."



1987 Quarterly Summer Cover, by Nita "Many Eagles" Moore



Grandpa was very connected to Owls. He was "Owl Man" - they talked to him. After he moved to Harbin, Libby Hillman, the priestess and Quarterly editor, became his "Owl Woman".

Before coming to Harbin, Grandpa lived in a small pad at the School for Herbal Studies - he knew a great deal about herbs and their healing properties. He made tinctures for himself and others. While there, we often did pipe medicine together.

Grandpa was available 24/7 to any and everyone who needed him for counseling, listening, advice. Visitors were always asked, "How are you?" If the answer was less than, "Great!" he would ask why not. He reminded us that as hard as we may think our lives are, there's always someone who's worse off.

Grandpa always gave away of himself and his sacred objects - stones, feathers, food - to his guests. Sometimes he'd invite a visitor to take a crystal or stone and place it on their forehead, close their eyes, and listen/feel in their bodies what sensations/healing/messages they received.

Grandpa made offerings to the bees and yellow jackets with almost empty cans of tuna outside his pad, thus keeping them from bothering the people. His favorite foods were snicker bars, root beer and blackberry wine.

Whenever you said good-bye to Grandpa, he would take you in his arms and say, "Now, take my love and wrap it around you and spread it to everyone you meet."

[by Lorindra Moonstar, who carries Grandpa's pipe today and continues to offer sacred pipe medicine at Harbin.]

And so it was, in the Spring of that year, that Grandpa Roberts began his Sunday gatherings as part of the newly formed New Age Church of Being on Harbin's Manzanita Lawn, holding satsang for the legions that regularly came to be near him.

For me, much of this New Age stuff was indeed new. I had dabbled in the occult, but had more interest in being an artist than in being enlightened. My offering then on August 17, for the crowds that came for the Convergence, was a seance in Azalea Kitchen to honor the 10th anniversary of Elvis' death (a tongue-in-cheek happening at best).

Elsewhere at Harbin, more important events were transpiring. The Fire Circle was the setting for large gatherings - prayer circles and spiritual activities took place all over Harbin, and the expected crowds showed up in droves. Harbin had indeed become a major New Age center.

From the Summer 1987 issue of the Quarterly, by Robert Ross:

Throughout history there have been proclamations foretelling a doomsday... These prophecies seem to consistently foretell destruction of the world - but, if taken symbolically, they seem to refer to the destruction of the prevailing paradigm of material consciousness, thought and values more than a cataclysmic physical event. For some, such an "internal" catastrophe may be worse than an earthquake. For others, some sort of natural calamity may be necessary to shake up their solidified world view. Yet, for all of us, this "end" heralds the dawning of an age in which we may finally realize our spiritual potential. The "destruction" of our current patterns, whether physical or metaphysical, opens us to new and greater possibilities of creation."

Looking back, I'm still here at Harbin, meditating on what the Harmonic Convergence meant and where we've come since that pivotal year. As I flip through the

old Quarterlies, I see that most of the articles are fresh, and would still be fresh today. They ring with an idealism and hopefulness which has perhaps become somewhat lost, our healing truths having become more commodities than message. Or perhaps it seems that way to me, who was new to it then, and for whom it all has the slight ring of cliché now. I'm admittedly jaded. It is important to see this place through guests' eyes, through the eyes of someone like Sue Imperial who wrote the 'Welcome' piece in this issue's inside cover. Some say Harbin has become too successful, too smooth, more of a resort than a spiritual experiment. And yet I still hear the stories of serendipity and magic that have always defined what we call the "Harbin experience".

But all was not so perfect twenty years ago. We were essentially a desperate group of anarchists and idealists trying to govern ourselves, and how much that has changed for the better! Politically, Harbin in 1987 was in turmoil. Anyone could become a resident by walking through the gate (I remember one guy who literally walked from Clearlake in his pointed cowboy boots) - it also felt like anyone could get thrown out (be "outa here!" as Managing Director Sajjad puts it). At the time of the Harmonic Convergence, an undercurrent of fear had become palpable. And, as if in response, four days after the Convergence, Grandpa Roberts passed over. I remember seeing the ambulance that morning and thinking it was Grandpa, feeling an otherworldly surrealness to that day. Folks who were there said that Grandpa was having another asthma attack, and he would not let the ambulance take him. He made it clear that he was ready to die - so forceful was he in his conviction that the people who were there acquiesced, including the ambulance driver who got in trouble for it - only letters from Harbin kept her from being fired. He died in Michelle Prince's arms amidst prayers, singing, and love.

From the Fall, 1987 Quarterly by Libby Hillman, editor:

A sage once said that one never sees the Day of the Yuga, but only knows it when it is past. For it dawns like any other day and passes in the same wise, recapitulating the history of the world. I think this is true of the Harmonic Convergence.



GRANDPA ROBERTS
1892-1987

I first met Grandpa Roberts at Harbin on Father's Day in 1987. It was Sunday and Grandpa was holding his weekly "Spiritual Gathering" in the grass near the gazebo. I sat directly across from him in a circle of 30 or so others, many of whom came weekly to hear him speak of Unconditional Love. Our eyes met and he smiled warmly at me as if to say, "Welcome home. It's good to see you again".

At 31, I had been on a spiritual path for years, but had never (knowingly) encountered a Shaman. I wasn't aware of the upcoming Harmonic Convergence or that my "chance" meeting with Grandfather Roberts would forever alter the course of my life. But, within two weeks, I had returned to my home in La Jolla, sold everything, quit my job and moved to Harbin. My friends and family thought I was crazy, but I knew that I was about to experience a far more rich life than I'd ever known before.

In the 6-weeks before the Harmonic Convergence, I was an apprentice to Grandpa Roberts. He invited me to live and work with him as he welcomed people from around the world into his home. They came at all times of every day of the week, seeking Shamanic healing and the wisdom of his 95-years. With crystals, herbs, feathers and more, he performed rituals to heal them physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. His message was simple and profound ~ Unconditional Love heals.

I witnessed many miracles during those weeks with Grandpa Roberts. I assisted him in rituals including a Hand Fasting Ceremony, Fire Circle Ceremonies and during the events of the Harmonic Convergence. Wise, graceful and content, Grandpa spoke of the importance of the Harmonic Convergence for our responsibility to heal our selves, our communities and the planet. He often said, "These are the days I've lived so long to see".

[by Michelle Prince]

Convergence, continued...

For those of us here at Harbin, the convergence influence has been going on for several months now. No one escaped... Every negative pattern in our lives came swimming up out of the murk and tried to pull us down. We have all had to stretch in unaccustomed ways and step outside our comfort zones...

In this issue, we say good-bye to a wise and gentle man, Grandpa Roberts. The many people whose lives Grandpa has touched will remember him forever. It seems as though his personal work here was completed with the Harmonic Convergence and, at long last, the Great Spirit took him home...

According to the Mayan calendar, August 16/17, 1987 marked the beginning of a 25 year period of cleansing, to culminate in the notorious 2012 - the end of the Mayan calendar. Five years out from 2012, we hear warnings of global warming, of nuclear proliferation, of the limits of the carrying capacity of the Earth. Many species on this planet have already experienced their doomsday, as have many peoples. For friends who have met their personal doomsdays with cancer, it seemed to me - watching them die - that they were going through a purification by fire, in an effort to burn off the karma of the world.



One of the paradigms that has visibly shifted in the past 20 years has been the general acceptance of a New Age cliché that we do in some ways create our own reality with our thoughts. Negative thoughts attract negativity and positive thoughts attract positive things to flow our way - hence the popularity of affirmations. Ironically, there are people who accuse those who worry about the destruction of the planet of causing that destruction by being negative. Meanwhile, those who worry accuse the accusers of being in denial, and causing the destruction with oblivious behavior.

I love to ponder a good paradox. It seems to me that the answer lies in the advice of the sages to live simply in gratitude and joyous harmony with Mother Earth and with each other - that our actions and our thoughts be in integrity to conjure the Earth fertile and whole - and to remember that we do not know what the next age will be like, nor what we must go through to get there. Accept whatever is with love and gratitude, for it is quite amazing that anything exists at all.

Again from Robert Ross in 1987:

As powerful spiritual beings, let us create the Harmonic Convergence together.

In the vernacular of 2007:

Word.

The Ghost of Harbin Past

An Ode to Harbin's Poets

A Poet is a rare, rare bird,
A Harbin Poet rarer,
For Harbin Poets wear no clothes,
And hence their souls are barer.

So hear our Harbin poetry,
Ye ancients and ye youth.
For Harbin Poets always write
Naught but the naked truth.

~ Lynn Lee, winter 1990

Make Life

if reaching out
to God
the Self
the Goddess, the real
is a repetitive behavioral act
then I'm
a monkey's uncle:
perseverance furthers

~ Linda Miller, winter 1990

Creature gathers little stones (3mm)
from the bottom of the stream and
builds a home like a cone.

Yellow streaked olive drab lizard with
a bright blue tail

A cat that hasn't been outside
apartment building in two years
Meadow afloat with purple lupine
Burning herbs to cleanse the house
of vibes and setting off smoke alarm
It's hard on workers.

Yesterday -- Huge mosquito-like bug
bouncing up and down off the skin
of the water.

Today -- Daubing its abdomen in the
streamside mud.

Pines standing on the ridge glowing in
the last light of day.

No rumors
No money exchanged hands
Every step a dance

~ Chris Meszaros, summer 1989

Whenever you walk
to the edge of the light
and you take that first step
into the darkness,
you know that one of two things will happen:
You will either step on solid ground
or instantly learn to fly.

~ Don Swires, date unknown

Nudity

When I see an imperfect body,
I do not feel derision.
I feel love,
that someone trusts me enough
not to hide from me.

Whatever his or her appearance,
he or she is accepted equally
with the perfectly formed.
There is something SO beautiful
about not hiding.

~ Ishvara, spring 1990

Harvesting for Gaia

We bundle wheat for security purposes
Inevitably pursuing the fall.

Corn is appropriate.
Pumpkins begin to look out over their
fields

Eager to be tabled midst the most
gracious of Holy Days.
Ours.

This growing is all so relevant, as we are.
Undergoing internal pressures.

Relieving ourselves of the burdens of the
past.

Focusing more on 2001.

(Awaiting God)

As the power of the transformative seed,
we notice,

Lies breathless, like she once was, in us.

~ Cathy Racette, fall 1989

Living the Future

An Update

By Ishvara, Founder of Harbin Hot Springs Community and Heart Consciousness Church

Heart Consciousness Church, which owns and operates Harbin Hot Springs, came into being in 1975 to help bring about the New Age. It embraces the three New Age movements which are powerful and new today.

First is the Human Potential Movement, characterized by such names as Maslow, Fritz Perls, and Esalen. Second is the Wholistic Natural Movement, our name for the general trend which includes ecology, natural diet, and holistic health. Third is universal spirituality, the attitude not widely existing before in the West that my belief is not necessarily better than yours, and the focus is to live together in love and harmony, practicing as we believe.

We see these as really one movement, emphasizing wholeness, harmony, healing and always including attention to the little pieces overlooked or considered undersirable by today's dominant attitudes - analytical rationality, dualistic religion, and dominance of head over heart, body, and nature. The individual experience of that one movement is our religion.

We use the natural disciplines of work and living together in harmony as our first level of teaching and welcome all those feeling affinity with our beliefs who can cope on this level. We have created an effective organization to operate on this level in managing and physically improving our facilities. Further levels of teaching are left to individual effort by our leaders and members; so we remain open to new ideas and participation, with no obvious or subtle "party line" or required practice that must be followed. Thus the organization serves as an umbrella under which small units

that might not have survived on their own can flourish. These units also have an audience and rub shoulders with many other units; for our economic support comes from the steady stream of visitor members and conferences that come to share our natural hot baths and other facilities.

