



BeFriending Creation

Newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness

Volume 20, Number 2 • March-April 2007

'Odd couple' learn cultural sensitivity as they teach sustainability in Paraguay

by Justin Mog
and Amanda Fuller

AFTER nearly a year serving as Peace Corps volunteers in a rural community in Paraguay, South America (*Ruta'i, Caaguazú*), we feel fully settled-in and have finally achieved a solid understanding of the everyday life and work of our friends and neighbors here. As we observe the ways that people here struggle to survive, we also learn about the limits of our ability to help.

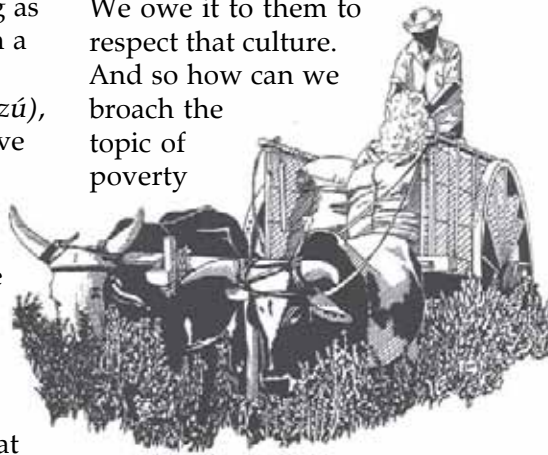
Coming to understand what kinds of things people *can* do to improve their lives and livelihoods, things that don't cost much (or anything at all!) is encouraging. These include how many children to have; what they plant on their land (and thus) what they eat and what their animals eat; what they teach their kids; and how they manage their soil, and other resources.

At the same time we are frustrated and horrified with every new observation that a few simple factors, beyond the control of most people, are at the root of the problems we have been sent here to help solve!

Why? Because we can see how Paraguay's social, agricultural, and environmental problems are *deeply rooted in the culture itself*. Paraguay has clung tenaciously to elements

of its culture through a very difficult history of colonization, wars, and brutal dictatorships.

We owe it to them to respect that culture. And so how can we broach the topic of poverty



reduction and environmental improvement in a culturally appropriate way? We are loath therefore to voice what we think is a...

"Recipe for Poverty Reduction and Improved Environmental Health"

1. Have fewer children.
2. Eat less meat.
3. Plant more vegetables and trees, and diversify crops.
4. Recycle organic matter, instead of burning it, in order to maintain soil health.
5. Distribute household work such that young women can go to school.

However, all of these suggestions—so obvious to us in their environmental and social implications—simply fly in the face of Paraguay's culture. Specifically:

1. Paraguay's prevalent Catholicism frowns upon family planning; many of our friends have more than 10 children!
2. People in Paraguay eat a lot of meat, are proud of it, and are not interested in changing.
3. Doing something different from everyone else seems to incite fear and confusion. And the concept of planning ahead is a rare one, undermined by the continuing tradition of patronage and handouts from the government and charities.
4. Organic wastes (such as the leaves swept up from the patio by the women each day) are not perceived as different from any other form of *basura*, or "trash." Both are called *feo*, or "ugly," rather than being seen as a potential resources.
5. Women's work and men's work are, for the most part, strictly defined and largely separate. Women who work hard scrubbing clothes while men sit idle, shrug with acceptance when questioned.

WHERE does that leave us and our Peace Corps work here? Advising people that their cultural traditions are ruining them doesn't go over too well. *How dare we?!*

Searching for enlightenment, we read *Two Ears of Corn, a Guide*

Paraguay, next page >>

Paraguay, from page 1 >>

to *People-Centered Agricultural Improvement*, by Roland Bunch, a wonderful book on sustainable development. It says that *helping somebody change who doesn't want to is not only unsustainable, it's ethically unjustifiable.*

ARE we relegated then, to work on the fringes, with the small percentage of people who are ready to challenge elements of their own culture? Or are there ways that we can creatively, subtly, show that a better future is possible, without directly offending the culture? Predictably, the answer can only be "little by little."

And here is where we wish we had some concrete examples to share, to end this report on a positive note. Surely the people in our community take note of the oddity that we are: We're in our early 30s and have no children; we don't eat meat; we compost our organic matter (and even cover our garden with it); and every day we work side by side as equals, in the home and outside. If people also see that we live well, work well, eat well, and that our garden does well, does that count for something?

