



BeFriending Creation

Newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness
Affirming our essential unity with nature

Volume 30, Number 2 • March–April 2017

Shock & Awe

By Bob McGahey

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE as a climate journalist and activist, the ascension of an outright climate denialist as the President, with cabinet choices of a half-dozen more, completes the campaign of disinformation mounted by the fossil fuel industry, aided and abetted by virtually the entire Republican Party. The rest of the world stands in absolute disbelief that the world's leading power, with a strong postwar history of helping the recovery of defeated nations and development of the Third World, has turned its back on the future of civilized order on this planet. The tragic irony is that this is occurring after a reluctant U.S. finally was party to a successful climate accord in Paris in December 2015, the culmination of decades of agonizing diplomacy.

Trump appears to be preparing the way for pulling out of the Paris Accord. Legal experts point out that doing so formally would require almost an entire presidential term. But prominent among the executive orders from his Gatling-pen is a wholesale attack on government scientists, with gag orders issued for all agencies. His leaked memo about dismantling the Environmental Protection Agency may simply be rumination, but he has fulfilled virtually every promise, a feat even the best of politicians could not match. The U.S. has the best tools for data collection and analysis in the world (NOAA, NASA, DOE, EPA), and these tools are being mothballed by executive order. As one government scientist put it with respect to climate data, "We are flying blind."

So what can we do? The purpose of shock and awe is to make such a gargantuan show of force that the opposition is overwhelmed and collapses. That has not happened, and I don't think it will. The Women's March was one of the largest marches ever, with simultaneous marches all over the country, in Canada, and abroad. The attenders I talked to said they were so crammed that marching was not possible; everyone was smushed together, inching along, or marching in place. The overall estimate of three to four million marchers across the country definitely sends a message. But the Trump Resistance involves



The Women's March on January 21, 2017 was one of the largest mobilizations in history and represented a broad platform that included critical issues like climate justice. Shelley Tanenbaum, QEW's General Secretary, marched in Oakland, CA with Friends from Strawberry Creek Quaker Meeting. Photo: Shelley Tanenbaum.

much more than a one-off day of marching.

Before the election, a retired pacifist Baptist preacher, Mahan Siler, wrote an op-ed for the *Asheville Citizen-Times*, inviting readers to join his passion: working for social and ecological justice. One person responded. After the election, dozens have joined Mahan and Steve Kagan, the founding pair of Elders Fierce for Justice, now deep into strategizing a series of actions joining elders and Millennials. Some of these actions will involve civil disobedience.

After taking my cues from *350.org* for many years, I now plan to join this vibrant regional group as they move from planning into action. I was with Mahan in the 2013 March for Our Grandchildren, which went from Camp David to the White House over nine days. At 77, he was the oldest member of the group, and his

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BeFriending Creation

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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.

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Earthcare Calendar

April 10, 2017. Deadline for article
submissions for May–June 2017
BeFriending Creation.

Letters to Share

*"WHAT CANST THOU SAY" ABOUT SPIRIT-LED EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF EARTH in relation
to the vision of Quaker Earthcare Witness? We'd like to hear from you. Send
your letters to Hayley at hayley@quakerearthcare.org.* ✍

Hello,

A few years ago on a lovely summer morning, I was resting after a
workout on a park bench. As I looked up into the leafy brocade above my
head, I began to see patterns and sky rivers opened up in between where
leaves on one tree ended and another began, in that negative space filled
with blue sky.

I was so mesmerized and transported by this I began, with the help of
my partner, Steve Soblick, on the technical end of things, to photograph
this stand of Linden Trees in that park, Fort Tryon's Linden Terrace,
for over a year during the equinox and solstice of each season. Always
greeting the early morning light, we began to become as familiar with the
under canopy as we would the topography of a map.

This became the basis for an installation called, "Look Up! Visions
from Under the Canopy." The images and video from under the canopy
of linden trees through all seasons will be projected on a screen hung
parallel to the ceiling in the 15th St. Meeting House meeting room. People
will view it by lying down on the carpeted floor or on a bench. Individual
still tree portraits arranged in a mandala-like formation will be off to the
side for people to use as visual meditation aids. The Common Room will
host concurrent screening of a short documentary featuring naturalist and
author, Leslie Day. She speaks about trees and nature from a scientific and
personal frame of reference.

This is my message. Interconnection. We are all interconnected and the
trees teach us that. They show us how to live. In their tree communities
they come to one another's aid through their roots and fungi underground,
'social networks.'

