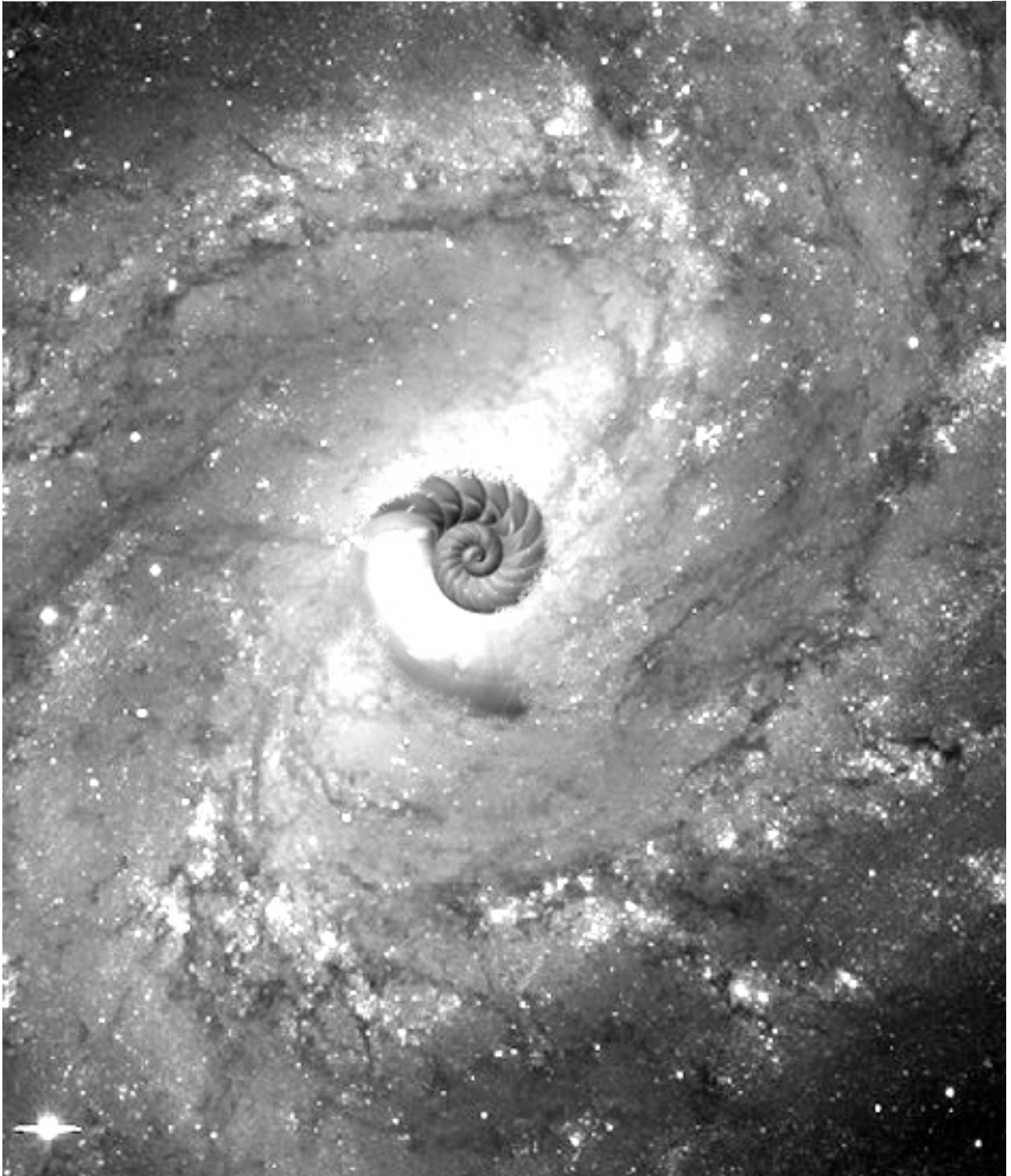


The Canadian Friend

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For Love of Mother Earth

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The Canadian Friend

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Editor's Corner

"To turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives."

Stories have the power to define us and motivate us. Given the mess we are making of our home planet, it appears we have been following the wrong stories. Somehow our stories have twisted the truth about who we are and what we are called to do. They have misled us to act as though this realm to which we were born is but a temporary place, a place merely to sate our greed, while God is busy preparing a paradise for our eternity. Through such stories we have become blind to the truth of paradise *here, present*, in all Creation. We have given away Holiness. As Bert Horwood says: "Caring for a future Heaven should be practised by caring for the present Earth."

To be serious about healing the planet is to embrace a *new story* that teaches us to fall in love with God's Creation here, and yearn to experience it fully, as beings interconnected with all life. In his book, *Darwin, Divinity, and the Dance of the Cosmos – An Ecological Christianity*, Bruce Sanguin suggests that it's time we adjust our Creation stories. "...it's time to get with the cosmological program.... There is a new story of creation, which needs to inform our biblical stories... We now know we live in an evolutionary universe. It follows that evolution is the way the Holy creates in space and in time and in every sphere: material, biological, social...and Spiritual. This is the new cosmology which simply cannot be contained by old models and images of God...". Only when we grasp this *new story* will we fall in love with Creation and experience it fully; only then will we be awake to our folly and change our selfish destructive practices. Then we will grasp, as John Woolman did in the 1700s: "The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious Creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness, appears to be an injury to the succeeding age...". He continued, "...so far as (God's) love influences our minds... we become interested in God's workmanship and feel a desire to...increase the happiness of the creation - one common interest from which our own is inseparable...". Woolman believed that: "...to turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives".

The work of loving this planet to health is immense. Keith Helmuth maintains that we can be effective, rather than collapse into fatalism, by being present to the Light, and placing ourselves in the Presence of the Light. This is spiritual work. When we commit to the truth of who we are on this planet, changing our consumer patterns and our lifestyles becomes a joy rather than a sacrifice. Finally, I appreciate the advice of environmentalist and writer Guy Dauncy: "If you want to know how best you can help, and how best you can share in being a part of the answer, all you have to do is ask: 'How can I serve?' Tell Nature, or God, or the Source, that you are here and ask to be shown your way."

Serving Nature is Holy work. Answers will be revealed to us as we respect and embrace our oneness with all life.

I hope you enjoy the thoughts shared in this issue. *Sherryll Harris*



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Cover: *The Universal Desire to Spiral*, courtesy Roger Davies, Halifax Monthly Meeting. "I placed a spiral shell at the centre of a spiral galaxy...for the cover of an eco-spirituality hymnal developed at the Tatamagouche Centre, Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia." For more of Roger's art see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OUpf-s_E9Y.

Letters to the Editor

Readers are invited to submit letters to the editor.
Please send your letters to: Sherryll Harris, Editor
E-mail: cf-editor@quaker.ca



Dear Sherryll,

I loved your article about Clarence Jordan. It ties some things together in my mind. In the 70s I bought a book called something like "The Alternative Celebrations Catalogue". I was intrigued by a group in Americus, Georgia, who gave out interest-free loans to poor people in order to build houses. They were an integrated community that were persecuted and had trouble selling crops locally. We bought nuts from them a time or two and then lost track of them.

Ann Scheleen, Roseberg, Oregon

[Editors Note: Jordan had quite a sense of humour. When Koinonia began marketing pecans by mail-order as a way to survive financially during the boycott, his ad read: "Help us ship the nuts out of Georgia."]

Dear Sherryll,

Your welcome recent Canadian Friend gives us another tie! Clarence Jordan's "Cotton Patch Gospels" and the community in Georgia. His version's words are wonderfully clear, and grounding for the present. Hadn't thought of them for some time. Glad for the reminder. Some of our Young Friends visited there. We used those scriptures at Webster Meeting (Earlham student meeting with Allan and Helen Hole, Tom and Nan Brown and at times Tom and Patricia Bassett). All were important as my teachers. Jack and Caroline Palmer Bailey also there - cousins and faithful Friends...tied to Coldstream Meeting through Arletta Cutler Palmer.

Did you know the Geigers (Jacksonville, Fla.) while there? Calhoun and Dianne Geiger were in the Bruderhoff in Georgia, and also (I think) at Oak Lake in NY. Several from there had ties to Barnesville Friends School (now called Olney) and some to Westtown School..

Peace and blessings

Jane Zavits-Bond, Coldstream Monthly Meeting

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed reading Peter Stevenson's article on "Engaging Christian Language: The New Covenant" (CF-Fall 2009). I especially liked the quote from Jeremiah 31, indicating that the New Covenant meant a God within our hearts, one immediately available to us all, the inward teacher. We are reminded here of the Old Testament origins of Quaker beliefs and the fact that 17th century Friends sought to understand early Christianity, when Christians still considered themselves Jewish and Meetings were based on teaching from the Torah (there being no New Testament yet). Also, thanks to the letters of Paul, we see that in the early Christian gatherings, master and slave, birthright and non-birthright Jew, and men and women ministered as equals. As Peter is concerned about 'engaging language' in his article, I would like to correct one small item he said that seems to me a stereotype. Reflecting on his own marriage, Peter says: "To the Israelites a husband was to be a master". I want to point out that in the very first chapters of the Torah, God makes man and woman equal: "God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them". (Gen. 1: 27) Both genders are made in the image of God. The message is reiterated in Genesis 2, in the story of the first married couple. God has brought all the animals of the creation for Adam to give them names, but among the creatures no helper suitable for the man was found. (Gen. 2: 20) Just to make sure that we understand that molecule for molecule man and woman are made of the same stuff, the Genesis writer then has God fashion Eve out of one of Adam's ribs. Eve was a 'suitable helper', a companion for Adam, someone equal to his worth. No wonder Adam was greatly overjoyed to meet her at last. (Gen..2: 23)

William H. Mueller,

St. Lawrence Valley Friends Meeting, Potsdam, NY
(Affiliated with Ottawa Monthly Meeting)

CORRECTION: Dear Sherryll, My apologies. In the Swarthmoor Hall article, I mention the Westminster Seekers. They are actually the Westmorland Seekers. I wonder how many Quakers have mentioned the error to you. If none, then few of us know our history. Ruth Lor Malloy (Toronto Monthly Meeting)

Readers Respond:

Dan Poisson's article, *Accomplice to Death*, published in the December 2009 issue of Canadian Friend, expressed his frustration over Canadian military deaths in Afghanistan. Poisson asked what we as citizen-witnesses thousands of miles away, can possibly do to make an effort to stop the deaths. To Poisson, the Canadian presence looks to be in vain. Opposition rallies here at home, and e-mails to government officials seem equally ineffectual.

"I know that I have to do something rather than nothing", he wrote. "We feel we have to reform this country (Afghanistan) and will do it regardless of the cost in lives lost on both sides, and the billions of dollars spent to achieve our goal." Poisson then challenged the Quaker community to come up with suggestions. "Friends, I need your help. What can I do?" Dan, this is one suggestion: it's not a short-term fix. It's thought-provoking, and aims for lasting peace.

In the 2006 New York Times best seller *Three Cups of Tea*, Greg Mortenson chronicled his journey from K2 mountaineer (one of the highest peaks in the world) to becoming an international philanthropist. Over a period of ten years he built fifty-five schools for girls in northern Pakistan and Afghanistan, scrambling together the money to do so as he went. Today, his goal remains to educate isolated village kids, with the support and blessing of the local communities, government and clerics. (Mortenson made two Canadian stops in January, speaking to sold-out audiences in Toronto and Vancouver).

"I don't want to teach Pakistan's children to think like Americans", Mortenson said in *Three Cups of Tea*. "I just want them to have a balanced non-extremist education. That idea is at the very center of what we do."

The project started as a tribute to his deceased younger sister Christa. It grew into a life-long calling, his personal contribution to counteract extremist madrassa schools, built by the Saudi Wahhabi sect (or al-Muwahhiddun).

By 2000 a pattern had become apparent. "The madrassa system targeted the impoverished students the public system failed", Mortenson related to co-writer David Oliver Relin. "I don't want to give the impression that all Wahhabi are bad", he added. "Many of their schools and mosques are doing good work to help Pakistan's poor. But some of them seem to exist only to teach militant jihad."

Three Cups of Tea cites a World Bank statistic that fifteen to twenty percent of madrassa students were receiving military training, along with a curriculum that emphasized jihad and hatred of the West at the expense of subjects like math, science, and literature.

In Mortenson schools boys are also educated. But the focus is now on girls. "Once you educate the boys, they tend to leave the villages and go search for work in the cities", Mortenson said. "But the girls stay home, become leaders in the community, and pass on what they've learned. If you really want to change a culture, to empower women, improve basic hygiene and health care, and fight high rates of infant mortality, the answer is to educate girls...If the girls can just get to a fifth-grade level, everything changes."

As of publication in 2006, according to *Three Cups of Tea*, it costs one dollar per month for one child's education in Pakistan or Afghanistan; a penny to buy a pencil. A teacher's salary there averages one dollar per day.

Dan, investing in literacy may not save Canadian lives in Afghanistan today. But it could go a long way – if what Mortenson says is true – to do the seemingly impossible in days and years to come: that is, help the most vulnerable in Central Asia educate themselves and improve their lives, while at the same time foster healthy international relations, and ultimately protect our own security here at home.

Greg Mortenson can be reached at Central Asia Institute (CAI) P.O. Box 7209, Bozeman, Montana, 59771. Phone 406-585-7841. He is online at www.ikat.org. See www.threecupsoftea.com for more info, book reviews, events and ideas.

For each book purchased through this website, seven percent of the price of the book goes to a girl's education-scholarship fund in Pakistan and Afghanistan.



Donna Henningson, Vernon Monthly Meeting

Big Footprints Lead to Small Steps

By Rob Fensom

One foot in front of the other: it's the usual way to get around for most folks, though many of us use cars and trucks which leave bigger footprints than a guy plodding along in his sneakers. Footprints are big news these days, at least carbon ones, not my size nines. Our choices and lifestyles give most of us larger footprints than our feet need. Some time ago I answered a questionnaire and took a workshop on carbon prints. I was actually surprised how low I was compared to many of my classmates, even though my back yard is forty-five acres and my house is twice the size of most folks.

