



BeFriending Creation

A Publication of

QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS

Affirming our essential unity with nature

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Awaking Across the Branches of Friends

By Shelley Tanenbaum

SOMETHING SPECIAL happened at the March 2019 Friends World Committee on Consultation Section of the Americas meeting. Friends from across the branches of the Religious Society of Friends came together to express our love for the land and our dedication to environmental justice, with each of us grounded in spirit along our own path.

Three of us were invited to be part of a panel on Earthcare that explored our individual spiritual paths and where we are led: Adrian Halverstadt is an Evangelical Friend who is Chancellor of Barclay College in Kansas and the Director of Evangelical Friends Church of North America, Cherice Bock is a Professor of Environmental Science and Co-clerk of Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting (Evangelical), and me, Shelley Tanenbaum, General Secretary of Quaker Earthcare Witness and a member of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting (unprogrammed, liberal/universalist).

Participants first shared why they chose to attend our workshop since



Shelley Tanenbaum, Adrian Halverstadt, and Cherice Bock share at the FWCC-Section of the Americas gathering.

there were several options. One participant who knew both Adrian and me said that he came to hear what Adrian and I could possibly say together. This participant might have been initially skeptical because of our different religious contexts and beliefs, but Adrian, Cherice and I were more in sync with each other than not.

We each described our spiritual paths, and how these had led us to embrace ecological integrity and environmental justice. Adrian quoted scripture to show how we are meant to be good stewards to our land. He explained that the original words of Genesis do not require us to have “dominion” over the earth, a common misinterpretation. Instead, the earliest versions of the Bible ask us to take care of the earth and all of God’s creations. He also quoted scripture to show that we are required to share resources fairly in our generation and to protect our environment for future generations.

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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. Please share our work widely and broadly, always attributing it to Quaker Earthcare Witness.

Interested in being a member of QEW? Membership is open to all who demonstrate a 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:

Mary Jo Klingel,
mjklingel@comcast.net

General Secretary:

Shelley Tanenbaum, P.O. Box 6787,
Albany, CA 94706. 510-542-9606;
shelley@quakerearthcare.org.

BFC Editor:

Hayley Hathaway,
37 Trailsend Dr., Canton, CT 06019
hayley@quakerearthcare.org.

Website: www.quakerearthcare.org

Twitter: @quakerearthcare

Facebook:

facebook.com/QuakerEarthcare

Earthcare Calendar

July 15, 2019 Deadline for
articles for July-Aug-Sept issue

From the Clerk's Table

Dear Friends,

As I left for St. Paul, Minnesota for our Spring Quaker Earthcare Witness Gathering, the question I asked was, **"How will we together embody the beloved community?"**

Thanks to Minnesota weather, that question rapidly shifted into, "How does one gather the beloved community from all across the nation while seven inches of snow are falling?"

We grounded our work by taking time each morning for worship sharing. My small group grew closer as we spoke about our reflections from the queries, and shared our hearts and our hopes and even our tears with one another. The magical silence of the snow falling gave even more depth to our seeking.



Mary Jo Klingel (Clerk of QEW), Nancy Newman (Twin Cities Coordinating Team), Shelley Tanenbaum (General Secretary, QEW) and Richard Fuller (Twin Cities Coordinating Team).

We were cared for impeccably by the Twin Cities Coordinating Team, with safe driving, great food, and inspiring evening programs. Thanks to the members of all three Twin Cities Friends meetings for their welcome and their support for our earthcare work.

We gathered this spring under the shadow of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel

on Climate Change (IPCC) report, saying that the time is now to avert planetary disaster. We were inspired by the young climate activists who remind us of the urgency of our work. **We, as the Quaker Earthcare Witness community, know that personal and spiritual transformation must be the foundation of our work, and that transformation will be the doorway to the beloved community.**

As a gift to you who are reading these words, I offer one of the quotes that inspired our worship sharing:

"The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize at the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that its center really is everywhere. It is within each of us."

- Black Elk

Mary Jo Klingel, Clerk, Quaker Earthcare Witness

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Cherice echoed Adrian's use of scripture and added that she seeks out and has experienced God's presence in the natural world. I described how I have come to my own sense of eco-spirituality experientially, by being present in nature. This experience has given me a sense of awe and joy in the natural world, and has allowed me to feel related to people across the globe, and to all people living before us and (hopefully) long after our times.

