



BeFriending Creation

Newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness

Affirming our essential unity with nature

Volume 26, Number 5 • September-October 2013

Climate Change— Embracing Corporate Quaker Action

By Mt. Toby Friends Climate Witness Committee

OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS a group at Mt. Toby Friends Meeting in Leverett, Massachusetts has studied the issue of climate change. In that time, the meeting made a number of structural improvements to reduce carbon use in the meeting house. In the past year, the study group began to address climate issues as shared responsibility, focusing on the carbon used weekly in driving to the meeting.

Dime-A-Gallon Fund

The proposal for the “Dime-a-Gallon Fund” grew out of our realization that just getting Friends to our Mount Toby meeting on Sundays uses a lot of gasoline. We hoped to raise awareness in order to motivate more carpooling. Our meeting is rural and draws from a wide area. It takes approximately 2,500 gallons of gas per year just to move Friends to the meeting and back home. A self-tax of a dime per gallon amounts to \$250 per year. The meeting agreed to send this \$250 to Quaker Earthcare Witness and to set up a collection device to let Friends drop in dimes and dollars to pay the meeting back for this self-tax.

It was hard for Friends to get the idea that their donations were for our collective use and were not a “tax” on their own personal drives. We did not want people with longer drives to feel they should pay more and those living nearby less. We hoped that all travelers would bear the weight of our collective gasoline usage and find ways to minimize it.

The project raised \$200 plus awareness about fuel use. A number of Friends bicycling plus some carpooling reduced our weekly carbon footprint. The awareness-raising is ongoing: We continue to realize that our meeting is deeply dependent on the use of irreplaceable fossil resources.



The Mt. Toby Voluntary Carbon Witness Committee: Roger Conant, Alan Eccleston, Alice Swift, Linda Harris, Peter Blood.
Not shown: Carol Lewis, Peggy Anderson.

A Voluntary Carbon Tax Witness

Messages rising in worship moved seven of us to a Voluntary Carbon Tax Witness. We decided individually the amount of self-tax that is right for us and whether we calculate it based on a single source of the carbon we use or on many sources. The level of each person’s voluntary tax is confidential (known only to the fund steward), but the witness is public. Others have since joined and there are now 13 of us involved in this witness.

George Fox is reported to have advised William Penn to wear his sword as long as he could. Aware that

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BeFriending Creation

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We publish *BeFriending Creation* to promote the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness, stimulate discussion and action, share insights, practical ideas, and news of our actions, and encourage among Friends a sense of community and spiritual connection with all Creation. Opinions expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of Quaker Earthcare Witness, or of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). The editor is responsible for unsigned items. Submission deadlines are February 10, April 10, June 10, August 10, October 10, and December 10.

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VISION AND WITNESS

WE ARE CALLED to live in right relationship with all Creation, recognizing that the entire world is interconnected and is a manifestation of God. WE WORK to integrate into the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends the Truth that God's Creation is to be respected, protected, and held in reverence in its own right, and the Truth that human aspirations for peace and justice depend upon restoring the earth's ecological integrity. WE PROMOTE these truths by being patterns and examples, by communicating our message, and by providing spiritual and material support to those engaged in the compelling task of transforming our relationship to the earth.

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Earthcare Calendar

October 10, 2013. Deadline for article submissions for November-December 2013 *BeFriending Creation*.

Letters to Share

"WHAT CANST THOU SAY" ABOUT SPIRIT-LED EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF EARTH, about your own stirrings toward care for the planet, in relation to the vision and thoughtful action of Quaker Earthcare Witness as a whole? We'd like to hear from you.

Send your letters to Katherine at katherine@quakerearthcare.org, and share your thoughts and leadings with Friends and caring others throughout North America.

dear friends,

the following quote jumped out from martin luther king's "**Letter from Birmingham Jail.**" it drew out of me what i have come to feel are foundational aspects of right relationship with earth.

"... In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self purification; and direct action. ..."

the quote seems especially true and important for us (friends, quakers, friends of truth), when exploring root causes and major influences; while recognizing that transformation on the deeper, underlying levels transforms everything one does on the physical level. this has to do with spiritual relationship with earth.

collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist, is the first step, and could be understood as: exploration, collection, of the "facts" to determine what underlying influences, factors are involved in "injustices" in our relationships and actions with each other, other, nature, earth, universe, all life spirit.

exploring the underlying, "spiritual level" or "spiritual relationship," from the very beginning of friends (quakers) and unity with nature, two and a half decades ago, was, and i feel still is, the special and unique, fundamentally important area that friends had/ have to offer.

i wish us well on this continuing, exciting, engaging, effective journey!

sincerely
in and seeking light
with love,

eric maya joy

Editor's note: In the preceding letter, the capitalization and bold conventions are the preferences of the writer.