Yes, I am one of a disappearing breed, a farming, Christ-centred, conservative Friend. No, I do not wear braces, black wool pants, and a straw hat. Blue jeans, western shirt, and a cap do me fine. My horsepower is a diesel-burning tractor, and I love any machine that saves my back and is cost-effective on our farm. I run chainsaws, riding-lawnmowers and a "Gator" (mini pickup) all of which burn fuel and give me black points on the carbon scale. So with some trepidation I set about working my way through the book at the workshop, calculating house size, heating system, car mileage for all vehicles, and air mileage per year. No stone went unturned.

When we had all finished I drew the short straw and had to read mine out first. I read the totals in each column and felt shame and guilt. Finishing, I looked up and was met with a circle of faces staring at me. Many seemed to show disbelief and shock. Oh boy, I must be a fuel hog. No one even offered a comment. I felt two inches tall.

As we went around the circle I started to realize that my footprint was the lowest. Maybe all those shocked faces were because mine was so low compared to theirs. I started checking my results, as surely I must have done something wrong. Panicking I re-read the calculations and worried all the more because I could not find my mistake. When we had reached the end of the sharing I could see I must appear to lead a boring life. I claimed no airline flights, no RV, boat or motorized toys, no holidays or weekend get-a-ways, no foreign wines; just some out-of-season fruit and vegetables in winter. This guy was beginning to sound like a stay-at-home bore!

The instructor asked me questions, no doubt to see why I had the lowest score. Well yes, I walk to work - it's only twenty yards across the farmyard. I walk to pick up the mail - the mailbox is on the corner by our pasture. When I was asked about food I began to feel like a lowly peasant. We grow all our own vegetables and fruit in season; have chickens for eggs; lambs and pigs for meat, and fresh milk for some of the year when the goats are lactating. We heat with a large outdoor wood stove. I felt sure this would give me extra points, as we burn a large volume of wood. Turns out the print from the wood stove, for the square footage of our house, even with my large volume of wood, was still well below that of hydro, natural gas, or oil.

On the farm we graze our pastures in rotation. This sequesters large amounts of carbon due to the generation of humus by the die-back of roots each time the grass is grazed. We only run the tractor when haymaking and feeding. With permanent pasture we do no cultivating, and farming organically means even fewer passes over the field with our tractor. As for travel, because we do not commute to work, it frees up mileage for our trips out of the valley. Even with those trips we ended up below average in that category, as commuting is the elephant in the room. Most attending the workshop drove to work, often using two vehicles, one for husband and one for wife.

I am not boasting my eco saintliness. Going into the process I was worried that I would be the one to be tarred and feathered for carbon crimes. The big lesson was not big at all but little: it was all the little things that accumulate into a large carbon footprint. It's not any one thing, which at first made it seem hard to give up anything and change our habits. Then on reflection I realized, if we turned it around it would be easier to change or even give up a few little things. If lots of us did the same, chipping away little by little, we could make a big difference.

We are all called to be good stewards of God's creation, not just the farmers and those close to the land and sea. Many can grow a small garden or support local farmers' markets. Some could walk or cycle to work, even if it's only when weather permits. Also, any time you buy food or items made within a hundred mile limit, you are cutting large pieces off the carbon footprint of those items, while at the same time supporting more favourable labour practices. Think of it as Fair Trade locally. As a farmer I often chuckle over the keenness for Fair Trade coffee, tea, or chocolate, but few give a thought to Fair Trade wheat, lamb, chicken, or pork produced here in Canada.

When George Fox and the early Quakers were forming the first Meetings the whole economy was small and local. Many never left their villages or bought products from outside their county. Today we have the technologies and the know-how to drastically reduce our footprints, and the stuff and clutter we accumulate, without giving up our standard of living and going back to the horse and cart. The problem is willpower. Worse yet, we worry about what other people will think of us. I realize now, that was the reason for my panic at the workshop. First, the fear of being the main carbon culprit in the room, then second, the fear of making a silly mistake and looking stupid in front of everyone. These are silly fears and they are the main reason we are scared to take the first small steps in a new direction. Other people will think we are weird, or more politely, eccentric. Yet Early Friends were strong and fearless despite public opinion, ridicule, and often persecution. Our fears, by comparison, are trivial. To make a difference is fashionable now (though maybe not with Shell or Exxon). These days you will not serve time in the stocks, or have your tongue bored with a hot poker for trying to make a difference to your personal carbon footprint. To be eccentric is not all bad. Remember early Friends were known as the *Peculiar People*, a badge they wore with honour.

I encourage you all to take a few small steps and reduce that size fifteen carbon print to a more human size eight. The Quaker call to simplicity does not mean braces, straw hats, grey bonnets and long skirts, unless you feel called to wear them. It does however mean a life of less, which will give us more. Good husbandry and stewardship are not just for the farmer, they are a burden and a blessing for all of us to share.

*Rob Fensom farms near Salmon Arm BC.
He attends Vernon MM when time and carbon allow.
Rob can be reached for a friendly chat at rancherdaddy@
hotmail.com .*



Book Review:

*Life, Money and Illusion -
Living on earth as if we want to stay*
Mike Nickerson (New Society Publishers)

Reviewed by Genevieve Jones

I like to be informed, but last winter I made myself quite sick reading too many disaster books. *Life, Money & Illusion - Living on earth as if we want to stay*, is different. Read the dedication: "To Daniel, Eliza, Taegan, Lillian, Zephyr, and all the children who will follow, from whom our generation borrows the earth". This author knows it's not over. "There are abundant solutions, well within our grasp, if we choose to apply them", Nickerson writes.

The title outlines the main themes of the book. Life: how a species succeeds. Money: its history and how it works. Illusion: how the current expanding economic system is at odds with our success as human beings.

Mike took ten years to write this book, and it's easy to see why. The scope is massive. Basically, he has outlined the major problems of the world, and proposed solutions. His manner is clear and gentle. He doesn't disparage 'evil doers', or create monsters out of corporations or governments. He calmly explains how people have made the mistakes that got us here.

The book is well researched and easy to understand, even though Mike discusses some very complex topics. He describes the history of money in all its forms: why we use it, how it has worked in the past, and how the economy works - or doesn't! As I read this, I realized, 'Holy cow, I'm reading and understanding economics for the first time in my life! I get it!' Whether it be the science of money, molecules, or media, Mike is always informative without inducing sudden deep sleep. He goes from issue to issue, gently tying them together, defining them and posing solutions as he weaves in personal stories, philosophy, and history.

Problems addressed include human impact on a full planet: pollution, destruction of habitat, loss of agricultural and wild lands; extinctions, resource depletion; inequity among people through domination, exploitation and poverty; failure to consider future generations, and much more. Mike explains the oil/transportation crisis, the role of the media, the evolution of war, overpopulation, unemployment, and unstable economies.

"Our customs, traditions, and economic system developed during a period when the thought that we might disrupt planetary balance was absurd. Consequently, these institutions give few clues for solving today's problems, yet they provide the patterns by which most of our activities are determined. Restructuring these institutions to help us find and maintain balance with the rest of life needs to be a top priority."

This book is full of "Aha" moments. Solutions abound. For instance we could tax only bad things like pollution, resource depletion, and urban sprawl. We could remove taxes from good things like employment and local investment. In our natural tendency to avoid paying more, we would either put an end to the problems, or at least have the problems paid for by the people who generate them in the first place.

What if we actively measure our wellbeing and build this into the economy? What if we attribute value to unpaid work and natural resources, which are currently not accounted for? Why not track the use of resources, measure pollution, and focus on health, while evaluating our ecological footprint every step of the way? Other solutions in the book involve the participation of all members of society in mutual provision: protecting the wellbeing of communities, encouraging local business, working to maintain democracy and getting fair proportional representation.

And it's not all work. "Life based pursuits, or the Three Ls: Learning, Love and Laughter, offer boundless frontiers. The development of our human abilities was the essence of human culture before the commercial era pushed acquisition to its current place of prominence."

Mike wants to nurture understanding, stimulate vision, outline areas for debate and investigation, clarify values, build political will to tackle the crisis, and help us to manifest our courage. Our biggest strength is our ability to connect with each other in purposeful and supportive relationship. We stand at a fork in the road. On one hand, we can continue with exponential growth until resources run out and chaos overwhelms us. On the other hand, we can change our direction toward sustainability now, while we still have the room to make a gentle transition. I pick the latter option. What about you?

On the scale of civilization, the challenge is huge, but it is not beyond our collective abilities. Ours is a time of extraordinary opportunity for exciting, purposeful lives. Should we awaken to the task and shepherd our species

successfully through this time of passage, our generation will be forever honoured by those who follow...never before has there been an organism as competent as humans. We have what it takes to succeed on this planet over the long-term.

Life, Money and Illusion - Living on earth as if we want to stay, is an oasis of clear thinking, sound reasoning, and achievable solutions.

Genevieve Jones, Lanark, Ontario

(Previously published in the Highlands Courier and reprinted by permission from Genevieve Jones. Genevieve writes: "Sadly the Highlands Courier no longer exists... pushed out of the way by the *big boys*". She gave up writing to focus on developing a restorative justice program in the area. "Here's a coincidence - I got the idea for the program from a Quaker.")

Elegy for an Endangered Species

By Michael Phillips

Oh, how I do love being conscious. I love the mysteries: discriminating attention, creative memory, language and meanings. I love the facts of brain function, perception, and the mystery of their relationship.

I love the way our bodies work and change. Being born, growing up, and getting old as a mammal is wonder and delight. Dance, sing, play, and laugh. Doubt and fear, try and fail, try again and succeed. Connect, only connect. Make love and produce babies. Grow with them to maturity. Watch them plunge into the world. We each have an inner life. Credible inner recognitions lead us to real meanings, provided we attend to them. We talk to one another about them even though there are no words with which to capture them. We always die too soon.

Everything in the universe is evidently composed of unimaginably large numbers of unimaginably small wriggles of energy, which combine in symmetries of harmony to make everything, including us, of course. They are inherent in Being. Being is whole, single, and complete. Each single being participates utterly in Being. Something in our inner recognitions seems intrinsic to Being, which we experience as meaning, divine love, glory. We make poems and songs about it shining through us like a light that refracts off our consciousness as love, as compassion; as faith, hope, and charity; as wonder, beauty, justice, grief, joy- we

have myriad names for the meanings, the colours of our understanding that spring from that light in the depths of our lives.

We can know ourselves as whole beings wholly integrated in Being, such that we recognise our fellowship, our common identity, with all humans, with all mammals, with all animals, with all life, indeed with all material objects. We are truly one with all Being and thus with every being.

But then we're too damn smart for our own good. We have learned to dominate and exploit other beings. We propagate without limit. We break the symmetry and ignore the harmony of Being. We spread over the earth, a virulent epidemic of uncontrolled growth. We kill one another by the millions and increase our population by billions. We have systematically depleted the world's forests, killed off thousands of fellow species never to be seen again, exhausted resources, poisoned air and water. We are destroying our own habitat, while serving our simple-minded cupidity and domination. This foolish evasion of the realization of our deep consciousness, raises doubts about our success as a species.

It's a pity that so pretty a species should fail the rigours of evolution. But the universe will not even notice. Being will continue unfazed, streaming with glory. The biosphere will go right on evolving without us. The planet has recovered from worse cataclysms. We're the losers. It does make me sad, but really, all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.

*Michael Phillips, Fern Street
Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting*

The Sacred Web of Connections – Our Hope

By Catherine Verrall

The Thanksgiving Prayer of the Six Nations opens every meeting, political or ceremonial, of the traditional Longhouse people. With this prayer the speaker gives thanks directly to the host of beings who are all our relations within the cosmic circle: our Mother Earth, the waters, the animals, the trees, the plants, the winged creatures, the winds and thunders, the sun, Grandmother moon and stars, and last the Creator Spirit – the Great Mystery. This prayer asks that we humans may be of good mind and fulfill our responsibilities, just as the other beings fulfill theirs.

In his 1961 book, *The Forest People*, Colin Turnbull gives a respectful and fascinating glimpse into the daily lives and spiritual values of the pygmies, in what was then the Belgian Congo. For a year he lived with them as they lived, listening and learning. I am struck with the pygmies' innate sense of absolute connection with their forest world, their humour, their brilliance in maintaining and restoring interpersonal relationships, their joy and lack of fear, their acceptance of death as part of life, their complex and frequent songs "to make the forest happy", for the sake of love for their forest life-giver. As do many other Indigenous peoples, the pygmies show us our human capacity for living in real relationship with our nature-kin, and so also with our fellow humans.

If anything will turn the tide, it will be the switch from studying the world to loving it.

**The Web of Life encircles all
each star and child and tree
We, co-creating, journey on
in the holy mystery.**

Catherine Verrall

Diarmuid O'Murchu teaches that since humans evolved seven million years ago, we have had this "ancestral grace". It evolved into a spiritual sense of relationships within the numinous world, and until the rise of agriculture about 10,000 years ago, and the patriarchal age (within which nearly all of today's religions developed) we humans more or less got it right. We managed to live in harmony within the cosmic energies.

The earth's ability for birthing, nurturing, sustaining, healing, is probably what prompted our ancient ancestors to envisage earth-life in divinely feminine terms... an imminent presence empowering all that grows and flourishes from within the living earth itself.

Our graced ancestors could embrace paradox - nature benign and sometimes destructive, death within life.

