

Emerging from a "Duck-and-Cover" Youth

By Kenan Doyle Branam

As a youth in junior high school in Tyler, Texas, during the mid-1950s, I read every science-fiction book in the city library. There was only one small section of about 50 books. This experience stimulated my interest in the future.

The question is, Why did I seek out science fiction in the first place, and why did my interest continue throughout my life? Of course, there were the current events in my life: I was drilled for surviving nuclear apocalypse as a "duck-and-cover" teenager, believing that the world might end before I reached adulthood. But I suspect my personal perspective was the biggest factor: I didn't like the world the way it was and wanted to "figure out" how I could make it better. I was hurting and scared. Survival instinct pure and simple!

It's taken me 60-something years to transform to a more optimistic state of mind, actually a passionate state of mind. Maybe through the wisdom of my varied experiences and learning, I have not only figured out what a better world can be, but more significantly, through the media of the Web, I have discovered "signs" of a large community of like-minded people. For the first time in my life, I can justify hope and faith in the future of humanity.

For now, that like-minded community is represented by the World Future Society.

About the Author

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Collectively Designing Earth's Future

By Jan Hearthstone

I am here hoping to find people who would be interested in designing the Earth's future collectively.

As it is now, the future of the Earth is being decided, but only to an extent, by few, with those left out influencing the future very negatively.

About the Author

Jan Hearthstone has written on ecological and social sustainability and spearheads the Model Earth project, "an interactive model of an ideal, ecologically and socially sustainable Earth," at www.modelearth.org. E-mail hearthstone@myway.com.

Personal Actions for a Better Future

By Ronald Russell

I've been an environmentalist since the 1970s, always recycling, reducing waste, etc.

Now I drive a diesel car that is powered by waste-vegetable oil. I don't want to support fossil fuel/oil companies, which do so much harm to the environment by drilling and so much destruction to peace politically.

But the most important thing anyone who cares about the future can do for the earth is become a vegan.

The leading cause of greenhouse gasses is factory farming, not carbon emission from autos, etc. You cannot be an environmentalist without being a vegetarian. Nothing does more to de-

stroy the environment than factory farming, which is the leading cause of water pollution, greenhouse gasses, and world deforestation.

About the Author

Ronald Russell is a novelist and screenwriter. E-mail ron4arts@yahoo.com.