It seems easy for people to dismiss these profound cultural differences because we are from far away. But perhaps some sparks of consciousness change are being lit.... In a nation of struggling people, we hope that positive change, one tree at a time, can someday become a point of pride too, just like a fat cow or pig!

Justin and Amanda, Madison (Wis.) Monthly Meeting, are doing agricultural extension and environmental education work in Paraguay until December 2007. <justinmog@gmail.com>; <abfuller@gmail.com>

Their low-environmental impact wedding in August 2004 in Madison, Wis., was featured in the January-February 2005 BeFriending Creation. ❖

Awareness, individual actions can help slow global warming

Unless you are living naked in a tree and eating nuts, you're part of the problem.

—Brian Schweitzer
Governor of Montana

CREATION works in unison with a cosmic clock that has everything perfectly timed. We have disrupted that clock and have already seen the consequences. Biodiversity is being lost, we are having heavier rains and snows, arctic ice is melting, Hurricane Katrina devastated the land along northern Gulf Coast, and maple trees are budding so early that little or no maple syrup can be made. From the Arctic to the breakfast table we are experiencing climate change.

Humankind created this problem and it is up to us to solve the problem. To do nothing is not denial it is immoral. By being more attached to things than to Creation our Inner Light has dimmed. We need to reach out to Creation to heal it and, in turn, our inner selves.

While we can work to have our city, county, state and federal governments establish laws and practices to make us a more sustainable country, we need to make changes to the way we live our lives. *If 35 percent of the U.S. population were to make the changes to live a more sustainable lifestyle while reducing our share of greenhouse gases, we could reduce our nation's emissions to the level the Kyoto Protocol targeted while saving money.*

My household has decided to reduce the amount of energy used and the amount of greenhouse gases that we are responsible for emitting. (This is not necessarily a chronological account—my family never let details get in the way of a good story.)

The first step was to replace all light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. This sounds easy but also required a lot of dusting and cleaning of globes on overhead lights. Older light bulbs went into the hazardous waste recycling box. Bulbs that had some useful life left were saved for one of my nephews. In some strange fit of enthusiasm I even installed dimmer switches in the living room and downstairs hallway (dimmer switches also reduce electricity use). I man-

aged this without electrocuting myself but was stymied by the dining room, where there were two switches for the overhead light.

I hadn't really planned on this being a cleaning process but can't claim my house didn't need it. I seriously cleaned the oven and microwave to reduce cooking time. I'm not claiming that I will immediately increase the amount of cooking I'm doing, but I'm ready just in case. You can also reduce the energy used in cooking by: not peeking; preheating less (baking breads and pastries are an exception); and using glass and ceramic pans.

My kitchen is a "hand-washing dishes" site. Since my kitchen has



Barbara Williamson

Actions next page >>

>> **Actions** from page 2

two side-by-side sinks, whoever is washing dishes can fill one with hot, soapy water for washing and the other side with cold water for rinsing. This way of washing dishes saves half the water you would normally use in a dishwasher, as well as reducing the carbon dioxide going into the atmosphere.

I think of dishwashers as staging areas for dirty dishes that I don't have time to wash right away—no one looks inside your dishwasher. For those who use dishwashers there are some suggestions that can reduce energy and water use: Don't pre-rinse dishes (you can scrape instead). If you have to pre-rinse for older dishwashers, use cold water in the sink or a pan. Run the dishwasher with full loads. Use the "energy saver" or light load setting. Use the air-dry option, not the "rinse-hold" option. Soak pans overnight with warm water and soap rather than scrubbing them under running water.

MOST homes today are host to numerous "ghost sappers"—anything with a remote control, battery charger, internal memory, AC adapter plug, instant-on feature, permanent display, or sensor—that are quietly using electricity even when they are "off." These include cell phone chargers, radio/alarm clocks, TVs, satellite dishes, computers, music systems, and who knows what else.

Reducing these energy drains calls for some serious decisions. How many clocks can you do without? How often do you want to reset the TV? The decision should under no circumstances be made 15 minutes before the ball game comes on TV! Thank heavens for power strips. Without them every day could begin to feel like preparation for a two-week

vacation. Basically you either invest in power strips or spend a lot of time every day unplugging and replugging. Doing this for an entire house at once convinces you to look for low-level "ghost sappers" when you make your next purchases of appliances that use electricity (look for the Energy Star™ logo).



WHEN will we begin to see the links between our individual, daily choices and the quickening pace of global warming worldwide?