They developed rituals to make sense of the paradox... with the person and the surrounding environment perceived as two different expressions of the one-life-continuum (Ancestral Grace. See also Reclaiming Spirituality, O'Murchu)

Celtic Christians expressed this same awareness of the divine within all creation, not just in humans. Creation theologian Matthew Fox calls this "panentheism" - God within all. They recognized the *word* in nature as well as in *the book* or the church structure. They worshiped in the holy outdoors as well as within walls, respected the leadership of women as well as men; knew the sacred within each person and in the whole wondrous cosmos. (Quakerly indeed!) We can learn more about Celtic Christianity from the writings of J. Philip Newell, former Warden of Iona Abbey in the western isles of Scotland. There, Celtic Christianity has been revived, relevant to today. (See *The Book of Creation: An Introduction to Celtic Spirituality* and also *Listening for the Heartbeat of God*).

Thomas Berry, one of the first modern 'ecologists' said: "The natural world is the maternal source of our being...the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human." O'Murchu maintains that this alienation is the root of most of our modern problems. Keith Helmuth in Canadian Yearly Meeting (2009) urged us to know this *presence* in the natural world all around us. He also warned us of impending chaos and destruction, unless we can rediscover our spiritual and physical connection to the *earth process* as a guide for our actions.

So in this most critical time ever, for this Earth and all her beings, what can we do to make a difference? We can pay attention to our own spirit meeting the spirit of the living earth - the "God in all". We can joyfully accept the challenge of co-creating. "We become more humble, grounded and real when we glimpse the cosmic and planetary mystery to which we belong, the interactive revolutionary process within which we are called to be co-creators." (O'Murchu).

The 2008 book, *A Passion for this Earth*, contains chapters by various writers, scientists and activists. Carl Safina challenges us to go beyond communicating information (there is lots of that) to communicating values. We are moved to change our ways because

of feeling inspired. "Values determine how new information will be incorporated into living...We must communicate in ways that will allow people to receive and assimilate messages within their existing moral and ethical context. In this way they feel a self-generated call to act....Hope is the sense that things can really be made better. Hope can motivate...we must allow people to envision new ways to act."

A writer to the editor of *World Watch Magazine* (Jan/04) wrote: "Our world is sacred. If anything will turn the tide, it will be the switch from studying the world to loving it. A spiritual awakening, one that returns us humbly to our magical place within the web of life, will be the start of a chain reaction that allows us to implement change with the conviction and force of a united front."

We can use whatever openings are given to us within our "circles of influence". (Thank you, Tony McQuail, for that insight.) John Woolman challenged us to be "channels of universal love". We could thus be co-creators with the *great mystery*, the *cosmic presence*, the *universal birthing energy*. Like the Longhouse people, we can continually give thanks for this interconnected web: all our relations.

Catherine Verrall
Regina Allowed Meeting



*We are stardust, we are golden,
We are billion year old carbon,
And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden.*
"Woodstock" by Joni Mitchell

The New Cosmology and the Principles of Genesis

By Gerald Harris

Genesis myths are stories to live by. They recount the most distant past in ways that may guide us to successful living in the present. When regarded as fact they have had power within individuals and cultures, but as expanding knowledge disproves their factual accuracy they begin to appear quaint. Looking out my window toward northwest Washington, I may get a warm feeling to think of the first people being placed by *He Who Dwells Above*, over there on top of Mt. Baker, but I won't build my life around that image.

During the past few centuries, people of every faith have watched a secular, scientific understanding of the universe depart from our traditional stories. As we have lost the sense of concrete fact in our old stories we have grieved our wounded ability to take meaning from them. The new view is dazzling, extensive and detailed. It engages us more strongly than our traditional accounts, but we may regret, in it, the lack of luminous spiritual truth. Yet transforming truth is there for us to discover. Such is the view of the New Cosmology.

During the past half-century, increasing numbers of Christian thinkers have been finding spiritual light in the *new story*, sustaining myth inside the facts as we presently know them. Leading the way, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest and physical anthropologist, was writing *The Phenomenon of Man* already in the 1930s, but the Church permitted its publication only posthumously in 1955. Father Thomas Berry (*The Dream of the Earth*, 1988) was chief among the generation who received his work and developed his thought. By now, *New Cosmology* thinkers proliferate and span a wide range of faith perspectives. Canadian writers include professed atheist Stuart Kauffman (*At Home in the Universe*, 1995); and a United Church minister, Bruce Sanguin (*Darwin, Divinity, and the Dance of the Cosmos*, 2007).

Throughout the scientific record of our origins we see a pattern of divergence and re-convergence. In the first moments of material being, the explosion in which space and time had their birth, the expanding universe cloud was already two elements: hydrogen and helium. As the cloud continued to expand, and its atoms to separate, a countering force was attracting them back together, uniting the two elements as the first stars. The pattern was set. Divergence and re-convergence has been at the heart of the subsequent process of universe development, in which humans today are participants.

*Well then can I walk beside you?
I have come to lose the smog,
And I feel myself a cog in something turning.
And maybe it's the time of year,
But then maybe it's the time of man.
And I don't know who I am,
But life is for learning.*

A new separation occurred when those first stars exploded. Their matter transformed into atoms of every element of the Periodic Table and blew into clouds of dust - the stardust from which humans would be created. Teilhard described the pattern as differentiation, interiority and communion. New entities split off, become fully themselves and re-unite into more complex entities. Thus stardust of many elements converged again into our star, which split off its planets, and the process resumed in Earth.

When Earthlife came into being, it quickly diversified. The universe loves diversity. Myriad forms of single-celled hunters pursued a still-more-varied array of prey in warm ocean. A major split arrived when producers of CO₂ separated from producers of O₂. Innovation brought colossal disaster to the existing order of Earthlife, leading to massive extinction. Beyond the disaster though, the O₂ and CO₂ producers came together, interdependent in ecosystems of ever-increasing complexity. The universe loves complex systems. The ever-proliferating forms of life in their ever-developing communities unified further into a single, planetary, self-regulating system: the beginnings of an Earth being.

Within Earthlife, the size and complexity of individual creatures also increased. The large mammals emerged, universal wonders - any wolf or buffalo itself a glory of internally diversified, yet unified function.

In one of the large mammals - us - the familiar process resumed, concentrated inside our skulls. The human brain grew, diversified, developed new functions, and folded back into itself. It was the latest expression of the familiar pattern. And true to the pattern of stars, the human exploded into Self.

In the human Self we may observe a new development of diversity in the universe. Our brain has gained an administrative function that we experience as "I". The new function allows us to perceive ourselves each as unique and separate from all other people and from all beings. Over the past several millennia, our great continuing event, our towering achievement has been the differentiation and interiority of self. A possible re-reading of the Garden of Eden story reveals metaphorically the start of the journey. Children of Adam, we have been walking away from the garden ever since, like atoms streaming out from a starburst.

Self has given us objectivity, given us science, allowed us to stand on the moon and look back at ourselves. In the human 'I' the great organism Earth has now gained consciousness of herself. The material universe has developed a centre of self awareness.

Man, having eaten his fill at the tree of knowledge of good and evil, may now assume individual responsibility for his actions, based on individual attunement to justice. His migration out from the *Eden* of undifferentiated tribal consciousness is almost complete. The prophetic cycle of Adam closes. Man has walked all the way around, and stands again peering into a garden. The name emblazoned on the gates is *Unity*.

Our participation in the process of universe development, having brought us out into differentiation and interiority of so many million human selves, now brings us back to communion. The gates of this garden are too narrow for one person to enter alone, yet wide for all humankind to enter together. To step though it, is for each person to submit to participation as a cell in a new entity of complexity and capacity, far beyond our imagining. The multitude of selves, each maintaining his or her full individual responsibility for justice, may now converge in the single mind, the single heart of unified humanity. Yet Self balks.

*We are stardust, we are golden,
We are caught in the devil's bargain,
And we've got to get ourselves back to the garden.*

The fruit Adam chose to eat was truly perilous. The 'I' once fed and nurtured, grows quickly to dominate, to fully control our awareness, to assume our entire identity. At any suggestion of sacrificing its lordship within us to submit to participation in a greater whole, Self rebels. The 'I' in its familiar defensive posture - Insistent Self - we may recognize as the state of being we have known previously as the Devil. It fears communion as death, yet must now yield as we choose again.

Converging humankind recognizes its body: Earth. In the unified mind and heart of Man, she becomes individually self-aware. Now Earth begins her own journey of conscious differentiation and interiority, in a developmental process, possibly without end.

*Gerald Harris follows Baha'i teachings,
attends Meeting, and cares for the garden at Fern Street*

AWKWARD QUESTION:

Is Heaven bad for Earth?

Proponents of various religions have argued that suffering in the here and now is compensated for by eternal joy in Paradise later on.

*The lake may be polluted, but not to worry,
there is a reward promised to those who believe.*

An extreme view is that the end times - The Rapture, Apocalypse, and New Earth - will sweep away all the mess made on the profane Earth. Few readers of this column will agree with this. But there is need to reconcile any ideas we have about life after death, with what we do to the quality of life before death. And what we do for ourselves we surely should do for other living things. This demands a much broader love. Love not only of humanity, but also of all the weird and unlovable creatures: the mosquitoes, the tapeworms, the slimy and crawling things. Surely caring for a future Heaven should be practised by caring for the present Earth.

*Bert Horwood
Thousand Islands Meeting*

ONE GOOD STORY - THAT ONE

By Bert Horwood

You: Tell me a story, Grampa.

Me: What story would you like?

You: A beginnings story, please.

Me: Okay. In the beginning everything was squashed into an incredibly tiny, immensely heavy lump. Much, much, smaller than the tip of a pin.

You: You mean the head of a pin, Grampa.

Me: No. The point of a pin, the sharp end. The lump exploded and got terribly hot. That was the big bang, a really big bang. Whatever was in the tiny lump scattered, cooled and changed into the matter and energy which formed the galaxies, stars, and other things we can detect in the sky today. The galaxies are still flying apart. Or rather they were flying apart the millions of years ago when the light we measure today left them. What they are doing at this minute no human can possibly know because information gets to us no faster than the speed of light. They are so far away, the light from them takes millions and millions of years, travelling very fast, to get here.

You: Oh. What made the big bang?

Me: No one knows for sure but I have story about that.

You: Okay.

Me: Well I think it was the God being creative, and maybe having some fun, like dumping out a big box of Lego. No person can say anything about God directly because there are no words fit to describe such a one. So this story is a way of trying to get close to it.

You: God really doesn't play Lego does he?

Me: No, it's just a way of trying to picture what can't be pictured. And I'm pretty sure it's not a he; not a person at all.

You: Does God have a name?

Me: That's part of the story. Let's see. How many names have you?

You: Just one, my name is Beth.

Me: That's one of your names but you have others. I call you "Sweetheart," your dad calls you "Dolly." I've heard your mum call you "That Girl" and your friend

across the street calls you Beth-Shmeth. Different people give the same idea different names. We do that with the god of the universe. "Creator" is a good name for the force in the big bang. But lots of people use different names for the same god. Like Logos, Allah, Yahweh, or Brahman, Gitchi Manitou, Dao, Mystery, Grandfather or Grandmother. John Woolman, who wrote wonderful essays, used 60 different names for this being. "Power of the Universe" is my personal favourite name for it, but John Woolman didn't use that one.

You: So where is Power of the Universe now?

Me: The universe is its body. The power is like a breath that flows through everything that came after the big bang. I think of it like an invisible river that flows through and around everything. Only it's really not water, not anything we can catch or weigh. So it's right here, now, gently and quietly with us.

You: Finish the story.

Me: Oh but it hasn't ended yet. The story is still going on and it's about you.

You: I didn't know I was in a story like that.

Me: Well you are. When you wake up and see the sun you are seeing one of the stars formed a long time after the big bang. The sun shoots out energy. Some of that energy makes corn grow. Some of the corn gets made into corn flakes, which you eat at breakfast. The energy of the sun that was in the corn is now in you. Remember your grandmother saying, "Where does *That Girl* get her energy?" Well now you know. You get it from the sun, our nearest star. You remember seeing the stars before bed the other night? How they move across the sky? Well everything in the universe is moving. Our earth is spinning around like a skater doing a spin. And at the same time it is moving around the sun, like the skater spinning and at the same time moving around the rink. You are on a giant midway ride through the universe. Beth, my love, whenever you feel sad, or sorry for yourself; or if you feel like being mean, you should remember that you are a part of this grand story that all started with a big bang long, long ago.

You: (yawn) Thank you Grampa.

Bert Horwood

Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting

Book Review:

God Answers Back

Vernon Mullen, Ottawa, 2008

Reviewed by Erika Koenig-Sheridan

If you've ever wondered how a loving God can allow earthquakes, floods and famines, read this book. The God described by Vernon Mullen (a.k.a. the Seeker) neither causes nor ends human suffering, nor intervenes in human affairs.

That conclusion is drawn from Mullen's life-long reading and reflection on the philosophy of religion, as well as his experience of worship in several world religions. In addition to a God who obeys the physical laws of the universe, the Seeker has found that God is a process, ever "dynamic, ever-growing, ever-developing, ever-changing", and that God exists in everything, in galaxies and oceans, in plants and animals. God is beyond time and space and God is present within us.

In Part One the Seeker says that he "has the effrontery to declare that he is writing an exposition of current views of religion from God's point of view", but it is clear that the Seeker's stance is one of awe in the face of the divine mystery. Descartes' exultant discovery of *cogito ergo sum*, is rephrased in the Seeker's central thesis, as *ego sum, ergo deus est* (I am, therefore God is). Or as an ancient proverb has it: "Knowledge of self is knowledge of God."

Part Two offers us reflections on some idols of religion: scripture, symbols, places, calendar days, and rituals. The greatest of these idols are the scriptures of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths. The Seeker agrees these ancient writings are full of wisdom. As God tells him, "... (they are) an intimate account of human experience in working out a relationship with *Me*, with all the ups and downs of centuries". But they are not the word of God. They were written by men in a specific time and culture, and are full of inconsistencies and problems of translation. An interesting example is the translation of the Hebrew word *almah* (an unmarried woman) as *virgin*. The Seeker suggests that this error was likely a ploy of the early Christians to support their new religion's unique and distinctive origins. Similarly, there is nothing holy in symbols like flags and crucifixes, for example, or places like Lourdes, Mecca, or Jerusalem.