Harbin Hot Springs is in its own valley only two hours north of the San Francisco Bay Area. It has many structures, over one thousand acres, clean air, quiet mountain streams, and the best hot baths near San Francisco. With one hundred residents, it is not quite full.

We have not planned just for one community, but for a network of communities and centers with a single membership. This way members can live in small units with similar people yet with the stimulus and opportunity of a large and varied overall membership and activity structure. While centers and especially communities are hard to begin, they are easy to spin off from an already thriving community or series of communities which can provide people, leadership and support.

Our home at Harbin Hot Springs is so beautiful, it serves as a Mecca to attract participants. But our resident members will not start other centers because they want to be here. So expansion to new centers will have to wait until we are full and overflowing. But that expansion is our ultimate purpose, to be the nucleus for an expanding whole; this whole will include teaching centers, spiritual centers, healing centers, cooperative communities, utopian communities, children centered communities, work oriented communities, urban centers, and so forth, all supporting each other, growing, and bringing ideals into reality.



Dry Creek



“You wake up one morning, look out into the backyard and there’s a mushroom growing there.”

That was the metaphor Neil Murphy used when asked how the Dry Creek Continuing Recovery Center got started.

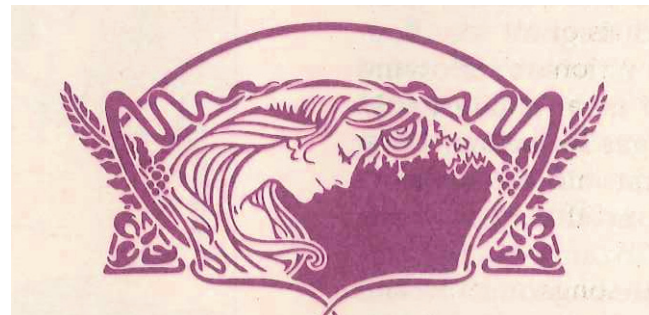
Dry Creek is an alcohol/drug continuing recovery center owned by Harbin Hot Springs. The center was initiated in the spring of 1993. Neil, part of Harbin’s management team, is the center’s executive director. “Dry Creek is an organic outgrowth of the process that is Harbin. It was suggested we reach out to those in recovery and offer a safe, therapeutic community. And that’s what we’ve done.”

Six months in existence, Dry Creek is on schedule with its goal to house eight to ten recovering alcoholics/drug addicts.

Dry Creek is a place to renew one’s life through sober eyes. About four miles outside of Harbin it sits on three hundred acres of land nestled within a canyon surrounded by rolling hills. With two goats, a cat, a puppy, and residents in various stages of recovery, Dry Creek is a rare find for those who need support, love, and companionship while recovering from the devastating effects of addiction.

“Finally we learn the Mystery—that unless we find the Goddess within ourselves we will never find Her without. She is both internal and external, as solid as a rock, as changeable as our own internal image of Her.”

— Starhawk

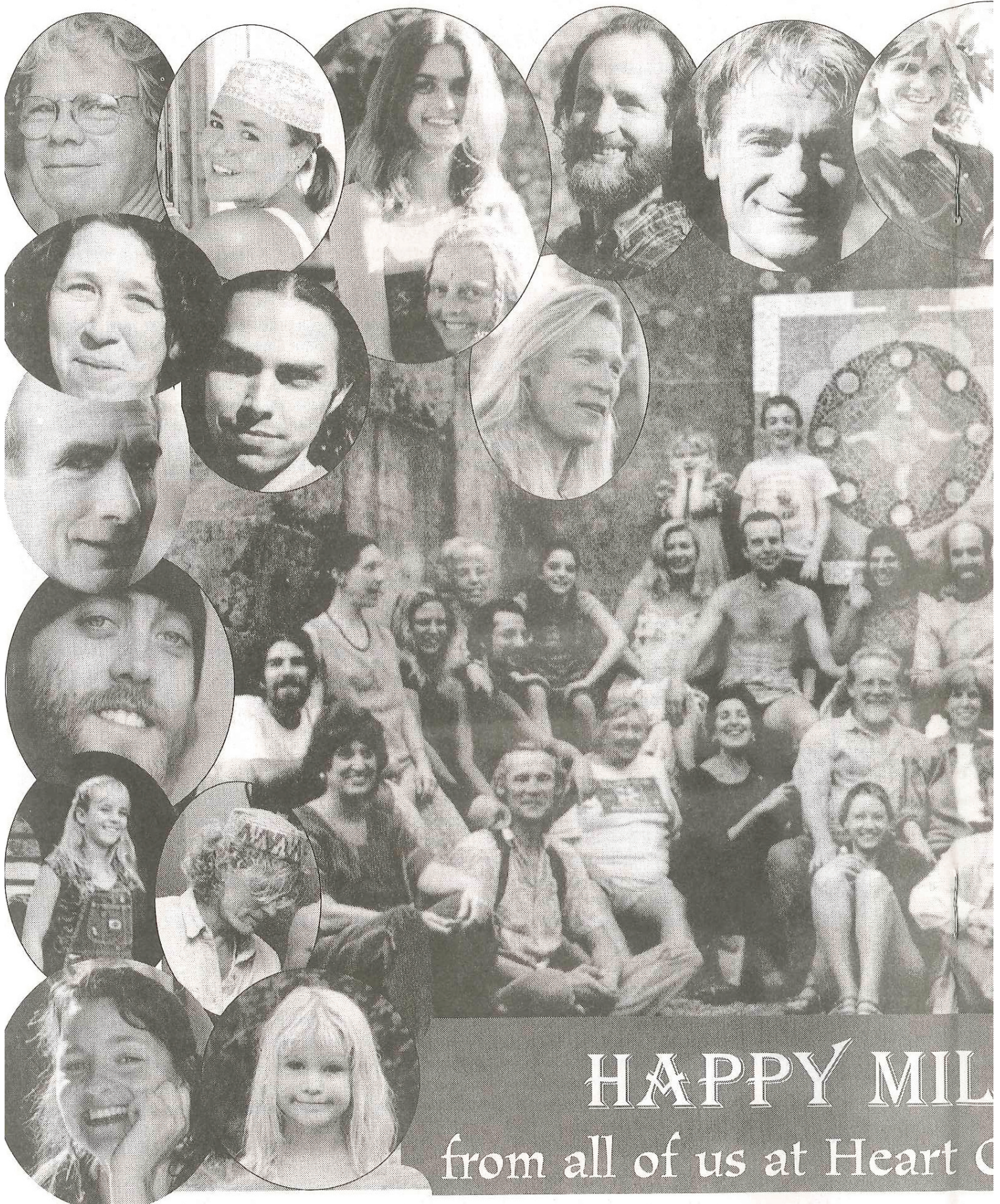


*Gathering of Sacred Song
with Lisa Thiel*

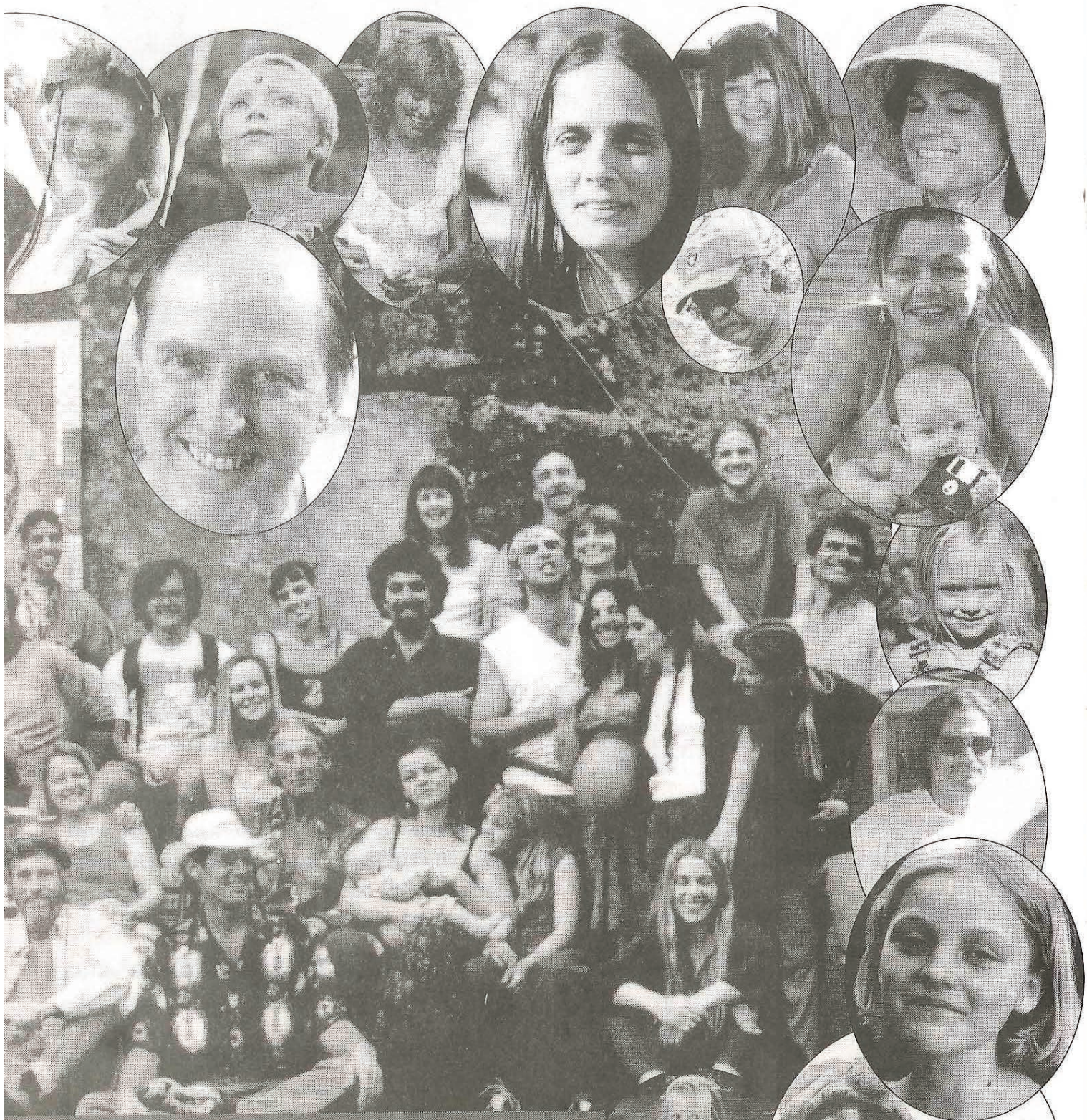
I worshipped God
and waited for you
I located the Goddess
and, finally, you arrived
a well made pot of soup
replaced puja
the rounded contours of my body
no longer excess
are redefined generosity
without the undertones of longing
my life takes on autumnal hues
of burnished golds and terra cotta

ah, love
without the struggle to find you
how will I motor my life?

