

Northern Sustainability Symposium: Everyday Solutions

Updated March 22, 2013



May 3-5, 2013

North House Folk School

www.northhouse.org

888-387-9762

How do I fix this hole in my sock? I wish I knew how to sharpen my own knives. There has to be a less toxic way to clean my house. Hmm...bulgur...how do I cook that? I wish I knew how to build things. Are these the thoughts in your head? Then the Northern Sustainability Symposium is the event for you.

The story of sustainability in our changing world is more than a macro-scale question of carbon credits and mass transit, energy policy and environmental regulation. Many of the changes ahead will be made by individuals, learning to repair and repurpose, simplify and reclaim the everyday skills of self-reliance from the not-so-distant past. The 2013 Northern Sustainability Symposium will focus on the do-it-yourself skills that are integral to sustainable future. Hands-on coursework on herbal medicine, creative cooking with whole ingredients, mending clothing, tool use and care, and living and working in community will all be offered during the weekend. We welcome featured speaker Dmitry Orlov, author of *Reinventing Collapse*, who will teach two seminars during the weekend and give a presentation on Saturday evening. Lunch seminars, films and community gatherings will round-out a stimulating and engaging weekend.

HANDS-ON COURSEWORK – EDUCATE.

Participate in a hands-on, positive learning environment and register for an event course. It's North House Folk School at its best, education with a purposeful outcome to enrich lives and build community. Registration required. Tuition and materials fees vary.

Pre-Event Coursework

- Ovenscrafting: the Wood-Fired Brick Bread Oven - 4.5 days

May 3

- Clean-it-Yourself: Making Sustainable Soaps- 1/2 day
- Can-it-Yourself: Introduction to Canning - 1/2 day
- Sailing Away from Fossil Fuels with Dmitri Orlov - 1/2 day
- Solar Hot Water Systems: Get the Heat!- 1 day

May 4

- Green Medicines - 1 day
- Cooking Creatively from a Well-Stocked Pantry - 1/2 day
- Cut, Carve & Whittle it Yourself: Basic Knifework - 1/2 day
- Fix-it-Yourself: Mending with Wool - 1/2 day
- Sew-it-Yourself: Hand-Sewing Skills - 1/2 day
- Root Cellars: Exploring Use & Design - 1/2 day
- Building Communities that Last with Dmitri Orlov - 1/2 day
- Sharpen-it-Yourself: Knife & Tool Sharpening Basics - 1/2 day
- Solar Hot Water Systems- Hands On Installation Experience – 3 days

May 5

- What's on the Menu- 1/2 day
 - Hoop, Hoop Hooray: Season Extension Tour- 1/2 day
 - Boreal Building Basics & Grid-Tied 1/2 day
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LUNCH & LEARN SESSIONS: FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY

Delicious food, fascinating conversations. Reservations required for Friday and Saturday

Friday, May 3

Noon: Lunch & Learn

Angry Trout Café, prices vary; participants order from menu, reservation required

Ideas to Inspire: Healing the Human Tribal Circle with Gigi Stafne

Join Master Herbalist and North House Instructor Gigi Stafne for a lunch and learn session that will feed your soul as well as your stomach! Gigi will reflect on lessons learned while living simply and sustainably.

What seem like small steps may actually be the keys to creating individual health & happiness, ultimately healing the human tribal circle.

Saturday, May 4

Noon: Lunch & Learn with the Northwoods Food Project: Get Growing! Starting a Garden

Catered by the Pie Place: Spring Vegetable Stew with Sweet Potato Dumplings, Choice of Pie

While it's deeply rewarding to grow your own food, gardening is not always as easy, natural or idyllic as it sounds. To help beginning gardeners get growing, the Northwoods Foods Project of Cook County has established a garden mentorship program to match experienced growers with new green-thumbs. Farmer and North House Instructor Melinda Spinler is an experienced mentor, and will present along with her garden mentee. They'll discuss successes, challenges and offer tips for beginning gardeners. Get inspired and informed: gardening season is just about here!

Sunday, May 5

Noon: Lunch & Learn Film: In Transition 2.0 (97 min)

Brown Bag Lunch: Bring Your Own

In Transition 2.0 is an inspirational immersion into the Transition movement, gathering stories from around the world of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. You'll hear about communities printing their own money, growing food everywhere, localizing their economies and setting up community power stations. It's an idea that has gone viral, a social experiment that is about responding to uncertain times with solutions and optimism. In a world that is awash with gloom, here is a story of hope, ingenuity and the power of growing vegetables in unexpected places.