Part Three is a biographical sketch of the milestones in the Seeker's life that shaped the course of his religious testimony, beginning with

childhood in a Reformed Baptist parsonage, and ending with membership in the Society of Friends.

Whether we agree with his views or not, Vernon Mullen has done us a good service by offering his writings to the wider Quaker community. I found this booklet to be an instructive and provocative account of one man's personal response to God; a welcome addition to any Seeker's library. Friends often refer to themselves as Seekers, but seldom as Finders. I'm glad this Seeker found answers, and that he was willing to share them. The challenge to you, dear reader, is to go and do likewise. Respond to the question: what canst *thou* say? And then tell others what you have found.

Erika Koenig-Sheridan
Ottawa Monthly Meeting

It can't be called god, or not-god, or both, or neither, but in order to point it out it is called god.

(Paraphrase of Alan Watts,
submitted by Bert Horwood)

Meditations by Rudolph Steiner

In my heart steams
the strength of the sun
in my soul works
the warmth of the world

I will breathe
the strength of the sun
I will feel
the warmth of the world.

Sun strength fills me
warmth of the world penetrates me

* * * * *

Sunlight streams through
far breadths of space,
birdsong rings out
through open fields of air,
the gift and grace of plants sprout from
the being of earth;
and, in gratitude, human souls
lift themselves to the spirits of the world

*Breathing the Spirit; Meditations for times of
day and seasons of the year*, Rudolph Steiner,
Sophia Books. (Pg.34/35).

Testimony

By Bob McInnes

My environmental awareness probably grew from an early age. As a child I saw that food came from farms and home gardens. As a teen in the US during the Second World War, I experienced that life could exist quite comfortably without many things no longer available or severely rationed, including car travel. I enjoyed cycling around for most of my trips on quiet streets and country roads.

In California, after the war, I saw the explosion of cars and freeways and the growth of suburb “bedroom” communities, isolated from services, work, and school; car dependent, with longer and longer one-person-per-auto commutes to work becoming the norm. For a time, declining public transport and my bicycle got me from A to B. However, eventually I succumbed to the auto.

In the early 50s at a School of Public Health faculty luncheon, I listened to an early report on a study of Southern California’s smog. The study was beginning to identify the automobile as a principle source.

“Live simply so that others can simply live.”

In the 60s, we lived in a small college town where the bicycle was widely used by students and townspeople. It was a small island of sanity in a growing car-dominant society. During this time, we joined the Sierra Club and were sensitized to the importance of preserving wilderness. A neighbor, a soil scientist, made us aware of some of the dire long-term consequences of large-scale industrial agriculture. Daily pesticides were sprayed on the surrounding fields from airplanes.

While Davis itself was a great place to cycle, commuting to work in Sacramento some twenty-five kms away seemed easier to do by motorcycle. However, when we moved to Victoria in 1968 I was determined to find a place to live from which I could cycle to work. Ten kms was doable, even through Victoria’s worst snowfall in 50 years!

For the next 16 years at work, before early retirement, I did a lot of travel in BC for work. Some was pretty extravagant, by government jet or floatplane. However, I tried as much as possible to use public transportation or ride with others. By the mid

70s I had a small portable folding bicycle which made my car even less necessary.

I have always been impressed by Gandhi’s saying: “Live simply so that others can simply live.” Especially in the time since retirement in 1984, I have been increasingly aware of the many implications of that. We are trying to *localize* our lives. Our last move to a downtown apartment was preceded by a small dots-on-the-map study of daily errands. In a shared wall-floor-roof building, our energy needs for heating have greatly diminished. Because of the proximity to most daily needs I can use my bicycle instead of a car. Still, we realize that we are far too dependent on food from afar.

I find the *Guardian Weekly* a great source of world perspective on many issues, including climate change and its consequences throughout the world. Folks, we (in North America) just can’t live as we’ve been doing! I agree completely with one of the authors of the *Twelve Quakers and Equality* pamphlet: “The goal of sustainable development (for us) may need to give way to seeking sustainable regression.” We need more than selling indulgences (carbon trading) so we can keep on sinning! We need to cut back wherever we can.

One area of control for me is travel, including travel to CYM. The fellowship of these gatherings has always been great but jetting across the country is out! *Our* Yearly Meeting with other Friends is the Western Half Yearly Meeting at Sorrento, BC. Also we no longer go to California in February to visit friends and relatives.

At 82, I have no great illusions about changing the world with my efforts alone. However, I am convinced that sometimes the seeds we sow will grow and bear fruit, long after we’re gone, far beyond our biggest dreams. I’ll just keep sowing!

Bob McInnes

Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting

Earth Care Training: Queries from the Railroad

By Maggie Knight

Since I began university two and a half years ago, I've become increasingly uncomfortable with the ethics of flying between Montreal and Victoria to see family, while pursuing a degree in Environment & Economics. Having resolved to reduce my transportation carbon footprint, I found myself departing Victoria, BC at 5:45 a.m. on January 1, 2010 to take a ferry and two buses to Seattle, whereupon I would embark on a five-day train trip to return to my studies in Montreal. I choose Amtrack as it was half the cost of VIA Rail.

Five days on the train without phone or internet left me lots of time to ponder: what is my environmental training leading to? How can we as a society ensure better environmental knowledge and awareness through both formal and informal training? How strong must the articulation of the moral dimension of environmental issues be? Can we rely on people to act ethically if only presented with the information? How do we define *ethical* while allowing the definition to evolve as we learn more about our ecosphere? On the train I was also able to read Andrew Weaver's *Keeping Our Cool: Canada in a Warming World*. I highly recommend it for the latest climate science, as well as an inside-look at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change process, and the media's response to climate change.

I am passionate about the environment and seeking to do my part to forge a sustainable future - of that I am sure. But what that looks like and how I make sure to critically evaluate the training I am receiving - through academic, activist, media, and spiritual circles - merits further and continual attention.

While I found few concrete answers, I found many questions. Perhaps this is the most important principle: to be ethically intentional in your actions, while continually questioning and seeking to improve your understanding.

I hope that these queries speak to some Friends. I welcome your contemplations at msdknight@gmail.com.

Ecological Queries from the Railroad

- How do we seek truth and stare in the face the state of our planet without feeling overwhelmed and thus unable to act?
- How do we remain open-minded, assessing new technologies and environmental economic policies with open but critical minds?
- Are we endeavouring to stay up-to-date with new science and policy developments? Do we as a community of Friends have the expertise to do this well?
- How do we seek to lower our own ecological footprints? How do we decide what is an acceptable level of consumption, given how grossly the average North American's consumption exceeds Earth's carrying capacity?
- How do we decide when we allow ourselves: To fly? To visit relatives? To visit relatives only if they are sick? To be with family at Christmas or other important events? To do service work abroad? How do we interpret this in the context of Quaker principles of simplicity and integrity? How much better or worse are other transportation options?
- How are we helping our local and global communities quickly pursue solutions that go hand in hand with climate justice, and fix the mechanisms in our society which have caused or exacerbated our ecological destruction?
- How does bearing witness to our concern for the Earth affect our ability to bear witness to other concerns and contribute in other ways? Can we embrace a definition of sustainability that encompasses environmental, social, *and* economic spheres?

Maggie Knight, Fern Street
Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting

Do We Love Our Machines More Than Our Children?

By Tony McQuail

Our current problems stem from our failure to understand and accept that we *are* biological organisms on a *finite* planet. This failure has coloured our assumptions of what is real and what is normal. In a century we have burned through millions of years worth of accumulated biomass in the form of fossil fuels: a conflagration based on our beliefs in economic growth and mechanical progress. It seems intuitively obvious to me that we cannot sustain these levels of energy use with only annually renewable energy sources. But what seems obvious to me is missed in most of the discussions of how to address climate change, peak oil, and environmental degradation. Our society has a passion for technofix fantasies that are held out as allowing us to continue on our present trajectory. Don't believe them.

I've been a farmer for nearly forty years; I've been interested in renewable energy for all of them. In the 70s we built a passive solar home; and we put up the first modern, interconnected wind generator on the Ontario Hydro grid in 1978. We were using photovoltaic panels to run electric fences more than twenty years ago, and currently use them to run our livestock water and garden irrigation in the summer. We formed a co-op with other farmers and tried unsuccessfully to make an ethanol still. A team of horses provides farm power. Horses run on homegrown renewable fuel, and have helped us farm organically since 1976.

In the early 70s, while continuing to farm, I enrolled in the environmental studies program at the University of Waterloo. I was interested in Agriculture and looked at the research on energy productivity of different systems. Energy Return on Energy Invested (EROEI) or Net Energy Productivity is the ratio of energy that comes out of a system divided by the energy put into it. What was fascinating was comparing pre-industrial with the industrial agriculture and food systems. Pre-industrial systems showed an EROEI of five to fifty. That is to say that for every unit of energy put into the system between five and fifty units came out. In pre-industrial agriculture, that energy was human labour, draft animals, tools, and seeds saved from previous

crops. The high end of the scale was an intensively managed and layered system, like paddy rice. The low end was simple subsistence agriculture. To me the interesting thing was that agriculture systems did not go lower than five units out per unit in. My guess is that an agricultural system that produced less than five units literally "starved out". It didn't yield enough surplus energy to have a reserve for bad harvests or to raise the next generation.

Industrial agriculture with its fertilizers, pesticides, diesel fuel, big machines, transport, processing and distribution networks, has an EROEI of zero point one. In other words ten units of energy are used in the system to get one unit of energy to the table. Industrial Agriculture is a system for converting petroleum into food in an extremely wasteful fashion. Unfortunately, what we have done with industrial agriculture has been echoed across our whole economy, where we have redesigned our activities to use ever-greater amounts of energy as we replace labour with fossil fuels. When we first started this substitution, the EROEI of petroleum was impressive. Early oil wells often produced over one hundred units of energy for every unit spent in drilling. They were the easy oil wells to get to. Today's light crude is returning between six to eight units for every unit in. The Tar sands may be getting down to one out for one in, if you count all the hidden subsidies. As EROEI decreases, environmental impact increases, and the driver of our past one hundred years of economic growth collapses. Without a high EROEI the rate of growth economists believe necessary for a healthy economy is impossible. Trying to achieve those rates of growth with low EROEI energy systems will be incredibly destructive and counter-productive.

The reason is the "compost conundrum". We've all heard of the greenhouse effect, but I'd like to offer an additional phrase to help us grapple with the challenges ahead. We have a greenhouse on our farm. I understand that CO₂ acts like glazing, helping to hold radiant heat inside the earth's atmosphere. But I also think that if I took all the biomass that I grew in the greenhouse over the course of the summer, and torched it inside the greenhouse some night, the greenhouse would still experience a sudden rise in temperature – even if there were no sunlight. Our burning of the fossil fuels is taking the biomass accumulated by millions of years of photosynthesis and burning it in the geological equivalent of a night. So I'm concerned that we not get so focused on CO₂ that we lose track of the cause of the problem, which is our intensity and scale of energy use. CO₂ sequestration and carbon

credits attack the symptom but not the root cause of our problems, and delay our addressing the real issue.

As an organic farmer I make compost piles. These heat up, not because of sunlight, but because of the rapid increase of microbial populations within the compost pile, and the heat buildup from their metabolic activity. They are oxidizing carbohydrates within the compost pile and generating heat from the rapidity of their growth.

When one unit of input energy produced five to fifty units of food, our food really only contributed a fraction over one unit of waste heat to the biosphere, for each unit of food we ate. Once we started eating food produced in the industrial system, each unit of food eaten contributed eleven units of waste heat – one for the food eaten and ten for the energy used to grow it. If we look at human population, it is on a J - curve similar to the increase in microbes in a compost pile. If we add in the additional energy we humans now use over and above the energy value of our food, we see an incredible increase in our energy use and waste heat generation. A modern North American probably produces one hundred times as much waste heat from their machines as from their body heat. We've figured out how to turbo-charge our compost pile.

We are not going to create a sustainable society by feeding our food to our machines. We are going to completely destabilize society if we plan to take the food out of the mouths of the poor to put into the tanks of SUV's and Jet planes. We will also continue to destabilize the ecological life support systems of this planet. But we are reaching the point of "peak oil" or as Richard Hindberg has written "peak everything". What can we do?

Well, the answer seems to me to be right under our noses. We need to redesign our economies and societies to run on the energy that goes into our mouths. And we need to remember how to produce that energy (call it food for ease of comprehension) in a manner that yields an EROEI of five or more. As a society we need to develop an ecological agriculture around and within our urban centres, where food is grown with a minimum of energy input and a maximum of ecological design. We need to redesign our cities to be walkable, bikeable, breathable, and livable. Most of the energy to make the city function should come from the food we eat. If we did this, then we could likely use photovoltaics, wind generators, methane digesters, and convert some biomass into liquid fuels to provide the energy to run public transit and communications

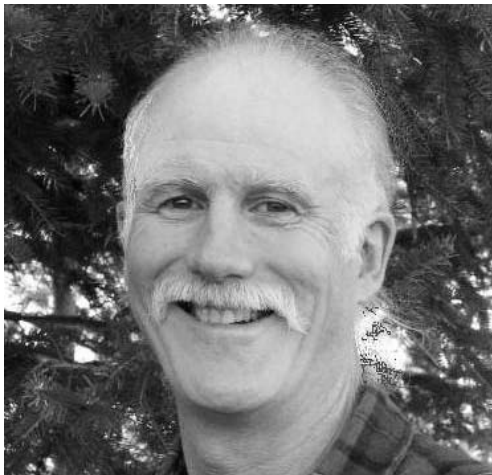
technologies, and even some tractors and combines in larger farm fields. And we could use our remaining petroleum far more carefully to bridge the gap between where we are today and where we need to be if we are to have a tomorrow.