— Linda Miller

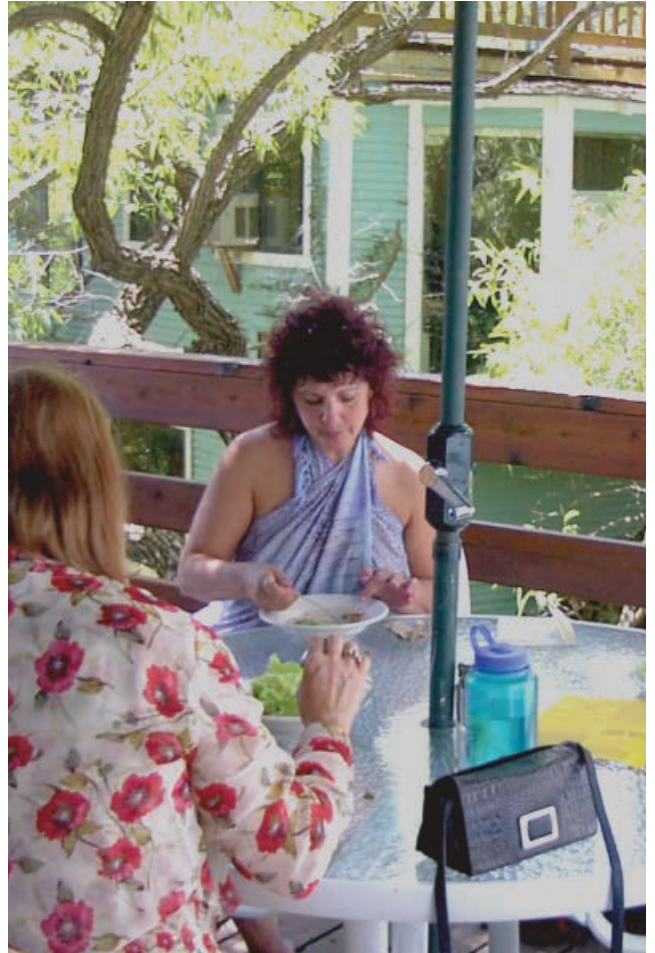


HAPPY MIL
from all of us at Heart C



LENNIUM!
Consciousness Church

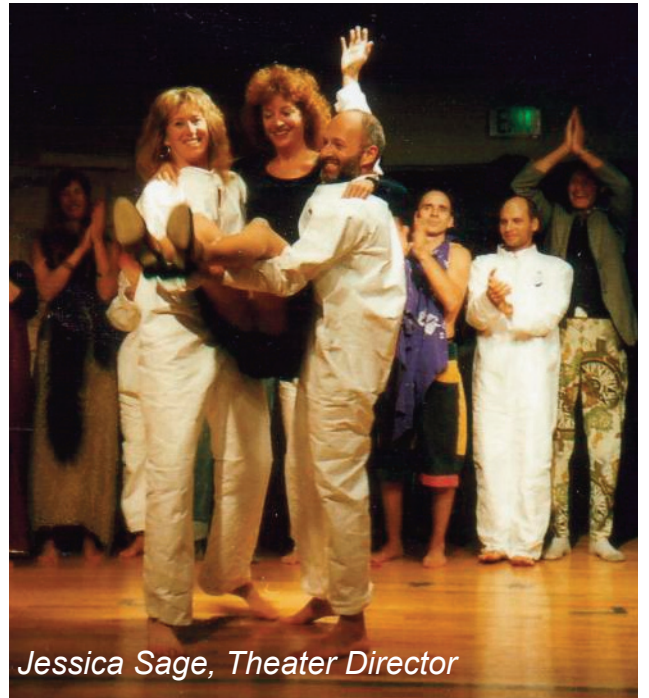
Harbin Becomes



World Class



Near left: Peter cuts the cake in the Restaurant as residents celebrate the 30th year of Heart Consciousness Church.



Jessica Sage, Theater Director

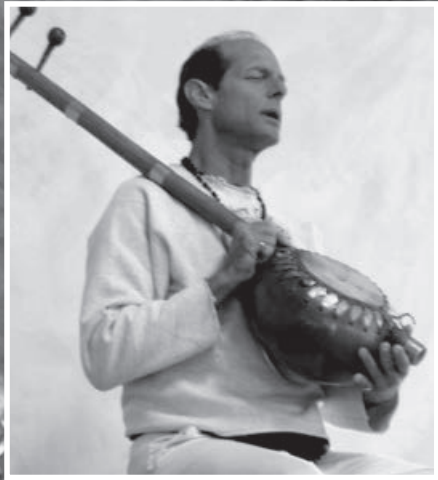


From Spiritual Gatherings to plays, dances, parties, parades, art festivals in the Garden, classes, yoga, hiking, health treatments, shopping on the vendor lawn or market, concerts, cooking in Fern kitchen, dining or just hanging out, the guests felt as much at home as the residents.



A Tradition of Now ~

By sharing ritual traditions, we keep community alive and celebrate



The Harbin Ministry

that it's knock-you-to-your-knees amazing anything exists at all...





Women's Moon Lodge



Beautiful Harbin

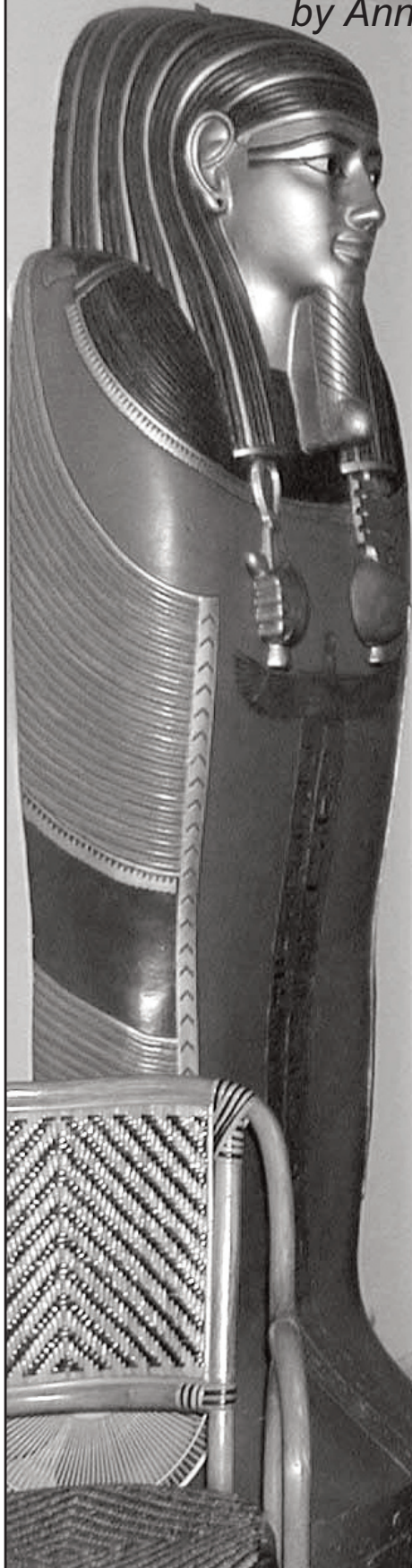
Bhagavan Das



Partial Health Services Staff Summer 2002

THANK YOU, HARBIN ARTISTS...

by Ann Prehn



When I first visited Harbin in 1985, it was rundown - though much improved, I hear - from what it had been. Balconies were strewn with clotheslines and laundry while the retreat rooms were dingy and ill-lit with unusable woodstoves occupying much of the space. A coating of dust in summer or mud in winter was a consequence of the heavily rutted dirt roads. We brought our own bedding with us to go on top of the one bottom sheet provided and waited patiently (or not) to get into the shared bathrooms.

Harbin's residents were making repairs, but Harbin lacked an overall artistic vision. Then, shortly after I moved here in 1987, Julie Adams stepped forward to do something about "Beautification".

By dint of immense geothermal energy and awesome visual grandeur, Harbin has long been considered sacred, one of the world's natural power spots. Anything that Julie did would have to not only address the existing mess but also express due reverence. And since Julie was known more for her irreverence, one could only shake one's head and hope. After all, it is in the Harbin tradition to fully back untried talent, especially in a job no one else wants to do.

Julie enlisted the help of other Harbin artists and craftsmen Peter Frankenreiter and Sajjad Mamoud (the guys who actually do the work) and got busy on the retreat rooms, the common space, the pools and grounds. For much of it, she teamed with the handsome and talented Ken Jenkins who currently does Harbin's website. Their exquisite working relationship shows in the spectacular Egyptian room, worthy of Isis and Osiris, which features Julie's murals and Ken's sarcophagus as well as Ken's furniture designs exquisitely rendered by deceased resident Ben Cribbs. (I won't jinx Ken and

Continued page 36



Above: Ken's Tiger and stained glass from Walnut 21.
Right: Neil Tuchin (he's actually shy) paints Harbin's signs (below), and designed and made the furniture in the Southwest Room (below) and in Cedar Cabin (next page). The painting above the desk is by Carol O'Shea.





Cedar Cabin

Artists Continued



Julie by calling them a 'couple'; I'll just say that they've "cleaved unto each other forsaking all others" for eleven years now.)

For Manzanita Cabin, the oldest building at Harbin, Julie chose Victorian jade for the fireplace, prints from the Louvre and a cat pastel by resident Pier Wright, as well as a goddess rendition by resident, Chandrika. Walnut 21 features Ken's mural of a white tiger and his tantric-themed stained glass, along with exquisite landscape miniatures by Pier. Harbin sign painter par excellence Neil Tuchin made the original furniture in the Southwest Room and the exquisite painting over his desk was done by ex-resident, Carol O'Shea.

I could go on and on about the rooms, especially the lovely stone bathroom in Azalea 12, which Julie says was inspired by her trip with Ken to the Madonna Inn in Santa Barbara; and of course, peaceful Jasmine Cabin with the wall of french doors that look out over a blissfully serene coy pond. And... Cedar Cabin has been transformed into what Julie calls a mission-style "tree house" with an original tile by Ruth Richards, mosaic glass tile shower by Ken and furniture by Neil Tuchin.

For the grounds, Julie chose master wrought-iron craftsman Mark Nichols (also known as Bubblemeister) for new railings around the Hot Pool and for the now-famous Dragon Gate. And as has often been the case, Mark's seduction of Harbin worked both ways and he became a resident, now plying his trade in Middletown and Napa Valley. Resident Ahlea did the beautiful mirror mandala on the ruins of the old hotel above

Continued page 38



Artists Continued

Julie's ancient unicursal labyrinth (first found on Crete). Whimsical tiles by Ruth Richards look out over the Heart Pool and the walkway behind Redwood.

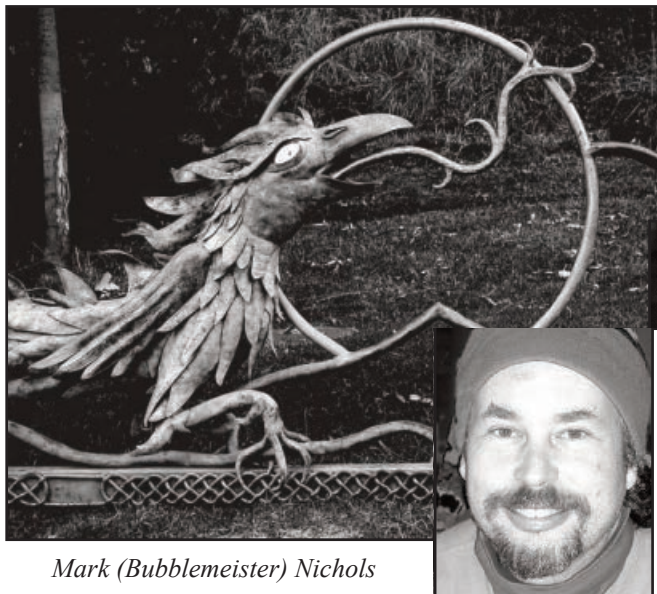
All of this enhances the beautifully maintained and naturalistic landscaping of Ruth, Be All, Anna Maria and others. And the rutted dirt road has been replaced by graceful stylized cobblestones, courtesy of the father-son team of Jackson & Jason.

