

I W C N e w s l e t t e r

The Spirit of Wisdom

*And our singing shall build
In the void's loose field
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to wield
We will take our plan
From the new world of man.
And our work shall be called the Promethean.*

Percy Bysshe Shelley



To deepen awareness of the universality of man's spiritual striving and its rich variety of expression in the religions, philosophies and literatures of humanity

Aim 5, Declaration of Interdependence

New Year's Greetings: The Promise of a Fresh Beginning

A New Year offers hope that freshly sown seeds of constructive projects will find richer soil, more sunlight and greater fulfillment of the ideals that nourish us. A natural cycle, the turning of the seasons, is given greater meaning by the human effort to sum up and then transform the lessons learned from the experiences of the past year into resolutions for a new year. Can we do better? Is there hope for peace, for prosperity, for real improvement in the quality of life throughout the globe? Will children be safer, better fed and offered true education? Will the future reflect the promise of an emerging world culture?

Graphic pictures of horrific violence and intimidating reports of economic crisis dominate the news and challenge rosy assumptions about globalization. Shock and then deeply felt despair settles into the psyche of many. For those who attended many of the programs sponsored by the Institute in 2008, it should not be a surprise that unstable economies with unjust distributions of resources have collapsed. From local to global, our speakers gave warnings while pointing to constructive experiments in the "imaginative use of spiritual, mental and material resources." Around the globe, pioneers in the service of universal welfare can be found, as participants in the study group, *Vision and Change*, discovered. The number of non-profit organizations registered with the United Nations as advocates and servants of global welfare is a hundredfold greater than the number of national governments. Across the globe, millions fill the streets and polling stations to insist on their right to choose their leaders and define their vision of the common good. *(Continued on page 4)*

UPCOMING EVENTS



Gandhian Principles for Social Change

**Seminar: Saturday, January 10
2:00 - 5:00 pm**

**Concord House, 1407 Chapala St.
Santa Barbara**

Presenter: Veena Howard

Explore how Gandhian Principles of nonviolence and soul force can be used to bring about social and political change in contemporary societies. Discover how Gandhi interpreted his ashram vows as tools for political activism.

Dr. Veena Rani Howard, an established scholar of Gandhi's life and philosophy, will lead this seminar that initiates a week of activities at a retreat to be held at Casa de Maria.



Institute of World Culture Membership

Individual Membership \$35
Individual Student Membership \$15
Individual Supporting Membership \$70
Individual Sustaining Membership \$350
Contact memberships@worldculture.org

Hands-on Gandhian Retreat

A Brief Ashram Experience in Santa Barbara

**Retreat: Sunday, January 11 –
Saturday, January 17, 2009
La Casa de Maria Retreat
& Conference Center**

800 El Bosque Road, Montecito

Explore Gandhi's ideas and practice Jan. 11-17 at La Casa de Maria with Shashi Tyagi, co-founder of GRAVIS. Experiment with Gandhi's lifestyle for a week of communal living, contemplation and energetic service work. The IWC website explains the event (www.worldculture.org) in detail. In addition to the daily activities for participants, free events are open to the public in the evening Jan. 12-16. Please read more about these events on page 3. Contact Sandhya Tillotson (sandhya.tillotson@gmail.com) or Renée Tillotson (renee@worldculture.org) for further information. *(continued on page 3)*



Exploring Plato's Dialogue, the *Phaedrus*

**Forum: Saturday, January 24
4:00 - 6:00 pm**

Presenter: Robert Moore

The archetypal struggle for transcendence and self-mastery will be the focus of this forum. Participants are encouraged to read the Jowett translation of the dialogue available on the IWC website. Contact Robert Moore at 967-7023 for information.

GANDHIAN RETREAT

The purpose of these evening forums is to open the doors of the retreat to the general public for dialogue on applying Gandhi's thought and example to the problems of today's world.



The featured guest presenter at all of these forums will be life-long Gandhian activist and social servant, Shashi Tyagi from the non-profit GRAVIS organization of Jodhpur, India. Admission

is free of charge. A donation towards GRAVIS' service work with the rural poor would be welcome.

Monday, January 12 (at Casa Regina*)

7:30 - 9:30 pm Richard Attenborough's "**Gandhi**" film segment & discussion on relevance in today's India with lifelong Gandhian activist, Shashi Tyagi from GRAVIS.