Beware: Batteries aren't better! Disposable batteries are harmful to the environment because they contain toxic metals that are here to stay. Producing one disposable battery uses 50 times as much electricity as the battery will provide, and the electricity from one battery is 1,000 times more expensive than the electricity that comes from an outlet. If you have to use batteries, use rechargeables.

Setting up "rules" for washing clothes was rewarding because, finally, what had always been considered my idiosyncrasies suddenly had merit—and I finally got my indoor clothesline in the long upstairs hallway. Laundry rules in my house include: 1) Wash clothes in warm or cold water and rinse in cold water. 2) Don't use too much detergent (no dumping). 3) Wash full loads or use the low-water level setting. 4) Don't overdry

clothes (if you can have an outside clothes line, use it as often as feasible). 5) Always dry full loads but don't overfill. 6) Clean the lint trap in the dryer after every use. 7) Take advantage of built-up heat by using the cool-down feature (or Perma Press). 8) Separate clothes by weight before drying. 9) Dry towels separately.

Not being a "cleaner" by nature, I tried to avoid the refrigerator, but it's too big to be ignored.

✓ It is already out of the sun and away from heat sources like the oven, so it didn't need to be moved. Whew!

✓ I checked the thermostat to make sure it was set between 37 and 40 degrees F and the freezer section was set at 5 degrees F.

✓ I also made sure the energy saver switch was turned on. (If you have condensation on the outside of your refrigerator, the energy saver switch is set too high.)

✓ The door seals were checked with a piece of paper between the seals, and a flashlight was turned on in the refrigerator in a dark room. The seals passed, but on the next trip to the hardware store I decided to pick up new ones.

✓ And of course, the condenser coil needed to be dusted. My next refrigerator will be an Energy Star™ with a "no-clean" condenser.

✓ I cleaned out the refrigerator, and it was apparent why there didn't seem to be much to eat in the house. It was so empty that I filled a couple of pitchers with water to fill it up, since a partially filled refrigerator holds the cold better than an empty one. A trip to the grocery store wouldn't hurt.

ALL of this was accomplished in the time available in one weekend. More projects need to be tackled, but they need a little more time and more planning. What's next? Stayed tuned. ❖

Scientists and evangelicals unite to protect Creation

WASHINGTON, D.C. —In a first-of-its-kind collaboration, evangelical and scientific leaders have announced a collaborative effort to protect the environment. Speaking at a news conference in Washington, D.C., in January 2007, a dozen leaders of the effort shared concerns about human-caused threats to Creation. The coalition's "Urgent Call to Action" was signed by 28 evangelical and scientific leaders and forwarded to the President and leaders in Congress.

An Urgent Call to Action

Summary

SCIENTIFIC and evangelical leaders recently met to search for common ground in the protection of the creation. We happily discovered far more concordance than any of us had expected, quickly moving beyond dialogue to a shared sense of moral purpose. Important initiatives were already underway on both sides, and when compared they were found to be broadly overlapping. We clearly share a moral passion and sense of vocation to save the imperiled living world before our damages to it remake it as another kind of planet. We agree not only that reckless human activity has imperiled the earth—especially the unsustainable and short-sighted lifestyles and public policies of our own nation—but also that we share a profound moral obligation to work together to call our nation, and other nations, to the kind of dramatic change urgently required in our day. We pledge our joint commitment to this effort in the unique moment now upon us.

Background

THIS MEETING was convened by the Center for Health & the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School and the National Association of Evangelicals. It was

envisioned as a first exploratory conference, based on a shared concern for the Creation, to be held among people who were in some ways quite different in their worldviews. It now seems to us to be the beginning point of a major shared effort among scientists and evangelicals to protect life on earth and the fragile life support systems that sustain it, drawing on the unique intellectual, spiritual, and moral contributions that each community can bring.



Our Shared Concern

WE AGREE that our home, the earth, which comes to us as that inexpressibly beautiful and mysterious gift that sustains our very lives, is seriously imperiled by human behavior. The harm is seen throughout the natural world, including a cascading set of problems such as climate change, habitat destruction, pollution, and species extinctions, as well as the spread of human infectious diseases, and other accelerating threats to the health of people and the well-being of societies.

Each particular problem could be enumerated, but here it is enough to say that we are gradually destroying the sustaining community of life on which all living things on Earth depend. The costs of this destruction are already manifesting themselves around the world in profound and painful ways. The cost to humanity is already significant and may soon become incalculable. Being irreversible, many of these changes would affect all generations to come.

