

**SUBSCRIBE TODAY**  
GIVE A GIFT  
RENEW  
REGISTER SUBSCRIPTION  
SHOP!

- Edward Keenan
- » Act Like A Man
- The Walrus
- » The Haulout
- Jeremy Keehn
- » The Bironist
- Sean Rogers
- » Four-Colour Words
- Jon Evans
- » NEW: World Fast Forward

## WALRUS BLOGS

- Jared Bland
- » The Shelf
- Andrew Braithwaite
- » The Sportstrotter
- Glenna Gordon
- » This is Not a Safari
- Holly Jean Buck
- » Shades of Green
- Chantelle Oliver
- » Web 2.0 Museum
- Joel McConvey
- » World Famous in Korea

### THE WALRUS E-NEWSLETTER

Online exclusives, events, offers: get news of everything Walrus.



Email address here...

Sign Up

Search The Walrus...  go

### MEDIA CENTRE

#### NEWS AND EVENTS

New *Walrus* Art Director

#### LATEST BLOG POSTS

World Fast Forward

How to watch *American Ninja* in the middle of the Colombian jungle

Shades of Green

Green possibilities growing out of poverty.

Web 2.0 Museum

Web 2.0 writing is a joke

Act Like A Man

Parenting makes you miserable. Discuss.

Sportstrotter

Music for Running Marathons To

#### PODCASTS

The Hamas Dilemma

#### GALLERIES

World Press Photo

Gallery

by 2007 prizewinners



## Giving Your Kids a Green Education

October 29th, 2008 by **Holly Jean Buck** in *Shades of Green*

ShareThis Buzz up! digg Facebook vigo



When I was a kid, I sat every day in a concrete block without windows. The prevalent theory at the time was that windows were distracting (this wasn't in the Dark Ages, but the 1980s). I like to think I turned out okay, despite my windowless education. But how much better could I have evolved if I had experienced a living classroom? A place where I could have hands-on experience in permaculture, and where I was educated in sustainability? What kind of education do our children need to meet the challenges of this century? More basically, how do we instill environmental values in our kids?

These were a few of the questions sparked in my mind as I walked through the campus of the Green School in Bali. Constructed largely in the past year, and just opened this fall, the Green School is one of the few places in the world that is making a calculated and passionate effort to tackle these kinds of questions.



They have built an extraordinary campus on a fertile eight-hectare plot of land, entirely out of low-impact and sustainable materials. It is a place for children and everything else to grow. Everything you see in the photo above is part of Green School: gardens designed by a resident permaculturist, classrooms and living quarters for faculty and staff. Looming in the distance in this photograph is what will be the world's largest bamboo building and, as you can see, it is still under construction. It is called the "Heart of the School."



A mud pool is built on purpose: here students can practice Mepantigan, a Balinese martial art that incorporates gamelan music, Balinese dance, and drama.



Students do sit at desks and learn academically rigorous lessons along with their environmental education. The school may be in the heart of the jungle, but it is still a school, with equations to be solved and stories to be analyzed.



And there are sports fields, it's just that the goalposts are made from bamboo.

The Green School faces a unique set of challenges. It's not just trying to design a new kind of curriculum, and become a showcase of architectural wonders. It's location within a country which has a very different culture than most of the students know presents complex hurdles. Currently, the school has a student body of 80% expat and 20% Indonesian. How can the Green School keep from being a social and economic bubble in the heart of Bali? One encouraging move is that all students have both an Indonesian and an expat teacher in the classroom and they all take classes in the Bahasa Indonesian language. It will be fascinating to see how this relationship between the school and the surrounding community develops.

Indonesia is a so-called "developing" country. While this terminology is problematic, I would venture that within this designation is some of the greatest potential for sustainability. It seems as though more is possible here. It would have been very difficult to get a project of this scale off the ground in North America. Financially as well as legally, in terms of building and zoning codes, places like Bali offer more room to experiment socially. If car-dependent and fossil-fuel dependent infrastructure isn't developed yet in a country, it makes things easier to develop something else.

Tags: Bali, environmental education, green education

### IN THE NEWS: POLITICS



#### Once Upon a Country

Stéphane Dion has resigned. Read our award-winning profile of Dion from the Feb 2007 issue.

### FROM THE ARCHIVES: NOVEMBER 2007



#### The Spinach Armada

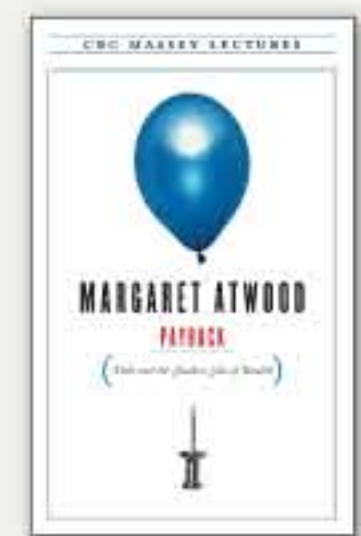
How the North gets its groceries.

### ADVERTISEMENT

#### ON THE MONEY

International award-winning author **Margaret Atwood** offers an insightful, timely, and entertaining look at our concept of debt.

#### THE 2008 MASSEY LECTURES



WWW.ANANSI.CA



ANANSI PUBLISHES VERY GOOD BOOKS

### ADVERTISE WITH US

#### THE WALRUS STRAW POLL

Scariest Canadian halloween costume:

- Ron MacLean as Dame Edna
- Céline Dion as herself
- Neil Young as a horse
- Leonard Cohen as Céline Dion
- Other:

> View Results

vote

THE WALRUS

### ALL WALRUS BLOGGERS

- Alexandra Redgrave
- Andrew Braithwaite
- Andrew D'Cruz
- Arno Kopecky
- Chantelle Oliver
- Chris Ellis
- Christopher Flavelle
- Crystal Luxmore
- Daniel Baird
- Devin DeCiantis
- Don Gillmor
- Dr. Noreen Golfman
- Edward Keenan
- Glenna Gordon
- Holly Jean Buck
- Jared Bland
- Jeremy Keehn
- Joel McConvey
- Joel Trenaman
- Jon Evans
- Katherine Leyton
- Ken Alexander
- Lia Grainger
- Mara Hvistendahl
- Marian Botsford Fraser
- Marni Jackson
- Mike Landry
- Mitch Moxley
- Paul Isaacs
- Sean Rogers
- Sivan Keren