

An Affordable and Fun-filled Summer Vacation That Will Prepare You for the Future

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(Banner Elk, NC) - If the economy has you feeling you need to prepare yourself for an uncertain future or to vacation on a tight budget, consider attending "The Gathering of the Peacemakers," held in Banner Elk, North Carolina in the Blue Ridge Mountains from Aug 4-10. The week-long event includes workshops in much-needed life-skills and inspired nightly performances by various recording artists.

The gathering will include daily workshops hosted by various experts. Topics include: solar and wind energy, organic and bio-dynamic gardening, permaculture, holistic health and healing arts, affordable shelter, green building, building your own home, bio-diesel fuels, voluntary simplicity, living off the grid, sustainable living, handling your money wisely, creating loving unions, finding your mission in life, and many others. The "Elder-in-Residence" will be Mayan Elder Tata Pedro Cruz from Guatemala.

"This will be an opportunity to offer real hands-on information to people about how to create a more sustainable—and affordable—lifestyle," says workshop leader Lee Ball, an instructor and energy research analyst at the nearby Appalachian State University Department of Building Science.

Each night there are live concerts featuring performances by the Southeast's best-known conscious recording artists, including Corey Harris, Dub Conscious, Laura Reed and the Deep Pocket Band, Afromotive, Ras Alan and Chalwa. Drumming circles, indigenous storytelling and acoustic music are slated for late-night.

"This is not just another outdoor festival," says Asheville-based recording artist Laura Reed. "This is a spiritual experience. All the music will be 'musical medicine,' carrying messages of love and forgiveness."

"Our goal is to prepare ourselves for the coming decades of change," says event organizer and author Robert Roskind, "so that we might share this peace with others."

The cost is \$275 for the week which includes all programs and concerts and camping with hot showers and bath houses. Children under 12 are half price. Advance registration is required as space is very limited. Lodge rooms, modern and rustic cabins and dorms are also available for an additional charge. Meals, both vegetarian or non-vegetarian, are \$125 for the week. The gathering will be held near at the 152-acre Holston Camp—complete with a dining hall, two meditation tipis, fire-circles, tube slides, a swimming lake with zip line, a climbing wall and an Internet coffee shop. Nearby attractions include rafting, tubing, horseback riding, gem-mining, Linville Falls, Blowing Rock, trail biking and mountain hiking.

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