We may love our machines – but they don't love us. We need to remember that, as we make choices. We need to love our children more than our machines. If we don't learn this there will be hell to pay. Most of the *new technologies* have dismal EROEIs. When Petroleum had a 100/1 EROEI it meant that for one hundred units of CO₂ released by burning that petroleum, only one unit of CO₂ was released in producing it. With a technology that yields only four units per unit of input energy it means that twenty-five units of CO₂ are released in producing one hundred units of energy

our machines don't love us

What are the global warming implications of our high-tech, low-EROEI plans to keep fueling our Machine Culture? The whole global warming debate seems to ignore the law of thermodynamics that states that: all energy eventually ends up as waste heat. The more energy we use the more waste heat we dump into the Earth Ecosystem. The act of burning fossil fuels and the act of fissioning Uranium adds to the heat-load of our planet. In the current climate, desperate strategies for turning tar into liquid fuel, or beaming solar energy from space into our ecosystem to become waste heat, hardly seem like wise plans.

I would be much happier if the bright minds seeking techno-fixes and the stacks of dollars funding them, were focused on learning to live with solar power from space that we get on an annual basis. For virtually all our species' existence on the planet, we managed on the solar energy stored in our food. Stonehenge, the pyramids, and Tical were built with that energy. Redesigning our society to run on food that we grow ourselves may hold out far more hope for "Safe, Clean, Renewable Energy", than high-tech fantasies. The rhetoric reminds me of the past enthusiasm for Nuclear Fission, which bankrupted Ontario Hydro. Ratepayers are still paying for it with the "debt retirement charge" on every bill. We have yet to deal with fully decommissioning a nuclear plant or coming up with a permanent solution to high level radioactive fuel wastes. The environmental costs of that "energy too cheap to meter" fantasy, have been swept into the future.



Let us be careful not to commit vast quantities of our limited resources to high-tech adventures that are likely to make matters worse, not better. We are more likely to survive and prosper if we return to being tool users and minimize our reliance and addiction to machines. We can set our personal and societal design criteria to rejoin the community of life on this planet. Rediscovering our own metabolic energy can be the key to our survival; it would address the causes of both the compost conundrum and the greenhouse effect.

Tony McQuail

Kitchener Monthly Meeting

(A founder of the Ecological Farmers Association of ON)

Can Gardening be a Form of Social Protest?

By Sheila Havard

I have always considered the earth to be a sacred trust, and its dwellers as its stewards. My parents were nature-lovers and we were avid hikers. Gardening was a practical affair; it supplemented our diet. My father grew up in the heyday of the British allotment (community garden) movement, encouraged by the 1887 Allotment Act, and my mother was a model of thriftiness.

As new immigrants to Canada in the 1970s, my partner and I turned the sod and planted a small rectangle on 100 arpents (84 acres) of abandoned bush near St.-Gabriel-de-Brandon, Quebec. It was my first direct contact with the soil, and I was hooked! Again we were mainly motivated by reasons of economy. Our farmer neighbours marvelled at the variety in our

plot - not just tomatoes, cucumbers and corn, as was customary in that area. They didn't grow crucifers and had never set eyes on a leek!

Gradually it dawned on me that gardening was more than simply growing food for the table. In the 60s and 70s I devoured the trendy books on root-cellarling, tofu, communal living, back-to-the-land philosophy and the like. The ideas put forth had a common thread: reconnecting with the earth; the basis of life. We could achieve greater simplicity by being less dependent on agribusiness intermediaries, waste-producing packaging, and the hustle and bustle of the supermarket with its bright lights and mesmerizing music.

What is simpler than returning from your backyard with an armful of veggies to cook for dinner? Such a lifestyle, as well as being healthier, enabled us to live in greater harmony with the environment. Being vegetarian - or practically vegetarian - imposed a lighter burden on the planet. I was still unclear which came first, healthy living or living in tune with the planet. Perhaps it didn't even matter.

As the family dispersed I continued to work the ninety-by-thirty-three-foot plot on my acre in Southwestern Ontario. With the advent of spring I itched even more eagerly to get down on hands and knees and grub in the earth. I had witnessed East African subsistence farmers providing for families on a fraction of my acreage. I had also seen peasants in the former Yugoslavia, tethering goats in roadside ditches because they lacked pasture land. This experience made me feel spoiled and privileged. Here I was positively squandering land! How could I personally respond, however meagerly, to such an unfair distribution of the earth's bounty?



Years before, at a family picnic, my toddler daughter was caught red-handed disposing of her lunch. Her grandmother gently reprimanded her with the standard guilt-producing reminder about the “poor starving African children”. I suppressed the temptation to point out that wasted bread in one continent and starvation in another were not necessarily connected.

Now with fewer mouths to feed, surplus produce became a concern. I started marketing the excess and collecting donations in support of Alternatives to Violence and income-generating workshops in Uganda. Eliminating waste in this way gave me a great deal of work and even greater satisfaction. In 2009 we raised nearly \$1,000

My garden provides much pleasure. It is my hobby, my passion and my therapy. The miraculous speed of new growth each spring, transforming minute sprouts into a disorderly tangle of greenery, is spiritually uplifting. There is nothing like a stint of heavy hand digging, or clay-bashing to relieve stress, and nothing more relaxing than idly plucking out weeds on a sunny day. I have what may be an outdated belief in the nobility of manual labour.

In the garden I allow myself to putter. In the garden I have the luxury of not forcing myself to be efficient. Gardening is simultaneously a solitary activity - at its best akin to meditation, and a sociable one. It provides fascinating topics for friendly, over-the-garden-fence chitchat, such as the year's bounty or its crop of pests and diseases. What can be more congenial than exchanging gifts of surplus produce?

Simplicity and gardening go hand in hand. Over the years I have adapted my lifestyle to my garden, rather than vice versa. I try to eat what is in season – the 100-foot meal rather than the 100-mile diet - supplemented by what I freeze: tomatoes, Chinese gooseberries, huckleberries, and other berries. Summer menus focus on salads, and winter menus focus on stews made with roots that last until spring in the root cellar. My food purchases consist mainly of grain and dairy products. Lemon balm and mint from the greenhouse provide herb tea all winter, and Belgian endive grown in barrels provides crisp salads in mid-winter.

A few alterations to the house have reduced fossil fuel use. The solar panel provides much of the hot water in the summer. The appliances are energy efficient, and I manage happily without a television and a clothes dryer. A line in the greenhouse serves me fine.

My efforts may not make a dramatic dent in my carbon footprint, but I feel they are steps in the right direction and I am eager to progress further along the same path. My lifestyle of living close to the earth feels right. I could even say I have been led to adopt it.

*Sheila Havard
Coldstream Monthly Meeting*

Growing Green and Slow in Victoria

By Diana Mitchell

Five women gathered on a rocky hill in suburban Victoria to ponder what we would do differently for our co-operative organic garden in the year 2010. What had started serendipitously in the winter of 2009 with a good idea, had morphed into a whirlwind conversion of most of this .20-acre lot into an organic veggie and flower heaven, with provender beyond our dreams. It had also fed our spirits and friendships in ways we could not have predicted. It built muscle, challenged us, and encouraged creative juices to flow abundantly. We often were awestruck by what we'd done. We laughed a lot. We got more furrows in our brows from barely keeping ahead of the deer and rabbits, who also liked what we'd done. The notion of Slow Food began to take hold of us all. We were living green. We were doing our bit for the planet, and liking it.

For twelve years I'd encouraged friends to bring and drop their garden waste down the back bank. That bank had been covered with wild blackberries, bindweed and broom. It careened off at a steep angle and roved along into my neighbour's patch of blackberries that constantly threatened to return up to my house. My son, his friends and I had worked hard with pick axes, mattocks and pikes, clearing the cliff over the first years we lived here. Our plan was that by dumping all manner of garden refuse down the cliff we'd build up a platform; eventually we'd be able to plant there. Little did we know that process would take years. There are twenty Christmas trees; tons of branches, cuttings and soft compostables down there. As well there are ninety bales of spoiled hay and straw, fifty yards of leaves, and as many yards again of leaf mulch provided by the Municipality. All was schlepped from the front of my house, around one side or the other, and heaved over the bank. Each year the accumulation would look marvellously like

a platform of detritus. I always thought “Oh boy! This coming spring I can plant there.” What a laugh.

Each spring the platform would have composted, and the bones of the trees and branch cuttings would appear skeletally up out of that lovely stuff. So year after year, in growing patience, my friends and I continued to dump. We filled it all with the barn stuff, leaves, and papers. What soil I had went on top. It built faith in a process that is infallible. It built certainty that by and by there *would* be a lovely rich bed into which I could heave some seeds, and they would grow. The planting finally was possible in the late spring of 2009. It had been a long time coming.

As those years went by, I’d gardened in small plots and raised beds that my son, and more recently, also my daughter-in-law had framed for me. As there had been no soil at all on this rock when I moved in, I either had to buy or build it. I built it with everything compostable and that I could beg, or take from heaps of leaves folks left at their curbs. Every bit of paper or cardboard, every gift of barn shavings/poop from friends’ stables went into these areas. The soil it made was black, rich loam. Red worms made their way here and stayed, with the result that birds came in the thousands over the years. Squirrels buried acorns and hundreds of Garry Oaks grew annually. For the first years I tried giving them away and some did get planted on Southern Vancouver Island as a result. But most I’d pull up and throw into the compost bins. What grew here was abundant, healthy, beautiful, lush, and oh so rewarding in all ways.

Now the platform was ready to plant on. It was huge. Friends decided they too would like to garden here. I rushed and got fifty more bales of spoiled hay, and placed them along my crazy property line at the back. The result looked a bit like a brick wall. A friend and I covered the wall with blue tarps, tucked a bit under and a bit over on the outside of the southern wall. It was like creating walls for an enormous 2500 square foot swimming pool, but we filled it up from shallow to deep end with organic material.

One of the f/Friends took charge of planting gajillions of seeds we’d traded for, and bought at Victoria’s Seedy Saturday last February. I think every seed she planted came up. We were unfazed. Ignorance is bliss.

We made gates that were chicken wire at the bottom, deer netting on top, stapled and held together with Guerrilla tape. We hammered rebar where the gate went in at the back. We attached all

to vast lengths of black net deer fencing. The closings were jute string. It worked. We were Little Engineers.

We strung the deer fencing for about 150 feet along the vulnerable south end of the property, attaching it to ten-to-twelve-foot bamboo poles we’d harvested at another Friend’s property. One of us tied on flashy Christmas ribbon and gaudy pink surveyor’s tape so these tails blew in the wind. It went all along the fence line to keep the deer at bay. Some ideas are better than others.

The gates worked. The fence worked for most of the growing season. By the time all our produce was lush, lush, lush, the deer broke through the fencing. Dadrati! We’d find and fix. The deer would move to a new spot and crash through. But there was more than enough for us all. We gave in and shared. *Oh my the harvest...*

Everything was so good: beans, squash, tomatoes (oh boy, those tomatoes!) peas, carrots, herbs, you name it, we had it, and it was goooooood. We didn’t water the potatoes enough. This year we’ll work out a drip irrigation system, figure out how to defy the deer with our fencing, and likely build a greenhouse along the lines of one a Friend illustrated to us: a simple lean-to of wood framing with eleven mil. plastic covering discarded by a local greenhouse.

Nothing we did was onerous. Five women, gently pacing themselves, finding the tasks each not only liked to do, but was able to do, and operating at a high level of companionable good will, made the entire project therapeutic rather than hard. We had chairs set here and there in the garden. Often I’d be out at five a.m. to sit and watch, to absorb, in expectant waiting. This year I will stand in the garden and speak to God. I will give thanks liberally. We friends will labour long and hard and know when each day is done that the planet we know in front of our eyes is loved and has loved us well. We are the Slow Food Movement, and it is good.



Diana Mitchell, Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting

Reports:

School of the Spirit: Can it be transplanted to western Quakers?

By Lynne Phillips

Why did I write this while on the Victoria Clipper (hydroplane ferry) on a cold sunny day in December, heading for Victoria from Seattle, Washington? I wanted to tweak your interest in an exciting possibility for spiritual nurture and growth, using the model of a well-established Quaker program for adults. I was invited to participate in a planning session to consider the feasibility of a two-year study program, similar to the School of the Spirit currently offered only in the eastern United States. The questions we considered were: do western Quakers want such an opportunity closer to home? Can it be funded so that it is affordable for participants? What would be the benefits to individual Quakers, to their Monthly Meetings, and Yearly Meetings? Would Quakers need to do the whole two years, or could parts of the program be useful and accessible to Quakers?

Thirteen Quakers were invited from: Western Half Yearly Meeting of Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM); Alaska Friends Conference (YM); North Pacific YM, and Northwest YM. There was one Quaker from North Carolina who serves on the School of the Spirit Ministries board, and is a core teacher in the Spiritual Nurturer program. The short answers to the questions are as follows. Yes, we think western Quakers need and want something like the School of the Spirit somewhere on the west coast. We hope that it will be affordable to many Quakers, given the already-demonstrated benefits to individuals and Meetings, based on almost twenty years of experience in the east. We recognized that many Quakers wouldn't be able to take the full two-year program, therefore the plan would include the possibility of retreats, and one-day workshops as samples of the riches in this program.

What is the School of the Spirit? The program in the east offers three courses of study. *On Being a Spiritual Nurturer* requires a two-year commitment with an eight-day residency session (a total of thirty-two residential days). *Silent and Contemplative Retreats* are residential long weekends. The *Way of Ministry*

is one year of study with four residencies (seventeen residential days). The *Spiritual Nurturer* program combines:

Clear Christian grounding with the ability to listen and recognize spiritual opening and committed journeys in whatever form they appear. This rare combination helps to lead one into deeper spiritual understanding and brings forth a greater tenderness with each other.

