



# BeFriending Creation

Newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness  
*Affirming our essential unity with nature*

Volume 29, Number 2 • March-April 2016

## Climate Justice— from Katrina to Paris and Back to New Orleans

By Shelley Tanenbaum

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT how global warming will affect the poorest and most vulnerable people on the planet, or when we talk about how countries that have historically emitted the most carbon have a greater carbon debt than those with smaller carbon footprints, or how polluting industries are nearly always located in poorer areas and usually in communities of color, we are talking about climate justice. A group of climate justice activists from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) attended COP21, the conference that resulted in the Paris Agreement on climate change, to raise their voices in the global community. Fifty students, faculty, and advisors from 15 colleges and institutions attended; it was their largest delegation to a COP ever.

I (Shelley) met a few members of the HBCU delegation when we attended a side-event with a panel on interfaith climate change activism. Isaac Wilkins from Howard University asked the panel to comment on climate justice. All the panelists brushed aside his question, so afterwards I introduced myself to Isaac and we met later to talk about how faith-based groups can support climate justice. I was very disappointed to get so little response from the panelists: how could people of faith have nothing to offer? How can Friends use our influence in interfaith settings and within our own Meetings to advance the discussion and change policies that disproportionately impact poorer people and communities of color?

In our meeting at the COP and a follow-up in January, Isaac shared some of his thoughts.



Isaac Wilkins from Howard University with Shelley Tanenbaum.

1. *Why did you attend the COP21 as a part of the HBCU delegation? What were the highlights for you and the delegation? What were the disappointments?*

*Isaac:* I attended COP21 as an HBCU delegate because I saw an opportunity to raise awareness about environmental issues happening in America. By being present at the conference not only would I be raising awareness but I would be advocating for loss and damage and stronger adaptation rules to be implemented in the agreement. Also I saw this as a great opportunity for me to learn about the different issues people were facing in other countries due to climate change as well as the inventions and strategies they are taking to address climate change.

A highlight for myself and the delegation would have been when we organized a panel/group discussion at a university in the south of France. The event

See **Climate Justice**, page 3

### IN THIS ISSUE:

<i>Climate Justice: Q&amp;A</i> , by Shelley Tanenbaum.....	1
<i>Walking Cheerfully Over the Earth</i> , Marjorie McKelvey Isaacs .....	4
<i>QEW &amp; FWCC in Peru</i> , by Mary Gilbert & Judy Lumb ....	5
<i>Desperately Seeking Pachamama</i> , by Mary Gilbert .....	6
<i>Cement and Climate Change</i> , by Judy Lumb .....	7
<i>Thinking Globally, Acting Locally</i> , by Vicki Tolbert .....	8
<i>Review: Altered Genes, Twisted Truth</i> .....	9
<i>Runway A-K47</i> , by Marjorie McKelvey Isaacs.....	12

## BeFriending Creation

*BeFriending Creation*, Vol. 29, No. 2, March-April 2016. Newsletter of **Quaker Earthcare Witness**. ISSN 1050-0332. Published bi-monthly.

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.

Contents of *BeFriending Creation* copyright ©2016 Quaker Earthcare Witness, except as noted. Permission to reprint material herein must be requested in advance from the editor.

**Membership** is open to all who demonstrate commitment to support the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness and who support its work at the Monthly or Yearly Meeting levels, or through other Friends organizations. Quaker Earthcare Witness is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation; contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

### 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.

**Steering Committee Clerk** Roy Taylor: [wrlldpeas@mindspring.com](mailto:wrlldpeas@mindspring.com).

**General Secretary** Shelley Tanenbaum, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA 94706 510/542-9606; [shelley@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:shelley@quakerearthcare.org).

**BFC Editor** Katherine Murray, 6658 Meadowgreen Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46236, 317/970-5988; [katherine@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:katherine@quakerearthcare.org).