We believe that the protection of life on Earth is a profound moral imperative. It addresses

without discrimination the interests of all humanity as well as the value of the non-human world. It requires a new moral awakening to a compelling demand, clearly articulated in Scripture and supported by science, that we must steward the natural world in order to preserve for ourselves and future generations a beautiful, rich, and healthful environment.

For many of us, this is a religious obligation, rooted in our sense of gratitude for Creation and reverence for its Creator. One fundamental motivation that we share is concern for the poorest of the poor, well over a billion people, who have little chance to improve their lives in devastated and often war-ravaged environments.

At the same time, the natural environments in which they live, and where so much of Earth's biodiversity barely hangs on, cannot survive the press of destitute people without other resources and with nowhere else to go. We declare that every sector of our nation's leadership—religious, scientific, business, political, and educational—must act now to work toward the fundamental change in values, lifestyles, and public policies required to address these worsening problems before it is too late.

THERE IS NO EXCUSE for further delays. Business as usual cannot continue yet one more day. We pledge to work together at every level to lead our nation toward a responsible care for Creation, and we call with one voice to our scientific and evangelical colleagues, and to all others, to join us in these efforts. ❖

FCNL's new legislative priorities address global climate change

by John Payton
QEW Steering Committee

AS a first-time attendee at the FCNL annual meeting, held in Washington, D.C., a few days after the November elections, I was particularly struck by the gatheredness of the business sessions. This was most apparent to me in the sessions that reviewed drafts of the organization's Legislative Priorities for the 110th Congress, prepared by the Policy Committee. This is the document FCNL uses to budget use of staff lobbying and education resources during the next two years to reflect issues of greatest concern to the Religious Society of Friends.

More than 200 Friends Meetings and churches from all over the country and from all branches of the Religious Society of Friends, including QEW, participated last winter and spring in submitting legislative priority recommendations to the Policy Committee. At the annual meeting, Friends had an opportunity to reflect and comment on a draft statement that incorporated this broad input from the Society. Through an iterative process of discernment in small groups and plenary business sessions, Friends at the annual meeting reached unity on a statement that includes for the first time mention of the need to "address global climate change" as an essential outcome driving the reduction of U.S. fossil fuel consumption. The statement on environmental protection in the 109th Congress legislative priorities two years ago had mentioned only

"eliminat[ing] a critical cause of violent conflict by reducing oil consumption and accelerating development and use of renewable energy sources."

This broadening of the scope of interest in environmental issues in the priorities statement reflects a growing concern about these issues among Friends, as reflected in the responses submitted to the Policy Committee. FCNL's increasing commitment of resources to environmental protection and reducing U.S. dependence on fossil fuels is evident in its appointment of a full-time, senior staff person, Edward ("Ned") Stowe, to lead its lobbying efforts on energy, the environment, climate change, and promoting U.S.-China cooperation on oil dependence to sustain long-term peace.

Together, Friends' growing concern about the environment and FCNL's willingness to respond to this concern by increasing its commitment to energy and environmental policy suggest that the timing is good for QEW to redouble its efforts to promote earthcare within the Religious Society of Friends as integral to Quaker faith and practice.

From the perspective of QEW, there are, of course, other environmental issues that we would like to see reflected in FCNL's legislative priorities statement, as indi-

cated in the recommendations we submitted to the FCNL Policy Committee last spring. Among these are population control, a "stable / steady-state and ecologically sustainable economy," minimizing and preventing pollution, safeguarding biological diversity, and assuring safe drinking water as a part of the global commons for all to use.

But it is important to remember that FCNL is guided in its adoption of legislative priorities not only by the input it receives from Friends, but by the guidelines of its broader legislative policy statement, the current areas of expertise of its staff, and legislative opportunity.

Also, the expansion in any area at FCNL requires additional resources. While the organization's financial health is good, it must

continue to grow its donor base to increase its impact.

As an organizational member of FCNL, QEW can be instrumental in strengthening FCNL's environmental focus by urging Friends to use the FCNL website for communicating

with congressional representatives and share mailing lists from Friends' churches and Meetings and related organizations with FCNL.