Tuesday, January 13 (at Casa Regina*)

7:30 - 9 pm **The Modern Man & Woman: What Would Gandhi Think?** - Woman's History Professor Carolyn Dorrance with Shashi Tyagi. 9 pm Music

Wednesday, January 14 (at Casa Regina*)

7:30-9 pm **3 Warriors: The Militarist, the Terrorist & the Gandhian** – Political Science Professor Manou Eskandari with Shashi Tyagi. 9 pm Music

Thursday, January 15 (at Casa Regina*)

7:30-9 pm **Caring for the Body: Gandhi's Nature Cure and Acupuncture** Shashi Tyagi and Gayatri Heesen, Lc. A. 9 pm Music

Friday, January 16 (at Casa San Ysidro*)

7:30-9 pm Participant Panel: **Life Lessons Gleaned from Gandhi for Today's World.** 9 pm Music

*Casa San Ysidro and Casa Regina are two buildings on the Casa de Maria campus, located at 800 El Bosque Rd., Montecito, CA 93108.

In January**Anniversaries**

- 3rd Cicero, Roman statesman, constitutionalist, orator b. 106 B.C.E.
- 2nd/3rd Clement Attlee, British Prime Minister (1945-51) b. 1883
- 4th Isaac Newton, English scientist, theologian b. 1642
- 4th Louis Braille, French teacher of the blind, inventor b. 1809
- 5th George Washington Carver, African-American inventor, scientist, educator d. 1943
- 5th Guru Gobindh Singh, Sikh spiritual leader b. 1666
- 6th Joan of Arc, French heroine, Catholic saint b. 1412
- 6th Kahlil Gibran, Lebanese-American artist, poet, writer b. 1883
- 7th Charles Peguy, French poet, essayist, philosopher b. 1873
- 11th William James, American philosopher, psychologist b. 1842
- 12th Edmund Burke, Irish statesman, author b. 1729
- 14th Albert Schweitzer, German physician, Nobel laureate b. 1875
- 15th Moliere, French playwright, actor b. 1622
- 15th Martin Luther King, Jr., African-American civil rights leader b. 1929
- 17th Benjamin Franklin, American printer, statesman b. 1706
- 17th Anton Chekhov, Russian playwright, author, doctor b. 1860
- 18th Baron de Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, French political philosopher b. 1689
- 18th Claude de St. Martin, French philosopher, mystic b. 1743
- 19th James Watt, Scottish inventor, engineer b. 1736
- 19th Robert E. Lee, American soldier, general b. 1807
- 19th Edgar Allan Poe, American poet, writer, editor b. 1809
- 22nd André-Marie Ampre, French physicist, mathematician b. 1775
- 22nd Francis Bacon, English philosopher, statesman, author b. 1561
- 22nd George Gordon, Lord Byron, British poet b. 1788
- 23rd David Hilbert, German mathematician b. 1862
- 25th Robert Boyle, Irish-born chemist, inventor b. 162
- 25th Robert Burns, Scottish poet b. 1759
- 27th Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Austrian composer b. 1756
- 27th Lewis Carroll (Charles Dodgson), English author b. 1832
- 29th Thomas Paine, English revolutionary, inventor b. 1737
- 29th Romain Rolland, French dramatist, Nobel laureate b. 1866
- 30th Franklin D. Roosevelt, American 32nd U.S. President b. 1882
- 30th Mohandas K. Gandhi, Indian political and spiritual leader d. 1948
- 31st Franz Schubert, Austrian composer b. 1797

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

Despite the gloom and signs of doom, are there not then also less visible signs of an embryonic world community based on shared aspirations and a common sense of right and wrong? Acts of violence evoke from millions of world citizens conscientious objection to the pain and suffering that the violence causes. Shared modes of civic protest show up in public squares throughout the globe. The internet provides a non-stop venue for dialogue that no government can destroy. Teams of volunteers fly to help mitigate the effects of natural disasters. Billions of dollars are raised for foundations. Anyone can use the internet to give micro-financing to business enterprises in Africa.

The most recent Presidential election in the United States became a global event, evoking both shock and hopeful expectations that a better quality of leadership and more progressive world politics will support the aspirations of humanity. Have not the citizens of the world developed shared values, universal ethics and astute public opinion to the point where they will not tolerate the self-serving corruption of political and economic Leviathans? To the skeptics who point to the militant religious ideas that divide us, religious leaders from several traditions demonstrated recently in a remarkable PBS documentary, "Beyond Our Differences," edited by Bill Moyers, that religious doctrines are now expressed in much more open-ended and universal terms than in the past.