Each of us has been led to the same place—a place of care and concern for a healthy planet and working toward a world where everyone can live sustainably and thrive. Environmental justice emerged as a goal that could unite Friends worldwide. Cherice and I also emphasized the urgency of the multiple environmental crises we are facing, including climate change, crashing species diversity, ailing oceans, and depleted soils.

We followed our workshop with an interest group the next evening, showcasing a film produced by the FWCC-World Office, featuring several public Friends describing their spiritual connection to earthcare, the environmental changes that they are seeing in their home communities, and the directions that they are led to witness in the world. The film features the three of us (Adrian, Cherice and me) plus Kelly Kellum (Executive Secretary of Friends United Meeting), Lindsey Cook (Representative for Climate Change for Quaker United Nations Office – Geneva), Christopher Sammond (former General Secretary, New York Yearly Meeting), and Beverly Ward (Field Secretary for Earthcare for Southeastern Yearly Meeting). We each come from a different spiritual path, all are experiencing significant changes in our home communities, and we are all



Adrian Halverstadt and Cherice Bock.

compelled to act out of a sense of urgency in our times. The film will be available from the FWCC website at <fwcc.world/sustainability-resources> and from the QEW website.

Our time together at FWCC Section of the Americas was exhilarating—finding common ground and mutual support across the branches for what can often be a lonely path in Quaker circles. We will continue the dialogue, with gratitude to FWCC for bringing us together.

[Note that Cherice Bock is editing a volume entitled Quakers, Creation Care, and Sustainability for the Friends Association for Higher Education's series on Quakers and the Disciplines. This book includes a chapter on QEW, and will be released in June 2019.]

Join Us



Friends General Conference Earthcare Center

JOIN QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS at the Friends General Conference 2019 Gathering in Grinnell, IA, June 30 - July 7.

We'll host the Earthcare Center, a dynamic meeting space where Friends will present on topics related to environmental concerns and Friends' witness. Visit our website for the schedule of speakers and events. This year's theme is *Peace in Our Hearts, Justice in the World*.

On Friday, we will take a field trip to Friend Jim Kessler's home where he has restored 30 acres of prairie with a focus on native plants and animals.

Our Request to You

AS FRIENDS, WE ARE LED to use our spiritual and material resources to work for ecological integrity and environmental justice here and now.

Quaker Earthcare Witness is a network of Friends in North America and other like-minded people who are taking action to address the ecological and social crises of the world from a spiritual perspective, emphasizing Quaker process and testimonies. We are helping Friends respond to climate change. We provide resources, networking, and support to Friends and Meetings, to “search for that life which affirms the unity of all Creation,” and to “participate in the healing of the Earth.” Our network was founded in 1987 as a non-profit, tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) organization.



The QEW Steering Committee takes a field trip during our Spring Meeting.

Can you help us equip the Religious Society of Friends with better tools to live in Right Relationship with Creation? Quaker Earthcare Witness is the only Quaker organization solely dedicated to environmental concerns. We are called to serve our Society during these tumultuous times.


Our network is full of so much knowledge and expertise—so many of you are on the forefront of issues like biodiversity, reproductive health, divestment, fracking, environmental justice, and unity with nature. This year, we are imagining new ways to share your stories and connect your work across North America. We need your help.

Your donation will help us:

- Build a new website that is highly functional, user-friendly, simple, and accessible. (Have you been on our site lately? It's filled with great information, but hard to access and it doesn't work on tablets or cellphones, which is prohibitive for people with low vision)
- Fund Friends traveling in the ministry to host workshops and gatherings on Earthcare
- Support local Earthcare projects through our Mini-Grant program

We hear from Friends across the country that they feel isolated and alone when facing the threat of climate change and ecological collapse. They're not sure where to begin; they feel overwhelmed by both the issues at hand and the myriad ways to take action. Quaker Earthcare Witness is committed to being the go-to resource to help answer these questions. **We want Friends everywhere to learn about and engage in climate faith and action and need your help to do it even better.**

Thank you.


Shelley Tanenbaum,
General Secretary


Hayley Hathaway,
Publications Coordinator

To make a donation to Quaker Earthcare Witness, visit quakerearthcare.org/donate or send a check to Quaker Earthcare Witness, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA 94706. Thank you.

Feeding Us with Love and Local Tradition

By Bonnie Peace Watkins

AS THE TWIN CITIES Friends Meeting Fellowship Committee, we were excited about the Quaker Earthcare Witness Spring Steering Committee meeting here in mid-April. We have long felt that food and fellowship are vital parts of witnessing, sharing, and caring for our beautiful planet.