**Website:** [www.quakerearthcare.org](http://www.quakerearthcare.org)

**Follow us on Twitter:** @quakerearthcare

**Like us on Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Quaker-Earthcare-Witness/143510792334460>

### Earthcare Calendar

**April 20, 2016.** Deadline for article submissions for May-June 2016 *BeFriending Creation*.

## Friends' News to Share

*Hundreds of Friends from around the world (including several QEW Friends, as you'll read in this issue) gathered recently in Pisac, Peru, for the Friends World Consultation Committee (FWCC) World Plenary. One of the planned goals for this meeting was to consider "furthering the Kabarok Call for Peace and Eco-Justice and considering how we contribute to a peaceful and sustainable life on Earth." As a result of Friends' efforts, the Consultation on Sustainability, facilitated by Jonathan Woolley (Mexico City MM/Pacific YM; Staff, QUNO-Geneva), Rachel Madenyika (Staff, QUNO-NY), and Charlotte Gordon (Aotearoa/New Zealand YM) presented the following minute, which was approved by the World Plenary.* ✍

## Living Sustainably and Sustaining Life on Earth



The Light of Christ has inspired Quakers throughout the generations. As we gather together in Pisac, Peru in 2016, we feel this light stronger than ever in our calling to care for the Earth on which we live. It is calling us from all traditions: programmed, unprogrammed, liberal, and evangelical. It calls us to preserve this Earth for our children, our grandchildren and all future generations to come, working as though life were to continue for 10,000 years to come. Be ready for action with your robes hitched up and your lamps alight. (Luke 12:35, Revised English Bible)

Our faith as Quakers is inseparable from our care for the health of our planet Earth. We see that our misuse of the Earth's resources creates inequality, destroys community, affects health and well-being, leads to war and erodes our integrity. We are all responsible for stewardship of our natural world. We love this world as God's gift to us all. Our hearts are crying for our beloved mother Earth, who is sick and in need of our care.

We are at a historical turning point. Internationally, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals oblige governments to take action. Faith groups and other civil society are playing a major role. As Quakers, we are part of this movement. The FWCC World Conference approved the Kabarok Call for Peace and Ecojustice in April 2012, while the FWCC World Office was a signatory to the Quaker statement on climate change in 2014 and divested from fossil fuels in June 2015.

We recognise that the environmental crisis is a symptom of a wider crisis in our political and economic systems. Our loving and well informed environmental actions as Friends, consistent with our spiritual values, must therefore work to transform these systems.

Many of us all over the Quaker world are taking practical actions as individuals and communities. At this Plenary, a consultation of more than sixty Friends from all over the world worked to build on these leadings with further practical action. The Annex attached to these minutes shows examples of what Friends are doing already or propose to do. We must redouble our efforts right now. We must move beyond our individual and collective comfort zones and involve the worldwide Quaker

*Continued on page 11*



**Climate Justice**, from page 1

brought people of many different races, ages, and countries together to come up with a blueprint on how we, as educated climate activists, can inspire the masses and bridge the gap of information pertaining to climate change. I wish that all members of the delegation would have had access to the “blue zone” where the negotiations were happening so that they could not only learn the process of international negotiation but also learn about the different innovations being done by other countries, non-profits, and companies [Note: the blue zone at the COP was restricted to delegates, observers, and press with special passes].

**2. What is the HBCU delegation? Why is it important for black students to work on climate justice?**

*Isaac:* It is important for black students to work on climate justice because there is little representation of blacks and other minorities within the field of climate justice. I think it is our job to advocate for ourselves, especially since sometimes people are not aware of the climate injustices that are happening in our communities. I think that climate injustices happen among a variety of classes/races and I think that each class should use their voice and mobilize and raise awareness of the issue. I believe that the area of climate change and injustice is very broad and sometimes, unintentionally, a group and their issue are not represented. The HBCU delegation is full of educated and aware advisors, students, and respected environmental experts (such as Dr. Bullard and Dr. Wright), who have accepted the mission of advocating for justice.

**3. What kind of activism is happening on the Howard campus?**

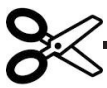
*Isaac:* Howard University’s student body is full of activists. For the past year we have mobilized a cam-

paign around divesting from fossil fuels and having an understanding of how our tuition is being spent, especially due to certain conditions of the university. Also, we are trying to increase the number of recyclable initiatives and clean water systems around the campus. A long term goal for eco-friendly student activists is for the school to invest in clean shuttle buses for students, to serve as our contribution to the decrease of greenhouse gasses. It is our hope that we can create a strong mechanism for decreasing greenhouse gasses and that it be adopted by other universities nationwide.

**4. How would you like to see communities of faith be a part of the climate justice movement?**

*Isaac:* Churches and faith communities have served as the platform for change since the beginning of time. For example, during the civil rights movement, the church served as a platform to mobilize, aid, and educate people regarding the major issue of civil rights. Many different faiths were able to come together and fight for change. Pertaining to climate change, I believe that churches should use their influence to educate people on the seriousness of climate change and to promote eco-friendly strategies to cope with the climate changes. Faith groups can create awareness of multiple avenues that saints can take toward the change. The Roman Catholic church, Quakers, Christians, and other faith groups have always had a strong influence in politics and on people.