The most visible issues for public dialogue during 2009 may be debated in long overdue discussions in centers of power on how to provide for the basic material needs of human beings in both rich and poor economies. Interestingly, the work of those who have developed, often in isolation, both the conceptual and practical foundation of local, sustainable economies may be given greater standing in revised conceptions of a healthy and sustainable global economy. While this reconceptualization of political and economic priorities is important, its implementation will require considerable strengthening of the human values and ethical duties that unite us. The foundation of a world community must be built on a deeper level of world culture and human understanding. Consequently, the Board of Trustees for the Institute of World Culture has chosen Aim # 5 in its Declaration of Interdependence to be the theme guiding *(continued on p. 5)*

In January**Observances**

- 1st New Year's Day Observed in the U.S.
- 1st Emancipation Proclamation committed the U.S. to ending slavery 1863
- 1st Discovery of Ceres asteroid by Piazzi 1801
- 5th Twelfth Night Christian holiday concluding the Twelve Days of Christmas
- 7th Celebration of Christmas in the Coptic community and Orthodox churches
- 7th Discover of Jupiter's moon by Galileo 1610
- 8th Thomas Paine's Common Sense published 1776
- 10th Most important day of Muharram which month marks the beginning of the Islamic New Year
- 10th League of Nations founded to preserve international peace 1920
- 10th Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon in 49 B.C. starting a civil war that led to the transformation of the Roman Republic into the Roman Empire
- 18th (2009) World Religion Day celebrated, initiated by the Baha'is of the U.S. 1950
- 19th (2009) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observed
- 26th Republic Day of India marking the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950
- 26th (2009) Chinese New Year observed
- 27th British government formally abolished the death penalty in the United Kingdom 1999

Undated:

- Irène Curie and Frédéric Joliot announced the creation of artificial radioactivity, Nobel laureates
- French Edict of Toleration ending persecution of non-Catholics 1562
- BBC begins radio broadcasts to the Empire and the world 1930s
- News of the splitting of the Uranium atom published 1938
- First boat specialized as a lifeboat tested on the River Tyne, England 1790

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

its programs for 2009. That Aim reads:

"To deepen awareness of the universality of man's spiritual striving and its rich expression in the religions, philosophies and literatures of humanity."

Rich indeed is the variety of ideals and goals expressed in the religions, philosophies and literatures central to the cultural heritage of humanity. Without these ideals, life would be static and without purpose. Simply surviving is not a purpose -- at best it is a successful calculation. How might we understand the nature of humanity's spiritual striving? To strive is to seek knowledge, improvement and fulfillment of potential. Does not this capacity for growth assume that there is a hidden potential in living creatures that we sense but do not know? Self-discovery is an integral part of spiritual striving. Is not this potential discovered within ourselves shared by all that lives? Is not a recognition of human commonality an inevitable discovery emerging from our own halting efforts to truly know ourselves?

As we strive to know ourselves and thereby others with both intellectual and existential methods, will we discover a larger sense of what is real and true and good and beautiful? A larger, more universal, persisting and sacred reality is what the artists and philosophers, the mystics and creators of literature, the spiritual

teachers and ethical leaders point to. Do we not read their writings and study their art with the hope we will learn what they have discovered? Do they not give us philosophical definitions and existential reports on what is spiritual? Do they not entice us into a discovery that we are part of a deeply felt human community as well a magnificent natural world? Then, also, do they not teach us the tough lessons of self-restraint and mutual responsibilities? Thus, the search for a spiritual identity becomes a pathway, self-consciously chosen, to non-violent and ethical participation in a worldwide, human community. The artists and philosophers give us the tools to make this journey of discovery and engagement. They inspire us and unlock our creative imagination, guiding us to become capable of fostering human fellowship among all races, nations and cultures.

To pursue answers to these questions and deepen our understanding of how human community can be nourished in a turbulent era will be the aim of the programs at the Institute of World Culture during 2009. We welcome your participation and wish to thank all who have given so much support in so many ways to the Institute. Your contributions in time, money and participation are essential to the life and future of a volunteer association. Thank you and best wishes for the New Year.

Carolyn Dorrance, President

Looking Forward

Seminar: Recovering the Spiritual Heritage of Indonesia
Presenter: Richard North

Saturday, February 7

2:00- 4:30 pm

Concord House

Community & Contacts

PRISM ONLINE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PRISM lists member-recommended community events of interest on the IWC website. If you wish to contribute a listing for a local or regional community event of interest, please e-mail donna@worldculture.org so it can be considered for inclusion in PRISM.

ENEWSLETTER

To contribute to the IWC eNewsletter, or to be removed from the list, please contact gerry@worldculture.org.

VOLUNTEERING

The Institute offers its programs by means of voluntary efforts in time, money and work. To find out more, please contact carolyn@worldculture.org.

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