Amala Lane, Fifteenth Street Monthly Meeting, New York

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Dear Friends,

I am going to a Legislative Coffee for my Iowa Republican Senator
and Representative tomorrow in Grinnell. The incredible overreach of
our new Republican-controlled legislature and governor have turned
this moderate, common sense Iowa Quaker into a political activist for
the first time in my life. It's not just people on the left that are incensed
and motivated to action as the media continually reports. I will ask them
probing questions about whether they support a bill that would prevent
rural property owners from filing "nuisance" lawsuits against huge
animal confinement operations that cause awful air pollution and make it
impossible for people to open their windows to get fresh air... We must all
get involved in grassroots local activism. I realize that many of you have
been doing exactly that for a long time.

Blessings to all in your work for the Earth,
Jim Kessler, Grinnell Friends Church (Iowa Yearly Meeting FUM)

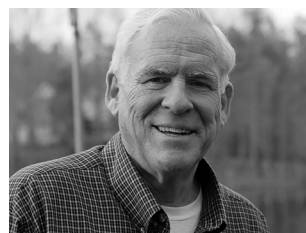
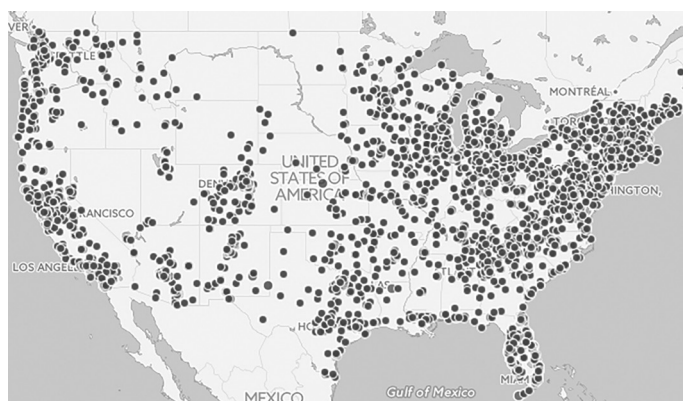
Shock & Awe, from page 1

granddaughter Leigh (11), the youngest. At the rally's finale in Lincoln Park, Mahan was the most eloquent speaker, orchestrating a rainbow bridge of those over 65 with the youngest marchers to create a visual icon of the most important political alliance of our day, between Boomers and Millennials. He called this symbolic bridge the real Keystone, urging us to "take the word back."

The surge of activism that I observe all around me contains more newbies than veterans. Here in my North Carolina conservative mountain county, many collaborative, overlapping groups have sprung up. I am a co-sponsor of Surviving Climate Change, one of the largest. We focus on making a strong, highly-networked community even more resilient. But as one person said at our first meeting, we still need to work on ways to not only adapt, but mitigate the problem, which means getting rid of Trump and his anti-environmental agenda.

The most focused response to the Trump Coup has come from Indivisible Yancey-Mitchell, with groups in Burnsville, South Toe, and Spruce Pine. *Indivisible: A Practical Guide for Resisting the Trump Agenda* is a sophisticated, highly organized plan for emulating the Tea Party strategy that emerged out of revulsion to Obama's election. Congressional staffers who understand how things work in Washington wrote it, with the whole strategy focused upon pressuring Members of Congress in every possible district as relentlessly as possible, especially at publicized events like town halls. On the Indivisible site map, I note eight to ten Indivisible pods across Western North Carolina. Senators Burr and Tillis and Freedom Caucus leader Mark Meadows, our slick congressman, held no town hall meetings during the recent recess, and our local group is pressuring them to change. Meanwhile, a Republican congressman from Alabama commented that his constituents are putting up such a fight on repealing the Affordable Care Act that he doesn't think a wholesale repeal is politically possible.

"The surge of activism that I observe all around me contains more newbies than veterans. Here in my North Carolina conservative mountain county, many collaborative, overlapping groups have sprung up."



Above: If you don't know where or how to get involved, looking for a local Indivisible group is a good way to start.

Left: Retire? It's time to recommit. Mahan Siler, 82, founder of Elders Fierce for Justice, Asheville, NC.

The faithful opposition has already won the first court challenge to Trump's initial "Muslim Ban." The fact that it was a unanimous ruling indicates that the courts may be our bulwark against fascism, with the federal system of checks and balances eking out survival of our system of government, albeit grievously damaged.

But our biggest legal avenue will be to push the limits of freedom of assembly, crossing the line into trespass and blockage of egress to provoke arrest and a day in court to publicize our cause. Many people I have talked to in this new year, rent by its disruptive politics, have said that they expect they will be going to jail before the year is out. I expect to be among them. Potential targets of these actions are manifold, increasing with every new round from Trump's pen: federal lands on the giveaway list, Dakota Access and Keystone pipelines, the Marcellus terminus pipeline heading down the Atlantic Coast, not to mention immigrant detention centers, abortion clinics, banks who fund Big Fossil—name your cause. We need to quickly train a non-violent militia to be deployed widely, ready to stand up to what could devolve into a police state.