There will be a Historically Black Colleges and Universities conference on Climate Justice in New Orleans March 30-April 3, 2016. We hope to report back on the conference and on the topic of environmental justice in future issues of *Befriending Creation*. ✍



— — — — —  
YES, I’d like to show my support for QEW!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

I want to contribute \$100\_\_\_\_; \$200\_\_\_\_; \$500\_\_\_\_; Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ My check/cheque is enclosed. Payable to QEW, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA, 94706

\_\_\_\_ I’d prefer to pay by my credit card: MC\_\_\_\_; Visa \_\_\_\_; Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I would like to give monthly. Please charge my credit card \$\_\_\_\_\_ each month.



# Walking Cheerfully Over the Earth: Step by Step to a Greener Lifestyle

By Marjorie McKelvey Isaacs, Psy.D.

FWCC HAS APPROVED A MINUTE asking everyone to personally make green lifestyle changes. All change, even desired improvements, creates some stress. My psychology clients and I, working together for more healthy lifestyles, discovered research, strategies, and viewpoints that can make change easier. Thanks also to Charlotte Gordon for these ideas.

1. Modeling. "If they do it, I want to do the same." Someone we admire can inspire. But if you can't persuade your brilliant, kind, good-looking presiding clerk to use a clothesline, no worries. An accessible role model is also effective. That person is someone with whom you can easily identify. "Chris is my age, works full time like me, and says using the clothesline is an easy way to enjoy getting outside. If Chris can do it, I can too."
2. Notice what you are telling yourself about the change you are contemplating. What you tell yourself will affect how you feel about the activity, and in turn, influence how successful you are. For example,  
*Old thought:* "I must use these TV dinners in throw-away packages because I do not have time to cook."  
*New thought:* "When all three of us made that stew together, it saved us money, only took 20 minutes, and tasted great."
3. Give yourself credit for attempting a change, even if it does not work out at first. Know that there are stages in the change process. A new habit will not be automatic or immediately perfect. When you notice that you did not do your newly targeted change, that awareness is a sign that you are just a step from success. Give yourself a little credit for noticing. For example,  
*Right way:* "Oops! I forgot my lovely cloth grocery bags. Noticing the mistake means I'm already in the process of changing. I'll remember them next time."  
*Wrong way:* "@#\$\$%! I forgot those cloth bags again. Making this change is impossible—I'll never learn."

In the second example, the person is instructing herself to fail. So be nice to you—it is more effective.



4. Change happens in phases. Be patient with other people—and yourself. Each phase may require different activities and thoughts to help people move forward. Talking about the feelings will actually help you get through them. Yes, this does mean that whining can help decrease resistance, rather than making it stronger.

Phases of change:

- *Pre-contemplation*—no awareness of a problem or need for change
  - *Contemplation*—noticing mixed feelings about making a change
  - *Preparation*—finding, then removing obstacles, beginning small steps
  - *Action*—practicing the new activity, meanwhile maybe missing the bad old ways
  - *Maintenance*—committing to sustaining the new behavior; find what will help you stick with it
5. Adaptive energy. Any change requires adaptive energy. Find times and arrange your circumstances so that you have enough energy to make the change. For example, the week you bring home a new puppy may not be the best week to also start the worm bin for composting kitchen scraps. It will be easier to stay with green lifestyle changes if you implement only one or two at a time.
  6. Foot-in-the-door. Long ago on a far-away planet, a door-to-door salesman put one foot into the doorway when someone opened it. Unable to shut the door, the homeowner was forced to listen to the sales pitch. Agreeing to a small change makes people more open to a similar larger commitment. Succeeding at a small change also can build your

See **Walking**, page 10



# QEW with FWCC in Pisac, Peru

By Mary Gilbert and Judy Lumb

THE FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE on Consultation (FWCC) brought Friends from all over the globe together in a loving and somewhat challenging mix. From January 19-27, 2016, more than 300 of us gathered in Pisac, Peru. Do you wish you had been there? Go to <http://fwccamericas.org/> to watch a video of the meeting while listening to Rachel Guaraldi read the “To Friends Everywhere” minute.