As we prepared both for the Friday night potluck and the Sunday “regular noon meal,” we maintained our committee’s ongoing commitment to offer vegan, gluten-free, local, organic food as much as possible, to reflect our community’s commitments to earthcare and more. We also use “gifts from the heart,” leftovers, and budget-friendly options as part of that. It’s impossible to do this perfectly or simply, but we do our best, cooking and washing dishes with love and spirit.

That weekend we committed, beyond that, to learn from and honor the food of the Lakota and Ojibwe people as it was hundreds of years before colonization. We learned that this food is super delicious and healthy. As Friend Diggitt McLaughlin says, “We will always be tourists on their lands... but I heard enough conversations of wonder about nearby Indians and how they ate to believe that eyes, and presumably hearts, were opened.” We’ve included the menu for our Sunday meal, mostly from two indigenous-focused cookbooks.

We have long felt that food and fellowship are vital parts of witnessing, sharing, and caring for our beautiful planet.

From *Original Local*, by Heid Erdrich: “I learned to appreciate my eating as an enormous privilege indebted to the passions of indigenous people who protect these foods and seek to change the spiritual and physical health of their people by returning to an awareness of a way that makes us, and now the world, strong.”

From *Sioux Chef* by Sean Sherman: “Why isn’t the original indigenous diet all the rage today? It’s hyperlocal, ultraseasonal, uber-healthy: no processed foods, no sugar, no wheat (or gluten), no dairy, no high-cholesterol animal products. It’s naturally low glycemic, high protein, low salt, plant based with lots of grains, seeds, and nuts. Most of all, it’s utterly delicious... This is a diet that connects us all to nature and to each other in the most direct and profound ways.”

We note also that the wild rice (*manoomin*) is very much threatened right now. Proposals are succeeding to dig pipelines and mine copper in the rare places it grows. “Cultivated” non-native wild rice (a very different food) is sold in stores, and there are efforts both to patent and genetically modify this sacred food. You can order the real stuff from the White Earth tribe in northern Minnesota at nativeharvest.com.

Thank you, QEW, for coming here and re-inspiring us.



Manoomin Growing in Kathio State Park in Minnesota. Photo: Brett Whaley/ Flickr under Creative Commons License.

First Day Menu

- Corn tortillas from El Burrito Mercado
- Erdrich Manoomin, native-harvested wild rice with mushrooms, sunflower seeds, scallions
- Spring greens with watercress, sunchokes and *wojape* (berry)-mint dressing
- Roasted butternut squash with sunflower oil, hazelnuts and cranberries
- Cranberry & other heritage beans, braised in cedar, baked with maple syrup
- Sumac lemonade
- Maple water tapped from a Friend’s tree the night before

Bonnie is a member of the Twin Cities Friends Meeting in St. Paul, MN.

Southern Appalachian Quaker Youth Respond to Climate Crisis

By Robert McGahey

ARTHUR MORGAN SCHOOL and Celo Monthly Meeting recently hosted Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) for their annual retreat here. The Quaker Earthcare Witness Outreach Committee contacted the organizers to share about our work, leading an afternoon session with the youth. After a rigorous hike to idyllic Strawberry Fields, a boisterous, sunburned group quickly quieted when presented with the “60-Minutes” Juliana vs. the US segment followed by a clip of 16-year old climate activist Greta Thunberg’s stunning speech at the United Nations Climate Change Summit (COP 24) in Poland in November. After a thoughtful, probing discussion, we went outside for a “Milling” exercise from environmental activist and author Joanna Macy’s *Work That Reconnects*. It was the highlight of our time together.

I tried this exercise several years back with a high school group in a workshop I led at the Friends General Conference (FGC) gathering, and it was beyond the comfort zone of several of the kids. This was true of one or two of these 40-odd SAYFers, but for most of them and the adults who mingled with them, embracing both the gifts and pain of being alive on Earth now was soul-satisfying.

The exercise moves from frenetic, disconnected hurrying past each other during a busy lunch hour on city streets to slowing down and noticing the faces of those around you, to “moving like kelp in the sea,” gently brushing others as you lazily follow the current. As the exercise progresses, the participants stop several times in pairs, contemplating the wonders



Young Friends on a hike before annual retreat. Photo: Jonas Kramer-Dickie.

of human evolution as well as the terrors of modern civilization in a militarized, industrial growth economy. All of this is conducted in silence. There were a few initial giggles, but our children and grandchildren soon settled into Meeting for Milling.