As events are moving swiftly, panic beckons. But we each need to take the necessary time to discern our priorities, our role in what could become a confused patchwork of actions, rather than a coordinated campaign. These are indeed trying times, but perhaps we are made for these times. ♪

Bob is a Quaker who trains, teaches, and writes at the intersection of ecology and spirituality. He is a steering committee member of North Carolina Interfaith Power and Light and the ecojustice committee of the North Carolina Council of Churches. He lives on a landtrust in Southern Appalachia.

Advice for These Times

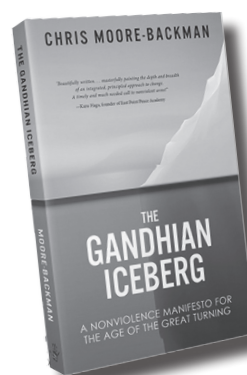
By Shelley Tanenbaum, QEW General Secretary

TWO OF MY RECENT READS have made a strong impression on me as I ponder how I as an individual and how Quaker Earthcare Witness as an organization can best use our resources in these times. Van Jones succinctly sums up the two opposing world views we seem to be facing: "Is it 'We are all in this together' or 'Each individual is on their own to get what they can'?"

Quaker author and activist George Lakey wrote *Viking Economics* to tell the story of how the Nordic countries shifted from capitalism and extreme polarization in their countries during the 1930's to the social democracy and connection that exists today. George readily admits that the Nordics are still arguing and complaining, but their issues tend to be about how to tweak their social structures; they have fully embraced a culture of inclusion where education through the university level is free, health care is provided for all, the elderly are cared for, family leave to care for children is standard, and the countries compete to see which one is 'greener.'

We have much to learn from their struggle to make this dramatic shift. George acknowledges that there is a significant difference between the United States of today and the Nordic cultures of the 1930's, but also enough similarities that we can borrow many of their tactics if we are to ever accomplish this shift. One of the critically important tactics that the Nordics used and the left-progressive movements in Germany and Italy failed to use during the same time period was a strict adherence to non-violence. As Quakers, we have a spiritual calling to commit to non-violence. In addition, George asserts that non-violence is more likely to succeed as a tactic than any other alternative. People in the middle of the political spectrum are prone to look for an authoritarian leader to keep the 'peace' if there is constant vandalism and street fighting.

Even before reading *Viking Economics*, my visit to Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota last fall led me to seek a greater understanding of non-violent movements. What I learned dovetailed nicely with George's emphasis on the importance of non-violence in creating social change. *The Gandhian Iceberg*, written by Chris Moore-Backman,



A visual interpretation of Chris Moore-Backman's description of the Gandhian Iceberg. Drawing: Hayley Hathaway.



is a clear and passionate description of the three components needed to build a non-violent movement. Many non-violent theoreticians talk about three interacting parts of a non-violent movement, often using venn diagrams. Chris' brilliance is to envision the three parts as one large iceberg.

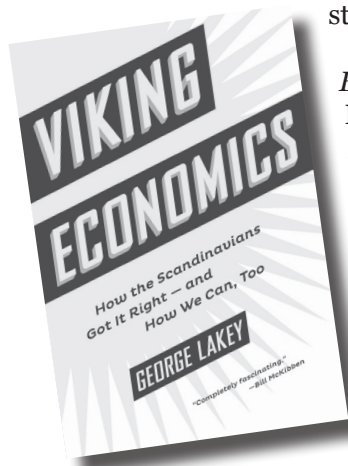
Chris explains that non-violent practitioners first ground their behavior and their actions in prayer and guidance from spirit—this is the largest part of the iceberg and it sits below the waterline. At Standing Rock, each of the camps was a prayer camp—there was a prayer circle at a sacred fire twice a day, with rituals that call on spirit for guidance; and spirit is called on to guide every major action.

In the second component of non-violence, practitioners surround themselves in a community of like-minded people, all supporting each other materially and emotionally, and that is building a better world—Gandhi called this the "constructive program," and Chris sees this as the part of the iceberg that is above the waterline. At Standing Rock, the main camp, Oceti Sakowin, included actively supporting an eco-village with a commitment to non-violence, and a strictly enforced ban on alcohol and drugs.

When practitioners are called to action, the call comes from a deep place of prayer and spirit (below the waterline), is supported by the entire community (above the waterline) and is pictured as the pointy tip of the iceberg, the third component.

At Standing Rock, direct action was structured as a time of prayer, a gathering as a community, and a spirit-led commitment as water protectors put themselves directly in the path of the pipeline or in other provocative situations.

Are you energized by the outpouring of public



engagement we are seeing? We may all wish that we didn't need to do this, but we always NEEDED to do this. The difference is that now we all know how much it is needed. Thanks to George and Chris for giving us some of the tools that we need at this time. Democracy has to be participatory.