Harbin has clearly been a place for artistic inspiration. An important venue for artists is The Restaurant where new work has been displayed by Nick Borges, Nioma Dean, Anna Maria Photinos, Nick Bennett and Upada Angelica. Photographs by Elaine Marie and Amelia Free often grace office walls and the Blue Room Café as well as the pages of this publication. Pottery by Mickey Gish and Ruth show up in perfect places as does Anke Ihnken's sewing and stained glass. And Peter Braun does wonders with dry erase markers daily on the Restaurant menu.

I have often thought that art and religion are in essence the same - each seeking to glimpse the Divine, to provoke awareness of the underlying harmony of Creation. There has always been Art in this place. The miracle that Julie wrought was that she enhanced it rather than disturbed it, and thus allowed a harmonious human presence. At Harbin, we are part of the divine plan of Nature, thanks in large part to Julie Adams and the other Harbin artists.

In the Native American expression of gratitude, "My heart is happy."

For more, see the Harbin website at www.harbin.org.



Mark (Bubblemeister) Nichols

I Was a

On a bracingly colorful Fall day, I ran into Omer and Helen near the Harbin Gazebo. I was telling them about my interview with the new resident from Kenya, Feswali (our new chef), when Helen told us about a movie she'd seen called "Nowhere in Africa". The film was about a Jewish family fleeing Nazi Germany to Kenya, where they lived in a remote ranch house and their daughter grew up playing with the village kids and speaking Swahili. "Oh, I definitely want to see that," I said to Helen, "I love stories about people living in a strange culture." "So do I," Omer said. Helen promised she'd get the film to us.

As we parted, it struck me that Omer, an Israeli, and Helen, from England, were themselves far from home and living in an alien culture. As I walked up the road towards the hot pools, I was thinking how diverse Harbin is and began to rattle off in my head how many nationalities, ethnicities, religions, and languages I had encountered in my seventeen years here - every kind and color of American and Native American, Argentinian, Brazilian, Mayan, Colombian, Mexican, Jamaican, Chinese, Japanese, Canadian, French Canadian, Irish, every kind of Brit, and European and Middle Easterner, Indian, Pakistani, South African, Russian, Serb, Bulgarian, Buddhist, Hindu, Bahai, Muslim, Jew, Sufi, Wiccan, Farsi, every kind of Christian, and every level of education, finances, and sexual persuasion. There were more differences than I could count - just the dietary preferences alone is a source of much hilarity. I remembered our founder, Ishvara, once telling me, "I don't have to go out into the world - the world comes here."

As I tried to imagine how far some people had come and how strange Harbin must have seemed to them, I recalled with a start my own journey - Harbin is not exactly the Seattle suburbs of my youth! I too, had come a long way. In fact, except for the kids who are raised here, there's no one for whom Harbin can't be

Stranger in a Strange Land

said to be an "alien culture". We have expressions in our language for the experience of alien cultural encounters: "culture shock" and "culture clash", neither one of which describes the experience of coming to Harbin. The word "assimilation" certainly doesn't describe it, with its Borgian connotations of conformity. Nor does the word "tolerance" seem appropo of the culture here. So what is it about Harbin, as alien as it is, that makes coming here so much like "coming home" for so many people? What makes it all work?

Of course that's the big mystery - great universities including Stanford have sent their anthropology grad students here to study us - one actually stayed on as a resident. Perhaps it's that Harbin never existed before, so we're all sort of co-creating it as we go. Perhaps being in wilderness allows us to remember our primal nature, before humans divided into so many distinct groups. Perhaps it's because we don't really know who each other was before, whether we were rich or successful - the definition of wealth is much broader now. Perhaps it's being naked in front of each other.

Dietlinde, who came from Germany, shed some light. "I am so supported to be whatever I want to be here. I can be spiritual in my own way. If I want to change my name and become a Guru - People don't laugh, they ask what they can do to help me." Yes, I've felt that, too. Whatever my really human needs are - even if I need to grieve or just be left alone for awhile - I feel accepted and supported.

Perhaps our community is not just a community, perhaps it is a "global village", a human sanctuary where the goodness of people is self-evident and, as Dennis Kucinich says, "Peace is inevitable".

I don't know. I just know that here at Harbin, I can be me - Whatever that means.



by Ann Prehn



Poolside

When I reached my tentative toe into the Harbin Warm Pool and felt the inviting tickle of warm bubbles, I forgot my nudity for a moment and allowed myself to relax and ease into the water. That was a stretch for me. Today is my first day here and I'm a large woman not in the habit of exposing myself.

I Wanna Hold Your Breath...

Let me take you down
'cause I'm going to...

With Wassertanzen, you define the field,
sentimental sweet, as John's strawberries
or deep dark and shadowy in yield
of twilight sleep.

All can heal
nothing to get tense about
something feels forever.

Breathing is easy when mind floats
it's oneness that you'll reap.
Shame and fear?
It all pours out
that is, I think we prana-be.

Let me take you down
'cause we're going to the Harbin sway,
nothing is real
nothing to keel haul about
something feels forever.

- Antonia Allawatt

What a spectacular place! Silence, wilderness, mountains catching the last golden rays of sun. It was easy to breathe in deeply, leaving behind the stress of city life. In a few short moments, I was so comfortable, I felt like I'd been here forever.

In the center of the pool, a woman was giving another very large woman a Watsu® - a water shiatsu massage, I've found out, developed here at Harbin by the School of Shiatsu and Massage. She rocked her gently cradled in her arms, then floated and stretched her. Both women looked transported.

At length, I ventured into the Hot Pool, a small covered grotto lit by candles. I made it in up to my waist, not bad for day one. I'm told the water is about 113°.



Epiphanies

Yikes! Then I went up behind and stuck my toe in the Cold Plunge. I won't lie - I didn't even try to get into that one. Other people were going in and out without hesitation, again and again. I was in awe. I'm going to be here for ten days and already I'm surprising myself with what I'm doing - so why rush myself?

When I went back out to the Warm Pool, I was greeted by the most incredible sight - the very large woman was now being floated *under the water*. I mean, this was truly amazing - not only did she not need to breathe, but she also had no bones, no mass - she moved like a wet noodle, flowing as her hair flowed, completely taken over by the water. Was she out of her body? Where was she? Finally she was brought momentarily to the surface, where she simply sighed and went back under. I caught the eye of a man nearby looking as dumbfounded as I must have. I looked away.

Finally, as the Full Moon was coming up, a woman jumped into the pool with a burning stick of sweet-smelling sage, and quietly went around asking if people wanted to be "smudged" for the Full Moon Ceremony. Soon we were in a circle, singing, chanting, sending love out to the world and howling at the moon. And as the minister pointed out, we all felt perfectly safe even though we were stark naked (most of us) holding hands with a bunch of strangers. The man caught my eye and we laughed.

What an incredible day. As I write this I've just shared a spontaneous potluck in Fern Kitchen and tonight I will be sleeping out on the deck under the clearest sky I've ever seen. Tomorrow, I'm going to get a Watsu® and try again to get in the Hot Pool. I found out the underwater thing is called Wassertanzen or WaterDance, but I'm definitely not ready for that... Am I?

- Shirley Rivers

unspeakable
message from the center
of the universe
calm sweet knowing
pulsing empty awareness
mystical nectar
on only
a life, perhaps lifetimes
of fated unfolding
and struggle
now let go
now rest
now in cool silence
know

- Treasure

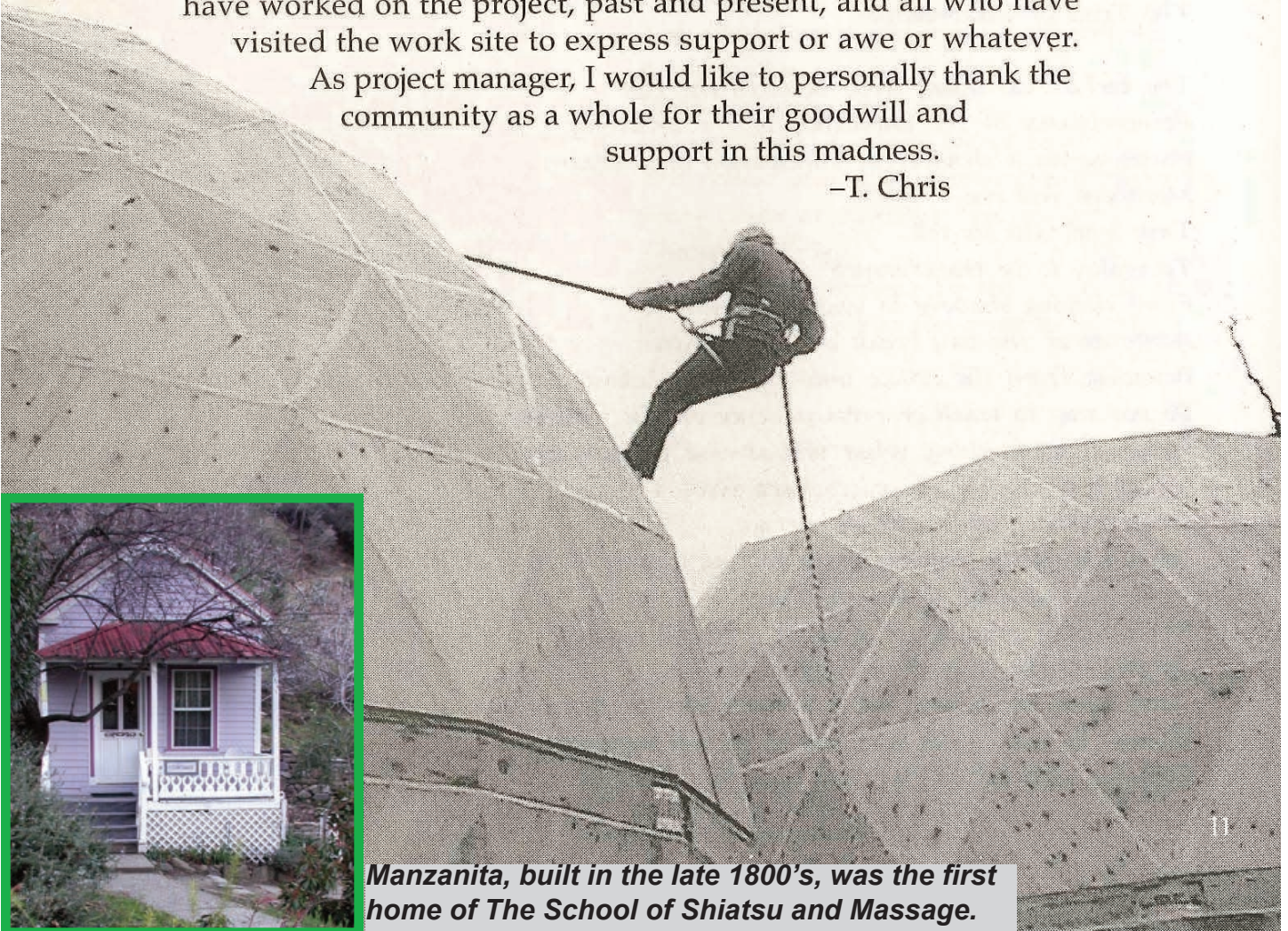


WANNA WATSU?