Other characteristics of the *Nurturer* program: are that it:

Fosters a deeper appreciation of the rhythms of the contemplative life as lived out within a faith community; strengthens understanding and appreciation of the roots of Quakerism, its theology, practices and traditions; enlarges the understanding of the life of a faith community grounded in God and the service of members within it, thereby building up the Religious Society of Friends.

The fee for the *Spiritual Nurturer*, 2009-2011 program is \$6,100 for tuition and residency. (www.schoolofthespirit.org).

Can this opportunity be realized for Canadian Quakers in the west? Individuals will have different answers depending on finances and flexible life schedules. Plans to raise funds are being made to assist with finances. Western Quakers may choose to have a different name and more independence from the School of the Spirit, which meets in several locations on the eastern coast of the US. It is a ministry of the Standing Committee on Worship and Care of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. If the prospect of advanced study in the Quaker faith tradition excites you, email Christine@whidby.net to be placed on a contact list.

Lynne Phillips, Fern Street
Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting



Canadian Friends Service Committee

At the recent semi-annual Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) gathering I was delighted to hear the following information. It gave me cause to cheer (in silence) at least three times:

- The Quaker International Affairs Program (QIAP) book, *The Future Control of Food: A Guide to International Negotiations and Rules on Intellectual Property, Biodiversity and Food Security*, shared the Derek Cooper Award for Campaigning and Investigative Food Writing, from the British Guild of Food Writers, with Jamie Oliver, The Naked Chef, for his TV series, "The Ministry of Food".
- For the first time we tried the new approach of a Consent Agenda Meeting and it seems to have worked very well. Adapted from Philadelphia Meeting, a "Consent Agenda" was used to deal quickly with agenda items that are standard, and do not appear to require seasoning. Essentially an 'omnibus bill' - a group of items - is circulated ahead of time and all are presented together for passing in total. We agreed to use this practice in future meetings. Thank you Philadelphia Meeting for sharing!
- We welcomed new members to our Committee. Tamara Fleming, Judy Gilbert, and Nat Egan-Pimblett joined Quaker Peace and Social Concerns. Al Crippen and Sarah Dick joined Quakers Aboriginal Affairs Committee. They chose their committees after spending time with each one. We look forward with joy to their new energy and expertise.

While we celebrated our successes, CFSC also recognized the important work that needs to be done. Friend Vince Zelazny reminded us very clearly of the significance of our purpose. The work we do comes from our concern about the incredible injustices occurring, and the plans for future destruction of previous gains. It was sobering to hear of the current government's plan to ignore well-founded knowledge about how to: prevent crime and support everyone involved in the criminal justice system; build new super jails; increase mandatory sentences, and to reduce resources to support rehabilitation. These actions will have an immeasurably harmful impact on our society if allowed to develop as planned.

The CFSC Programme Committee is dedicated to addressing issues such as these, and Quakers Fostering Justice needs all the support they can get to challenge these backward plans.

Penni Burrell

Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting

Highlights of Representative Meeting

November 2009

A favourite aspect of Representative Meeting (RM) is the short time we take to share how our Meetings fare. I always find inspiration in the creative ways Meetings embody Quaker spirituality. This year we were asked to focus our comments on responses to items raised at CYM, and news specific to the growth of our Meetings. We also were asked to hold in the Light Friends who are struggling with health issues or loss. After hearing reports and asking questions we settled into a spirit of worship and thankfulness before closing on Friday night.

Saturday morning business began with Adrian Dolling of Finance Committee unpacking the particulars of the committee's recommendations. At a certain point he paused briefly, then proceeded with: "Let me go back to the seventeenth century". Being able to laugh at ourselves had the marvelous effect of affirming who we are, and of preparing us for further development.

In its Summer 2008 issue, the *Canadian Friend* published an article entitled *Report: Implementing C'nR - You can Help!* written by Marilyn Manzer and Susan Stevenson. This article states that *the most important discovery of C'nR was that Canadian Quakers know too little about our history, our practices, our organization, and our beliefs. C'nR strongly recommended that we must rectify this if the Religious Society of Friends is to continue to exist in Canada. Hence it is recommended a Quaker Education Program to be staffed to provide a variety of resources for visitors to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups. It will decide on such important things as new Canadian pamphlets. Equally important, C'nR recommended providing more funding for gatherings of Young Friends and the hiring of a part-time Youth Secretary.* (Pg. 20). Adrian informed us that \$23,000 is still needed before hiring can proceed to get these programs on their feet.

Other items that arose at RM are as follows: Programme Committee will be sending out a list of queries to help discern whether a Special Interest Group

(SIG) is ready for presentation at CYM. This is not to discourage the moving of the spirit on short notice, but in part is a way of helping Programme Committee prepare for scheduling the numerous SIG's it is asked to coordinate. A minute from the Monthly Meeting regarding the SIG at the time of application is strongly recommended.

The paper, *Big Countries, Few Quakers*, will be discussed at Yearly Meeting 2010. Monthly Meetings are asked to review this document in advance. Members are also asked to review the proposed *Faith and Practice* and send comments to the committee by February 28, 2010, for approval at CYM 2010. (Not nit-picky stuff but noticeable omissions, etc.)

We are also asked to be thinking about a potential study leader from the east for the 2011 CYM. Suggestions can be referred to representatives who will then contact Program Committee.

In closing, I acknowledge how impressed I am with the way Quakers conduct their business. Each clerk, committee representative, and Monthly Meeting representative is clearly invested in the life of CYM, and is committed to making it vivacious and wholesome. Just as committed were the volunteers from Ottawa Monthly Meeting, who provided excellent food and accommodation for yet another November meeting. Thank you.

*Julie Robinson
Edmonton Monthly Meeting*



Julie with son York

Taxes for Peace: Really?

By Donald Woodside

When even Obama is getting drawn in by the war game, it is more important than ever to signal our rejection of violence as a means to solve international problems. Conscience Canada (CC) was established in 1983 to facilitate war tax resistance by operating a trust account into which taxes could be deposited, to promote legislation enabling Canadians to pay only for peace, if their consciences so directed them; and to educate Canadians about freedom of conscience. The first Peace Tax Trust Fund was built on a Quaker foundation by a committee of Victoria Monthly Meeting in 1978. It is a worthy offspring of the Quaker Peace Testimony. It has had the support of multiple Private Member Bills in the House of Commons, and recently from an outspoken Senator as well. Yet the vast majority of Quakers have been reluctant to take action and redirect their taxes. Why?

I explored this question with a group at Yonge St. Half Yearly Meeting held at NeeKauNis July 2008. Their concerns echoed those I have heard in many quarters. I will try to answer each of them briefly.

Even if we redirect our taxes, it won't reduce the military budget. This is true, and follows from parliament's prerogative to set the national budget. That is a cornerstone of parliamentary democracy. Nonetheless, our taxes are being conscripted to pay for war, and we have the capacity individually to signal our refusal to cooperate. Conscientious Objectors (CO) to military service likewise refused to cooperate, knowing they could not reduce the size of the armed forces.

If I redirect nine percent of my taxes, they will take the military part from the other 91 percent. Conscience Canada's answer up to now has been that while the money is in our hands, and we know that nine percent is heading to the military, then it is our responsibility to resist, even if we can't control what happens to the rest. Recently, the Mennonite Church of Canada expressed concern about this point, and as a result the most recent Private Members' Bill was altered to state that all of a CO's taxes would go into a special peace fund, not just 9 percent; and this fund could be spent on any non-military function of government.

The money I put into the Peace Tax Fund isn't actually doing anything. Any depositor can ask CC to transfer the deposit to our operating budget and spend it; or they may withdraw it and donate it. But its function

in the Fund is to demonstrate that tax *has* been paid; and the depositor can recover it after the government seizes the taxes owed.

If the government spends the money on any non-military function, as in the current Bill, it isn't going towards peace. Conscience Canada has been a supporter of the Department of Peace Initiative since 2005. Such a department would offer an ideal repository for our redirected military taxes.

If we can do this, anyone can refuse anything on grounds of conscience This floodgates argument scares politicians, who don't see how they would identify legitimate conscience. However, conscientious objection has centuries of historical precedents in Canada. It is clear that it is now our taxes that are being conscripted, and not our bodies. Other grounds may emerge for conscientious objection to taxation, and each case will need to be judged on its merits.

There is no precedent in any country for conscientious objection to taxation. The clearest precedent was set in Ontario, then Upper Canada, in 1841, when after decades of lobbying, the government agreed to allow Quakers, Mennonites, and others to redirect their militia taxes to building roads and bridges.

Canada's armed forces are for peacekeeping. This has been a major sticking point for most of the life of CC, but it is now clear that it is not true. Canada provides only sixty or so of the 60,000 UN Peace Keeping troops worldwide.

We have a 'Responsibility to Protect' and may need military force to intervene. Just as Canadian Quakers are divided over Responsibility to Protect, so is Conscience Canada. The board has agreed that it is possible that in some situations, a policing style of Peace Keeping, requiring accountability for every use of force and civilian oversight, would be acceptable. A police force could do the job.

From a political point of view, probably the biggest obstacle is the *floodgates argument*. CC is currently working on an improved, tighter, and more persuasive response.

From a personal point of view, fear of the Canada Revenue Agency is probably the biggest obstacle. CC is promoting three options for supporters; first, a letter (or e-mail using our web-based Peace Tax Return) without any tax implications; second, a letter of support, plus a symbolic redirection, which could be as small as ten or twenty-five dollars; third, full redirection of military taxes. Each and everyone of the steps is of value. It is essential to build the base of support. As Honorable

Jean Augustine says on the Conscience Canada DVD: "politics is a team sport". Who is on this team? See www.consciencecanada.ca.

Donald Woodside
Hamilton Monthly Meeting

Nuclear Energy Concern:

Naïveté and Possibilities (lost?)

By Colin Stuart

Over forty years ago I was a young and somewhat naïve university student in residence, looking for a much needed summer job. In previous summers I had worked in the bush in northern Alberta, cruising timber and mapping groundwater resources. I knew how to live in the bush for extended periods, how to rely on a compass (there was no such thing as GPS in those days) and how to blaze a trail. I knew how to avoid getting lost, or if lost, how to survive.

A student from the geology department gave me a contact for a company looking for prospectors to work in northern Saskatchewan. Because of my bush experience I was quickly offered a job. The employer was a small mineral exploration company prospecting near Wollaston Lake. In late May, after spring breakup, we were flown into the area with tents, some food, and basic prospecting gear. At no time was I told that we would be looking for uranium. I knew vaguely that just north of us, at what is now the Rabbit Lake Mine, uranium had been discovered, but at the time it was just another metal to me. When I asked if we were to be searching for uranium, I was shown samples of chalcopyrite and told that it was associated with copper (which it is) and that is what we would be looking for, then mapping and claiming. I was not told that in certain geologic circumstances chalcopyrite can indicate the presence of uranium. In retrospect it is what *I was deliberately not* told that is important. We were discouraged from any discussion of uranium, with the excuse that most of the deposits had already been found. Additionally, what bothers me to this day, is that to determine the presence and quality of chalcopyrite it was often necessary to drill and blast outcrops or boulders to get "fresh" exposure. I was not told that this risked releasing radon gas, even though I was responsible for the drilling and blasting.

Minor though it seems in retrospect, I have never forgotten the lesson about my own naïveté, and the deception, by omission, of the company and its field geologists. This experience, with the very front-end of the nuclear cycle, cautions me to look carefully and critically at proposals for expanding nuclear power; and to listen not just to plumpily-funded industry and government proponents, but also to those with knowledge and experience who are not as often heard.

It was therefore good to have the knowledge and experience of Gordon Edwards, Robert Del Tredici, and Tim Weis at Yearly Meeting last summer. They spoke critically and knowledgeably about the many risks inherent in the expansion of nuclear energy, including most significantly, in my view, that of weapons proliferation. However, later, as I listened to Friends discussing nuclear energy, it was evident that climate change was very much on Friends' minds. One possible way to deal with this urgent and immense problem appeared to be increased reliance on nuclear energy, in an energy mix which might also include renewables, such as solar and wind in a minor or lesser role. One need go no further than the industry website of the Canadian Nuclear Association to see this same glib thinking presented in a pleasant if somewhat anodyne way. It is at this point that my experience of many summers ago emerges, and I have to say to myself, and directly to Friends, "don't be naïve; something is missing here".

There are many things missing, not the least of which are the multiple risks from nuclear waste and weapons proliferation pointed out by Gordon, Robert, and Tim. In addition to these crucial concerns, another significant and persuasive part of the presentations provided evidence that: renewable, non-carbon-emitting sources of energy, combined with significant but reasonable conservation and heat recovery, can fulfill our energy requirements without resort to refurbished or new nuclear reactors. At the same time we can reduce considerably our dependence on hydrocarbons (coal, oil, and natural gas). The price of electricity from nuclear facilities, according to major investment houses, will be about fifteen cents per kilowatt hour (kw/h). This price is very high - well into the billions of dollars for each reactor. The Ontario government has put the construction of new reactors on hold because of the cost. Construction time can be lengthy - up to ten years. The price for energy from conservation and renewables would be much less, and

the environmental and financial risks much lower. The baseload requirements - for example that basic energy amount, especially electricity, which must constantly be available at any given time - can be reduced by conservation. Lowered baseload requirements can be filled with a suite of renewable energy sources, plus energy storage and transmission technologies that are known and available.

In short, conversion to, and reliance on renewable energy can be done, and in many parts of the world is being done. It is a question of political will. Canada is falling far behind, despite the evidence that research opportunities and new jobs in installing and using renewables is real, and sustainable.