Climate Change, from page 1

we are still wearing our carbon swords, we encourage each other in this witness.

Although the Voluntary Carbon Tax is an individual commitment, our Meeting supports it by receiving our earmarked personal checks on a quarterly schedule. The meeting treasurer then submits a single check for the total to the recipient organization or group selected by the Climate Witness Committee. After some discernment, the meeting agreed to this process which is described in full at <http://www.mounttobyfriends.org> under the Action tab. (The first check of more than \$400 went to QEW.)

Toward a Corporate Quaker Witness

Meeting support is a key to the larger purpose of the witness. Individual action on climate change is not enough; groups and organizations must come together to act and urge others to join.

The 2009 Copenhagen Accord, stating any global warming above 2°C would be unsafe for human habitation, was signed by 167 countries (including the U.S., China, India, and Russia). In spite of this near-universal agreement, our government is unable to act. Friends are called to “Be models, be examples...” (George Fox). This issue, like slavery, is deeply imbedded in our culture and economic system, and we as individuals and as meetings have a calling to respond.

Friends in our Quarter (Connecticut Valley Quarterly Meeting) have expressed interest. We are hopeful their meetings and others will feel led to set up their own Voluntary Carbon Tax Witness. Please visit our website for more information and examples you can use in your own meeting. ☞



Alan Eccleston at New England Yearly Meeting, passing out information and talking with Friends about the carbon tax idea. Also shown (left to right): Nan Davies, Nancy Slator, and Geoff Lobenstine.

For More Information

- Mt. Toby Friends: www.mounttobyfriends.org
- The Mt. Toby Voluntary Carbon Tax Witness and pledge form: www.mounttobyfriends.org/action/voluntary-carbon-tax-witness/carbon-tax-summary/
- A calculator to help you determine your own Voluntary Carbon Tax: www.mounttobyfriends.org/gascal/gascal.html



Bridging Contemplation and Action

“There are two ways in which a concern is a particularization. It is a particularization of the Divine Concern of God for all creation. God’s love isn’t just a diffused benevolence. As the Eternal is the root and ground of all times, yet breaks into particular moments, so the Infinite Love is the ground of all creatures, the source of their existence, and also knows a tender concern for each, and guides those who are sensitive to this tender care into a mutually supporting Blessed Fraternity.

But it is a particularization of my responsibility also, in a world too vast and a lifetime too short for me to carry all responsibilities....But the loving Presence does not burden us equally with all things, but considerately puts upon each of us just a few central tasks, as emphatic responsibilities. For each of us these special undertakings are our share in the joyous burdens of love.”

—Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*, 1941

**Thanks to Roger Hansen for sharing this quote.*

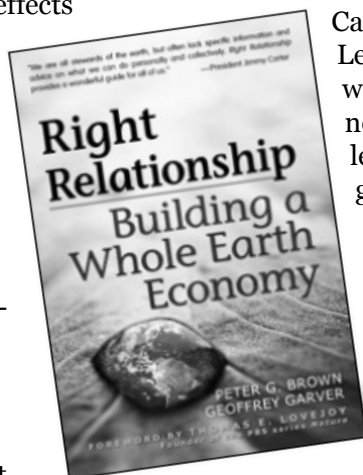
Climate Change is the Issue of Our Times: I=PATE

Most of us reading this know that climate change is the issue of our times. Knowing that so many of us are working on this together helps lighten this heavy burden. Climate change and what we can do about it is the theme for QEW's fall meeting, coming up in Chicago on October 24-27. We hope all concerned Friends will attend!

Environmental scientists describe an environmental impact with the equation $I=PAT$, where I =Impact, P =Population, A =Affluence, and T =Technology. Applying this formula to climate change, we learn that our impact is caused by the combined effects of population, affluence (how much we can afford to buy), and technology (how energy efficient our purchases are). The equation helps us break down the impact to figure out where we can make changes. Friends and others, writing in the book *Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy*, by Peter G. Brown and Geoffrey Garver (see www.quakerinstitute.org), have added an E for Ethics to the standard equation, making it $I=PATE$. In addition to population, affluence, and technology, we have a choice about whether or not we consume environmentally damaging products or not.