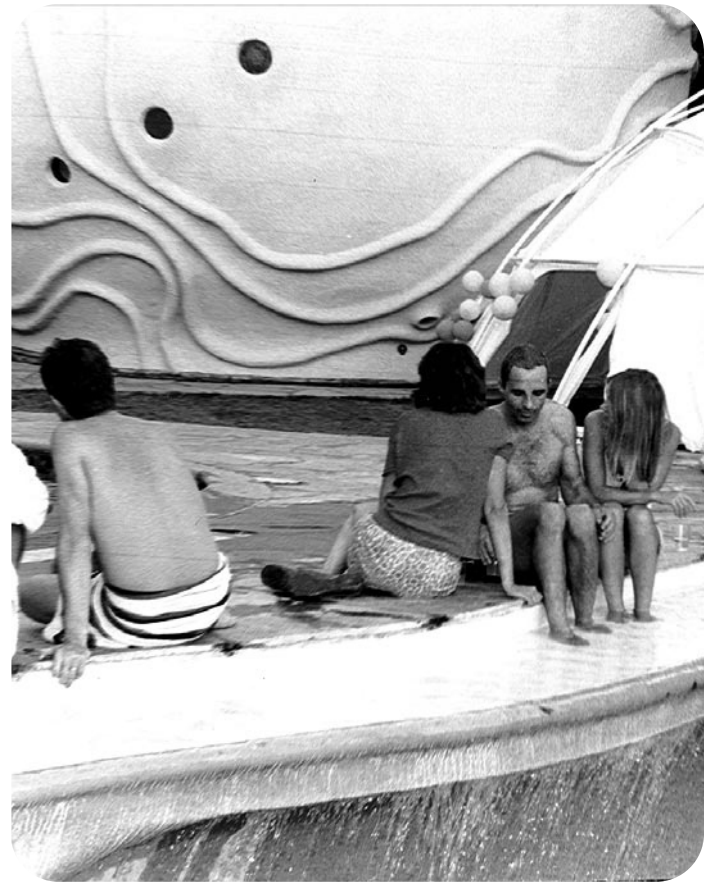
The first rains of the season bring forth the fungal fruits of slowly germinating hyphal mats. Puffballs burst from the ground overnight, but it has been the work of seasons to bring them to their emergent state. Up on the Western flank of Mount Harbin things are popping out of the ground with amazing rapidity. The Watsu Center, which has spent almost a decade in its pre-emergent state, is rising from the soil of our sacred land to take its place as the home base of the life changing aquatic bodywork modality known as Watsu. Construction of three of the five spheres is well underway and work on them and others should continue through the winter. The work is being performed by a combination of Harbin and local residents, with a lot of help from ESPers (whatever that stands for). Although we at Harbin have no expectations concerning the future, work seems to be proceeding at a pace that has us well ahead of any sort of schedule we would have if we actually had a schedule. Our thanks go out to all of the people who have worked on the project, past and present, and all who have visited the work site to express support or awe or whatever.

As project manager, I would like to personally thank the community as a whole for their goodwill and support in this madness.

-T. Chris



Manzanita, built in the late 1800's, was the first home of The School of Shiatsu and Massage.





THE WATSU CENTER School of Shiatsu and Massage

Come join us in our beautiful new home on the side of Mt. Harbin

Ours is the school where Watsu was created, and where this remarkably gentle and effective water massage continues to evolve and grow. Every one of our classes including Shatsu, Deep Tissue, Therapeutic Massage and more - is infused with that same spirit of innovation. Here every class is unique, meaningful, powerful and transformative. Continuing education credits are available. 11 different certification programs are offered from 100 to 1000 hours.

Enjoy a weekend, or one or two weeks of training from masters in the field, and bask in the life-affirming heart space of Harbin Hot Springs. Stay in the incredible five sphere, two pool complex the Harbin community has lovingly constructed for the school and the work originating here that is having such an effect around the world. You and your work will never be the same.

"After just one class I took with the school, clients told me that I have given them the best massage they have ever had." H. D Ritscher

WEEKENDS (the first of many to be added to our schedule this year)

Attend for the experience, or as the first step in a professional training:

- **Basic Watsu** - Learn a powerful tai-chi-like form to practice with family and friends. Master it and continue into the last 3 and a half days of any Watsu 1.
- **Land and Water** - Introduction to the unique forms developed at Harbin: Co-centering, Watsu, and Tantsu. The first two days of Tantsu 1.
- **Watsu Integration 1 or 2** - Practice, adapt and further explore the forms learned in Watsu 1 or 2 and their effects on giver and receiver.

Check our schedule updates regularly for weekends in these and other fields.

The School of Shiatsu and Massage was granted approval by the bureau for Private Post-Secondary

Spring 2002

5-10	Cranio Sacral 2
5-10	Zen Shiatsu for AB
11-12	Basic Watsu
12-17	Jahara Basics
12-17	Deep Tissue 1
19-24	Deep Tissue 2
20-31	Watsu 100
9-14	Presence of Being
9-14	Shiatsu 1
15-16	Basic Watsu
16-21	Shiatsu 2
23-28	Lymphatic
23-28	Watsu 1
30-J5	Watsu 2
6-7	Land and Water
6-11	Tantsu 1
7-12	Watsu 3
13-14	Basic Watsu
14-19	Tantsu 2
15-25	Massage 100
16-21	Watsu 1
28-A2	Jahara Basics
21-26	Waterdance 1
21-25	Integ. Thai & Swed
27-28	Watsu Integration 1*
28-A2	Lomi Lomi
28-A2	Waterdance 2
4-8	Healing Dance
10-11	Basic Watsu
11-16	Adv. Healing Dance
11-16	Anatomy: B & M
11-16	Watsu Adv. Tech.
18-23	Sports Massage
18-23	Reflexology*
18-23	Watsu 1
25-30	Watsu 2
25-30	Ayurvedic Massage
25-30	Ther. Massage
25-30	Healing Dance A&B
1-6	Watsu 3
1-6	Adv. Ther. Massage
1-6	Shiatsu 1
7-8	Land and Water
8-13	Shiatsu 2
9-19	Massage 100
15-20	Shiatsu 3
21-22	Basic Watsu
22-27	Waterdance 1
29-O4	Waterdance 2
5-6	Watsu Integration 2*
6-11	Waterdance 3
6-11	Internal Org. Mas. 1
6-16	Watsu 100
12-13	Basic Watsu
13-18	Internal Org. Mas. 2
13-18	Jahara Basics
13-18	Anatomy: B & M
20-25	Anatomy: Body Sys
20-25	Jahara Expansion
20-25	Watsu 1
27-N1	Zen Shiatsu for AB
27-N1	Watsu 2
27-N1	Deep Tissue 1
2-3	Land and Water
2-7	Tantsu 1
3-8	Watsu 3
3-8	Deep Tissue 2
4-14	Massage 100
17-22	Jahara Expansion
23-24	Basic Watsu
26-D1	Watsu I



World Class Workshops

April 17 - 20.....	Hatha Yoga Retreat.....
April 20 - 25.....	WATSU® I.....
April 20 - 25.....	Introduction to Massage.....
April 25 - 27.....	Peacemaking Circle.....
April 27 - May 1.....	HeroQuest Adventure.....
April 27 - May 2.....	WATSU® II.....
April 27 - May 2.....	Therapeutic Massage.....
May 2 - 5.....	Healing the Father Wound / Women.....
May 2 - 4.....	Love, Intimacy & Sexuality.....
May 2 - 4.....	Love Without Limits.....
May 4 - 9.....	Advanced Therapeutic Massage.....
May 8 - 11.....	Healing the Father Wound / Men.....
May 12 - 22.....	Massage 100.....
May 15 - 18.....	Essence of Yoga.....
May 23 - 25.....	<i>The Celestine Prophecy</i>
May 23 - 25.....	Create a Loving Relationship.....
May 25 - 30.....	Diving into the Self.....
May 25 - 30.....	Anatomy: Bones and Muscles.....
May 30 - June 1.....	Tantra and Sexual Shamanism.....
May 30 - June 1.....	Love, Intimacy & Sexuality.....
June 1 - 6.....	WATSU® I.....
June 4 - 8.....	Ancient Ways Festival.....
June 8 - 13.....	WATSU® Advanced Techniques.....
June 15 - 20.....	Waterdance I.....
June 16 - 18.....	Bodymind Processing.....
June 20 - 23.....	Metaphorum Ministries.....
June 22 - 27.....	Waterdance II.....
June 23 - 30.....	Marantz School of Acrosage™.....
June 23 - July 3.....	Massage 100.....
June 27 - 29.....	Love, Intimacy & Sexuality.....
June 27 - 29.....	Swingolf®.....
July 4 - 6.....	Initiating Your Dream Relationship.....
July 6 - 11.....	Tantsu™ I.....
July 6 - 18.....	WATSU® 100 for Women.....



Dee's Fountain



This project began three years ago when my mother was very sick and near the end of her ten year fight with cancer. I needed money to take a month off work and be with her.

In the years that I've been here, my mother had visited Harbin only three times. Her first visit was a shock to her system (nudity!) but in later years, she came with new-found appreciation for the nature and peacefulness. On her first visit in early '91, she met some residents, most of whom she was skeptical of, but she was very happy to meet Dee - she felt this was someone she could relate to. Over the years, Mom always asked, "How's Dee doing?" So when I shared with Dee how sick my mother was and my financial needs, she volunteered to help me out in trade for "a future artwork".



After my mother passed, I asked Dee what kind of artwork she would like. We discussed different ideas and she said she wanted something for the Harbin Garden. At the time she was dealing with her own health issues and facing her own mortality. She said that she would like "a bench where people can come and visit with my spirit after I'm gone."

With her wish as my guide, I began to develop the project. Neil and Madronna offered a site in the Garden near the Resident Center in the old orchard. Neil and the garden crew sculpted the site for the bench and installed plumbing and landscape for a fountain.



Eighteen years earlier, while taking a Watsu Class, I had been rock hopping in the creek near the Conference Center and landed on a large green serpentine boulder. Its beauty inspired me, and I thought, "Someday, I would love to use that in a sculpture." Now, eighteen years later, I thought of it for Dee's fountain - and how could I ever get it out of the creek? I asked Davel (Harbin's ace backhoe operator) to have a look. Macho guy that he is, he said, "Piece of cake." We lassoed and slung both red and green boulders and we were on our way.

We Dreamt of a School for Our Children...

*F*rom the Summer 1987 issue of the Quarterly, "For the community's children, Heart Consciousness Church operates an accredited Self-Teaching Independent Studies program administered by our teacher, a credentialed L.H., experienced in alternative learning approaches, and resident Shelly, a certified Home Instructor. Once a week, the children meet with these instructors for four hours and find out how to obtain information and training in their chosen fields. Tutors are arranged, lessons assigned, problems discussed; then each child is responsible for a minimum of four hours of study per day." In other words, basic home schooling. The problem was "the tutors" who were not always so easily "arranged", and the fact that there were few kids and they wanted to be with peers.



The Summerhill model was very attractive to many Harbin parents who felt like their own school experiences left major parts of themselves repressed, unexpressed, or undeveloped. There were no Montessori or Waldorf schools in Lake County (still aren't) and the local public school was going through a reactionary period which left Harbin kids feeling like pejorative freaks.

Harbin didn't do too badly by the little ones, and for years ran a reasonably successful "Kids' Club", a semi-volunteer effort which grew out of "Lawn Babies".

The book Summerhill inspired the main goal I chose: to create a more humane and effective living environment than most people thought possible.