Quakers seem to come in three broad categories, which can be seen in the nature of the three large Quaker organizations in the US:

- Those who practice unprogrammed, silent worship: <http://www.fgcquaker.org/>
- Those who practice programmed worship: <http://friendsunitedmeeting.org/>
- And those who are evangelical Friends: <http://www.evangelicalfriends.org/>

Missionaries from FUM went to Kenya’s Western Province in 1900-’01 and converted folks there to Quakerism. Since that time Quaker practice and identity has spread to some nearby regions in Africa. At a later date, evangelical Quaker missionaries travelled to South America, where they too succeeded in converting Quechua- and Aymara-speaking people in Peru and Bolivia, respectively. Therefore many South American Friends are evangelicals.

The full panoply of Friends met daily in small “home groups” of about 10 people, which were, in most cases, very helpful in bridging our differences. In my home group there was deep sharing and growth in mutual understanding.

## Consultation on Sustainability

Three of us from QEW—Judy Lumb, Marjorie Isaacs and Mary Gilbert—attended a four-session consultation to look at the FWCC Kabarak Call issued four years ago and consider what Friends should be doing now. The text of the Kabarak Call was made available, and about 60 of us sat down to do some guided brainstorming.

Jonathan Woolley, director of QUNO Geneva, with the assistance of Rachel Madenyika from QUNO’s New York office, and Young Adult Friend Charlotte Gordon from Aotearoa-New Zealand YM, facilitated the consultation with great skill. After all, Jonathan has practice with diplomats whose countries are at odds. We Quakers are quite disparate, but at least we all intend good will.

We worked in small groups and shifted around while the facilitators took notes and put together what we said. Young Adult Friends were prominent in the process. The resulting statement was approved at the final plenary session: <http://fwcc.world/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Epistle-WPM-2016-English.pdf>.

*Continued on next page*



It is not a document we would have written, but that's the point. Mary and Judy were both consulted to review early drafts, but often our suggestions were not accepted. For example, where individuals are encouraged to plant trees and grow their own food, Mary wanted to add "manage landscapes for the benefit of the whole biosphere." It wasn't accepted. The organizers gathered a small group of Young Adult Friends for the final editing process, which seemed in right order. It is their future!

## QEW's Future with FWCC Friendly Contacts

Judy set up a display of QEW materials in a space for displays and sales of some handcrafted items being sold by Peruvian and Bolivian Friends. With the help of Tere Campos and Brad Stocker, Emma Condori of Bolivia, and Yanira Zamora of Mexico City, we were able to provide translations of two QEW trifold in Spanish: *Contemplative Action in the Time of Climate*

*Change and A Friends' Witness on Population.* Emma was particularly excited by the population material and plans to use the trifold in workshops with women in Bolivia. She is willing to work on more translations, and we hope to get more Spanish QEW material into Latino Quaker hands soon.

Additionally, a young man whose pastor feels that all these concerns about the environment are distracting people from their real business of salvation asked me for a list of Bible verses that support working toward sustainability that he can share with his pastor and congregation. This is being done with the help of Benigno Sanchez-Eppler, originally Cuban and now a long-term member of NEYM, who is now clerk of the FWCC Section of the Americas.

QEW has been invited to offer at least one workshop at the next meeting of the FWCC Section of the Americas meeting, which will be some time next year in North America. This will be another chance to do important outreach to Friends of all kinds. We do have a message, and it is not in conflict with more traditional teachings. We will do our best to share it. ☞



# Desperately Seeking Pachamama

By Mary Gilbert

WHILE I WAS IN PERU for the FWCC World Consultation I tried to hunt down Pachamama, whose home ground is the Andes. Pachamama is commonly translated as "Mother Earth." I wanted to know what people thought she looked like but in the museums and markets I visited I found no representation of Pachamama. In a phrasebook and dictionary about Quechua, the most common indigenous language of Peru, I learned that "pacha" can have a number of meanings, depending on the context. The meanings include: space, time, universe, and world—not just "earth" as we understand it. Could it be that the concept is so all-inclusive that no representation is adequate? Incan pottery and carvings show lots of anthropomorphic gods. Could Pachamama be pre-Incan?

College-trained guides told me the most common symbol of Pachamama is a silver circle. The concept is known all over the Andes and is most definitely pre-Incan. There is an Incan symbol of Pachamama showing three levels of existence, with ascending and

descending "stairs" corresponding to Incan cosmology. This later symbol is an example of "syncretism," the blending of ideas and beliefs from different traditions. The Incans incorporated the idea and subsumed it into their beliefs. The silver circle is older. Once I knew this I saw the symbol everywhere.