We will be exploring parts of this equation during our October meetings. Friends are invited to attend all or part of our public and business sessions at the Cenacle Conference & Retreat Center in Chicago. Registration is up on our website (www.quakerearthcare.org) and you'll also find the agenda for the meeting (subject to change).

One of our three public programs will focus on the growing global population and its effects on climate change (see Roy Treadway's description on page 5).



We also will be exploring community responses to climate change with descriptions of on-the-ground projects partially sponsored by QEW's Mini-Grant program. Kenyatta James will talk about Green Street Monthly Meeting's project on community development through local gardens, and David Schaad will describe community sustainability projects in Vietnam. You can learn more about David's project by reading the Mini-Grant Profile on page 9.

Our third public session will explore Canadian and U.S. national policy on climate change. Jim Cason from Friends Committee on National Legislation and Jim Davis from Kairos Canada will lead a discussion on what is and what is not happening at their respective national levels. They will provide suggestions for grassroots activism.

We are looking forward to these important and inspiring meetings in October and know they will provide much information and opportunity for sharing and connection. The time is now, and more than ever we need caring, concerned community to make a difference in all the areas where Earth needs our care.

There is a scholarship fund for Steering Committee members who need assistance to attend the October meetings, and we also have a young adult scholarship fund for Friends between the ages of 18 and 35. Please contact Anne Mitchell (anne@quakerearthcare.org) for more information about scholarships.

If you are concerned for the well-being of our planet and are feeling led to do more with your concern, the time is right to get directly involved in spirit-led action for Earth. Please join us in October! I look forward to seeing you there.

--Shelley Tanenbaum, Clerk

EQAT Keystone XL Pipeline Civil Disobedience Training

Join Earth Quaker Action Team for a regional training in civil disobedience, facilitated by George Lakey, Eileen Flanagan, and Matthew Armstead. More than 75,000 people across the country have pledged to "engage in acts of dignified, peaceful civil disobedience." Take the training and help President Obama

say a clear "No!" to the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Sunday, September 22, OR Saturday, October 26
1:00-4:00pm
Friends Center, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA
RSVP to matthew.eqat@gmail.com.

The Impact of Population on Climate Change: Our Response?

A Program Preview

Collaborators Ken Lawrence, Dick Grossman, Roy Treadway, and Stan Becker will be leading an informative and stirring program on the subject of population as it relates to climate change. Thanks to Roy Treadway for providing the following information and giving us a preview of the program.

Program (Overall time: 120 minutes): Opening by Dick Grossman (5 min); Presentation on the impact of population on climate change, followed by factual questions (total 15-20 min), led by Roy Treadway; Small group (8-10 persons) worship-sharing (60 min) led by Ken Lawrence; Large group worship (30 min.), led by Dick Grossman.

Description: In this session, we will start by exploring the relationship between population and population growth in the world with the increasing threat of climate change. Obviously, at its basic, population is a multiplier of everything else contributing to climate change, such as carbon dioxide and methane emissions into the atmosphere: the more people, the more climate changing gases will be produced. But more people creates more sprawl with more traffic to farther distances, puts pressure for more extreme energy with more pollution, and encourages industrial agriculture with higher use of oil-based products. We will explore some of these relationships and answer a few questions about population in the first part of the session.

Given the clear impact of an increasing population on climate change, we will move into worship-sharing to explore several queries which focus on what might be our collective and individual response to growing population. Since its beginnings, FCUN/QEW has had a strong emphasis on population concerns with a Population Working Group producing tri-folds and pamphlets on world population, adoption, abortion, immigration, human sexuality, and clearness on child-bearing. We have attempted Men-4-Men and Quaker Condom projects. But what else should QEW be doing about population which continues to grow rapidly in the world, exacerbating (along with many other factors) not only climate change, but water use, food, and pollution? And how should we respond individually in our personal lives, not only to our resource use but to our concern over population? What does our faith call us to do? ☞

QEW Annual Meeting Agenda October 24-27, 2013

==== Thursday October 24 ====

1:00-3:00	Meeting for Fellowship, Worshipful Prep
3:00	Registration
3:15- 4:30	CCC
4:40-5:50	Welcome by the Cenacle, Review the Business and Themed Agendas and intro to/of newcomers
6:00-7:00	Dinner
7:10-9:30	Meeting for Worship for Business: Introductions, Stories from YM, MM and your community, Financial/Nominating items to be seasoned