See you in the streets, see you at school board and city council meetings, see you on the frontlines, and see you building community. See you marching on April 29 for climate action! ♪

Shelley is QEW's General Secretary, a member of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting in Berkeley, CA, and an environmental scientist. Eco-spirituality has been her lifetime guide.

Journey to the End

By J.T. Dorr-Bremme

IN JULY 2009, I had things pretty well figured out. I had, after six years of on-and-off study, achieved a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing. I had been hired into a new-graduate program, an increasingly rare opportunity in the post-financial-crisis economy, at a nearby hospital. I was elated.

In August 2010, I suffered a back injury. While much of my identity was involved in becoming and being a nurse, I had already become disillusioned with the hospital and the US health care system in general. Now, unable to work, I had a lot of time to think about things. Why did everything seem so out of balance?

After much learning,

I understood that our modern world is built on a foundation of petrochemicals, infinite growth, and profligate consumption. Petroleum, natural gas, coal, and their derivatives are the underpinnings of all the technology enabling us to live as we do. Unfortunately, what nature took millions of years to create, humanity has exhausted in a couple hundred. We are already feeling the inter-related shocks to the environment, the energy supply, and the economy built atop them. The shocks will only grow worse with time. After realizing this, I felt quite alone. I craved allies, a community of

people who were considering these issues. This is how I became a Quaker.

In 2012, I attended my first meeting and knew I was home. Since then, I have explored these ideas through further study and action, seeking a transition away from this destruction and toward the future. For me, the solution lies in radical acceptance of the Quaker testimonies, taking them to their utmost, and living an integrated life.

In this case, simplicity is my primary value. It will rightly guide all other action. I want to learn how to enjoy life with less than I have now, which is so much more than I need. Community is vital to this: not only sharing resources with others, but finding the joy of camaraderie and inter-relationship. To have community, we must have peace and equality, where every person is valued for their gifts and conflicts are approached with love.

My experiments in living these values have taken me to various communities, from nascent to iconic, in Mexico, California, the Pacific Northwest, and along the eastern seaboard. All of these are their own experiments, some more intentional than others, in equality, sharing, and interdependence. I have learned some of the skills and resilience that I have sought: to grow food, to care for animals, to find satisfaction in the practical work of living, and to savor the company of others who value this type of life as I do.

I strive for the will and inner peace that allow my growth in the Spirit and the holding of all the present and future turmoil I perceive. Cultivating these has been a slow and often arduous process for me, but these few years of practice, however fitful and inconsistent, have shown progress.

I have taken only the first small steps of a very long journey. The next step, if all goes according to plan, is a larger experiment: moving to a small community and becoming a

farmhand for a season. I hope I will find more friends who will walk this path with me, for though it is difficult, I believe it is the only path to our salvation. My hope is that I can learn to simplify, share, love, and appreciate, and in so doing, help to build strongly bonded, interdependent communities with the skills and resilience to weather the coming storms, as they will be such as history has never seen. Only with profoundly deep action, both internal and external, will we prevail. ♪

J.T. is an attender at Orange Grove Friends Meeting and the co-clerk of Pacific Yearly Meeting's Young Adult Friends.



J.T. learning essential skills on a farm in Maine.



Jeff Kisling's personal witness outside Chase Bank in downtown Indianapolis. Photo: Bridget.

One Dollar at a Time: Defunding DAPL

By Jeff Kisling

IN INDIANAPOLIS we have been working on defunding the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) for several months. On November 15, 2016, a crowd of about 200 of us alongside Native Americans in traditional dress marched through downtown Indianapolis with our signs about defunding the pipeline. We stopped in front of two of the banks involved with funding the pipeline, Chase and PNC Bank. The crowd stood in silence as people went in to close their accounts. That day the group withdrew \$110,000 dollars.

Yet my own effort to close my account was much more difficult than I thought it would be.

Because of administrative changes, I first had a lot of trouble getting the forms to change my paycheck to direct deposit. It took time to set up paying bills. Also, I realized that I had initially chosen Chase bank because they had the most ATM locations. This was important because I don't own a car. There can be major inconveniences from defunding. I did it anyway.

I went down to the Circle in the center of downtown Indianapolis where the Chase Tower dominates the Indianapolis skyline. I spent about an hour walking around the Circle with my sign, looking to see if anyone else had shown up from my local group. It is a little nerve wracking to be walking around by yourself like that, but, for better or worse, no one looks directly at you or engages you, for the most part.

“I had finally worked up the courage to enter the Chase Bank Tower to close my account. I had no idea what the reaction to entering with my sign would be.”

I had finally worked up the courage to enter the Chase Bank Tower to close my account. I had no idea what the reaction to entering with my sign would be. I just held it at my side, and then placed it next to my chair as I waited. The bank officer greeted me with a smile and said someone would be with me shortly. He came back after about ten minutes to say he appreciated my patience—it was a busy time.

