



## Transition Towns Movement: Changing The World At It's Core, Town by Town

### Goals & Mission:

[The Transition Towns Movement](#) is "comprised of vibrant, grassroots community initiatives that seek to build community resilience in the face of such challenges as peak oil, climate change and the economic crisis." Transition Towns differentiate themselves from other sustainability and environmental groups by engaging citizens to make the changes at a community level. They share and re-use assets and information, encourage innovation and collaboration, and replicate proven strategies.



Chris Condello, Founder Whitney Street Urban Farm, a Transitions Initiative.

Although a Transition Towns' goal can be both broad and tailor-made to meet the community's needs, its mission specifically states that humans need to learn to live life with dramatically lower energy consumption. In addition, it is in the transition from a consumer based economy and society to locally based sustainability that we have a golden opportunity to incorporate all the goodies in the process, including a "more nourishing, fulfilling, ecologically sustainable, and socially just" society. In a nutshell, Transitioners believe that locally based sustainability is not something for experts to do but that the community should do. Currently, The United Kingdom has 200 initiatives, Europe has 81 initiatives, the US has 310 initiatives. It is estimated that there are 900 initiatives registered, and over 1800 around the world.

### The Transition Towns Model is Flexible:

Transition Towns goals can be different based on their locations. For example, one rural Portuguese community's goals stated the need for a cleaner town, doctors making house calls, local markets, and better places for children to play. With a few exceptions, this small town now, called "[Sustainable Village of Amoreiras](#)" has achieved all of these goals.

**Challenged Communities:** Some communities are so challenged that a formal transition initiative is not appropriate. One such community is Wilksburg, PA, where according to Chris Condello, founder of [Whitney Avenue Urban Farm](#): "...one of the main things that the (economic) downfall has been attributed to was the loss of fathers. Many fathers were murdered,

jailed or disappeared at some point." On Whitney Avenue, twenty percent of the houses are boarded up or vacant. In this location, without an official community transition effort, Condello built and started Whitney Avenue Urban Farm, where all the food that is grown is given away or donated.

Condello's model for the beautification of the town, the inspiration for the farm, and his engagement of local youth in these efforts comes from the Transition Towns model. Teenager Brandon Scott, Whitney Avenue youngster, got into the wrong crowd on his street and began getting into trouble. After volunteering at Whitney Farms, his guardian says of him, "He is turning out to be a nice little kid." Holding back her tears, this same resident says: "It's changed the block to where everybody else in Wilkinsburg envies our little street. Everybody wants to come to Whitney Avenue. It's the best street in Wilkinsburg."

**Inner World Equals Outer World:** Speaking on even a larger scale, Sophy Banks of the Transitions Network states, "...we need a culture that supports people into a state of well-being." Banks feels that we've made a world where the focus is on competition and on getting as much as you can. She states that it is only through looking at that and owning it, that we will escape it.

**In Transition 2.0: A Movie Showing at OMNI Center Oct 27th, 7pm:**

OMNI Center is showing the movie "In Transition 2.0", which is about transitioning towns into carbon-free living. "It's an amazing story about how Transition groups around the world are responding to the challenges of depleting and costly energy resources, financial instability and environmental change." Showing this movie is one step towards bringing this initiative to Fayetteville.

## Using The Media To Teach Peace

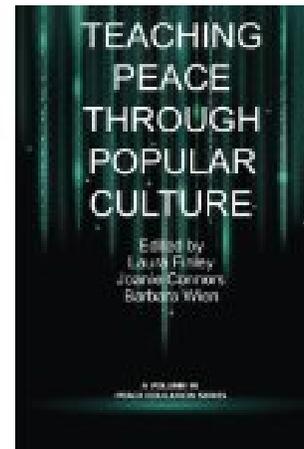
Author Dr. Joanie Connors will speak on on using media to teach peace on October 29th at 7pm at the OMNI Center. This talk will be feature many of the concepts discussed in Dr. Connors' book: Teaching Peace Through Popular Culture.

Amazon describes her book, written in conjunction with other authors: "From popular dystopian novels like The Hunger Games to feature films like The Matrix to modern rap and hip-hop music, contributors not only provide critical analysis of the violence in popular culture but also an assessment of how the same or alternate forms can be used by peace educators."

Dr. Connors taught Peace Studies at the university level for over twenty years, at both the University of Arkansas and Western New Mexico University. Currently, she is an author and runs a private practice as a psychologist.

When teaching, Dr. Connors experienced some students really understanding and valuing the peace process, while others were just taking class to fulfill a requirement. These concerns motivated her to develop a strategy so that she could reach the latter group in particular.