==== Friday October 25 ====

7:30-8:00	Morning Worship
8:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:10-10:30	Standing Committee meetings: Finance, Nominating, Publications, Spiritual Nurturance, Outreach, Personnel, Development, SFA
10:45-12:00	Working group and project meetings: Mini-Grants, UN, FCNL, Finca la Bella, No Name
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:30-3:30	Meeting for Worship for Business
3:30-6:00	free time
6:00-7:00	Dinner
7:10-9:30	"The Impact of Population on Climate Change: Our Response?" Collaborators: Ken Lawrence, Dick Grossman, and Roy Treadway with help from Stan Becker
9:30	Fellowship

==== Saturday October 26 ====

7:30-8:00	Morning worship
8:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:10-10:30	Working group and project meetings: Mini-Grants, UN, FCNL, Finca la Bella
10:45-12:00	Standing Committee meetings: Finance, Nominating, Publications, Spiritual Nurturance, Outreach, Personnel, SFA
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:15-3:15	Meeting for Worship for Business
3:30-5:45	Local Responses to Climate Change: Stories from Green Street Meeting with Kenyatta James and Stories from Vietnam with David Schaad.
6:00-7:00	Dinner
7:10-9:30	National Responses to Climate Change: U.S. policy with Jim Cason, FCNL, and Canadian policy with Jim Davis from Kairos Canada
9:30	Fellowship

==== Sunday October 27 ====

8:00-9:00	Breakfast
9:10-11:30	Meeting for Worship for Business
11:30-12:00	Worship
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-3:00	Independent meeting time

Moments from SEYM

Photos courtesy of David Millar



Sharing beneath the trees at SEYM.



Early morning worship by the Lake.



Roy Taylor giving the Walton Lecture at SEYM.



A beautiful, restful setting.

QEW Shines at Southeastern Yearly Meeting

By Mary Jo Klingel

Each year, Southeastern Yearly Meeting Friends come together for our annual meeting on the beautiful grounds of a Methodist camp in central Florida. This year our Gathering was titled “Becoming Whole in Mind, Body, Spirit and Planet.”

The highlight of our week is the Walton Lecture on Saturday night. This year our Lecturer was QEW’s rising clerk, Roy Taylor. Roy began the Gathering by leading two workshops: first on “Green Building for Homes and Meeting Houses” and a second one on “Community Transitioning to Resilience.” Roy shared his information about green building and community living, as well as his energy and love for his work. His Walton lecture, “Friends Leading: Climate Change—A Crisis of Spirit,” asked of us that we ground ourselves in our testimonies and step into the roles of leadership that these times ask of us.

There were numerous workshops with a focus on Earth. QEW members offered three. The first offered a focus on *Active Hope* by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone. I brought statements about parts per million of CO₂, mass extinction, melting ice, climate-related deaths, and the decline of large mammals. I selected 12 fact-based statements to read. One person read a statement, and then we sat in silence as though we were hearing a bell toll, and then the next person read. The silence after the readings was profound: the impact of global climate change was in the room with us. We then went on to look at the equally significant potential for Active Hope.

The second QEW workshop was led by Barbara Letsch, based on the book *High Tide On Main Street* by John Englander. With facts and maps, Barbara brought home the potential sea level rise in South Florida with a presentation that was both precise and very alarming.

Our Yearly Meeting welcomed David Millar, a QEW Friend from Canada. In addition to many conversations with Florida Friends, David led a workshop based on Friend’s testimonies and the Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco justice. He encouraged people to talk to one another about their passions and leadings. By the end of the workshop there was tremendous energy and hope in the room. We hope to continue to discuss our leadings with Friends across the continent in the Circles of Discernment (See *BeFriending Creation*, May-June 2013, p. 5).

There were many other Earth-focused workshops, such as the scriptural basis for care for the Earth, drawing in nature, sustainable living from the Coalition for Peace and Justice, and the sacredness of nature as seen through photographs of wild places in Florida. Our daily worship sharing offered Earthcare queries for our focus. Our Earthcare Committee began the yearlong process of seasoning and approving a minute so that SEYM will speak with one voice about our concern for Earth and our commitments to protect her.