~Ishvara, Harbin's founder

In about 1990, a credentialed teacher, Heidi, showed up who really tried to make Kids' Club into a certified school. She had about 7 kids and managed to keep kids and parents happy, and even teach them some French. But her efforts to grow the school with the kids turned sour as the parents realized that by the 1990's, few could agree as to how much "freedom" was good for kids. The parents also realized that a real school would cost money, and time, and that Heidi and Shelly could not do all the work necessary to convince grant-money people that Harbin was "straight" enough to be entrusted with funding. The dream of an alternative school seemed very far away.

Most parents gave up and sent the kids to the local public schools. As the children grew older, parents tended to move off-property into Middletown, so that their kids' friends wouldn't have to deal with special guest arrangements to get onto Harbin property, and wouldn't run into naked people. The Kids' Club died when the kids population dwindled, and the little ones turned to Middletown again, where Harbin resident Linda Findley had rented a house and started a Day Care. And once again, the Harbin parents and others of these day care kids began to dream of growing the school with the kids. While Middletown schools had improved and Harbin was back in vogue with the townies, the dream was still to raise the whole kid, to teach to his/her unique abilities and interests, and to have a view that was at once global and sustainably local. But that's not easy...

Please turn the page →

AND NOW...

In Winter, 2006, Linda wrote:



I decided to stay home with my son when he was four, because I felt the lightening speed of him growing up. I created a small family day care that could support us and help to support others in and around Harbin in the daily care and feeding of our youngest members. I met Bonnie Howard and Lisa Kaplan through caring for their first grade and toddler sons. I don't know if all grass roots movements begin around the kitchen table, but this one did. I can tell you from experience that Margaret Mead was right when she said, "Never underestimate the power of small groups to change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."

From that kitchen table, which was designed for little people under the age of six, we crouched on toddler-sized chairs and dreamed of an education appropriate for our children. An education that recognized that not all children learn in the same way and did not cater to the notion that a child's education could be produced in a factory model where so many units could be churned out in X amount of time. We know our boys. They are quick, intelligent, and hard to keep seated, especially when they are curious. And they are like most other children. So the three of us began to look into how we could get an option for all the children that we knew in the Middletown area. It quickly became apparent that we needed to create a charter school. Chartered schools are federally funded and are tuition free, public schools. They are typically founded out of a grass roots need for change and are often parent driven.

The first year was an exercise in wheel spinning. Many people came and went as we tried to decide everything consensually. Too many of us tried to know everything that needed to be known to start a new school. Finally, Lisa Kaplan emerged as our "Little Engine that Could." She worked ceaselessly to connect us with the right people in the county that could give us the million little pieces of information necessary to end up with a viable document that would pass through the rigorous approval scenario that is the chartered school process. Bonnie became the "Presentation Babe" and made countless visits to the Rotary club and their ilk, and to organizations that had to be convinced, first, that Lake County needed an educational option, and second, that we were the people to provide it.



Chapter 3- Raising Dreams, Children, Roofs and Money

by Linda Findley

We, a dozen residents and Middletowners with young children, opened the Lake County International Charter School (LCICS) in 2005 with our hearts and minds oriented towards fulfilling the dream of raising our children in a unique and diverse public school. We had open hearts and open minds. Open wallets were another matter because most of us were single mothers and, when you work at Harbin, life is not about making money.



LCICS became the first educational alternative in the county. I'm six years into this project and there are still no Waldorf and no Montessori choices. What we have is clean air, clean water and a diverse community of world traveling, thoughtful people committed to support community in diverse ways. Some of us sing kirtan and some of us start schools.

For our children to thrive in the diversity of the 21st century, they need to be independent, globally aware citizens.



Behold...



A vision came to the children of Harbin,
And they did dream a sweet dream.
For an Angel came unto them and said,
“Money will I give you for the
building of a temple.

“And it shall be brought forth
of strawbale and cedar
On the eastern edge of the Garden
And covered round with earth and flowers
Where the frogs sing in the shadows
And the quail hide in the heath.

“And the diameter of the temple
shall be 60 feet
And the shape of the temple shall be round,
The floor of it shall be of rammed earth.
Warmth radiates in Winter from
its sealed softness
And a large fire blaze upon a hearth.

“And all about, windows bring in light
Lifting high unto the spiralled rafters
And spilling down from the High Center.

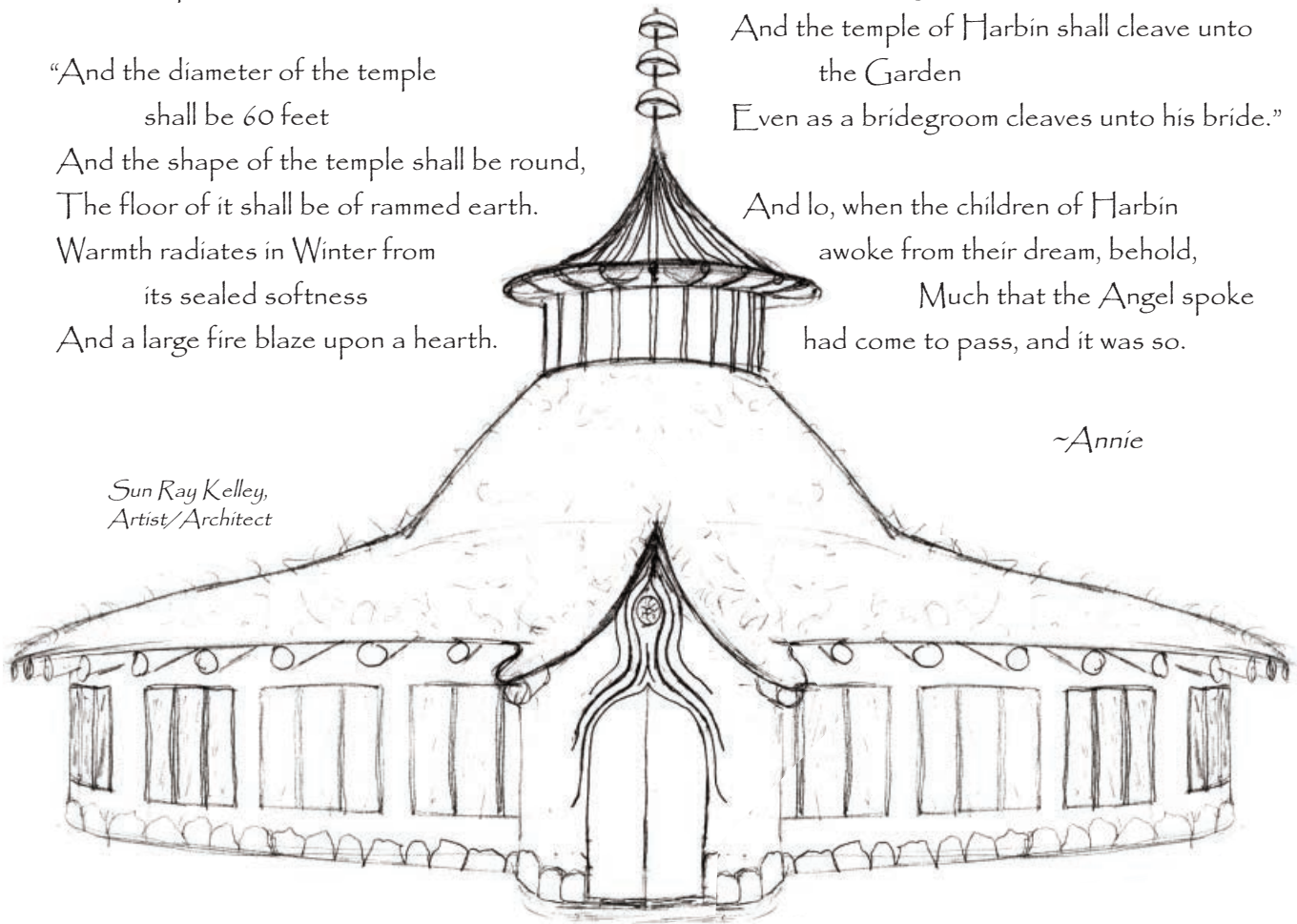
“And the children of Harbin shall sing & dance
And perform all manner of performances,
And many shall there be, too,
Who do Satsang and Yoga.

“And in the Spring, the windows of the temple
will be thrown open
And the cooling breezes will blow round about.
And the temple of Harbin shall cleave unto
the Garden
Even as a bridegroom cleaves unto his bride.”

And lo, when the children of Harbin
awoke from their dream, behold,
Much that the Angel spoke
had come to pass, and it was so.

~Annie

*Sun Ray Kelley,
Artist/Architect*

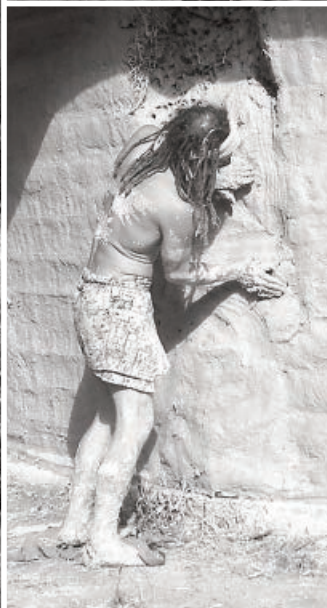




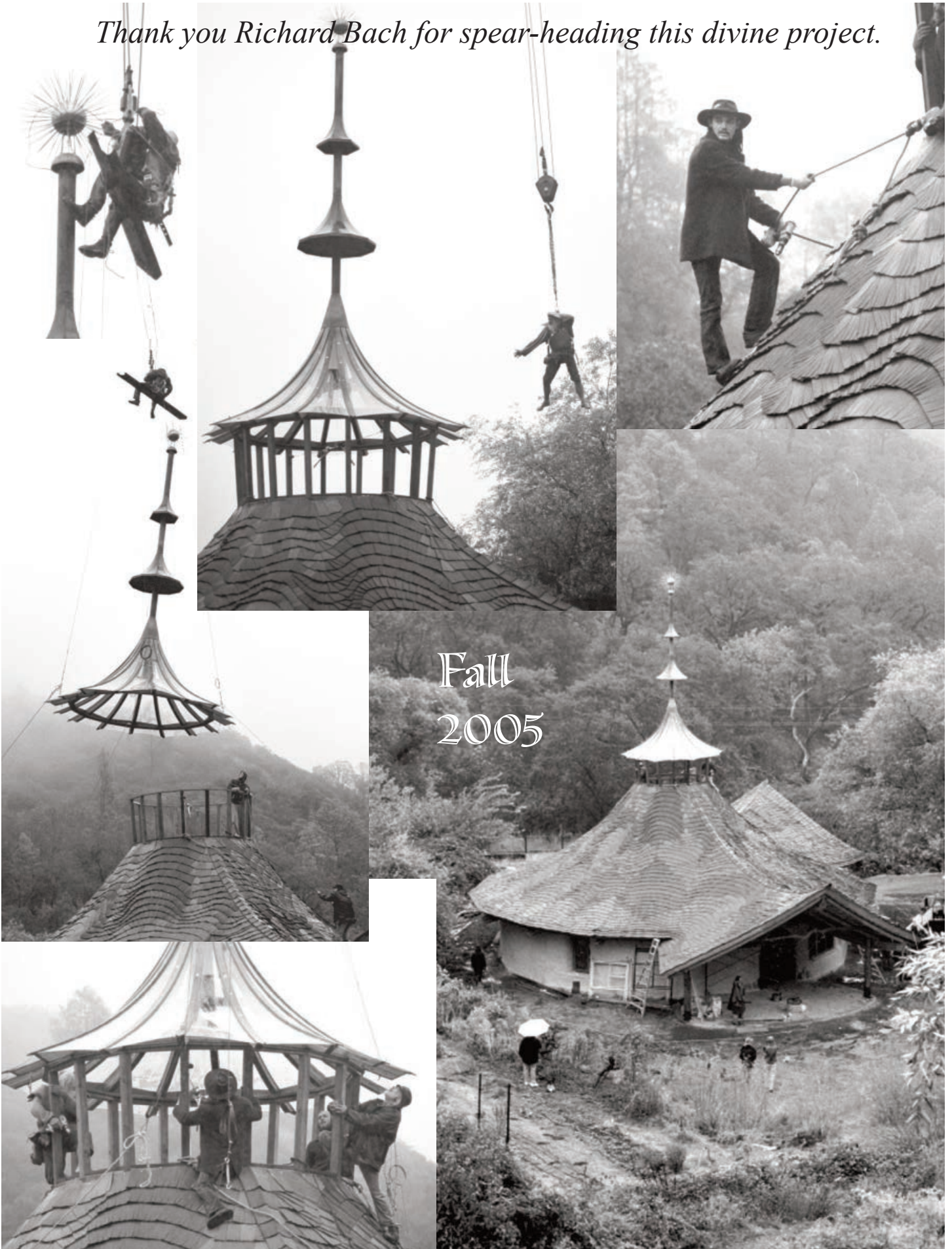
*Architect and Builder
Sun Ray Kelley*



*Summer
2005*



Thank you Richard Bach for spear-heading this divine project.



Fall
2005

Roots of the New Age –

By Ann Prehn

"The New Age is a religious beginning. It can, therefore, free from distorted scriptures, be based on the whole universe as God. As we embrace the universal spirituality of New Age thinking, we can use all scriptures as sources of truth..."

Spiritual feelings arise in various ways. Sometimes they are induced by beautiful surroundings, churches, art, music, and, most of all, nature. When we leave noisy, enclosed cities for the silence, majesty, and openness of tall trees and mountains, or vast plains or waters, we connect with the unlimited." Harbin's founder, Ishvara: [Oneness in Living](#).

To see God, ourselves, and the universe as one unlimited whole does not seem political. But, at the dawn of civilization, hierarchical religions stressed our separation from God, and from nature. Because of this, the philosophy we now call New Age was counter-cultural and revolutionary.

The earliest claim on the "New Age" label belonged to Madame Blavatsky and her occultist Theosophical Society of the late 19th Century. The Theosophists were interested in replacing hierarchical religion with the universalism of Eastern religions. But before the Civil War, there was already a group that espoused the tenets of the New Age, a group called the "Transcendentalists". Proponents included some of this country's greatest writers and thinkers, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Bronson Alcott, and Margaret Fuller. "Transcendentalism" was first coined and discussed by philosophers in Germany, but it was in New England in the 1840s that it became a real social movement.

When we think about New England, our first thoughts may be of Puritans, scarlet letters, and witch hunts. How, we may ask, in a few short generations, did the medieval-seeming Puritans become Transcendentalists, the freedom-loving prophets of the New Age? To understand this, we must first grasp that the

Puritans came to New England's shores for their own religious freedom. They were part of the Protestant Reformation, whose main dispute with the Catholic Church was its Papist hierarchy which acted as sole interpreter of the Bible. The Protestants believed everybody should read and interpret the Bible for himself, and sent their missionaries off to teach everybody to read, even going so far as to create written languages where none existed and translate the Bible into them. They took along their strict customs and moral codes, and, to understate it severely, were not welcomed everywhere they went. But this idea, that Christians should be able to read and interpret the Bible for themselves, soon led to the idea of reading other things, including other religious books, and coming to one's own conclusions about those, too. Once literacy had been spread, the cat was out of the bag.

By the 1840's, New Age-like texts from India, China, and the Middle East were being translated and read, by women as well as men. Many were impressed by Buddhism, the Bhagavad Gita, and Middle Eastern mystery schools and from them adopted the idea that God could be experienced directly. Calling themselves Transcendentalists, they saw God in all things, and were horrified at what industrialized civilization was doing to nature and individual freedom. They experimented with Utopian movements and spiritualism, even creating Harbin-like intentional communities such as *Brook Farm* and *Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands* where they lived in harmony with nature, guided by each person's own intuition and conscience. (A great account is in [Transcendental Wild Oats](#) by Bronson Alcott's daughter, Louisa May Alcott.) The Transcendentalists practiced gender and racial equality, espoused and agitated for the end of slavery and child labor; many were even vegetarians and vegans.

Emerson said, "There is a correspondence between the human soul and everything that exists in the world; more properly, everything that is known to man. Instead of studying things without, the principles of them all may be penetrated into from within..." The

The Transcendentalists

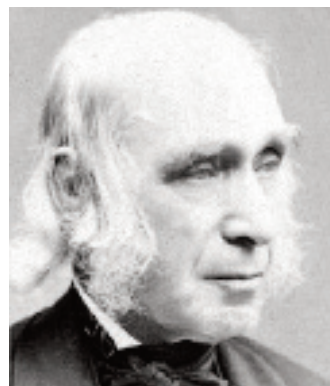
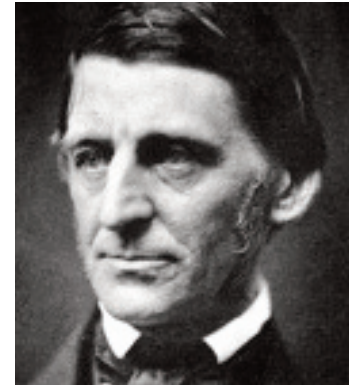
purpose of life seems to be to acquaint man with himself... The highest revelation is that God is in every man."

The idea that man is a part of nature is expressed in this quote from Margaret Fuller: "It is not meant that the soul should cultivate the earth, but that the earth should educate and maintain the soul."

Defining 'Transcendentalism' seemed then almost as hard as defining 'New Age' seems today. It was a topic of constant debate. This was because the one agreed principle was that each individual should experience the divine for himself. A late 19th Century history book called Transcendentalism in New England notes:

"A remarkable feature of The Dial [Emerson's 1840's Transcendentalist magazine, edited by Margaret Fuller] were the chapters of "Ethnical Scriptures," seven in all, containing texts from the Veeshnu Sarma, the laws of Menu, Confucius, the Desatir, the Chinese "Four Books," Hermes Trismegistus, the Chaldean Oracles... To read such things then showed an enlightened and courageous mind; to print them in a magazine under the sacred title of 'Scriptures' argued a most extraordinary breadth of view. In offering these chapters to its readers, without apology and on their intrinsic merits, Transcendentalism exhibited its power to overpass the limits of all special religions, and do perfect justice to all expressions of the religious sentiment."

Accessing the divine directly, each in his own way, without the intercession of church or government, was and is a revolutionary act. And just as with the counter-culture movements of the 1960's, the Transcendentalists stood up for freedom. They were Abolitionists, Feminists, reformers in factories and schools, proponents of Indian rights. The Transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau especially resonates through the ages. His book Walden, written in 1845, advocates a simple life in nature and inspired modern



Clockwise from top left: Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Bronson Alcott

environmentalism. His Civil Disobedience inspired Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

Today, Harbin and the New Age are advantaged with years of experience and methods for aiding the individual to a state of divine oneness. There are gurus and teachers for every predilection and personality. Innovations in modalities of consciousness-raising, especially from *Esalen's Human Potential Movement*, distinguish us from those early Transcendentalists.

But without the Transcendentalists, there would likely have been no Theosophists, no New Age, no Esalen, and no Harbin. Now it's our turn to give to the future. "We're obviously hanging at a cusp," says George Wheeler, Esalen's president, "and that cusp is human evolution itself. It's still all about the evolution of consciousness and human potential. But yes, I'm hopeful."

Fire!!!

I had heard stories, that because of the geography of the canyon, fire was a serious threat, that the springs had caught fire five times previously in its long and varied incarnations, but hearing stories and being in one are two different things. As I sat on the Harbin lawn that day, in front of the beautiful Victorian/hippie renovated hotel buildings, surrounded by huge old cherished trees that cradled the lawn tenderly, I saw a dark pillar of smoke rise in the north from behind Harbin. It was September 12, 2015, the birthday of a friend with whom I sat. She had come all the way from Florida to celebrate because she, like many others, loved Harbin so.

"I think we better go," I said, casting an eye at the curiosity of smoke.

By the time we got across the Village, the devil himself and all the hounds of hell came blasting out of the canyon. Huge black clouds loomed over a wall of flame taller than most of the buildings in Middletown, devouring anything in its wake.

With little or no warning, suddenly 20,000 people had to make it down that skinny, winding mountain road, some with animals in tow, leaving behind all of life's possessions to the fate of wind and flames.

The Valley Fire was the fastest moving fire in the recorded history of fire in the state of California. It started shortly after 1pm on Cobb Mountain and by 6:30pm had consumed more than 10,000 acres, including our beloved Harbin. While firefighters fought to save what could be saved of Middletown, Harbin Hot Springs burned to the ground.

We ran for our very lives with only the clothes on our backs, praying the car had enough gas to get down the mountain, and that no burning trees would fall across the road before we made it to safety. Twenty thousand people from Cobb, Harbin, and Middletown, who on a good day would probably struggle, curse, and compete to get to their goal, instead hung together, helped each other to move faster than the raging monster in hot pursuit behind them.

If the story could end here, it would probably be a grace, but for those of us who went through the Valley Fire, who were now homeless, our transformation had just begun.

Carol Thompson

A Shout-Out to the Heroes Who Came Back



Sajjad



Julie

by Aquiana

The Valley Fire caused the loss of 4 lives (a fifth has never been found), destroyed 1300 homes, and another 666 structures in 79,000 acres. Seven to ten million trees were lost. Costs of rebuilding quadrupled. Most of us lost our jobs, pets, property all at once. I lost my home, 5 cats as well and both my professions.

Harbin's 10,000 acres burned buildings, except for 3 school buildings, the garden barn, some housing took years to clear the debris and great deal of money was lost trying to what had been a thriving town and all points of the globe. Many had no in-to leave to find work or a place to live, destroyed.

As we waited in our tents for homes were still there, an amazing meeting (without managers) was our evacuation center, within days of family and unity, more than 150 to do whatever needed to reopen. our Managing Directors) showed the from the ashes.

Sajjad came out of retirement to lead the effort. Julie Adams showed up, as well as Lia Findley Jennings, Chayo Mosqueda, Eric Richardson, Ken Gonzales, Michael Whalen, Padma, Will, Shah, Elaine, R. Lane, T. Chris, Alexa, Eme, Anke, Deirdre, Neil, Abel, Amir, and Ishvara. In three years Harbin reopened with temporary buildings and a new infrastructure. Others were showing up by the day to help including Dennis, Sunheart, Jon Streiter, Linda Miller, Leland, Jocelyn, Frankie, Harlan, and more. Body workers too were returning: Penny, Janelle, Aquiana, Caroline Arpita, Nico. Ace chef Feswali also returned, along with Crystal, Chris Deer, and Chia.

For the three years after the fire, Sajjad wrestled with the Lake County planning department who had also been devastated. Their help came and went and each new face had a different set of criteria than the previous. Two years after the rebuild plans were finally accepted, Harbin was hit by another major disaster: Covid. Harbin barely managed to stay open. It is with utter gratitude that this shout out is given. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Some names of folks who helped have been missed. Sunheart, that blessed soul, has passed on. Many including Sajjad and Julie, Eme, Elaine, Padma and Aquiana have left Harbin or retired.

Harbin is now led primarily by Lia Findley Jennings, Chayo Mosqueda and a cast of new characters. When asked if they felt like residents or employees, one said, "We feel like family." Someday we hope to have 'residents' again, but for now 'family' is a beautiful place to be.