FRIENDS should also watch for a new FCNL automated climate and energy e-mail list that will start soon. There are about 3,000 people on the list now, and Ned Stowe is ready for more subscribers. To sign up, write to him at: <ned@fcnl.org>. ❖



Strawberry Creek MM approves Minute on global climate change

STRAWBERRY CREEK (Calif.) Monthly Meeting approved this Minute on Nov. 12, 2006. In January, College Park Quarterly asked us to rewrite it as a more general statement fitting to come from a Quarter, including a request to each Monthly Meeting to work out a specific Minute.

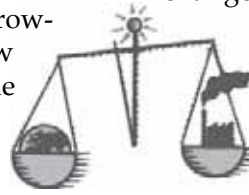
—Shelley Tanenbaum, co-clerk, Peace, Earthcare & Social Witness Committee

Background

IN 1985, Marshall Massey challenged Pacific Yearly Meeting with his prophetic witness about the impending environmental crisis. Since then, PYM has sponsored retreats, interest groups, publications, and established a standing

committee on Earthcare. Growing numbers of Friends now recognize that caring for the environment is a spiritual concern. In PYM's most recent *Faith and Practice*, we are asked to:

- ◆ "Live according to principles of right relationship and right action within the larger whole.
- ◆ "Be aware of the influence humans have on the health and viability of life on earth.
- ◆ "Call attention to what fosters or harms Earth's exquisite beauty, balances and interdependencies.
- ◆ "Guided by Spirit, work to translate this understanding into ways of living that reflect our re-



sponsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations."

We now face global climate change, a phenomenon no

longer seriously in doubt within the scientific community. As a result of the choices we have made, the Earth grows ever hotter, exacerbating weather extremes, habitat destruction, species loss, crop damage, and the dislocation of human lives. Most of these changes, we cannot escape entirely; some of the damage may be avoided if we act responsibly soon.

In the midst of these awesome changes, we turn away from either apathy or despair toward a way opening in the Light.

We embrace our sacred interconnection to life on this planet. ❖

Minute on global climate change

WE RECOGNIZE that our current human impact on the planet is environmentally damaging, and that conflicts over resources are aggravating the conditions for war. We also recognize that when resources are scarce, it is the most vulnerable people and ecosystems that are at risk. Spiritually, we are compelled to care for both.

We call for Friends to examine and shift our individual impacts to the extent that each is able, so that Earth's resources are sustained or replenished. Such commitment will likely entail major adjustments in our purchases, our diets, transportation and livelihood.

While many individual Friends have progressed toward a sustainable lifestyle, we must now move to a corporate witness in our meeting, joining with and helping each other and also like-minded groups in supporting common concerns.

We ask all to stay continually informed about this evolving planetary crisis and discern future actions that will become needed. We appeal to all Friends to make this a standing priority in our families, meetings, and communities. We recognize that the actions described below are only the first steps in what is needed; we will work towards a transformation at all levels of society to create a sustainable way of life.

Recommended Immediate Actions

- ◆ Reduce our meeting-wide greenhouse-gas emissions at least 10 percent in the coming year by personally decreasing driving, flying, and home energy use and by utilizing efficient alternatives (for those who are able to do so). Maintain a list of suggested specific actions.
- ◆ Labor with and learn from others to help us all examine and reduce our fossil fuel consumption.
- ◆ Engage in collective discernment into how we might witness most powerfully for systemic impact.
- ◆ Regularly worship together and study and discuss climate change and personal adjustments, allowing spirit to work amongst us.
- ◆ Network among Meetings and other groups to share resources and expertise.
- ◆ Labor with those who shape public opinion and policy to promote Earth care and, if that fails, work to replace them. From local to state, national, and international levels, advocate for measures to protect Earth's resources, promote environmental justice, and reduce the occasion for war.
- ◆ Work through personal participation and public policy to mitigate the impacts of resource wars and climate change on the most vulnerable people and ecosystems.

—Approved November 12, 2006

Carl Magruder: 'I am *not* an environmentalist'

By Louis Cox

LAST fall, we reported on a passionate talk that Carl Magruder delivered during a special interest group about "Friends and Global Warming" at the 2006 FGC Gathering.

Later at the Gathering, Carl and I explored his ideas over lunch. I was asked about the part where he had faulted many ecologically concerned Friends for having faith in a *deus ex machina*. (That's Latin for being rescued from disaster by the intervention of a divine being or some other outside power.)

He said was talking about activists who pin their hopes on the outcomes of public elections, legislation, regulatory hearings, and the work of nonprofit organizations. Such activities may be worthwhile, but they cannot save us, because they are run by flawed human beings.