She developed two different strategies. The first involved using clips from the media to address the issues. For example, she might show a clip on someone's personal journey through the transgender experience as



springboard to discuss sexism and gender preference. Previous to using these tools, Connors describes the classroom experience: "Me talking was not getting through old prejudices. If I showed a media figure that they respected, they would open up a little more." Additionally, students had to come up with video clips, print articles, and audio clips on the subject of the day for presentation in class. The whole class would then go through all the media, which resulted in even better discussions and greater ownership of the issues. Some of their projects were semester long projects, such as creating a website or creating a documentary.

## Request For Volunteers

OMNI is beginning to plan our 15th Annual Membership Meeting, which will occur in February of 2016. This will be a dinner with special presentations and entertainment. If you have an interest in helping us organize this, please contact Gladys Tiffany at 479-935-4422 or send email to [gladystiffany@yahoo.com](mailto:gladystiffany@yahoo.com)



## [Dick Bennett's Blog](#)

OMNI founder, Dick Bennett, presents thought provoking information on peace, justice and ecology.



## Support Our Work Become a Member & Donate [Click Here To Get Started](#)

Every new member or donor increases our voice and visibility by one. The broader the support we have, the more impact we have on decision makers such as businesses, legislators, and community organizations. Most importantly, grantmakers and funders evaluate the number of our supporters when deciding whether we qualify for their financial resources.

## OMNI Calendar

## How to add an event to the OMNI Calendar;

1. No PDFs please - text only.
2. Please include in the following order: a. What, b. Where, c. When, d. Accurate links to further information, e. Short description.
3. Email to [Omni@omnicenter.org](mailto:Omni@omnicenter.org).

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Oct 23rd - Celebrate the Buffalo River, gala fundraiser, <http://www.celebratethebuffalo.com>.  
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Oct 24th - Roy Zimmerman, comedian and musician, OMNI Center fundraiser. \$15 suggested donation.  
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Oct 25th - Ecofeminist Study and Action Group, 1-3 pm, OMNI Center.  
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Oct 27th - Transitions Initiating Group, 7-9 pm, OMNI Center. Showing movie "In Transition 2.0", regarding transitioning towns into carbon-free living. "It's an amazing story about how Transition groups around the world are responding to the challenges of depleting and costly energy resources, financial instability and environmental change." See article above.  
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Oct 28th - Women For Choice, 5:30 pm, Common Grounds. Women and allies supporting Planned Parenthood and women's rights.  
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Oct 29th - Using The Media To Teach Peace, 6 pm, OMNI Center. Presented by Joanie Connors, author and peace educator. Presenting material from Dr. Connor's book: [Teaching Peace Through Popular Culture](#). See article above.  
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Nov 1st - OMNI-350 Climate Change Book Forum, 1:30 pm, Fayetteville Public Library.  
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Nov 1st - Open Mic For Peace, 7 pm, OMNI Center.  
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Nov 2nd - Civil Rights Roundtable, 6:30 pm OMNI Center..  
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Nov 7th - Yule Festival Holiday Crafts to support Goddess Festival, 9am to 4 pm, Fayetteville Senior Center, S. College. Those interested in selling crafts contact Penny Gray, [pennygray@yahoo.com](mailto:pennygray@yahoo.com).  
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Nov 7th - Spanish Conversation Club, 10 am to 12:30pm, Yvonne Richardson Center.  
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Nov 7th - Herbology Class, 2 - 3 pm, OMNI Center, by Marietta Camillieri.  
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Nov 11th - Veggie Potluck, 6 pm, OMNI Center.  
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Nov 11th - Citizens Climate Lobby, 7 pm, OMNI Center.  
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Nov 21st - OMNI Family Thanksgiving potluck, 1pm, OMNI Center.  
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Nov 21st - All-Teen Open Mic, 7 - 9 pm, Common Grounds.  
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Nov 21st - Creative Writing Workshop, 11 am - 1 pm. Fayetteville Boys and Girls Club, In conjunction with Umja Soul Writer Group.  
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Nov 22nd - Fundraiser for Dan Dean, 5 - 8 pm.  
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Nov 24th - West Fork Friends of OMNI Meeting, 6:30pm, West Fork Library Annex.  
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Dec 6th - Alternative Gift Market, 9 - 2pm, St Paul's Episcopal Church.

**Rooted Vision Healing Drums - First Sundays 1-5 pm.**

### **Weekly @ OMNI**

**Spanish Conversation Table** - Every Wednesday, 6pm, El Camino Real Restaurant, S. School, Fayetteville

**Quaker Meetings** - 9:30 am Sundays. Everyone welcome

Omni Center  
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STAY CONNECTED:

