



*Sustainability
is not about
subsistence.*



The Good Life Guide

*A self-guided tour of Inn Serendipity & the
renewable energy systems that make it possible*



The Quest for the Good Life

Since moving from downtown Chicago to a small farm in southwestern Wisconsin, our days have been richly flavored with discoveries and fresh opportunities to live more sustainably and closer to the land. It was one balmy July evening while sitting on our front porch eating dinner that we realized we were no longer just the owners of our farm; we were ingredients and participants.

This mutual desire for living authentically — and caring for all life — breathes through our everyday experiences by our approach to living, weaving together food systems, energy systems, living systems and livelihood. How we grow and eat our food is directly connected to how we produce and use our energy. How we earn income, in what we've come to embrace as right livelihood, is integrally linked to a restorative economy that is life-sustaining and soul-nourishing.

A five-and-a-half-acre quintessential Wisconsin farmstead is home to Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast, our office, and our home. We planted roots in a place where we could see stars and hear frogs, having faith that goodness would serendipitously blossom. A place where community could be cared for and nature could be nurtured.

This booklet, *The Good Life Guide*, summarizes some of our many steps, especially highlighting those involving renewable energy and energy conservation. Our book, *Rural Renaissance*, delves into the topics unable to be addressed briefly in these pages. Since there are so many approaches to the good life, this guide is meant to be a personal overview of our endeavors, to serve as a benchmark, resource and, perhaps, inspiration.

For the Earth, Lisa Kivirist & John Ivanko

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Material in this guide is adapted from *Rural Renaissance: Renewing the Quest for the Good Life* (New Society Publishers, 2004); visit www.newsociety.com on the Internet for other books to build a new society.

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Creating the Good Life
by Lisa Kivirist & John Ivanko

Eat organic food. Generate electricity from renewable sources or buy from companies that do. Wash out and reuse plastic bags. Line dry linens. Send unexpected Valentines — or care packages. Open up. Play dress-up. Invest in heirloom seeds. Restore biodiversity. Stretch your arms, expectations, travel funds. Weed out negative people, unrealistic expectations. Eliminate fossil fuels. Sequester CO₂. Plant trees. Keep planting. Celebrate the solstices. Frequent libraries, museums, neighbors, local businesses. Keep a compost bucket under the kitchen sink. Challenge children, parents and politicians. For politicians, remind them who they work for. Recycle mailing envelopes, canning jars and traditions. Skinny dip. Overdose on June strawberries, campfire conversation and Grandma's cookies. Question the same old same old. Detour. Star gaze. Count fireflies and blessings. Try bok choy, collard greens, Swiss chard. Watch thunderstorms roll in. Watch the electricity meter spin backwards onto the grid. Foster friendships half and double your age. Embrace serendipity. Chase rainbows. Embrace life-long learning. Hypnotize yourself, staring into the woodstove's glow. Vote with your purchase dollars and at the booth. Plant oak trees, zucchini, tolerance. Cultivate community: buy local, share pies, host potlucks. Bend rather than break. Simplify, declutter, prioritize. Live frugally and with the Seventh Generation in mind. The journey matters. To our family, community, nation and planet.

Adapted from *Rural Renaissance: Renewing the Quest for the Good Life*
Join the rural renaissance at <www.ruralrenaissance.org>.



Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast

www.innserendipity.com

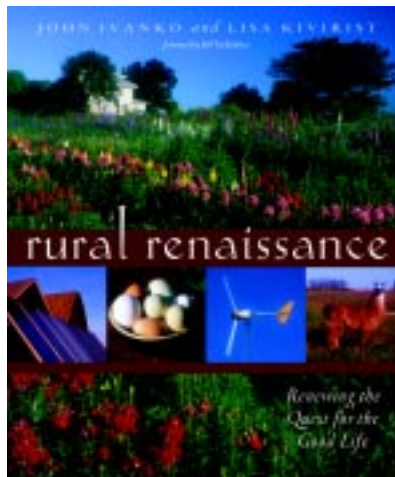
Power down, linger with the llamas and learn about renewable energy and more sustainable living at this nationally-recognized B&B. Inn Serendipity is a part of the Co-op America Business Network, MREA Business Partner, and Energy Star Small Business as well as a demonstration home for Real Goods. For more information about open houses, workshops or educational tours, call 608-329-7056 or e-mail info@innserendipity.com.



Independence is really about interdependence, with nature, neighbors, and community.

“Here comes the next generation of homesteaders. Powered by the wind and sun, Inn Serendipity does more than generate renewable energy. It — and the authors of this book — are helping energize and give a greater voice to a movement of people searching for more sustainable ways to live, regardless of where they call home.”

— John Schaeffer, President & Founder of Real Goods and the Solar Living Institute



Inspiring and practical, *Rural Renaissance: Renewing the Quest for the Good Life*, by John Ivanko and Lisa Kivirist, captures the American dream of country living for contemporary times. From organically grown food to harvesting the wind and sun to power their farm, the authors redefine success and in so doing, recreate their lives in more meaningful and healthy ways.

Visit www.ruralrenaissance.org on the Internet.

Renewing the Countryside 

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Through innovative books, websites and other resources, *Renewing the Countryside* showcases individuals, businesses and organizations that are “renewing the countryside” through innovative, diverse enterprises and initiatives that combine economic, environmental and community benefits.