Mostly people coming into the bank ignored me, but there were a number of glances in my direction.

When I was shown into the banker's office, she saw my sign, smiled, put her hands together and bowed to me, and said, "We are on the same page with this." She put her finger to her lips with a smile indicating she shouldn't be saying that, officially. She was very pleasant and helpful. When I left, she took my hand in both of hers.

As I was walking past the lobby officer when I left, I reached out my hand, which he took in both of his hands, giving me a big smile and a little bow as well. I told him I appreciated his patience with my freedom of speech, and he smiled and said, "Of course."

My little bit was added to the total amount of personal money divested so far: \$72,944,005.39 dollars according to defunddapl.org.

I felt a transfer of goodwill between me and those in the bank to such an extent that I returned later in the week to drop off three copies of the blog article I had written describing how well they had treated me and the whole defunding process. When the banker I had dealt with previously glanced up, she gave me a big smile and waved me in. She got up and again took my hand in hers and asked what she could do for me. She told me she and her husband had talked about our visit and the pipeline.

This is how our stories spread.

During meeting for business in February at North Meadow Circle of Friends, the meeting approved closing its Chase Bank account in solidarity with the #noDAPL movement. ♪

Jeff was born into the Bear Creek meeting community in rural Iowa, which is part of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), where he currently serves as clerk of the Yearly Meeting's Peace and Social Concerns Committee. He attended Scattergood Friends School and Farm and currently attends North Meadow Circle of Friends in Indianapolis.

Valley Friends Meeting is Going Carbon Free

EARLY IN 2016 at several Meetings for Worship with attention to Business, Valley Friends Meeting of Dayton, VA discerned the way to live out the spirit of their Minute on Climate Change. They approved a bold initiative: the reduction of their "carbon footprint" from the Meeting House to zero in two phases. They have completed Phase 1 and are now heating their Meeting House with the new efficient heat pump and are raising money with community support for Phase 2: installing a solar array sufficient to meet all electrical needs including heating and air conditioning. ♪

SOURCE: From Baltimore Yearly Meeting's *March 2017 News & Announcements*



A Great Spangled Fritillary Butterfly feeding on a Butterfly Milkweed in a sedge meadow next to wetlands protected by Jim Kessler south of Grinnell, Iowa. Its larvae feed on Common Blue Violets that bloom in the spring on this hillside. Without Common Blue Violets, there would be no Great Spangled Fritillary Butterflies. As humans convert habitat to other uses, the populations of species that need very specific native plants decline and become locally extinct. One way to make a difference is by creating native habitats around your home. Photo: Jim Kessler.

Ideas into Action: QEW Mini-Grants

QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS offers mini-grants for Friends' organizations, groups, and meetings planning positive projects that lift up a message of Earthcare and resulting action consistent with QEW values. We offer matching grants of up to \$500 for each project.

Mini-grants have supported many creative projects over the years: edible gardens, bike lending programs, and solar heating systems, to name a few. We welcome your project ideas and energies!

We are now accepting applications for Friends projects which:

- Improve your immediate environment
- Involve, inform, and educate members young, old and in-between
- May reduce carbon footprints
- Create opportunities to improve and learn about your own local ecosystems
- Enrich your local community
- Set examples and inspiration for others
- Provide spirit-led, meaningful work, and create fun for all participants

Are you inspired to get your Meeting's green project off the ground? 2017's deadlines for your mini-grant application are May 1 and October 1. Visit our website to read the details and download the application.

Good luck, Friends! And thanks for your care, vision, and effort for our planet. ♪

Down to Earth: Climate Justice Stories

Interview with Filmmaker Andy Burt

"I didn't set out to make a film," says Andy Burt, the creator and director of the new documentary film, *Down to Earth: Climate Justice Stories*. "I set out to go collect stories. It was young friends who said 'you should do a video.' So that's why you have this film." *Down to Earth* is a visual collection of thirteen "stories with the power to change hearts and inspire bold action," featuring locals in Andy's home state of Maine who are finding ways to creatively resist climate change and build healthy communities.

"What is important to me about this film is that it is not something I created to entertain people. There are a lot of powerful documentaries that I have certainly been moved by and I have attended so many screenings. I feel that the stories are often not something that common people can touch. You know, Naomi Klein is telling this story—I could never be Naomi Klein. So I wanted to gather stories of people just like me, of folks who are neighbors, that could be shown as an outreach tool to the folks who



A storyteller from the film, Becky Halbrook, changed her life from corporate lawyer for Texaco to climate activist. She's pictured hatless and holding the "Invasive Species" banner at a protest in Portland, ME.

aren't part of the climate change choir, not necessarily those that are climate deniers, but those that are sitting on the fence that know there is a problem, but don't quite know how to act and are asking what can I do? The stories are diverse—people of different ages, cultures, gender identity—and they could be any one of us."