*Liminal
That moment upon awakening
when it's all the way it was
not the way it is
When you realize you've
been driving the clear road of
yesterday
not the scarred paths of today
The sharp intake of breath
knowing the past is only ashes
and so is the future if we don't
learn
The only hope to make anything
better in the now
than the memory of how it was
— Aquiana*

to the ground, taking 95% of its (Domes), 2 cabins, 2 comfort station town, and the smoking deck (!) It land; the rebuild will take decades. A increase funding for the rebuild. family of its own largely disbanded to surance for home or health and had as Harbin housing was largely de-

word of the fire being out and if our thing happened. A Harbin community held at the Calistoga Fairgrounds, the Fire. Drawn together in a spirit Harbin Strong members were ready Another meeting in Calistoga (with determination to rebuild and rise

Rebuilding - Nov. 2024



Reunited Souls at Harbin —

The Story of Zeynep and Mahmut

The drive to Harbin Hot Springs felt like a journey through time. I glanced over at Zeynep, her profile framed by the afternoon sunlight. She had said “let’s do a road trip, it will be intimate”. It had been twelve years since we’d last seen each other, and now we were here, together, on a road winding through the California hills. My heart was racing, not just because of the sharp turns, but because of the surreal reality of having her beside me again.

We’d met in high school, two restless souls dreaming about the future. We shared everything back then—hopes, fears, endless conversations about life. After graduation, our paths diverged. Zeynep’s architecture career took her to New York, then Moscow, while I ventured to Switzerland and then California, pursuing my passion for physics. Life happened, as it often does, and we drifted apart.

In 2020, I discovered Harbin Hot Springs. It became my refuge, a place to disconnect from the chaos of the world and reconnect with myself. The hot springs, surrounded by lush hills and ancient trees, offered a tranquility I hadn’t known I needed. Every visit felt like a balm, healing old wounds I didn’t even realize I carried. It was here, amidst the steam and silence, that I often found myself thinking about my life and what is missing.



A wedding under the fig tree.

And then, a few months ago, I reached out to Zeynep. A simple message: “Hey Zeynep, long time. If you’ll ever be in California, I would love to catch up.” Then we started to exchange messages, catching up on the basics, but it was clear that neither of us wanted to stay on the surface. When I suggested we visit Harbin together, I wasn’t sure what she would say. But she agreed, and here we were, making our way up the winding road, anticipation and a touch of nervousness hanging in the air.

As we pulled into the parking lot, I turned to her. “Ready for this?” She smiled, a hint of that old mischievous spark in her eyes. We stepped out of the car and walked towards the entrance, the familiar scent of eucalyptus and the sound of rustling leaves greeting us. We checked in, and as we made our way to the pools, I could feel the tension of the past few years easing out of my body. There’s something about Harbin that just does that—melts away the stress, leaving only the essentials behind.

“I can see why you love this place,” Zeynep said, her eyes taking in the surroundings. “It’s so peaceful.”

“It’s become a kind of home for me,” I admitted. “A place to reflect, to heal. It’s helped me through a lot.”

We reached the main pool area, and I watched as Zeynep took it all in—the steam rising from the water, the quiet conversations, the way the sun filtered through the trees, casting dappled light on the surface. I realized then just how much I wanted her to feel what I felt here, to understand why this place had become so important to me.

We found a spot by the warm pool and slipped into the water. For a while, we just sat there, side by side, letting the warmth soak into our

Zeynep & Mahmut Continued

bones. It was a silence filled with comfort and a sense of familiarity that surprised me. Despite the years apart, it felt like no time had passed at all.

“I’ve missed this,” she said finally, her voice soft. “Being able to just... be with someone who knows me.”

I nodded, understanding exactly what she meant. “I’ve missed you, Zeynep”.

She turned to me, her eyes searching mine. “Then why didn’t you reach out?” It was a question I’d asked myself countless times. A small smile played on her lips. Zeynep reached over and took my hand, her touch sending a familiar warmth through me.

“I’ve been searching for something, Mahmut. I lived in these incredible cities, met amazing people, but there was always this feeling that something was missing. I think it was you.” The honesty in her voice, the openness—it took my breath away. We had been through so much separately, yet here we were, finding each other again in this place that had given me so much peace.

We spent the rest of the day exploring Harbin together. We soaked in the different pools, strolled along the quiet paths, and talked about everything and nothing. It felt like peeling back layers, rediscovering who we were and how we had changed. The ease of our old friendship was still there, but it was mixed with something new, something deeper.

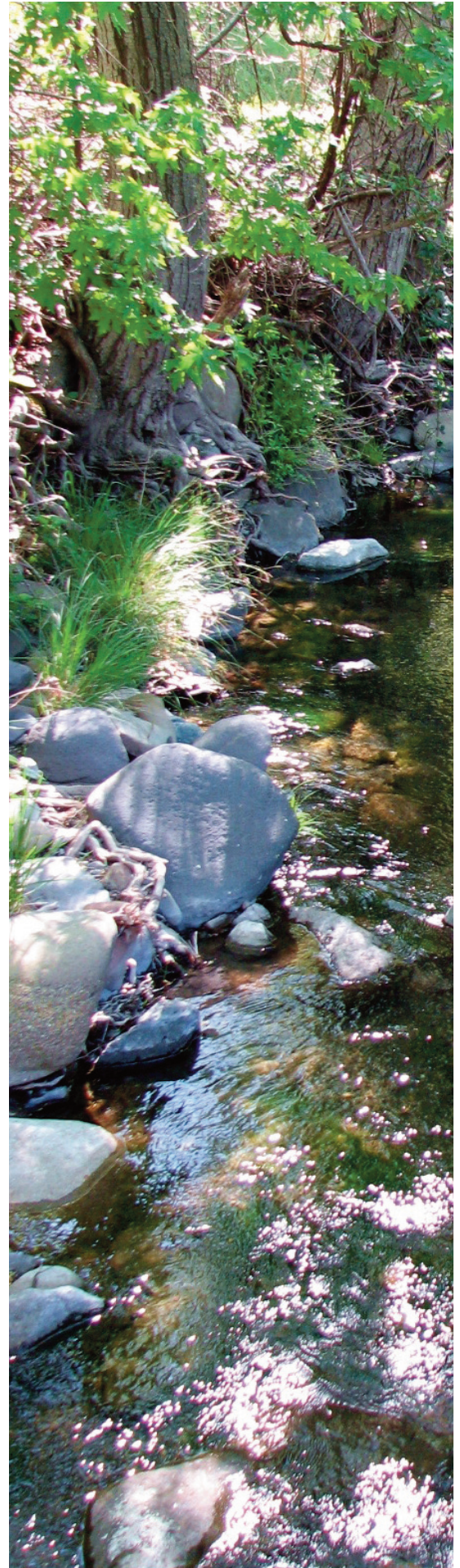
The sun was setting as we made our way to a place I wanted to show her, a quiet spot called “The Roots,” under a majestic fig tree that had stood there for decades. It was my favorite place at Harbin, a place where I often sat and reflected. As we stood there, I took her hand and looked into her eyes.

“Zeynep, I’ve spent so much time here finding myself, but I didn’t realize that what I was really searching for was you.” Her eyes filled with tears, and she squeezed my hand.

“Mahmut, I feel the same.” We hugged, holding each other tightly, and I knew I didn’t want to let her go.

The next few days were a blur of joy and discovery. We promised to return to Harbin together, and we did—just a few months later. On our second visit, standing under that same fig tree at The Roots, we exchanged vows right there with our spiritual guide Ann Prehn, in the place that had brought us back together, surrounded by the serenity and beauty of Harbin.

As we stood under the canopy of the fig tree, I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude. Harbin wasn’t just a sanctuary anymore; it was the place where we had found each other again, where we had started a new chapter together. Now, every visit to Harbin is a celebration of that moment, a reminder of the journey we’ve taken—separately and together. As we look to the future, I know that whatever comes, we’ll face it hand in hand, grounded in the love and connection we rediscovered under that fig tree, in the heart of Harbin.



Carol 2024: How do you like Harbin?

Tamary Cahill (reception)

This place is magical. It's more than what you see. There are actually spirits here that do healing, and I know this because I have experienced it. I love that Harbin is an intentional community. We build each other up. We stand up for each other, and love each other. The employees are not just employees, and the guests are not just guests. We are the Harbin tribe.

Steven Chiu (guest)

I can't imagine before the fire. It's an amazing environment. I love the architecture of the Watsu Center. Sad I'm leaving. My dad's last wish was to be in a hot springs. Now I know where to bring my mom.

Kyleen Weerts (reception)

I love it here. You can be you and be comfortable.

Bryan VanDerhyden (guest)

Close to paradise. Very relaxing. Tranquil and peaceful. Good to do a reset from the world.

Vicki Novelo (Blue Room & kitchen)

I have the opportunity to come on my days off. It's beautiful and charming. Nice people, but I'm still waiting for the wild factor to come back. Needs more marketing to bring in your tribe. I managed 850 rooms. For me this is a candy shop. We need to bring the employees together. I like the rural location. People come a long way to get here. They have all that time to think of their expectations.

Maurice Randolph (guest)

One of the most pleasant vacation experiences I ever had. And I will definitely be back. I like the spaciousness, the chance to walk around. The Gardens are so beautiful. And the place is so clean.



John Sciarra (Waste and Recycle)

I can't imagine it being better. It's incredible. We have an incredible opportunity.

Journey Dobbs-Marsh (guest)

I enjoy the pools a lot. Construction is slightly annoying. I heal here. Get away from the computer.

Adam (security)

I like the vibe of everybody. Relaxed guests. Friendly staff. Different people from different parts of life.

Vonni Wyng (guest)

I love it. I do garden design, and I love all these areas. Good events whether you are solo or with a group. Electronics free zone. The food is excellent, and I love the history. It is well run. People are available. Will be exciting to see what will happen.

Amelie Cabrera (reception)

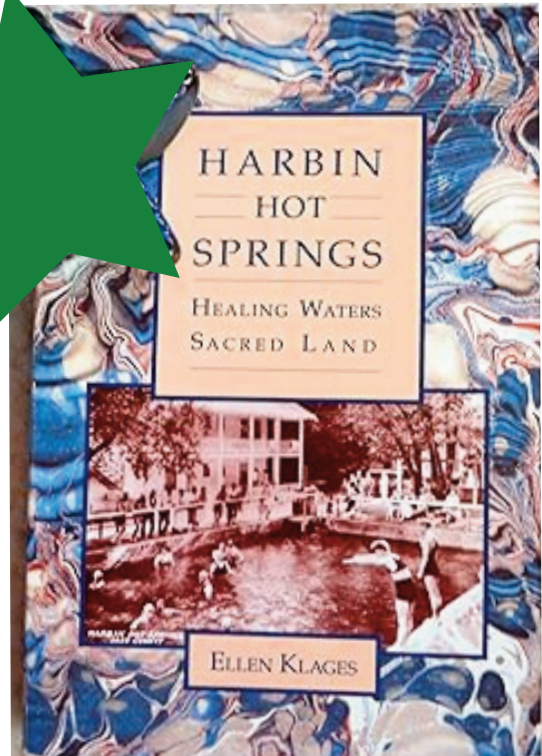
I like how adaptable it is here, because they are constantly adapting and changing for the better, while still keeping to their roots. It's wonderful to see such a tightly knit community and how they come together so well.

Healing Waters * Sacred Land

by Ellen Klages

“The Harbin History Book”
is still in print.

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