Listening to Joanna’s lyrical recital of evolutionary history, one partner examines another’s hand, eyes closed. “If you were anywhere in outer space, in intergalactic reaches, and you were to grasp that, you would know that you were home. It is only made here.” In the final segment, holding the hand of one’s partner, looking them in the eye, participants accept the hazards of premature death, due to the riot of toxins, the odds of nuclear attack, and the probability of rapid climate change. “Don’t look away! We can face this together.” The exercise closes with an affirmation that this partner “may play a decisive role in the healing of our world, that they are in the right place, at the right

moment, with the right gifts and motivation.” Like Greta Thunberg, I added.

Knowing that this was all a bit much for the group I led at FGC, I had decided that the SAYFers, many of whom have had years of retreats emphasizing non-judgmental bonding and Quaker process (they have clerks and meetings for business and clearnesses, all conducted by the youth), would be primed for such an exercise. And I was right, based upon the tone of the exercise and the deep discussion afterwards (which went places I never imagined, led by a 12-year old girl who may well be the next Greta Thunberg). I received several affirmations of the power of this experience, and some of the teens said they wanted more. One girl said it was “transformational.”

The next morning, I walked through the Arthur Morgan campus on my way to Meeting just as the SAYF group began the same journey. Halfway there, the young

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clerk stopped the chatty group. They circled in silence, settled, and we walked the rest of the way to Meeting in silence. I scrambled to keep just behind that 12-year old girl, who was taking the lead, without knowing the turns in the maze of paths which connect us in Celo Community. We had a spirited session of hymn singing, followed by a worship into which the youth centered rapidly. They knew what to do, and unlike many of the adults hustling in late and distracted, they had walked in quiet preparation through the woods, “like a family,” as one the SAYFers put it.

After Meeting settled, our clerk shared the story of the ancestors of the Southern mountain folk. These folks kept a fire in the hearth at all times, and when they traveled, carried an ember with them. Addressing the SAYFers, he counseled them to do the same, as they carried their concerns out into the world. We had built the hearth fire high the day before, and there were coals aplenty for distribution.

As I left meeting potluck, I encountered one of Celo’s own SAYFers. Her mother had just asked me for the opportunity to have an experience like the Milling. We discussed having an intergenerational Saturday workshop in the near future. Knowing that this mother and daughter had been at odds in the recent past, I told the girl of her mother’s wish. She looked thoughtful a moment, then smiled and said, “Sounds like a good idea.” A new generation is rising to lead the climate rebellion, and we can and must support them.

Robert lives in Celo Community, NC. He is a member of Celo Monthly Meeting and QEW representative for SAYMA. Robert’s blog is <ecospirit.blogspot.com>.

A Story of Interbeing

A Book Review by Ruah Swennerfelt of
Climate: A New Story By Charles Eisenstein

I’VE JUST FINISHED reading *Climate: A New Story* by Charles Eisenstein and am so moved by the wisdom I found between the covers. Eisenstein critiques the climate movement, arguing that the reliance on numbers, such as 350, facts, and data will not bring about the changes that are needed to slow down the disasters that we face today. His reasoning will be familiar to you since we’ve been talking for decades about the interconnections of caring for people and all that lives on the planet.

The author makes the case that our obsession with fossil fuels is too narrow. He cites a study which concludes that if we continue current rates of deforestation the planet will warm by 1.5 degrees even if fossil fuels were eliminated overnight. Therefore shouldn’t conservation and reforestation be much higher priorities? The protection of biodiversity must also be a priority. And much more!

These examples of interconnection inspire Eisenstein to lead us on a path from our current Story of Separation to a Story of Interbeing, a term borrowed from Thich Nhat Hanh. Per Eisenstein, “When we restore the internal ecosystem, the fullness of our capacity to feel and to love, only then will there be hope of restoring the outer... That is not to suggest we withdraw from outer activism in favor of inner cultivation. It is that love and

empathy are the felt dimensions of the Story of Interbeing, and we cannot act effectively from that story, nor truly serve it, without... guidance.”