Andy first saw the power of storytelling while working with the American Friends Service Committee in Indiana in the 1980s. Through a collaborative project with AFSC, the Indiana Council of Churches, and Pastors for Peace, Central Americans were invited to share their personal experiences of the violence and civil wars in their home countries with audiences at academic institutions and

FILM REVIEW

Down to Earth: Climate Justice Stories

Review by Mary Gilbert

HOW DO PEOPLE BECOME ACTIVISTS? Are they born that way? How does continuing revelation come into play?

Andy Burt, a Quaker from Maine, has made a sensitive, well-planned, and beautifully edited one-hour film, *Down to Earth: Climate Justice Stories*, in which she interviews a dozen or so earthcare activists about how they became involved in activism and what it means to them.

We see that it takes a certain type of courage to take on the role of "activist," but the ordinary people in this movie have done it in a variety of ways and over their lifetimes. Some speak of important experiences of nature in childhood; their wish to protect the natural world has always been part of who they are. Some

became activists later in life once they perceived the complexity of the world in a more informed way. For some, connections with others drew them in. Some simply had a feeling that "I must do this." Once across the threshold, they all found an enhanced inner sense of meaning in their lives.

Down to Earth is honest about feelings of frustration and even despair that are part of the activists' experience and those interviewed share about how they keep going. If the task is "personal and manageable," one said, "I can stay with it." Some express a built-in renewal as their cause evokes a sense of the sacred. Others don't use that language, but the feeling can be heard in how they talk about their experience of what they are called to do.

Watching *Down to Earth* is a superb way to spend an hour, whether you are a long-term activist rethinking your leading or a newbie. We are living in a time when we are all called to do what we can on behalf of the Earth and of each other. The people you will meet in this film are doing both. ♪

congregations all over the state.

“What I saw was that the framework that had been politically presented to people about what was happening in Central America was changed as people put a human face on that story.” The political became personal. As a result, “folks in Indiana, some of them Quakers, got involved in the new underground railroad, which was bringing Central Americans up the center of the country to Canada. It made me realize that stories really could create change for people; they could take action that they never could have imagined taking before.”

Andy never forgot the power of those stories and has now applied that wisdom to the subject of climate change.

“For a long time I have felt that the positive aspect of climate change is that it awakens us to how we are interconnected to every living being on this earth and beyond—and how fragile we are as an earth, as an island. So there’s this sense of being connected physically to all of what’s happening on the earth. But then there is also a time connection, through paleoclimatology, which has allowed us to have a connection to our past, to understand what our place is in time, and then it also allows us to touch the future that our descendants will experience.”

From the Midwest, Andy returned to Maine in 1989. In 2000 she was hired as a consultant by the Maine Council of Churches to organize around climate change through collaborations with environmental groups and religious communities. She worked to get congregations and Friends Meetings to think about energy as well as local food. Andy started programs that supported local community-supported agriculture farms, farmers’ markets, and the state’s first community-supported fishery.

“...A positive aspect of climate change is that it awakens us to how we are interconnected to every living being on this earth and beyond—and how fragile we are as an earth, as an island.

Like Andy’s most recent organizing work, *Down to Earth* is focused on her state. Yet she adds, “The film’s storytellers could live anywhere. It’s not a ‘Maine story.’ What’s been so powerful with all of the current news is that what is happening at Standing Rock speaks to what is happening here in Maine with our own indigenous people, like the Penobscot Nation, who are engaged in

Earth Prayer

By Janet Soderberg



Divine Creator, Spirit in All Things,
Your kingdom is Here, and Now.

Your creativity is manifest everywhere I look on
this heavenly Earth.
Nourish us Body and Soul in this earthly Paradise.

Forgive us for not noticing, for overlooking, the
tiny, the subtle,
The seemingly insignificant beauty in your
Creation.
And teach us how to forgive those who would harm
your Great Works.

Make our Loving attention constant.
Deliver us from Ingratitude.
For You are our perfect Guide through the Delights
of our sacred Home.

a lawsuit around land and water sovereignty.” Protect South Portland, a citizen-led group that is organizing to prevent the Portland-Montreal Pipeline from carrying tar sands to the city’s waterfront, is also featured in the film.

Andy hopes the film’s wisdom is spread and shared: “I’ve seen it about 100 times and I am moved to tears every time by the storytellers’ experiences and how they entrusted me with their stories...I feel honored and really committed to taking those stories to try to create the change that their bold actions try to foster.”