Carl said he is driven by old-fashioned "hunger and thirsting after righteousness." Much of what is unrighteous about the world today has to do with the deteriorating condition of the earth's life-support system. But several years ago he realized that he was not an "environmentalist," in the ordinary sense of that word.

For him it's more about *right relationship*. It's a call to living with *integrity*, seeking *wholeness*, not just as individuals but for the whole life community. Little is accomplished just by complaining that affluent North Americans use a disproportionate share of the world's resources, Carl noted. We must, as a faith community, kindle a spiritual transformation that

compels us to *love unconditionally*.

Carl said our Society's ineffectualness began more than two centuries ago, when Friends started moving away from *corporate* embodiment of the Spirit to reliance on individual discernment. Now we watch helplessly as the forces of economic globalization trash the planet. Many individual



Carl Magruder

Friends are deeply concerned, but their voices tend to be drowned out by corporate-controlled media. The single-issue campaigns or movements they join don't address root causes.

For example, Carl said, if some genius invented a machine that made the problem of global warming go away, we humans would miss this opportunity to evolve psychically and spiritually into the kind of beings who are so filled with love for God's creation that they could no longer pose a threat to it.

Carl said his experience of being an adopted child conditioned him to see the world in terms of scarcity and hidden dangers. This state of mind led to much unhappiness as a young adult. But it also made him more aware of the rest of the world's suffering.

A turning point came when he began noticing rich and powerful people who weren't any happier than he was. This showed him that modern life isn't working for either the rich or the poor!

After going through a long "dark night of the soul," Carl began looking for a different spiritual path and life work. He reconnected with Quakers at Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting in

Berkeley, Calif., and soon became involved in the Meeting's peace, justice, and Earthcare work.

Hungry for more knowledge, he enrolled in environmental studies at Humboldt State College. But he became disenchanted when he realized his instructors not only weren't addressing his concerns about a healthy human-Earth relationship—they weren't even asking such questions! This must have been how George Fox felt when he met people who professed the truth but didn't possess it, he thought.

A breakthrough came when he took a course on "Consumerism and Eco-spirituality," which introduced him to a different spiritual tradition, one that saw Earth as sacred, and legitimized the depth of his questions. He also gained insight into what seems to be wrong with modern Quakerism—a general drift toward intellectual understanding and less expectation of encountering living Truth.

SINCE then, Carl has been called to spread the gospel of Earth within the Religious Society of Friends. Last August he spoke at Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting sessions at Earlham College. He is open to other opportunities talk about Earthcare both in Quaker and non-Quaker settings.

Other venues include leading a course for high school students on "Peace, Justice, and Sustainability" as part of the Woolman Semester at the Sierra Friends Center. When we spoke, he was still in discernment about various possibilities that were vying for his attention, including leading workshops, joining an intentional community, or doing graduate level studies in eco-spirituality, leading perhaps to college-level teaching. ❖

Computers have become central to the work of many ec-activitists. —But what about the environmental costs?

THESE ARE highlights from an article, "Global Perspectives," published in 2004 by a student journalism class at the University of Santa Cruz, California, in a newspaper titled The Project.

I feel further proud in not using a computer from the time I read this article. I made Xerox copies to share locally and to whip out of my saddlebag purse if the subject comes up within my relating to other humans, friends, and acquaintances. I simply feel compelled to give you the high points of this article, which I find crucial and, of course, still vital and timely.

—Alene O. Smith
Santa Cruz, Calif., Friends Mtg.

THE HEART of the computer, the tiny part that makes modern computers so fast and small, is the semiconductor chip inside. There are various brand names: Intel, Pentium, Motorola, and so forth.

Manufacturing these chips requires approximately 400 steps in a complicated process that begins with mining silicon dioxide (silica). It's the most abundant substance in the earth's crust, so it's not too difficult to find or extract. It is then heated along with carbon to form carbon dioxide and silicon.

That silicon is then heated again with hydrochloric acid and hydrogen in the process of forming a pure rod of silicon, which is then sliced into millimeter-thick wafers and shipped to the chip factory. This factory is over twice the length of a football field and contains over 100 different brands of machinery from around the world.

The chips must be manufac-

tured in "clean rooms" that use powerful air filters to reduce airborne contaminants to only 1 particle per cubic foot of air. (Hospitals have 10,000 particles per cubic



THIS ELECTRONICS plant in Sweden is tiny compared to the sprawling facilities that turn out millions of computers every year, in the process often contributing to serious environmental pollution and health hazards for workers.

foot, and normal outdoor air contains 500,000 particles per cubic foot.)