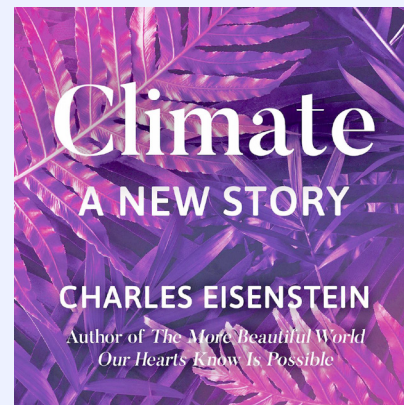
At heart, this is a spiritual book, not an environmental book, though its inspiration has come from concern about the degradation of the planet. He claims that we have forgotten all the “mysterious ways invisible to our numbers, to maintain the balance of our living planet.”

I remember when I first began working for Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN, now Quaker Earthcare Witness) how difficult it was to engage Friends on caring for Earth. So many Friends were swamped with the issues of

war, poverty, racism, hunger, and so much more that they couldn’t imagine embracing “another” issue. FCUN members had a hard time convincing Friends that all the issues were interconnected. In fact I came to FCUN because of a quote in one of its pamphlets, “there will be no peace without a planet.” That was my wakeup call. We can’t be single focused. We have been working within the understanding of the Story of Interbeing all along, and now it is becoming more understood and embraced.

Are we in time?

Ruah is a former General Secretary of Quaker Earthcare Witness and a member of Burlington (VT) Friends Meeting.



The Spiritual Dimension: Why We Care for the Earth

By Jack Phillips

WHAT DO WE MEAN by saying, “Our concern for the Earth is a spiritual one”?

By recognizing this concern as spiritual, we are acknowledging that God’s presence permeates all things. We are also acknowledging that significant changes in how humans treat the Earth and its creatures will not take place until there are significant changes in how we feel about the earth. When the heart is engaged, loving actions will follow.

For some people, the religious principle of continuing revelation has yielded an “Eleventh Commandment,” expressing God’s will that we treat his entire creation lovingly. When Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment, he selected two out of his tradition: loving God and loving your neighbor as yourself. Since he was very in touch with his time, I think he might in our time give a third great commandment, such as: “You shall love the Earth as you love yourself; care for her health and fitness and beauty as you care for your own body; and protect the earth as you would your own private property.” I believe that Jesus would understand that our neighbors are all living creatures, not only our fellow human beings.

Other people, coming from different religious traditions or inspired by such writers as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Albert Schweitzer, recognize an invisible bond between themselves and the physical world—a universal stream of inner vitality they may label “spiritual.” Their experience of being “in unity with nature” isn’t mere aesthetic appreciation; it is a profound recognition that humankind and the Earth share a common lifeblood, a common pulse, and a common destiny.

Whatever the origins of our Earth-consciousness, we can explore and nurture it by intimate contact with nature herself:

Lie on grass, watch clouds. Caress white birches, embrace an oak, climb an apple tree. Go barefoot in dirt and dunes. Float naked in a lake. Stroll on a beach, be beaten about by surf. Sing and circle-dance with friends in the woods or on the beach.

Rejoice in rain, stand in storms, enjoy shoveling snow. Listen to crickets and crows, whistle back to

songbirds, hoot softly back to an owl. Take a night walk in the woods. Watch high-flying geese, look into the curious eyes of a deer. Smell pines, eat wild berries. Make up songs about experiences like these.

SOME PEOPLE yearn to leave the earth, to colonize the moon or Mars. Perhaps someday that will happen. But life beyond Earth’s fragile biosphere would be life without rivers, lakes, or waterfalls. A world with no meadows or jungles! No rainbows, red clouds, black clouds, lightning, or thunder. No marshland, moss, or loons. No bamboo, cypress, or cedars. No bees, bears, or beavers. No meadowlarks, monkeys, or elephants. No zebras, azaleas, or hibiscus. No gulls, bluebirds, or hummingbirds. (Someone may mock: No scorpions, rattlesnakes, mosquitoes, or poison ivy? Yes, amen)

No sharks, no whales, no dolphins! No squid, no deer, no sheep. No clams, no oysters, no lobsters. No coral, no angelfish. No limestone, no fossils. No wild rice, wild strawberries, or wild beasts. No bananas, walnuts, or grapevines. No tigers, cougars, or jaguars. No eagles, falcons, or rabbits. No doves, ducks, or anhingans. No showers, willows, or warm breezes.