Andy is promoting screenings of the film around the state and in local and national film festivals. She has also created a workbook with activities and a spreadsheet tool to “look at the memories, experiences, people, and things that have influenced your life. The values that you hold dear and the values that you try to live your life by.” She wants the viewer to experience and share their emotions related to the film even though directly after watching “most people want to go to their left-brains” to focus on facts instead of feelings. She knows that it is through the emotional connection that we create deep and personal change, how we create our own stories, and how those stories lead to action. She also knows how hard it is: “I know what organizing is like. It’s a slog. But you get lots of rewards too.” ❧

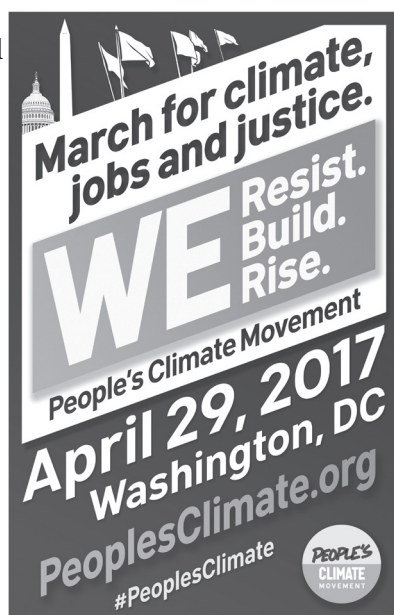
Visit Andy’s website at downtoearthstories.org to learn more, order the film for \$10, and share it far and wide.

Come Join Us! QEW-Sponsored Special Events

March for Climate, Justice and Jobs *April 29 in Washington, DC*

Since the first day of the new presidential administration, the People's Climate Movement has been organizing a country-wide arc of action, culminating on April 29 in a powerful mobilization to unite all of our movements. To change everything, we need everyone.

Join us in Washington, DC and across the country to stand up for our communities and climate.



SOURCE: From www.peoplesclimate.org

QEW is working with the faith-based organizing group to help mobilize for the march. Visit the People's Climate Movement website for details. We want to see a strong Friendly presence! Email shelley@quakerearthcare.org if you plan to attend or are organizing/attending an event in your community.



You're Invited: QEW's Spring Steering Committee Meeting

*April 20-23 in Atlanta, Georgia at the
Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse*

All QEW friends are welcome to our spring meeting—you do not have to be member of the Steering committee.

Our agenda will include time for worship and a potluck with Atlanta Friends, two evening presentations with featured speakers: local clergy talking about environmental justice on Friday and Charles Eisenstein on Saturday. We'll have two sessions each for committees and working groups, business sessions, free time, at least two full-group worship sharing sessions, and time to hear brief presentations from steering committee members on topics of their interest.

Information, a draft agenda, and registration can be found on our website.

In these challenging times, it will be good to gather and discern our way forward, together.

Many thanks to Atlanta Friends for hosting us!

Continuing Revolution: Young Adult Friends Conference

*June 2-7 at Pendle Hill in Wallingford,
Pennsylvania*

Young Adult Friends and seekers (ages 18-35) are invited to Pendle Hill's annual intensive six-day conference – Continuing Revolution – designed to strengthen a networked generation of awakened and effective spiritually grounded change agents. This year, we will be focusing on the Peace testimony. The program includes inspirational speakers, workshops and trainings, worship and worship-sharing, fellowship, community-building activities, opportunities for movement, and discernment opportunities.

SOURCE: From pendlehill.org/learn/continuing-revolution

QEW is one of the conference's sponsors.

What to Do While You Wait for Your Earthcare Leading

By Mary Gilbert

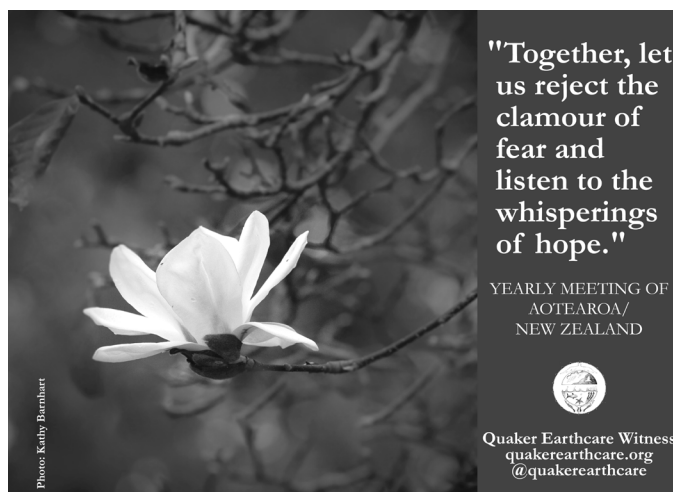
ON THE DAY that my new meeting found out that I am a member of Quaker Earthcare Witness, one of the men from the meeting approached me to talk. He asked about QEW. Soon he began to speak about his own feelings and his fears for his three young children and their future. He said he just does not know what to do.