Actually the circle becomes a spiral, winding in to a round central spot. It is not really gendered; there is no "pachapapa" or accompanying theology that provides a male counterpart. Pachamama just is. I now have a pendant to help me remember the principle of continual becoming and responsible reciprocity with all of nature. ☞



# Cement and Climate Change

By Judy Lumb

RIDING IN A MINI-BUS in Guatemala, Mary Gilbert and I were noticing that most of the construction used concrete blocks as building materials. I commented that was because many of the trees had already been cut down, and using concrete saved trees. Mary said the manufacture of cement had a big carbon footprint. I was upset because that meant concrete was not as good as I had thought, so I investigated.

The manufacture of cement accounts for five per cent of global carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. Although the two words are sometimes used interchangeably, cement is not concrete; rather, cement is the binding material used to make concrete when combined with sand and water. Concrete is the second most consumed substance on Earth after water, with three tons used per person per year (global population).

Cement is made by heating limestone and other clay materials in a kiln at 1,400 degrees C to form a “clinker,” which is ground and combined with gypsum to form cement. This process releases CO<sub>2</sub> directly from the limestone which is converted to calcium oxide and CO<sub>2</sub> when it is heated and indirectly from the fuel used to heat the kiln to such an extremely high temperature. Finally, the electricity to run the manufacturing plant and transportation account for up to 10 per cent of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cement manufacture.

The good news is that because the manufacture of cement is so abundant on Earth, here is an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Reductions could take place several places in the process where. The fossil fuels used to heat the kiln could be changed to biomass or waste such as tires and other solid waste. By 2050, that change could reduce by 18 to 24 percent overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from cement manufacturing.

Some analysts suggest that emissions could be reduced by increasing the efficiency of the kiln operation, but others say that the industry has already increased the efficiency of operation to the maximum. Another option is to reduce emissions by substituting other materials for some of the limestone, producing what is called, “blended cement,” but there are disadvantages. The coal ash or blast furnace slag used to substitute can have toxic heavy metals and the resulting cement takes longer to set.

Carbon emissions during the process can be captured by a process called “accelerated carbonation,” in which concrete is used a sink for CO<sub>2</sub>. CO<sub>2</sub> is pumped into the concrete along with water and reacts with calcium hydroxide to form calcium carbonate, a stable, long-term CO<sub>2</sub> storage.

There is an interdisciplinary research group at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) called the “MIT Concrete Sustainability Hub that “brings together leaders from academia, industry, and government to develop breakthroughs using a holistic approach that will achieve durable and sustainable homes, buildings, and infrastructure.” You can read more at [cshub.mit.edu](http://cshub.mit.edu).

Because concrete is so ubiquitous in our lives, those involved in research and manufacturing have a major contribution to make to CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions. I hope they realize the importance of shepherding this industry into a low-carbon and then no-carbon future.

For more on statistics and process, see *Emissions from the Cement Industry*, by Madelein Rubenstein. In “State of the Planet, Earth Institute,” Columbia University (2012): [blogs.ei.columbia.edu](http://blogs.ei.columbia.edu). ♪

# Thinking Globally, Acting Locally

By Vicki Tolbert

As a member of the Blacksburg, VA Friends Earthcare Committee reminded us, we have been “thinking globally, acting locally” as we take on a global issue confronting our local area: the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline.

Appalachia has historically been a target for those seeking to make a profit from its natural resources, including virgin forests and coal. History is appearing to repeat itself as energy industry interests are pursuing permits to build a pipeline. The purpose of this pipeline is to transport natural gas derived from the Marcellus Shale field through the process of hydraulic fracturing.

The long-term disastrous environmental hazards of obtaining natural gas through hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling have been exposed and protested by many environmentally conscious groups. However, further environmental devastation is probable if high-pressure gas transmission pipelines for such dangerously produced fossil fuel are permitted to be constructed and used.

The geological profile of our area includes many sinkholes and caves common to such karst regions. The 42-inch pipeline being proposed is larger than the prior 20-inch to 32-inch gas pipelines that have previously been proposed or built by the specific contractors who are seeking permits from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The pipeline is planned to follow powerlines, thus exposing electrical equipment to possible gas explosions and fires.

Requests to survey in the Jefferson National Forest have been made by the pipeline contractors. Building the pipeline will decimate natural areas including waterways, exposing them to invasive species, and destroying natural habitats through disruption and contamination.