Our QEW Vision and Witness Statement says, “We work to integrate into the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends the Truth that God’s Creation is to be respected, protected and held in reverence in its own right . . .” At this Gathering, Southeastern Yearly meeting showed its awareness and commitment to care for our Earth. ❧



Report on Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues May 20-31, 2013

By Mary Gilbert, QEW Representative to the UN

I was there in 2001 when Indigenous representatives at the UN first heard that the UN would host and support an annual Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). I saw grown people jumping in the halls, rejoicing. This May I was able for the first time to attend a meeting of the PFII and meet people from around the world dressed in their native finery. At the PFII, the standard terms of address are “brother” and “sister.” This article shares some of what I learned at the PFII.

Sovereignty

Sovereignty is the bottom line for indigenous groups. Even when indigenous peoples are technically citizens of “...the societies in which we choose or are forced to live...,” they consider themselves sovereign nations that should be treated as such. They say corporations should not replace governments in negotiations about land or rights.

Some groups are working for more recognition of their sovereignty by national governments. Chief Oren Lyons, representing 10 Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) nations, says that government restriction of his people’s movement is illegal. He wants recognition for Haudenosaunee documents of citizenship for international travel. Some groups, including native Hawaiians, want to reject citizenship in the colonial-founded countries where they live.

Although some see citizenship as a threat to their sovereignty, Joan Carling of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (<http://www.aippnet.org>) sees it as a plus. Citizenship allows people to get drivers licenses,

appear in court, receive basic services, and hold title to land. This last is crucial. Carling says emphatically, “Land is life!” Some indigenous groups do not even exist on paper, giving them no legal status at all in the countries where they live.

Education

Concern about preserving indigenous identity as Peoples rings clearly in discussions about education. Indigenous peoples want both the continuity of traditional languages, values, and life-ways and a strong, knowledgeable presence in the wider world. Historically, national governments have tried to force assimilation through harsh suppression of tradition while providing some form of mainstream education. The overt goal has been to eliminate the native presence by absorbing indigenous people into the dominant society.* Indigenous Peoples do not want to disappear this way. In higher education, out-migration in pursuit of education can mean a loss to the community of its good minds. Strongly supported early traditional education can reduce this danger.

A speaker from UNICEF named two things that work: (1) Children learn best in their mother tongue, and (2) the community must be involved with the schools. Indigenous Peoples want to be in charge of their children’s education through planning, providing, and training teachers for their children’s schools. There are successful examples of this, such as a mobile school for a nomad group in southeastern Siberia, (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyp4J_ezPqU), but having control over their children’s education continues to be a serious challenge in many places.

Continued on next page

UNDRIP

The most important global event in the Indigenous world was passage in 2007 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). UNDRIP calls for the “free, prior and informed consent” of indigenous peoples before any action is taken that will affect them. In spite of this, land dispossession and rights violations are happening on all inhabited continents, as corporations try to implement extractive industries, bio-fuel plantations, large hydroelectric facilities, and even playgrounds for the rich.

UNDRIP has no force of law, but whenever it is cited in a court decision it enters the case law of that place. There is a great campaign going on to have the document translated into all indigenous languages, and widely disseminated and taught. Many indigenous people don’t yet know that UNDRIP exists, that it articulates their rights, and can potentially be of help.

It is crucially important to get laws on the books that incorporate basic rights and that clarify title to land. Written title was not an issue before colonialism came along with its rules about ownership. However, as one speaker asserted, “There is direct continuity with colonialism. The master/slave relationship is still there. The constitutions and laws may be in place but there is no way to have them enforced.” Another speaker brought up tales of slaughter by government or private forces, mercenaries hired by agribusiness and mostly by extractive industries. When such horrific violations occur, it is important to have lawyers present and to have the media spotlight. Someone suggested setting up a process enabling notice of violations to be sent to the General Assembly.

Non-indigenous people whose work impacts indigenous people and programs also often don’t know about UNDRIP and how it applies to their work. Education about UNDRIP is needed everywhere, among UN agencies and departments, governments, police forces, soldiers, and citizens in general.

In the context of wanting to educate widely about UNDRIP and the struggles of people demanding the rights that have been declared, even “incomplete successes” are valued, along with conferences and gatherings. They can inform both the Indigenous themselves and the wider world about what is going on, which is itself progress. Someone remarked, “Awareness-raising percolates both up and down.”

Coming of Age

The PFII is maturing as an organization. There is now “a mix of bureaucratic experts,” who follow relevant issues through the UN system. They can con-

nect specific paragraphs in UNDRIP with correlating paragraphs in official documents and monitor in detail what is going on.