AND THESE WONDERS are united in a Great Wonder—an intricately interwoven ecosystem, in which each wonder works and lives. We know of no other such wonder in the universe. As a ready-made home for human life, there can be no other. For the earth, as Jacques Cousteau said, is an “oasis in space.” How, then, shall we face the insensitivity and stupidity of humankind’s destructive abuse of this our home and mother? Or of the sin of extinguishing even one species of such wonder? Can contemplating the earth’s wonders motivate and empower us to move from abuse to protection, from exploitation to Earthcare? Can our inner Light help us discern and speak Truth to corporate/political forces that use deception to mask their plunder?

Reprinted from Walking Gently on the Earth, an Earthcare checklist, a classic Quaker Earthcare Witness text from 1989 that continues to inspire today, 30 years later. We honored Jack’s memory while meeting this spring at his home meeting, Twin Cities (MN) Friends Meeting.

Public Banking, Divine Vocations, and Fertile Ground

By Pamela Haines

THE ECO-JUSTICE Collaborative (EJC) of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has endorsed an effort in Philadelphia to create a public bank. Similar to credit unions for individuals, a public bank would hold public funds in the city to be directed toward local needs, rather than paying for big banks to manage those funds and invest them wherever the profits are highest. Rita Varley and I, both members of EJC and Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, have had a couple of very rich experiences this spring sharing the message of public banking.

At the Philadelphia Urban Coalition, a group of mostly Black church leaders convened by former mayor Wilson Goode, we offered an explicitly religious frame on the issue. According to theologian Walter Wink, the Spirit is at the core of every institution (or Power), but their spirituality can become diseased. The task of the church, he says, is to identify these Powers, discern whether they are still aligned with serving the common good, and if not, redeem them by calling them back to their original “divine vocation.” Urban Coalition members resonated strongly with the message that it is not rightly ordered for big banks to use our public money to maximize their profits, when great needs in the city are unmet for lack of financial resources. They were ready and eager to use their networks and organizing capacity to gather support for a public banking alternative.

Rita and I were also part of a lobby day effort with City Council,

where one Councilperson has taken the lead—finding money for a study on how a public bank might be created and operated, and working with the Commerce Department to identify a group to do such a study. After a morning briefing, our group of forty or so fanned out through City Hall to meet with each Councilperson or a member of their staff. I was particularly touched by one staffer’s response. He had never



Councilman Derek Green (right), a public banking advocate, addresses local lobbyists at Philadelphia City Hall on Lobby Day (Rita in blue and Pamela in teal). Photo: Stanley Shapiro.

heard of this concept, and it was a case of love at first sight. “This would be really good for the little people.” “We could save a lot of money.” (Philadelphia paid \$170 million in debt service last year.) “I think my Councilwoman is really going to like this.”

It was also a pleasure to lead a team of Philadelphians who were new to the issue but ready to make a move. (The interfaith organizing group, POWER, had just endorsed the idea of a public bank, and several folks came on the strength of that connection.) We talked in advance about what each person in our group could say about an aspect of public banking that spoke strongly to them.

I learned later that two of them had not intended to stay for the Council visits because they felt that they didn’t know enough, but with my reassurance that I would answer the “expert” questions they were ready to do their best, and together we made a great team.

It was helpful to be able to refer to the Bank of North Dakota, a public bank that has operated successfully for 100 years, kept state infrastructure project costs low, returned interest to the Treasury, supported community banks, and helped the state sail through the recession of 2008, since none of their money was in Wall Street.

In a recent Freedom Seder in Philadelphia, Reverend William Barber of the Poor People’s

Campaign invoked Jeremiah, who called on God’s messengers to go to the seat of power and challenge the abuse of that power. When we went to City Hall, it was clear that this abuse of financial power was not happening there. As Philadelphia citizens and public officials together work toward a public bank in Philadelphia, we will be challenging the abuse of power of the big banks. We will be calling our financial institutions back to their divine vocation of serving the community by holding, dispersing and investing our money for the common good.

Pamela is a member of Friends Economic Integrity Project and a member of Central Philadelphia (PA) Meeting.

An Easter Reflection

By Sara Jolena Wolcott

“What do you envision for the future?” Joanna Macy—Buddhist eco-philosopher, scholar of deep ecology and systems theory—asked me last night, over a dinner of orange yams and tofu and lemon broccoli. Every time I visit her in her Berkeley home, she feeds me these bright orange yams, grown not far from here. We were sitting at her round, wooden kitchen table, where so many powerful conversations have occurred.