Further, toxicity will result from the proposed compressor stations that pressurize gas to move through the pipelines. Per an educational flyer from *preserve-montgomerycountyva.org* and *preserverthenrv.com*, “Compressor stations release materials that can cause cancer, worsen asthma, cause serious respiratory illness, and increase deaths from heart disease. Other



Blacksburg, VA Friends Meeting Earthcare Committee.

major damage can occur in the kidney, liver, nervous system, bone marrow, and fetal development.” Also, “blowdowns (pressure releases) release natural gas containing methane into the atmosphere. The process happens frequently and can last up to 3 hours. They can be scheduled or accidental. It is the largest single emission at a compressor station.” This flyer lists prominent chemical, noise, and light pollution that will be emitted from the stations and notes that “there have been 10 fires/explosions in the past 4 years.”

There are many obstacles to overcome in order to stop the construction of the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Some of these hurdles are eminent domain legal

*Continued on next page*



issues, support of elections of political officials by energy companies, and myths such as job creation and U.S. freedom from foreign-sourced fossil fuels. Often, jobs created by construction of such projects are temporary jobs that involve digging ditches and putting up fences. We have heard that there are plans to export the extracted natural gas.

Our Earthcare Committee is continually striving to become educated and subsequently pass that knowledge to our Blacksburg Friends Meeting through announcements and informative community events held at our meeting house. One early event combined presentations by anti-Pipeline experts and excerpts from the documentary, *A Fierce Green Fire*, which chronicled many historical environmental battles. Members of our committee are active participants in organizations that are solely involved in preventing

the Mountain Valley Pipeline from becoming a reality. One of our Earthcare Committee members took part in the recent Climate Change demonstration held in D.C. during the visit of Pope Francis.

Through many doing what they can, perhaps the Mountain Valley Pipeline, along with the Keystone XL Pipeline and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, can be stopped from being constructed. Without having a transportation infrastructure for fossil fuels, the profit-seeking energy industry may be more willing to seek environmentally sustainable energy sources, cease the disastrous practice of fracking, and encourage conservation.

For further information, please refer to [preserve-montgomerycountyva.org](http://preserve-montgomerycountyva.org) and [preservethenrv.com](http://preservethenrv.com) websites. ♻

## BOOK REVIEW

# Altered Genes, Twisted Truth:

## How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted Government, and Systematically Deceived the Public

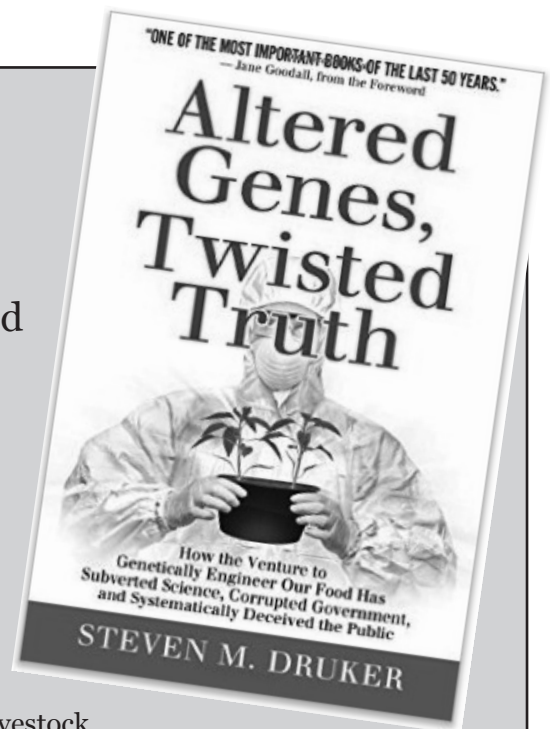
Reviewed by Marty Grundy, Wellesley Friends Meeting, New England YM, and Marty Michener, Science Coordinator, Carbon Farming Research Institute

*ALTERED GENES, TWISTED TRUTH*, by Steven M. Druker (Salt Lake City: Clear River Press, 2015) is an important book for understanding how the assaults on our environment and food supply by genetically engineered organisms and the methods of commercial agriculture actually function and continue to occur. Steven M. Druker is a public interest attorney who initiated a lawsuit against the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for falsely declaring that Genetically Modified Foods (GMOs) are officially “Generally Recognized As Safe” (GRAS). By law this classification is intended for foods and herbs that have been in use for long periods of time, traditionally, and for which no main line scientific research has shown known toxicity in any way.

