

Sustainable Building Coalition

P.O. Box 49381
Austin, TX 78765-9381

Next Meeting:
Wednesday
January 19, 2005
7:00 pm
Casa de Luz
1701 Toomey Road



December 2004

<http://www.greenbuilder.com/sbc>

Volume 11, Issue 6

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Announcements:

★ **Monthly SBC meetings will now occur on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.**

★ Deadline for articles and events for the next newsletter is February 15. Email to Chris at cdgaines@yahoo.com

★ Check out the calendar on the website for upcoming workshops and events!!

Upcoming Events:

- January 19th Member Meeting
- January 22nd Site Visit
- House Alive Cob and Natural Building Workshops
- Lama Foundation "Build Here Now" scheduled for June 13-20, 2005. For details, go to: www.Lamafoundation.com

Website Resources:

www.greenbuilder.com/sbc

January 19th meeting: FoodWaterShelter Project presented by Lester Germanio

By Gayle Borst

An amazing, unique project is taking shape in West Lake Hills. This is a project that extends well beyond the walls of the house, looking at the issues of food, water and shelter as inextricably connected. Lester Germanio, an Austin structural engineer, is creating what he calls his "FoodWaterShelter Project" as a demonstration of urban/suburban off-grid sustainable living.

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SBC October Meeting: Wall Systems Roundtable Great Success

By Chris Maxwell-Gaines

The topic of the October 2004 meeting of the Sustainable Building Coalition was green wall systems. We invited many experts on wall systems in order to answer questions from our member. The Roundtable was a huge success with estimates of 50 to 60 people attending the meeting. Our members and other meeting attendees were able to ask any question to these experts that they had about these various wall systems. We would like to thank everyone, whether you are a longtime member or a newcomer, who came to the meeting.

Our SBC roundtable discussion featured several local experts who discussed different aspects of "green" wall systems. These experts included Mark Kohlhass and Ted Roan of Casa Verde Builders who talked about their experiences with AAC, Faswall, SIPs, and ICFs; Kay Mayfield spoke from the owner/builder perspective of building with strawbale; Frank Meyer of Thangmaker Construction provided his knowledge of building with strawbale; Gayle Borst of Stewardship, Inc. discussed working and building with cob and light clay; Shane Holt of Way-Wall Builders, LLC added the topic of rammed earth construction to the mix; and, Frederick Bernard of Acorn Builders shared his knowledge about compressed earth.

We would like to thank all of the roundtable experts and many thanks goes out to the Saturday morning Garden show on KLBJ 590 AM for promoting this meeting. ★

New SBC Meeting Schedule for 2005

In order to provide more convenience to our members, we are changing the SBC member meeting day to the 3rd Wednesday of the month. There always seems like many activities are scheduled around the beginning and end of the month, so we decided to change the SBC meeting schedule. This schedule will start in January 2005 with our first meeting on January 19th. The meetings will still be held at Casa de Luz.

Thank you from the Clipboard Lady

By Yvonne Hansen

Many of you helped prepare our SBC/SBAT/SASBC booth on the workday at Yvonne Hansen's. As a result, we looked good, were prepared to greet visitors, and genuinely had a presence for our fifth year at The Renewable Energy Roundup & Green Living Fair in Fredericksburg. We thank you who made a difference: Frieda Rinehart, Elena Montemayor, Christine Shaw, Richard Huffman, Chris Maxwell-Gaines and Katie Jensen.

The many visitors to our booth saw photo displays of cob and straw bale, text displays of future dates and locations of green/sustainable events, shelves of books to buy, a variety of literature, examples of green building materials with descriptive labels, and more. The flow of curious and "ready-to-be-green" visitors was continuous throughout the three days. Questions were asked, answers given, information shared.

On hands and knees, Fred Bernard demonstrated how to make compressed soil blocks, explained the equipment necessary, handed out samples, and more, much more. Not once, but continuously over the three days of The Roundup, Fred compressed soil and made blocks. At any time, three to twenty people watched Fred, asked questions, and got good answers. Special thanks to you, Fred! Many thanks also to Lawrence Jetter, Advanced Earthen Construction Technologies, Inc. (AECT) of San Antonio, for the use of a compressed soil block machine, what a beauty!

Ari and Terry Koinuma, Kay Mayfield and Dan Madden conducted an Owner/Builder conversation in the Chat Room with people interested in learning more about the scope and details of this daunting task. Many questions were asked and answered, and guests left the Chat Room quite satisfied.

Over the three days of The Roundup, the following SBC, SBAT and SASBC (San Antonio SBC) folks were there giving their all: Frieda Rinehart, Ari & Terry Koinuma, Kay Mayfield, Stephen Colley, Dan Madden, Fred Bernard, Christine Shaw, Katie Jensen, Marjorie Gentsch, Chris Davis, Deb Galerneau, Richard Huffmann, Gayle Borst, Linda Stone, and several SASBC volunteers.

I urge SBC members and e-newsletter readers who haven't volunteered for our booth to consider signing up with the Clip Board Lady next year, or sooner if the opportunity arises for us to have a booth, for example, on Earth Day.

Your Clip Board Lady - Yvonne Hansen *

January 19th meeting: FoodWaterShelter Project [Continued]

Lester's homestead is designed to be fully functional off the grid relative to food, water, and shelter, except for about 7 bushels of wheat per person per year. Some of the many sustainable living features geared toward this goal include:

- Climate responsive design maximizing shading and natural ventilation
- Photovoltaics supplying nearly all the power needs
- Rainwater harvesting for all water needs, home and landscape
- Herb, vegetable, and root gardens
- Root cellar for storage of canned, dried and stored food from gardens
- 12 volt LED lighting
- Double shed roof system for summer thermal comfort
- No air conditioning in the house; Heat supplied by wood stoves
- No painting, no sheetrock, no cornice, no formwork (resource conservation)
- Use of onsite materials
- Minimal construction waste – No dumpster for trash destined for the landfill

This owner/builder project is being built almost entirely by Lester and his son. During January's meeting, Lester will describe details of the house and his FoodWaterShelter approach. A site visit to see the work in progress will take place on the Saturday following the SBC meeting [See page 3 for details]. *

Site Visit: FoodWaterShelter Project

Saturday, January 22, 2005, 1:00 pm

This site visit to Lester Germanio's FoodWaterShelter project under construction is a follow up to the January presentation. See features such as ventilated roof system, rainwater harvesting, use of onsite materials, construction waste management, food production strategy, and much more.

Directions:

Lake Austin Blvd. to Red Bud Trail across the dam at Town Lake
To Caravan Circle, turn Right
To Terrace Mt. Drive, turn Right
To Road Runner Road, wide left
Driveway at end of first stretch of Road Runner. Look for signs. Park in Lester's driveway.*

*Note: Parking is limited, so please try to carpool.

If weather is threatening, check the SBC website (www.greenbuilder.com/sbc) to verify whether the tour will or will not take place. Rain date is Saturday, January 29. "Emergency" cell phone contact: Gayle at 350-0001. *

Behind the Scenes.....

By Frieda Rinehart

Once upon a time, not too long ago, in the Kingdom of the Clipboard Lady, two wise elves, Ken & Yvonne, were hustling and bustling, preparing decorations for the great annual SBC/SBAT holiday party. As the time grew nearer for the big event, while all the SBC & SBAT members were slumbering and dreaming of organic sugar plums the night before, Elf Yvonne and Elf Frieda journeyed to the Environmental Depot-land upon the distant Oak hill. The angelic hosts there, Alyssa & John, along with archangel Andy, commenced with the initial transformation into a merry, festive mood with lights, ribbons, and greenery from the land of the Lost Pines. Then Elf Ken came rumbling in with his Strawbale sleigh. But lo & behold, white folding chairs magically appeared, so no need for him to unload Gayle's strawbales for seating.

As a deep stillness fell on the night of December 11th, 3 more self-appointed elves arrived, great Elf Darius, Elf Katie & Elf Gayle, bringing yummy delights, spirits and all kind of goodies to put the finishing touches on the party warehouse. Then Elf Kay arrived on her white steed. Following closely on her heels, was the first party guest! Our most recent new SBAT member, Wendy, wasn't about to miss the fun! Since she was first to arrive, she was blessed with the honor of decorating the front porch with Elf Kay. Not to be forgotten, the very kind neighbor, Navidad Pecan Farms, graciously provided a great big jug of spiked (oops, I meant spiced) hot cider! And last but not least, Elf Paul arrived just in time with the promised sparkling crystal ice.

But oh my! - Elf Ken totally spaced out & forgot to load the keg of beer on his sleigh. But no matter, Elf Katie came to the rescue, as they rushed out with such a clatter, that no one even knew! For just in an instant, they scurried back with many bottles of brew. More and more guests excitedly arrived, even 2 deer, Brandi & Kevin Ann were spotted. The fervor grew as the band 'Zydeco Blanco', got under way with their festive cajun music-making. Needless to say, the merry revelry continued into the wee hours, with many happy green feet dancing away.

So a Thank You, a Thank You to All, what a great night!! The End!!

Much gratitude to: Yvonne Hansen, Ken McKenzie, Frieda Rinehart, John & Alyssa Alvord, Andy Schulz, Darius Linnebur, Katie Jensen, Gayle Borst, Kay Mayfield, Wendy Cunningham, Navidad Pecan Farms, Paul McCutchen, Harvey Trahan and band members. *

Local News

We would like to congratulate The Rhizome Collective on receiving a \$100,000 Brownfield Cleanup award from the EPA to clean a 9.8 ac vacant lot that was recently donated to them. The property, located adjacent to

the Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park in the underserved Montopolis neighborhood, is covered with several acres of illegally dumped debris. The cleanup will feature innovative uses of ecologically sustainable methods and technologies. After the cleanup, we intend to transform this neglected land into an Environmental Educational Park to serve the local community.

After cleanup, an environmental educational park that complements the adjacent 360 ac Colorado River Park will be created. The land will be tended according to ecological and permaculture principals, with the goal of creating a place for appreciating and learning about nature, sustainability and the environmental justice movement. A bicycle/walking trail that links the Montopolis neighborhood to the River Park will be created and opened to the public.

Long-term goals for the educational park include: hands-on demonstrations of green building techniques; pilot bioremediation projects using mushrooms and microbes; constructed wetlands for wastewater treatment and storm water mitigation; and composting wastes from local businesses with earthworms. *

Coordinators:

Programs: Katie Jensen (512-663-2927)

Community Outreach:

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Organizational Development: Gayle Borst (512-478-9033)

Newsletter Publication & Distribution:
Chris Maxwell-Gaines

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Treasurer & Book Sales: Frieda Rinehart (512-490-8797)

If you would like to contact anyone of us by email, visit the contact form on the Greenbuilder website at:
<http://www.greenbuilder.com/sbc/contact/>

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING COALITION

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