The kitchen table is always one of the most important pieces of furniture in a home. Over this modest furniture brew ideas, homework, and potions. Dinners and tea times are shared between women and their menfolk in kitchens all over the world. She has a dining room table, but I have never sat there. We always sit at the kitchen table, drinking tea from hand-made pottery.

Joanna is turning 90 in a few weeks, and her eyes are pointed to the future. “I won’t be here,” she told me, very matter of fact, “the clarity of a woman who has spent many years looking at Death. Her question was direct. There was no hesitation.

Well, we’ve got about 10 years to turn this thing around,” I said. She nodded. “Under the surface, there’s a lot of good things happening. But even so, it is not looking good.” She nodded again.

“I see violence,” she said. “When the transportation fails, the food lines shut down, and there won’t be more than a few days before the stores are empty. And then there will be violence.”

She says this calmly. She breathes deeply. There is a stillness inside



Supermoon from San Rafael, CA. Photo: Kathy Barnhart.

of her, for all that she speaks of horrors. It is the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. It is an appropriate time to delve into the darkness of our despairs—of our futures, and our pasts.

As she speaks, my mind flashes to other parts of Oakland, just a few miles away. I’m reading the superb and lyrical novel *There There* by Tommy Orange about indigenous folks today in Oakland, and it is rife with stories of the ‘hood, of guns and drugs and alcohol, and prison sentences, and the lost opportunities that haunt poverty. Not much about the farmer’s markets: the context is food deserts. Fruits and vegetables just don’t have access to the people. Lots about resilience, though.

Lack of access to food and clean water. Violence. Guns. Octavia Butler: *Parable of the Sower*. Armed men on the corner, watching out for the safety of their women. The future is already here. Having ears, do we not hear? Having eyes, do we not see? Do we not remember?

ReMember: I have been teaching a course that I like to call ReMembering for Life, stitching the broken human-earth body together again, through reconnecting the histories of climate change and

colonization. When I first told Joanna about the course, she wanted to take it. For various reasons that didn’t work, but she invited me to teach her and a few other Buddhist friends of hers about the histories of the witch hunts that spanned centuries in Europe and killed hundreds of thousands of people, and their relationship to colonization and ecology, which was one part of the larger course. So I did. This blossomed into friendships of women who are unafraid to look into suffering, be that in the future, the present, or the past. They can have such clear visions, regardless where in time they cast their gaze.

Easter dawned bright: the clarity that can emerge from being unafraid to look into suffering. Crones and grandmothers and children are so good at asking hard questions. Remember: not only the suffering. ReMember also ancient peace.

Sara Jolena is the founder of the ecotheology company, Sequoia Samanvaya, is on the board of the Quaker Institute for the Future, and is a member of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting. For more about Joanna Macy and her work, visit <workthatreconnects.org>.

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each requires flowers to which their physical characteristics and their behaviors and nutrient requirements are adapted. Contrast that with honeybees, a non-native species domesticated to be “generalists,” using a wide variety of flowers and not dependent on any particular species, and often much less effective at pollinating native plants.

Why native plants? Most domestic flowers are “cultivars,” bred for human-centric qualities. Most are bred from species which are not locally native and are totally unfamiliar to local pollinators. Even locally-based cultivars (called “nativars”) are less able to supply the needs of native pollinators. Generally, if a plant sold at a nursery has a varietal name, such as “*Geranium maculatum* ‘Espresso’” (a human-bred variety of native wild geranium), it is a cultivar/nativar.

What’s native to your region? Visit <xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/plant-lists> or <wildflower.org/collections>. Learn which plants occur naturally in your state.

Questions? Email the author at naturalistdave@hotmail.com. Dave is a member of Twin Cities Friends Meeting.



Monarch butterflies on meadow blazing star. All photos are from author’s urban garden. All photos on page: Dave Crawford.

Tips for Helping Pollinators

You can allow dandelions and lawn clover and other non-natives to grow, at least until you install natives in their place. These weedy non-natives can be stopgap food sources for pollinators

in the absence of native alternatives. They rarely pose a serious competitive threat to the integrity of native plant communities, unlike invasive species like creeping bellflower, crown vetch, blue squill, purple loosestrife, Japanese barberry, European buckthorn, and many others. But, natives are still best!

Avoid installing any plant or seed which has been treated with neonicotinoid pesticide. All parts of a neonicotinoid-treated plant can be toxic to all insects, and neonicotinoids may leach from treated plants into soil and contaminate adjacent plants.