Many if not most indigenous groups now have their own websites or are connected with other groups that do. There is also an Indigenous Peoples’ Center for Documentation, Research and Information, called doCip, which is a multilingual database with more than 800 links to indigenous sites (see www.indigenousportal.org).

Joan Carling (mentioned previously) recalled that the first three to five years of the FPII were enthusias-

tic, but now at 12 years, she identifies “a sense of fatigue.” She noted that, “The countries aren’t coming as much.” Carling called for a clear recommendation to countries and to UN branches for “constructive engagement with states, not just talking to ourselves.” She asks for “inclusion and participation at both regional and global levels.” Carling says, “We need feedback on progress,” and asks for research with “clear indicators and monitors.”

In September of 2014 the UN General Assembly will hold a World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous representatives from around the world have already gathered in Alta, Norway and produced an Outcome Document that names concerns and how they can be remediated. It is very informative! To learn more, go to: <http://wcip2014.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Adopted-Alta-outcome-document-with-logo-ENG.pdf>

Our Role

The Global Indigenous Women’s Caucus strongly urges that we teach all people the history of the Doctrine of Discovery, how the taking of land and genocidal practices against indigenous peoples were justified and



Mary Gilbert and a (very small) Maasai woman.

See *Indigenous* on page 11



A Q&A interview with David Schaad, a 2013 Mini-Grant recipient

In this and continuing issues of *BeFriending Creation*, we are sharing profiles of our most recent Mini-Grant recipients. We hope the stories inspire you to consider your own Mini-Grant application for a project your meeting would love to do!

This Mini-Grant profile shares the work of David Schaad, who will also be speaking on local responses to climate change at the QEW Annual Meeting in Chicago, October 24-27.

Q: Please tell us about your project.

A: On December 26th, 2012, I flew to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam to study climate change in the Mekong River Delta. Together with my Environmental Studies faculty advisor (and professor) Dr. Dan Spencer and 15 other students from a variety of disciplines, I traveled around the Mekong Delta in southern Vietnam while learning about the ways in which climate change was already impacting the region—how it was and is changing the ecology and physical environment; how climate change is impacting livelihoods and society at large; and what actions are being taken by individuals, communities, universities, and the government to respond and adapt to climate change.

This was my first trip to Asia, as well as my first experience in a communist country. Needless to say, each and every moment of the trip was rich with newfound learning and perspective as we visited farms, national parks, cultural sites, research stations, and attended classes on a wide variety of facets of this complex nation and its unique bunch of challenges resulting from climate change.

Q: What inspired you to do this project?

A: In 2010, shortly after the inauguration of the Climate Change Studies Minor here at the University of Montana, this program unveiled what would become a yearly travel seminar in the Mekong Delta of southern Vietnam. Initially, I was intrigued by the idea, but lacked the funding and decided to look into the travel seminar more seriously in the future when I had more time and money to spare. In the fall of 2012, nearing my college graduation date, I realized that the 2012-13 trip was my final opportunity to make this journey.

In particular, I wanted to investigate what climate change felt like and looked like in another part of the world completely distinct from Montana. I had long dreamed of seeing Asia one day, and I decided as a climate change studies minor that there couldn't be a better inaugural trip than this one – and what a fantastic capstone to my undergraduate career. I wanted to engage in a reverse mission – to learn from the Vietnamese and bring that knowledge, wisdom, and awareness home to Montana and to the United States. Particularly because our federal government has continued to blatantly stall proactive policies responding to climate change – and has even committed to a policy of inaction until China and other major polluters take the lead – I wanted to see what we as American citizens could learn from the on-the-ground projects of the Vietnamese people. I also hoped to build solidarity with the Vietnamese people – and to assure them that not all Americans are climate change deniers, as our media might make us out to be. In short, I was looking for a very personal and intimate learning opportunity

Continued on next page

that would allow me to engage with local people, learn from their creativity firsthand, and then bring home that knowledge to my country, to both educate and inspire change on the local, regional, and national levels.