COMMUNITY GATHERINGS: FRIDAY, SATURDAY

Join fellow students and community members for stimulating and engaging presentations and discussion about sustainability in the North.

Friday, May 3

7:00 pm at North House

Minnesota's Energy Future: Renewable Energy, Efficiency & Local Opportunities with Erin Ruccolo of Fresh Energy

Though Minnesota has enough wind and solar potential to meet its electricity needs several times over, most of our electricity is generated by fuels that must be imported into the state. This year, efforts are underway at the Minnesota Legislature to increase our state's solar market, cut red tape around solar projects, and increase the state's renewable energy standard, creating family-sustaining jobs, supporting local communities while keeping our air and water clean. At the same time, local communities like Grand Marais aren't waiting for state leaders and are moving ahead on renewable energy and efficiency initiatives. Hear what's happening at the Capitol to bring renewable energy to everyone in Minnesota, find out what you can do, and learn more about how cities and towns can use a district heating model to power and heat homes and businesses.

Saturday, May 4

5:30 pm at North House

Wood-fired Community Pizza Potluck

Bring your favorite pizza toppings to share and beverages for this casual, harbor-side pizza potluck as North House Folk School fires up the wood-fired oven and provides the dough. Enjoy good company and good eats!

Saturday, May 4

7:30 pm at North House

Featured Speaker: Dmitry Orlov “Living with Collapse”

We welcome featured speaker **Dmitry Orlov**, author of the award-winning book [Reinventing Collapse: The Soviet Example and American Prospects](#) and of the forthcoming [The Five Stages of Collapse: Survivors' Toolkit](#). For the past five years he has been experimenting with off-grid living and renewable energy by giving up the house and the car. Instead, he has been living on a sailboat, sailing it up and down the Eastern Seaboard, and commuting by bicycle. Dmitry believes that, given appropriate technology, we can greatly reduce personal resource consumption while remaining perfectly civilized.

Collapse is less an event than a process. It brings sudden, dramatic changes to those it affects the most while remaining barely noticeable to casual observers. Initially, it is less about things happening and more about things failing to happen as expected. But it is observable to the trained eye, and even measurable, as a steady deterioration in the status quo. Once we learn to see it, we can also learn to start putting together viable alternatives to the status quo that can help carry us through it.

LOCAL SOLUTIONS SEMINARS: SUNDAY

Life on the edge of the boreal forest presents some particular challenges to homesteaders: a shortage of top soil, a short growing season, and harsh winters are regular features of the northern landscape. Spend Sunday exploring the creative solutions local residents & experts have implemented in three different settings, co-sponsored by local organizations. Local discount of 25% applies to full-year Cook County residents. Pre-registration requested.

9am-noon: Boreal Building Basics & Grid-Tied Solar Systems

\$45, registration required

Living sustainably means becoming aware of our footprint. When we lighten the load, opportunities to create and use energy differently emerge. This survey course will cover the basics of what you need to know about home construction and setting up a photovoltaic array in Northern MN. Whether you're building, buying or renovating a home, you can get more from your structure in terms of comfort and durability by understanding how buildings work. We will cover the basics of building science with attention to energy use and how to apply that knowledge in practical ways. This will include design and construction details of insulation, air sealing, ventilation, moisture control and building design for our northern climate. We will investigate what is involved in setting up a solar array to power all or some of your needs. This includes site assessment for solar, how to integrate the system to your building, sizing and metering basics as well as general cost and pay backs.

9am: Hoop, Hoop Hooray: A Tour of Greenhouses, Hoop-houses and More

\$20, registration required

From cold frames to hoop houses to large greenhouses, gardening and small-scale farming in the northern landscape means finding myriad ways to create extra days of warmth to coax plants into later and more prolific production. Visit different locations in Cook County to see season extension options in action, and discuss the pros and cons of each option with the gardeners and farmers who use them. Participants will meet at North House and should expect to drive 15-30 miles. Carpooling can be arranged the day of at North House.

North House Folk School is an independent educational nonprofit committed to enriching lives and building community by teaching traditional northern crafts in a student-centered learning environment that inspires the hands, the heart and the mind. During 2011, North House served more than 1,600 students through hands-on coursework and more than 13,000 people participated in North House's educational programs.

With 140 instructors and 350 plus courses, educational programming is offered throughout the year at North House Folk School. Call 218-387-9762 for a free course catalog or to register for courses. Additional information is available at www.northhouse.org.

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