Through the legal “discovery process,” Druker’s lawsuit forced the FDA to surrender many documents from 1990-1992 which demonstrate unequivocally that the FDA’s own scientists and some directors of groups responsible for all toxicological reviews strongly

objected to the release of GE plants for human and livestock foods without extensive testing for acute toxicological, allergenic, mutagenic, and carcinogenic potentials. Illegally overruling scientists and judging these organisms as GRAS implied that no credible scientist had any objections to release the GE plants as food to the general public with no further testing.

Druker carefully describes just how genetic modification takes place and the drastic manipulation required to force plant cells to do what they are not designed to do and have natural barriers to prevent. The unintended results of the quite crude disruption of DNA can result in a wide array of dangerous mutations. The author’s analogy with computer programming is striking, both in regard to the rigorous testing software undergoes—and it still has bugs—and the complete lack of testing that genetic modification



**Continued** from page 9

receives. Far from “engineering,” gene splicing resembles the random hacking of a computer’s software, due to the mind-boggling complexity of plant biology.

We know that today more than 90 percent of all corn, soy, and canola crops grown in North America begin from GMO seeds, and that derivatives of these untested crops are included in nearly every prepared food on grocery shelves. Millions of lobbying and campaign dollars have been spent preventing the labeling of those foods. Perhaps even more damaging has been the extensive and effective campaign of disinformation and confusion that has resulted in even well-meaning journalists and scientists in other fields being misled and confused. The so-called DARK act passed the House and is poised for a vote in the Senate. As Senator Warren has pointed out, even with strong, explicit laws on the books, if the people appointed by

the administration do not enforce them, the laws are useless.

How can illness be traced to any toxin that is new to science if people and doctors have no information about which foods were eaten and which crops were involved? For more than two decades, families in the US and Canada, and many other parts of the world, have unwittingly been part of a totally unstudied toxicology experiment. In her introduction to the book, Dr. Jane Goodall underlines the importance of these incontrovertible facts coming to the full attention of the authorities. The residual problem seems to be exactly that: the authorities. ❧

You can read more about *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth* online at <http://www.amazon.com/Altered-Genes-Twisted-Truth-Systematically/dp/0985616903>

**Walking**, continued from page 4

- confidence for making a larger change. For example, “I walked to the drug store yesterday instead of driving, so I can walk to the grocery today—it’s only a little further, and I do have my lovely new cloth grocery bags (those again!?)”
7. Staying in touch with other people attempting similar changes gives everyone more strength. Well-known scientific studies show that holding onto a rational belief is difficult without the agreement of at least one other person. When you feel like the only one making a change, it is easy to feel “wrong” about your decision, even when you know the decision is right. Chatting together about the lifestyle changes you are making may feel like small talk, but it is really more than that. These connections with others sharing your goals will help you identify and overcome obstacles to change, feel the importance of the changes, and stick with right action.
  8. Contracts. Make a written promise to implement a specific change. Include dates, times, how the change will be done, and any reward you will receive. Tell a friend about the change you plan to begin. For example, “I will find my lovely cloth grocery bags by \_\_\_\_\_(date.) Each time I use them, I will put the bags back where they belong, ready for next time. I will tell Lucretia I am starting on Sunday to use those lovely bags she gave me two years ago. Lucretia and I will celebrate over coffee after I use the bags.”

9. Tie your lifestyle change to a short-term reward. For example, put the money you save by cooking at home instead of eating out into a “fun fund.” Spend it on a special weekend activity, like buying lovely cloth grocery bags—no, no, find something really fun. I probably hold the dubious distinction of being the only person who considers cloth grocery bags a source of fun. (If you knew how many we have, you might believe it—I am afraid to count them.)
10. Discover the humor in the changes you are making. Humor helps decrease the anxiety that often accompanies change. For example, when I look into my garbage can and see it is only one fourth full on garbage day, I think, “Wow, look what all those awkward refusals of plastic bags, and the ban on paper napkins at our house has done to reduce the solid waste stream! What a proud and happy moment with my trash!” Yeah, kind of ridiculous, but also true. Feeling sexy is also biologically incompatible with anxiety, but I’ll leave it to you to figure out if there is anything sexy about cloth grocery bags, and other environment-friendly lifestyle changes.

Marjorie is a psychologist in private practice in Cincinnati, Ohio USA, and Quaker Earthcare Witness representative for Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting. She enjoys doing Improv and using lovely cloth grocery bags. Never ask her how many she owns. ❧

**Sustainability Minute**, *continued from page 2*

community and others of like mind. Just as Jesus showed us, real change requires us to challenge ourselves to be effective instruments of change. We can do more.