In discussion at CYM, at least two additional points were raised. The first was the fact that France relies on nuclear reactors for over seventy percent of its power with seeming success. Two comments are in order. First, France has little or no uranium and must rely on imports from other countries, most notably Canada and Australia. In other words France does not feel the serious environmental effects of mining with the release of radon gas and toxic tailings. They leave that particular environmental problem to Saskatchewan. Second, at the other end of the nuclear cycle, France now faces serious problems of waste disposal. They don't know where to put the radioactive waste, and no communities in France seem to want it buried beneath them. It is exported to highly dangerous and polluted sites in Russia, or reprocessed with all the attendant problems of nuclear weapons proliferation, and radiation hazards.

Friends at CYM also referred to China, which is now in the process of building about twenty new reactors and has plans to increase its reliance on nuclear energy to four percent of its energy needs (from two percent) by 2020. One can understand the dilemma China faces with its intense growth and heavy reliance on coal. However it should be noted that in 2006 China was getting sixteen percent of its energy from renewables, including hydro. Today China is leading in research and production of wind turbines and solar technologies. In addition, China has immense potential for conservation. They are among the most inefficient users of energy, especially in the industrial sector. Similar to France, although to a lesser extent, China relies on imports of uranium and is searching the world for new sources, with a focus on Australia. Eventually China will face the same waste disposal problems that every other country with reactors faces.

In Canada, the first estimates for a waste disposal facility and processes capable of handling the very dangerous waste from our reactors, exceeds twenty billion, and that is calculated in 2002 dollars. Even at this price there is no getting around the fact that the waste will remain toxic for *hundreds of thousands of years*.

It is interesting that in 2003 the most informed engineering proponents of nuclear power at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) undertook a lengthy and very detailed study of the future of nuclear power. They came to the conclusion then, that its viability needed to be demonstrated in practice. In 2009 they updated their study, noting particularly that viability had not been demonstrated and that, "...nuclear power will diminish as a practical and timely option for deployment at a scale that would constitute a material contribution to climate change risk mitigation" (*The Future of Nuclear Power*: <http://web.mit.edu/nuclearpower/>). James Lovelock, the renowned scientist who proposed the Gaia hypothesis, at one time said that nuclear power may be the only route out of the global warming crisis. Now he suggests that a more appropriate approach is to engage in massive carbon capture using charcoal or bio-char, one of the oldest proven technologies in the world, and one used by indigenous people in the Amazon (terra preta) well before colonization.

If even well-informed proponents now doubt the viability of nuclear energy as a solution to greenhouse gases and global warming, then I think it is fair to ask what the costs are of continuing down the nuclear path. **Would it not be better to invest the time and money in the energy path of renewables, a path we know to be possible and certainly more consistent with Friends' dedication to right relationships with the earth, and with all who inhabit this earth and this country?**

In this light I would encourage Friends to consider carefully the proposed minute on Peaceful Energy from CYM 2009:

Today, with the dual concerns of global warming and global 'warring', and the realities of a finite planet, we are challenged to find energy pathways which are consistent with Quaker values of peace, community, and equality. The climate crisis requires that we move away from reliance on fossil fuels for energy, and move toward renewable energy systems such as solar, wind, geothermal, and ecologically sound hydro. It is critical that we reduce our energy use through conservation. We ask Canadian

Friends to examine their ecological footprints and seek ways to reduce them. We ask Monthly Meetings to seek ways to buy power from renewable sources for our Meeting Houses. The dangers of nuclear energy include environmental contamination through mining, tritium releases in reactor operation, risk of nuclear accidents, the unsolved problem of highly radioactive nuclear wastes, and the use of uranium and used reactor fuel for weapons. It is not peaceful energy. Therefore, we ask the Government of Canada to phase out the use of nuclear energy in Canada, the mining, refining and export of uranium, the export of fissionable material, and the export of Canadian nuclear reactor technology.

There was much support for this draft of the proposed minute. There are also Friends and Monthly Meetings who are not in agreement with some parts of this minute. We ask CFSC and the Uranium Working Group to consult further with Canadian Friends on this topic. We lay over this minute to CYM 2010.

*Colin Stuart, Ottawa Monthly Meeting
in association with Marilyn Manzer, Annapolis MM*

(Both are members of the CFSC Uranium Working Group and they welcome invitations to speak to other Meetings or engage in dialogue with Friends on this concern)



(Further Information: Gordon Edwards and Robert Del Tredici, *Coping with Nuclear Waste*: <http://www.ccnr.org/stockholm-2007/>. <http://pubs.pembina.org/reports/plugging-in-ontario-report.pdf>) (<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20126921.500-one-last-chance-to-save-mankind.html?full=true> and <http://www.biocharinternational.org/biochar>)

Where Do We Go From Here?

By Joseph Fasciani

It is said it is very difficult to be a Christian in our society, but it is equally difficult to be a Jew, Sikh, Muslim, Jain, or anyone else who seeks justice, wants to live with others, and respects another's beliefs. When we create and maintain economies that first divide, set individuals against one another, deteriorate our environment, and allow one class of people to prosper at the expense of others, then we have acted in unnatural ways. Nature does not allow such inequitable behaviour in her economy.

Animal societies benefit and develop through cooperation, not ruthless competition. This was proved by Peter Kropotkin's thirty years' observation of Russian animal populations in the last half of the 19th century. Life doesn't have to be like this: we can, and must do better, much better. For us to succeed to the widest possible viable and sustainable extent, we must never forget that we always have before us the definitive choice: *biology or oblivion*. In the Hebrew Scriptures God declares: "This day I have offered you life or death. Choose life." When this sensibility informs our sense, we can make decisions that are truly for the common good, instead of the uncommonly rich.

neither can there be an infinitely expanding number of people to eat it. If we truly want holistic resolutions to present crises, then spiritual investments must precede our financial investments.

We must choose diversity over uniformity, encouraging multiple solutions from everyone involved with, and affected by outcomes. This is the only way to ensure we will truly meet basic human needs. Social and economic structures built from the bottom up, rather than imposed from the top down, are far more stable in every way, as well as more satisfying. Unless minimum levels of educational, social, and medical needs are met, the result is always a vast social deficit. It is long past time to put an end to Social Darwinism.

There must be a sense of justice and equilibrium instilled in our young people, through appropriate modeling. When a company's CEO is paid one hundred thousand times more than its lowest paid worker, what is taught? What can possibly justify this? When tax laws allow the already wealthy to hide income overseas, what model is held up as an example?

"But at my back I always hear, time's winged chariot drawing near", wrote Andrew Marvell, entreating his coy mistress more than three hundred years ago. Indeed, Nature is our only mistress, and we must pay full attention to her soon, for "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned".

Joseph Fasciani

Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting

"This day I have offered you life or death. Choose life."

Our first realization must be that we live in a very finite, circumscribed series of closed systems. This is not rocket science; indeed it requires both intuition and art to tease out what Nature loves to hide. We must re-learn sympathy with Nature, rather than fear sinister threats at every turn. King James' scholars made a poor translation of a phrase in Genesis, stating that God "gave" Earth to Adam, to run as a kind of branch-plant economy. What the Hebrew really says is that Adam and Eve will not dominate Earth, but live in a "bondage relationship"! We must live in a mutual, subtle, and interactive relationship as stewards and caretakers, to be rewarded for our efforts.

We can deliberately choose quality of life over quantity. Just as there is no infinitely expanding pie,

For further reading:

1. The Hype about Hydrogen" at <http://www.culturechange.org/hydrogen.htm>
2. Michael Ruppert's website copvica.com <http://www.copvica.com/> has many articles covering all aspects of our crisis, and positive resolutions.
3. One who made the immense journey from oil industry professional to one of the oil age's foremost critics is Jan Lundberg. His site is <http://culturechange.org/>
4. Dr. Richard Heinberg's website, <http://www.museletter.com/> offers useful insights and alternatives to our crises.

Bible study for CYM 2010

Facilitated by Jay Cowsill

Berith: Covenant and Crisis in the Jewish Bible

In chapters ten- eleven of the biblical book ascribed to him, the man who would come to be identified as the prophet Ezekiel records his vision of the glory of the Lord, abandoning the temple and city of Jerusalem. This vision caps the most cataclysmic event in the history of the biblical kingdom of Judah: its conquest by Babylon and the subsequent deportation of its ruling class (the Babylonian exile). According to the dominant ideology of Judah, such events were impossible. The Judahites conceived themselves to be impregnable due to a covenant established by their Lord, Yahweh, through a prophecy and promise made to David, the founder of the royal line in Jerusalem. "He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Sam, 7.13).

The Bible study for CYM 2010 is entitled "Berith: Covenant and Crisis in the Jewish Bible". We will explore the concept of covenant as it evolved over the 1,000 year history of the Jewish Bible. More particularly, we will consider the extent to which the entire biblical compendium was shaped, as a reflection upon the crisis arising when Yahweh seemingly abandoned his covenant with Judah in the early 6th century BCE, at the approach of the armies of Babylon. Finally, we will ponder the enduring effects of the theological concept of covenant in the modern world.

Jay Cowsill, of Saskatoon Monthly Meeting, has taught English at the University of Saskatchewan and biblical studies and biblical Hebrew at the Saskatoon Theological Union (Anglican, Lutheran, and United Church seminaries). For the past decade, his primary academic focus has been upon Marxist and psychoanalytic criticism of the Jewish Bible with a view to better understanding of the origin and influence of its more violent texts. For the past two years, he has also been involved as the literary theorist on an interdisciplinary team researching the psychological effects of the experience of cancer among senior citizens.

Sunderland P. Gardner Lecturer

CYM 2010: Rick McCutcheon

Working with Darkness, Waiting for Light: Friendly Thoughts about Quakers and Violence

Friends have written extensively about nonviolence and social justice, and are well known for their many interventions in situations of violent conflict, from interpersonal to large-scale forms. Rick's reflection will draw on the well-known George Fox passage: "I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness". While Friends - for good reason - have often focused on "the ocean of light and love", in this lecture Rick will look at the ocean of darkness and ask difficult questions about it. Through his personal experiences of violence and his study of violence as an anthropologist, Rick will develop a Quaker understanding of violence. He will ask, "how does a better understanding of violence help us to emotionally, physically, and spiritually respond to it in more grounded, creative, and effective ways?"

For almost thirty years Rick McCutcheon has been committed to blending his life as a Quaker with his academic life and work as an activist in social movements and non-governmental organizations. Rick has served Friends as Clerk of Canadian Yearly Meeting and Clerk of Prairie Monthly Meeting, and has also served on a variety of committees. He was General Secretary of Canadian Friends Service Committee for three years. As an activist Rick is committed to nonviolent social movements, and in the past was arrested on numerous occasions for solidarity actions. In 1991 he traveled to Iraq twice in the aftermath of the violence visited upon that country, and subsequently engaged in public speaking and media events across the country, often organized by Friends. In 2000-2001 he lived in Iraq for a year as a field representative for the Mennonite Central Committee and the American Friends Service Committee. He worked on the *Health of Children in War Zones Project* at McMaster University, where he was also actively engaged with the Centre for Peace Studies from its inception. He currently teaches in the Conflict Resolution Studies program at Menno Simons College, a college of Canadian Mennonite University. He lives in Winnipeg and is married to Tamara Fleming.



Jay Cowsill
Saskatoon Monthly Meeting



Rick McCutcheon, Prairie Monthly Meeting

Ask Margaret Fell

Editor's Note: Margaret Fell (1614-1702) was a key member of the Religious Society of Friends. After her first husband Thomas Fell, a circuit judge, died, she married George Fox, founder of the Quakers. Readers may direct their letters to :

Margaret Fell
c/o editor of The Canadian Friend
(Margaret loves your letters!)

Confused Friend



Margaret Fell
c/o The Canadian Friend

Dear Margaret: I've just taken on the job of cleaning the Meetinghouse. How can people leave so much messy garbage and junk around? Have you any suggestions? Up To My Neck.

Dear "Up To Thy Neck:" I suspect it comes partly from the habit of having others pick up after them. And also from "out-of-sight, out-of-mind." Judge Fell, a generous soul, was always picked up after. But dear George took responsibility for his leavings. I know of a people, blessed in the Light, who treated their waste with as much love and respect as the bodies of their dead. Dost thou dare to gather up the debris and place them as sacred things on the table in the centre of Meeting? Thy Meeting might benefit from contemplating them in worship. Thy tidy Friend, Margaret.

An occasional column offering light-hearted answers to those little puzzles which are too small to take to your Meeting and too irritating to dismiss. Send your questions to the editor with your identity. As "Margaret Fell" is a pen name, you may also use a pen-name, but the editor must have your real name. Send your questions today.

Quaker Book Service



The following titles have been added to our stock. For a complete listing of QBS books see our 2009-2010 Quaker Book Service Catalogue (included in the July 2009 edition of The Canadian Friend and is also available on the CYM website, www.quaker.ca/qbs).