Q: *What do you hope the outcome will be?*

A: Ultimately, I hope that my learning experience in Vietnam can be leveraged to promote more proactive energy and resource use policies here in the United States. I understand that I am but one single person among millions, but I believe that the awareness and knowledge I gained in Vietnam--both of the imminent nature of climate change impacts in coastal nations and regions around the world, as well as an appreciation for some of the many creative solutions and adaptive policies that are possible--will help inform me to be a more effective voice for change in the future. After my four-week travel seminar in Vietnam, I feel more determined than ever to work for progress, particularly in the realm of governmental policy. I also hope to be a servant to the Vietnamese people, because Vietnam stands among the many nations on the front lines and in the imminent wake of climate change – even as our nation, far from threatened by climate change to date, continues to be the world's single greatest per-capita emitter of CO₂ and therefore the single-largest contributor to anthropogenic climate change. I hope to speak for the Vietnamese people in this regard – to give a voice to the voiceless, to empower the powerless, and speak up on behalf of people worldwide who need the United States to set a strong example and lead the world in moving towards a carbon-neutral existence.

Q: *How did the QEW Mini-Grant help you achieve your goals for this project?*

A: Financially, I would not have been able to make this journey without the financial assistance of the Quaker Earthcare Witness Mini-Grant and several other small scholarships and grants I was lucky enough to receive. Despite my lack of financial resources, I felt that I needed to make this journey before I graduated--and understood that never again would I be afforded an opportunity quite like this one--to learn directly from scholars, researchers, farmers, governmental policy-makers, park staff, scientists, and community leaders about the many significant ways in which climate change is impacting a nation so far afield from our own. I am so grateful for this gift, which transcends far beyond the dollar amount QEW contributed. Your generous grant has opened my eyes and expanded my worldview immeasurably.

Q: *Can you tell us a bit about you, your connection to Friends, and your work and/or the area in which you hope to make a difference in the world?*

A: I was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, where I began attending West Hills Friends Church as a fifth grader. My Quaker community provided a central and all-important, nourishing role in my life. My parents raised me from an early age to be compassionate, peaceful, and to care for and appreciate the natural world around me; West Hills added a profound spiritual dimension to these familial teachings, and augmented my commitment to them through the Quaker testimonies of peace, social justice, and environmental stewardship. I was lucky enough to attend summer camps at Twin Rocks Friends Camp several summers during my middle and high school, as well as two Samuel School spiritual retreats. My weekly youth group and meeting for worship grounded me deeply in the active faith of the Quakers, and further heightened my passion for working for justice of all kinds throughout my life.



David Schaad (right) and the motorcycle driver for biogas tour day.

At the University of Montana, I am wrapping up two bachelor's degrees in environmental studies and Spanish. As a college graduate, I hope to make a positive difference in our world by working for strong partnerships between nations for environmental progress and social justice. Through my travels in Vietnam and in other moments in college, I have come to understand that environmental and social justice are inextricably linked; I am relieved that I can dedicate myself to both of these passions without having to sacrifice one for the other. Ultimately, I want to work for a more just, fair, sustainable, and equitable world, a world in which people are increasingly tied to each other and to the land, and understand that any action which hurts the Earth indeed hurts themselves, as the indigenous

*See **Vietnam** on next page*

Vietnam, continued from previous page

people of the world have been telling us since before time began. I want to help preserve and promote local environmental knowledge and work on behalf of those who have been marginalized by globalization, particularly indigenous peoples and cultures. Their driving ethic of balance within, rather than domination over, the natural world, is something that all of us must once again adopt. It is time for all of us to understand the fallacy of endless consumption (both because it is fundamentally unsustainable and because although it promises us happiness, it leads us only to misery) and to return to a place of harmony with our Mother Earth, and the indigenous peoples of the world will show us how if only we are willing to listen. ♪

“Our Gracious Creator cares and provides for all His creatures. His tender mercies are over all His works; and, so far as His love influences our minds, so far we become interested in His workmanship and feel a desire to take hold of every opportunity to lessen the distresses of the afflicted and increase the happiness of the Creation. Here we have a project of one common interest from which our own is inseparable, that to turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of Universal Love becomes the business of our lives.”

—John Woolman, *A Plea for the Poor*, 1763

**Thanks to Roger Hansen for sharing this quote.*

Indigenous, continued from page 8

now underlie aspects of “the Law of the Land.”

I am more convinced than ever that a very important way to defend Nature on our planet is to support indigenous struggles. However, as we rush in where angels fear to tread we need to understand that for Indigenous Peoples sovereignty is the bottom line. I’ve been told that ecologically concerned non-indigenous people show up to defend land or water rights, but melt away when sovereignty trumps Earthcare for the tribe. In other words, our support is often conditional on whether the indigenous group involved is carrying out our agenda. I have no answer for this except lots of listening, gentle honest speaking, and more listening.