On recommendation of this Consultation, and after some discussion, we adopt the following minute: In this effort for sustainability, and mindful of the urgency of this work, this Plenary asks the FWCC World Office and Central Executive Committee to:

1. Invest FWCC World funds ethically.
2. Share Quaker experiences with other faith groups to inspire them to action, especially through the World Council of Churches.
3. Seek ways of connecting Friends worldwide that are sustainable.
4. Facilitate dissemination of training materials on sustainability issues for Quaker leaders, pastors and teachers.

This FWCC Plenary Meeting also asks all Yearly Meetings to:

1. Initiate at least two concrete actions on sustainability within the next 12 months. These may build on existing projects of individuals or monthly meetings or they may be new initiatives. We ask that they encourage Young Friends to play key roles. We ask that meetings minute the progress and results, so as to share them with FWCC and Quaker meetings.
2. Support individuals and groups in their meetings who feel called to take action on sustainability.
3. Support the work done by Quaker organisations such as the Quaker United Nations Office and the Quaker Council for European Affairs to ensure that international agreements and their implementation support sustainability.

This FWCC Plenary Meeting asks individual Friends and groups (such as Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and ad hoc groups within Meetings) to Share inspiring experiences of living sustainably on the new “sustainability webpage” of the Quakers in the World Website (<http://www.quakersintheworld.org/>). This webpage can be used as a source of ideas, inspiration and action.

Annex to the minute: possibilities for practical sustainability action from the Pisac consultation

Individuals can:

1. Dedicate personal time to nature.
2. Reduce consumption and use your consumer buying power to create change.

3. Cut down on meat consumption, be aware of energy costs in production and transport of all foods and methane from ruminant animals, support sustainable agriculture.
4. Travel – cycle, walk, use public transport or alternatives to private cars, keep air travel to a minimum.
5. Grow your own food and plant trees.
6. Be politically active in promoting sustainability concerns.
7. Share environmental concerns through books, publications, conversations, electronic media
8. Reduce energy use.
9. Use less water and harvest water.
10. Make time for spiritual connection with God.

Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and small groups within Meetings can:

1. Live in a community, share housing, participate in a transition town movement.
2. Educate yourself and others.
3. Share transport and equipment.
4. Develop urban agriculture, community gardens, community supported agriculture, tree planting.
5. Love nature and encourage others to do so: we protect the things we love; get children out in nature; take care of nature around your meeting house (e.g., picking up trash/litter).
6. Invest ethically and divest from fossil fuels.
7. Ensure meeting houses are carbon neutral.
8. Build alliances, seek visibility, approach legislators.
9. Share sustainability skills.

Yearly Meetings can:

1. Support the sustainability actions of Monthly Meetings.
2. Build solidarity with local people.
3. Support Quakers in politics and international work.
4. Form support networks and alliances to make more impact – we can only do so much on our own.
5. Invest ethically, including on sustainability issues.
6. Practice what we preach.
7. Discern and move concerns to action.
8. Set targets for increased sustainability.
9. Connect and share with other YMs, direct or via FWCC Sections and World Office

We recognise that different actions are relevant to different Quaker meetings in different parts of the world.

To read the minute in its entirety online, go to <http://fwcc.world/fwcc-news/living-sustainably-and-sustaining-life-on-earth-the-minute-from-the-plenary> ↗



# BeFriending Creation **March–April 2016**

**Quaker Earthcare Witness**

P.O. Box 6787

Albany, CA 94706 USA

Internal pages printed on 100% post-consumer  
recycled paper, bleached without chlorine

Non-Profit  
Organization

U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Permit No. 9  
McCordsville, In.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## **Join Us in Chicago!**

April 28-May 2, 2016

QEW Spring Meeting

Register Now! [www.quakerearthcare.org/upcoming](http://www.quakerearthcare.org/upcoming)



## Runway A-K47

A POEM

By Marjorie McKelvey Isaacs

Through the squarish portal  
Upright in night-dark grass  
Stand matrices  
of most beautiful blue lights  
Shining at attention,  
Electric English garden  
in adoration  
of my benevolent metal bird.

On the airfield,  
awkward yet magnificent  
slowly she rolls,  
to review these, her blue subjects  
blazing their adoration.

Within her empty heart  
Borne into the sky  
On brilliant wings  
of human invention,  
I am awestruck  
as this great and lifeless creation  
transports me to realms  
of honor, meaning, connection.

Once transcendent achievements  
Now pierced with grief  
in these last days  
of life ways  
utterly unsustainable. ♪