Rachel and Obadiah by Brinton Turkle, Beautiful Feet Books, Sandwich, MA 1978. Obadiah learns another lesson, good for adults as well as children, as sailing ships return from whaling and trading to his Nantucket community. Well illustrated. (28 pp \$8.20)

Encountering the Light: a Journey Taken by Martin Lynn, *Foreword by Rex Ambler*, Wm. Sessions Ltd. York, UK, 2007. This historian author has used inspirational messages from early Friends to lead us to act today, guided by the Light within. His theme is "to Be is to Seek" in this series of lectures to Friends Meetings in Ireland. (92 pp; \$12.50)

Crossing Arcs: Alzheimer's, My Mother, and Me by Susan McMaster, Black Moss Press, Windsor, ON, 2009. The author describes Betty Page's struggle with aging in this book of moving poems. Both Susan and Betty are long-time members of Ottawa Monthly Meeting (110 pp; \$16.00)

Coming into Friendship as a Gift: The Journey of a Young Adult Friend by Christina Van Regenmorter, Quaker Press of FGC, Philadelphia, 2008. Older members give encouragement to the author as a young seeker on her way to becoming a Quaker. In acts of genuine Outreach these elders realize the value of fresh perspectives that young people can bring to their Meeting. (28 pp; \$7.80)

Emma Field (Book Two) by Carol Williams, Journey Publishing, Merrickville, ON, 2009. Emma as a young adult continues her life in a 19th century mixed community of Conservative and Hicksite Quakers in Dutchess County, New York. She meets Lucretia Mott and other leaders in their fight against slavery and for women's rights. A novel with good Quaker background for young and old. (272 pp; \$24.95)

Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans and the Myth of Racial Justice, by Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye, Quaker Press of FGC, 2009. Well researched, this study gives careful scrutiny and critique, both positive and negative, of the part played by American Quakers in the struggle of Blacks for freedom from slavery and for integration into the Religious Society of Friends. Extensive notes and index. (548 pp; \$36.40)

The Presence in the Midst by Peter Eccles, The Swarthmore Lecture 2009, Quaker Books, London, UK, 2009. Peter Eccles, a mathematician and long-time Quaker, brings science, philosophy, theology and history into this lecture on discernment, the process of determining the will of the spirit of Christ in decision making both personal and corporate, in Quaker worship and business meetings. Good notes and bibliography. (\$20.00)

Ordering Instructions: Mail orders, enclosing payment by cheque or money order, should be sent to Quaker Book Service, Box 4652, Station E, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5H8. **Phone orders cannot be accepted.**

For orders from North America Please add the following mailing costs:		For orders outside North America
Value of an order	Postage Add-on	We require an extra 20% to be added to the total cost of the order to cover the extra mailing charges
Up to \$9.95	\$2.50	
\$10 - \$19.95	\$5.00	
\$20 - \$34.95	\$7.50	
\$35.00 - \$59.95	\$9.00	
Over \$60	\$10.50	

Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

Yonge Street Meeting

We continue to seek ways to strengthen our faith community and to serve the local community. Our Quaker Quest workshop with three facilitators from Friends General Conference (FGC) was a joyful and enriching day. We have continued with some of the exercises to become more acquainted with Quaker beliefs and each other.

In October we had a request from the John Howard Society to use space in our lower level for an office, as they are establishing a chapter of the Society in York region. The Meeting House's proximity to the Court House makes it an ideal location and one of our members serves on the John Howard Board. We are looking forward to this connection with a justice organization and to test out how we share the Meeting House once again.

The holding of CYM in Kemptville enabled many Yonge Street Friends to attend, several of whom participated in the SIG about the CYM Archives and Records. Our proximity to Pickering College gives us a special concern for their care and future management. Friends also travelled to the Clerking workshop at Camp NeeKauNis, the FWCC regional gathering in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and to Barnesville, Ohio.

We celebrated the marriage of Maria Powers and Peter Lerch and welcomed Peter into membership. Excerpts from the new draft Faith & Practice have been read during Meeting for Worship, and will be explored in more depth in the coming months. Our meeting website was recently launched: yongestreet.quaker.ca.

Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting

(Formerly Wolfville Monthly Meeting)

Our Meeting accepted Nominations Committee's recommendation of continuing with Bruce Dienes as Clerk and Peter McInnes as Assistant Clerk. In the fall we focused on developing a new outreach brochure. We met four times and found this process helpful in building our Meeting's sense of community.

Carol Bradley attended a West Hants County Interministerial Association meeting. This continues to deepen our commitment to reach out to other parts of the Annapolis Valley.

For our monthly potluck in the summer and fall months we met at the Telegraph Tea Room, in a

Fair Trade coffee shop's meeting room just outside of Wolfville. This is located near Kingston, Nova Scotia, closer to the middle of the Annapolis Valley than where our Meeting usually gathers. The tea room is owned by British people who have a Quaker background. They are committed to ensuring that they run the business on Quaker principles in a creative and conscientious manner.

We are participating in an Interministerial pulpit exchange program for the first time in January. Although we did not host a public meeting for Florence Ntakarutimana, she joined us in a potluck and attended a Night Kitchen concert. All who were in attendance with her felt inspired and energized by her presence.

Vernon Monthly Meeting

has lost two of its most experienced and weighty members. **Bill Lewis** passed away on November 11, 2009. A Memorial Meeting was held on November 17. Bill had been a part of Vernon Meeting since Friends first began to gather together in Vernon, and was one of the first members of the Meeting when it was under the care of Argenta Monthly Meeting. Since then Bill had been one of the rocks upon which our scattered Meeting could rest. He held many positions and had also been a member of CYM Finance committee. We will remember him as a loyal member, devoted seeker, and loving person.

Peter Elkington died on September 23, 2009 in Revelstoke. Peter was raised in a Quaker family in Pennsylvania and attended Friends school and college. He moved to Canada in 1967 and settled in Revelstoke in 1977. Peter was a member of Argenta Meeting for many years and was an active and loved member of Vernon Meeting for the last six years.

Isolated Friends: The penpal list has now grown to include several Canadians and two Australians. If you know of anyone who would like to become part of our f/Friendly group, either via e-mail or post, please pass the news of this network to them. Anyone - Friend, Attender or Seeker, in any corner of the world who is interested in enriching their lives by sharing Quaker life stories via the penpal network contact: Diana Mitchell - drhelp@shaw.ca
926 Falaise Crescent, Victoria BC V8Y1A3

Halifax Meeting

The Public Memorial for Muriel Duckworth was held in Halifax at Mount Saint Vincent University on September 27, 2009. Interim University President, and Muriel's good friend Alexa McDonough welcomed us all. It was a celebration of her life through meaningful songs and spoken word; planned as Muriel had wished, by a committee of friends and family.

Memorable pictures from her past were projected on a giant screen, while favourite songs by Paul Robeson, Marion Anderson, and Portia White were played. Spoken reflections were given by individual friends from Circles of Love representing different areas of deep concern in Muriel's life; Family, Education, Friend and Mentor, Lover of Art and Nature, Eradicating Poverty, Ending Racism, Feminism, Community Development, Political Change, Pacifist and Peacemaker.

Requested familiar peace songs, such as *Let there be Peace on Earth, Bread and Roses*, and *Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream* were sung by individuals with audience participation. The program ended with *Muriel's Song* especially composed by friends and sung on the occasion of her 100th birthday party in 2008.

Hurricane Bill swept through Halifax on August the Twenty-third, canceling Halifax Friends' Memorial gathering for Muriel Duckworth. It was as if Nature

was attempting to fill the space left by the great soul. A week later, approximately sixty attenders, f/Friends, family, and special invitees, gathered at the Atlantic School of Theology to share thoughts and reflections. The quiet Meeting was soon filled with tributes to Muriel's courage, wisdom, tenacity, intelligence, humour, and compassion. There was gratitude, laughter, and tears. The meeting continued for an hour and a half ending with the hymn *Bread and Roses*. To close, all held hands as John Lennon's *Give Peace a Chance* was sung.

Since the mid 60's, even before Halifax Monthly Meeting was formally recognized, Muriel was a guiding presence and inspiration and an active worker among us. Though the press and TV was publicly honouring her many accomplishments, this was our time for sharing out of silence, and remembering her loving spirit, and her influence on each of our lives, and in our community.

Muriel's love and light still radiates in all of us.

Betty Peterson,
Halifax Monthly Meeting

Editor's Note: The poem *Credo* by Kenna Creer Manos, published in the December issue of *The Canadian Friend*, was submitted by Peter Walker in tribute to Muriel Duckworth. This Minute was intended to be along with it in the December issue. My apologies for the error. Sjh

The Canadian Friend is 105!

Please consider the following ways you may contribute financially to your national journal:

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If you have a paid subscription it is time to renew for 2010

Our heartfelt appreciation to all of you who have contributed so generously over the years.

The CYM Publications and Communications Committee

NOTICE: Vietnam-War-Era War Resisters and Supporters

I would like to create a booklet that presents the experiences of the Vietnam-War-era war resisters - draft resisters and army deserters - and their supporters, where there was Quaker involvement. It would include resisters who came to Quakers in later years. Contact me if you have a story to tell about your experiences. It is an important chapter in Quaker history.

Roger Davies, Halifax Monthly Meeting
rogerdavies@eastlink.ca 33 Dakin Drive Halifax, NS, B3M 2C9

Notice Board

Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, CA (90 minutes south of San Francisco)
Personal retreats/Weekend programs
(831) 336 8333 or visit www.quakercenter.org

Wanted: FOOD CO-OP COORDINATOR

Canadian Yearly Meeting Thursday Aug. 12 to mid-day Saturday Aug. 21 - Winnipeg, Manitoba.
Plans shopping lists and menu choices, in consultation with the Continuing Committee of Food Co-op and the Local Arrangements Committee; facilitates food preparation, manages food storage and ensures safe food-handling practices. The coordinator has a host of volunteers available for site setup and maintenance, financial control, food shopping, preparation and clean up. Job begins mid-day August 12, A two- day startup shopping/ planning period precedes the Saturday evening first meal. The coordinator attends for four hours at each lunch and dinner. Breakfast is completely in the hands of co-op members.

We are seeking someone who is familiar with volunteer organizations and sensitive to the Quaker values of simplicity and community-building. The person may or may not be a member of the Religious Society of Friends. An honorarium of \$800 is available.

For further information and application form contact:
Madeline Campbell, oragemom@hotmail.com, 403-238-4748
Barbara Aikman, baikman@eastlink.ca

African Summer Workcamps 2010 AGLI - The African Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams is sponsoring intergenerational workcamps in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Orientation begins June 19 near Washington DC. Workcamps end July 24. Workcampers build clinics, schools and peace centers - no skills needed. All ages welcome, including families. Learn more: <http://www.aglifpt.org> or dawn@aglifpt.org.

Join local, national and international practitioners and students of peace, justice and development at the 2010



Canadian School of Peacebuilding

COME TAKE	John Bell	Cathy Campbell	Ray Vander Zaag	Howard Zehr
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WITH:	Ovide Mercredi	Kenton Lobe	Harry Huebner	Karen Ridd

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Last Words:

“...problems...will not be solved...unless people see them as...outrageous and solvable...”

I have just finished reading *Bury the Chains* by Adam Hochschild. The story of the abolition of the slave trade involves a lot of Quaker history. The story also indicates how we can tackle the crises of our day. I share this excerpt – the last paragraphs of Adam Hochschild’s epilogue:

“To the British abolitionists, the challenge of ending slavery in a world that considered it fully normal was as daunting as it seems today when we consider challenging the entrenched wrongs of our own age: the vast gap between rich and poor nations, the relentless spread of nuclear weapons, the multiple assaults on the earth, air and water that must support future generations, the habit of war. None of these problems will be solved overnight, or perhaps in the fifty years it took to end British slavery. But they will not be solved at all unless people see them as both outrageous and solvable, just as slavery was felt to be by the twelve men who gathered in James Phillip’s printing shop in George Yard on May 22, 1787.

“All of the twelve were deeply religious (*nine were Quakers and three were Anglicans*) and the twenty-seven- year-old Clarkson wore black clerical garb. But they also shared a newer kind of faith. They believed that because human beings had a capacity to care about the suffering of others, exposing the truth would move people to action. ‘We are clearly of the opinion’, wrote Granville Sharp to a friend later that year, ‘that the nature of the slave-trade needs only to be known to be detested...to feel a just indignation against it.’ It was this faith that led him to mount his horse again and again to scour the country for witnesses who could tell Parliament what life was like on the slave ships and the plantations. The riveting parade of firsthand testimony he and his colleagues put together in the *Abstract of the Evidence* and countless other documents is one of the first great flowerings of a very modern belief: that the way to stir men to action is by vivid, unforgettable description of acts of great injustice... We live with that hope still.”

*Shared by Eric Schiller
Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

“...a mind attuned to beauty is like a survival kit for the soul”

Queries by Keith Helmuth

How can we spiritually prepare ourselves to remain functional and not collapse into fatalism?

Potentially significant experiences of relationship and presence often come to us unbidden. We may miss them. What do we do, or can we do, to not miss them?

Attunement is a natural capacity, but we can choose what we will be attuned to. What areas of attunement do we seek out? What does this mean for the arrangements of our living and working spaces? Indoor/outdoor?

Is the sense of presence always positive? What do we do if guidance goes silent?

We speak of Light as if it were ultimate, but the times of darkness are also real. How do we stay in the Light when dark times come?

I have said, a heart trained up in beauty and a mind attuned to beauty is like a survival kit for the soul. (I think) beauty (will) see us through the hard times likely to come.

The First Light Ceremony

The First Light Ceremony of the Abenaki People stands as a remarkably central practice for human wellbeing. Imagine...generations of Abenaki people, as well as others, who around the fire circle have offered their prayers of gratitude to creation and then faced into the dawning of a new day. I suspect the recent scientific information about the benefits of such practice would be met by Indigenous peoples with a tolerant smile, and perhaps the slightly teasing question, “How else did you think the Creator worked?” Nor should it come as a surprise to Quakers that the central metaphor of our collective spiritual experience has a grounding that truly unifies body, mind, and spirit.

It is literally the case that every cell in the body is directly affected in its function by the ebb and flow of light. As organisms we have emerged within the diurnal rhythms of day and night and our entire state of being, including the mental and emotional states which cradle our spiritual life, is keyed to this reality.

Wisdom from Keith Helmuth’s Quaker Studies - CYM 2009

Editor: Sherryll-Jeanne Harris

Editorial Support: Steve Fick, Gerald Harris, Diana Mitchell, Michael & Lynne Phillips, Alison Prentice

Please Note: You, the reader, create this journal. Your submissions and suggestions for themes are necessary for *The Canadian Friend* to thrive. **Do not delay!** Send articles, poems, art, photos, and thoughts today: cf-editor@quaker.ca

Themes & Deadlines for upcoming issues:

May 2010 Varied Thoughts on Community

Summer / July Young Adult Friends Speak
(Submission deadline - May 15)

Fall / October CYM

Winter / December Celebration - Joy - Wonder

March 2011 Interpretation of Scripture/Holy Writings



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