I feel unity with the words of Mario Areda, representative for three Indigenous Peoples in South America, who spoke of “... our own god, which is in all things and all places, in the four directions, the plants, the animals, in the air, the sun, the moon, in each grain of corn. Everything, absolutely everything is part of our god....” Areda doesn’t limit the realm of his god to living species; he sees that the distinction between living and non-living forms is blurry and unreal. This is what Friends mean when we speak of the Light being not just in every one of us humans, but inherent in all Creation. ♪

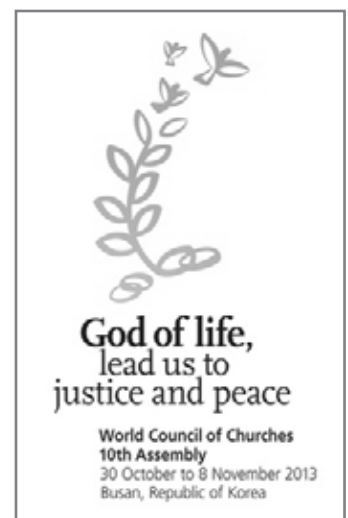
Biology, continued from page 12

This entails mobilizing people and communities, providing the required resources (funds, time and capacities), and developing more cohesive and coordinated programs geared toward transforming economic systems, production, distribution and consumption patterns, cultures and values... Transformation must be guided by the mission to heal and renew the whole creation.”

Quakers in Britain, at a Meeting for Sufferings held in London on Saturday, July 6, 2013, have written the following: “We value this document which will be circulated in many parts of the world, and which challenges the dominance of the economic global order. This paper addresses urgent concerns which Quakers have adopted as part of our central work. By cooperating with other faiths and groups on these issues, making explicit the moral values we share, we will be more influential than if we all act separately. We

resolve to listen to where the words come from and act together in love. We endorse this paper wholeheartedly. The final paragraph includes the words: ‘transformative spirituality can counter and resist life-destroying values.’”

After the Assembly I will be working with CYM to bring the WCC agreed-on actions to the attention of Canadian Quakers. I hope that QEW will also be interested in these proposed actions, which are also part of the Kabarak Call. ♪



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A Call for Transformation

By Anne Mitchell

Have you ever wondered about the World Council of Churches?

The WCC is the broadest and most inclusive among the ecumenical movement, with members in more than 110 countries, representing more than 500 million members from 345 member churches.

This ecumenical journey began in the early 1900s. The World Council of Christian Education (WCCE) Conferences were held in Rome in 1907; the World Mission Conference was held in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1910; the World Conference on Life and Work was held in Stockholm in 1925; and agreement was reached to form the World Council of Churches in 1937. The first International Assembly was held in Amsterdam in 1948 and the second Assembly was held in Evanston in 1954. Since then, Assemblies have been held in India, Sweden, Kenya, Canada, Australia, Zimbabwe, and Brazil. The 10th Assembly will be held in Busan, Republic of Korea from October 30 to November 8, 2013.

I will be a delegate to this Assembly, representing Canadian Yearly Meeting. I also hope to bring greetings from Quaker Earthcare Witness. CYM was a founding member of the WCC and is the only Yearly Meeting to send a delegate. Other Quaker delegates

are from FGC, FUM, and FWCC. The theme of this Assembly is “God of Life, Lead Us to Justice and Peace.” More information on the WCC and the Assembly can be found at www.wcc2013.info.

The WCC Assembly offers a unique space for delegates and guests to reflect, speak, act, and worship together. It is a space for delegates to challenge and support each other, to share and debate. The goal is to “promote common witness and engage in common service by serving human needs, breaking down barriers, seeking justice and peace and upholding the integrity of creation.” The mandate of the Assembly is to set the future agenda of the WCC and speak with a public voice.

Some issues coming to the Assembly this year that will interest Quakers include a statement on unity and a focus on the theme of peace, justice, and ecological integrity. A document entitled, “Economy of Life, Justice and Peace for All,” will be presented to the Assembly and it is a call to action. The following is an extract from this call:

“God calls us to a radical transformation. We must cultivate the moral courage necessary to witness to a spirituality of justice and sustainability, and build a prophetic movement for an Economy of Life for all.

*See **Transformation** on page 11*