I have heard that heartfelt cry so often from Friends. I think we miss how much we can all do while we are waiting for our big work, our leading for the earth. Here are some suggestions for what to do right now.

First, start where you are.

The Friend mentioned how busy he is, and with three young ones, of course he is. But one option might be thinking about how to “green your family.” Messages like, “Our family always recycles” are so important. Going out in nature and seeing this beautiful world with your kids instills messages that will last a lifetime. Grow tomatoes and cook with them. Touch trees. Hear bird songs. Do what you enjoy and they will learn to love the earth from you.

Assemble spiritual resources. Keep George Fox’s quote about an ocean of darkness and an ocean of Light on your desk. Read Pendle Hill pamphlets about earthcare. Don’t judge yourself if you fall asleep reading them.



QEW's weekly Facebook and Twitter graphics add a little inspiration and beauty to our weeks. Follow us at @QuakerEarthcare.

Listen for the gentle nudges from Spirit and trust that more will come. Notice what you love and let that guide you. Wait peacefully for the doors to open, trusting that they will. Do not judge yourself for not knowing yet, and do not fear. Know that your life will change many times and you can set your intention now to do this work as it arrives.

Talk to activists. Know that it means a lot to be asked about our work.

Hold us in the Light. Those who do the spiritual work are every bit as important as the ones who march.

Thank you so much for coming up to talk to me. ☺

Mary is a member of Friends Meeting at Cambridge, is active in her monthly and yearly meetings and on QEW's Steering Committee. She is married to David White, has a son, a daughter-in-law, and a grandson. Mary will sing at the drop of a hat.

Quaker Earthcare Witness relies on donations from our readers. Can you make a donation today?



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

Name _____ Email _____

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I want to contribute \$30____; \$50____; \$100____; Other _____

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Quaker Earthcare Witness

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How to Build a Sustainable & Life-Enhancing Future?

HOW ARE YOU FEELING right now? We've heard from many friends that they are feeling overwhelmed and scared, but also engaged and fired-up.

How are we doing at Quaker Earthcare Witness? As a mostly volunteer organization, it could be easy for us to feel under-resourced in the face of the mounting challenges to our democracy, our communities, and our planet. Yet as a growing network of Friends across North America, we feel strong and motivated. Thank you.

In times of such turmoil, there is the likelihood of radical change—for better or for worse. We need to hold on to a vision of radical change for the better.

Together we must continue to engage in daily actions that protect the vulnerable and our earth while moving forward toward a world in right relationship with Creation.

What does that look like?

For this issue we are sharing some initial responses to the following queries voiced by QEW members and friends. Many have shared their stories, which can be read here and on our website. Their work represents the diversity and depth of our network and we hope they inspire contemplation, dialogue, and action for you and your community.

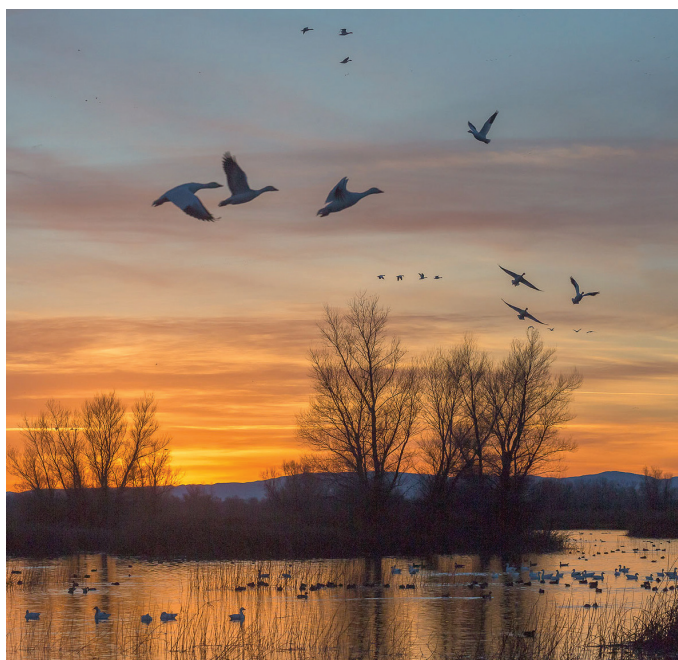


Photo: Kathy Barnhart

In the context of this current moment, what do the following words from QEW's vision statement mean to you?

"WE ARE CALLED to live in right relationship with all Creation, recognizing that the entire world is interconnected and is a manifestation of God."

How do we move toward that vision? What are you doing in your community? What can we offer as QEW? As Friends? What are you offering?

Share your insights and actions via email to hayley@quakerearthcare.org or via Facebook or Twitter at @QuakerEarthcare. ↻