Avoid chemical use in your yard or neighborhood (i.e. insecticides, herbicides, fungicides). Evidence increasingly shows that any chemical pesticide weakens pollinators’ ability to sustain their populations.

Encourage beneficial insects:

a healthy ecosystem (even as small as a single yard) will tend to balance itself. Insect pests are food which sustains predatory insects and insect-eating birds and mammals. When pest insects are eliminated, predators are also eliminated. Unfortunately, pest insect populations recover much faster than predator populations, so pests become a problem again very quickly. Consider tolerating moderate levels of plant damage if you want to sustain predators and a healthy balance.



Rusty-patched bumble bee on showy goldenrod.



Ladybug larva eating aphid on early sunflower.

Manage the landscape to provide nest sites: 70% of native bee species nest in the ground. Most dig their own nest burrows in bare, loose, undisturbed, well-drained soils instead of compacted or wet soils. Mulch makes soil inaccessible—avoid using it. Some species (including virtually all bumble bee species) nest in abandoned small mammal burrows. Thirty percent of native bee species nest in cavities in dead wood, dead plant stalks, and rock piles. Leave plant stalks standing in fall and winter, and cut them to 15-inch height in late spring. Leave a log or two to slowly decay into the soil.

A yard that’s allowed to be less-than-immaculate will harbor more beneficial life than a perfectly-groomed yard. Mole and shrew burrows, anthills, standing and fallen dead wood and plant stalks, natural leaf litter, and an abundance of native plant diversity all contribute to more resilient ecological functioning.

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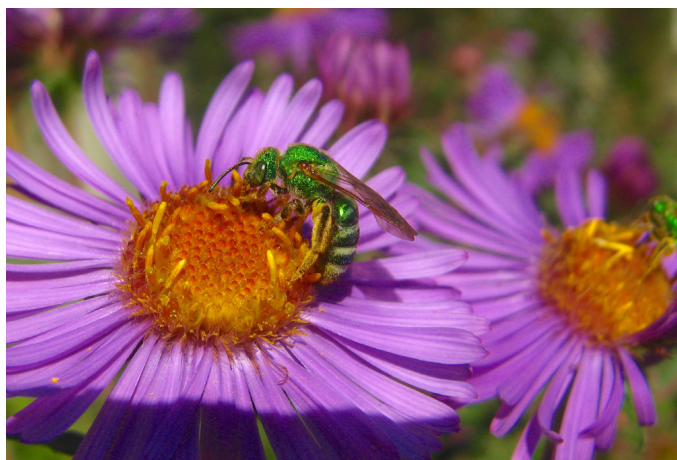
How to Help Pollinators in Your Own Neighborhood

By Dave Crawford

Robin Wall Kimmerer (*Braiding Sweetgrass*, 2014) suggests humans can restore natural landscapes as a gift to Earth in exchange for the gifts nature provides to humans. She suggests that Earth might say “thank you” to humans for doing this. I’ve done this in my yard, and Earth says “thank you” in pollinators!

Helping indigenous pollinators—any organism which transports pollen from one flower of a species to another flower of the same species, like bees, hummingbirds, and some butterflies—by providing plants native to your region can work at any scale. I’ve found native pollinators on a front porch with nothing more than three potted native plants.

Native pollinators, which do most of the work of sustaining our ecosystems and a large share of sustaining our crops, are radically declining in population. Native pollinators need regionally appropriate native plants—organisms indigenous to a specified geographic area, occurring naturally—and a pesticide-free environment in order to maintain their populations and do their pollination work. These needs can be met as simply as by installing a small pollinator garden.



Green sweat bee on New England aster. Photo: Dave Crawford.

As pollinators succumb to rural habitat conversion and agricultural practices, urban habitat becomes increasingly important. For example, federally endangered rusty-patched bumble bees may currently be sustained more successfully in cities than in rural areas.

The ideal goal for a pollinator-friendly neighborhood is to ensure the presence of native plants in bloom through as much of the growing season as possible. Some pollinators are active through most of the growing season while others complete the pollinating part of their life cycle in spring and aren’t seen again until the following spring. Still others are active as adults only during late summer and early fall. All must find appropriate food.

Native pollinators are indigenous to a specified geographic area, and co-evolved with the native flowers of that area. For example, the U.S. has over 4000 native bee species, and ***Continued on page 11***