However, these filters do not work on the toxic vapors created by the chip-making process. Workers in the chip factory use microscopes, ultraviolet light, photosensitive chemicals, and chemical baths, all toxic, and precision instruments which carve tiny patterns and implant phosphorus and boron on each chip wafer. Workers also apply microscopically thin coatings of copper and gold to the chips, then ship them off to the factory that makes circuit boards.

The circuit board factory uses copper, fiberglass, and epoxy resin to make the boards, then coats the boards with copper and tin-lead solder, then etches them with circuit patterns, using techniques similar to those in the chip-manufacturing process. This generates acidic fumes and other toxic wastes. The plastic used in making the computer's exterior comes from oil that requires extensive refining, not to mention the com-

plicated process by which it is extracted from the earth.

Finally, all of these parts are put together in yet another factory and shipped around the world to various distribution centers.

As you can see, the manufacture of a single computer requires a great deal of division of labor, from mining to manufacturing to assembling. Complex technologies such as these require alienated labor.

—A rather ironic and hideous coincidence for progressive, concerned, aware people within environmental organizations to be joyfully, mindlessly, automatically using such computers!

Fact: Workers in computer factories report higher incidences of lung disease, skin rashes, and miscarriages. Silicon Valley, where many computers are manufactured, has vast areas of contaminated groundwater and the largest concentration of Superfund Cleanup sites in our United States. Computer manufacturers generate millions of pounds of toxic waste each year—manufacturing just one computer chip creates 90 pounds of waste and uses nearly 3,000 gallons of water alone! And the process of refining copper used to create chips contributes to acid rain. A lot of manufacturing-generated pollution, such as contaminated groundwater and acid rain, can't be limited to one location. What will we all do when our drinking water is ruined by computer-makers upstream? ❖

New booklet from Cambridge (Mass.) Friends: *Quakers and the New Story*

"Science today seems to be telling a 'new story'—one that no longer stands in tension to core Quaker convictions."

So writes the Quaker Philip Clayton, visiting Professor of Science and Religion at Harvard Divinity School, in his introduction to a new booklet, *Quakers and the New Story*, published by the New Story Study Group at Friends Meeting at Cambridge, Cambridge, Mass. This change in science, resulting from unexpected discoveries made largely in the last century, is of great significance for Friends, since this change will help build a strong spiritual and intellectual foundation for an effective Earthcare witness.

Many people, including Friends, have been under the pervasive influence of a worldview from Western science that has in the past objectified nature, reducing it to lifeless matter. This has supported the commodification of the natural world, and served of-



ten to reinforce a theological dualism that separates the sacred realm from the physical world. It supported the strengthening of a consciousness that relates to the natural world as an object "out there" (a subject/object consciousness) thus isolating human consciousness from the natural world around us. While the highly developed individual consciousness has an important role, it urgently needs to be balanced by a developed participatory consciousness. This participatory consciousness includes experience of the Light within the entire natural world.

With the changes in world-

view now available we are emboldened to explore, nourish and develop participatory consciousness as individuals and as a group and to honor and learn from cultures where it has been developed and from our own where it has been repressed or forgotten. This will greatly empower and transform our witness. We are encouraged to enter into a felt knowledge of being fundamentally at home as Earthbeings, awakening and deepening our capacity to love and care more deeply and energetically for our home wherever we may live. As Philip Clayton writes,

"We are bone and sinew, breath and soul, of an ever-evolving Whole that is like us because it includes us as an intrinsic part of itself."

The booklet includes the sidebar, "A Personal Journey into the New Story" by Mary Coelho, and an essay about the work of the New Story Study Group of Friends Meeting at Cambridge. It is available for \$3.00 plus 87 cents postage from Mary Coelho at <mccoelho@earthlink.net>.

New edition of *Healing Ourselves and the Earth*

THIS UPDATED BOOKLET is based on a talk, "Mistaken Beliefs that are Helping to Destroy the Earth," that the late Elizabeth G. Watson presented at the FGC Gathering in 1990.

Her challenging insights about the spiritual roots of humans' ecologically destructive behavior are as relevant—and urgent—today as they were then.

After surveying the many fronts on which the earth's ecological integrity is seriously threatened, Elizabeth

outlined five common beliefs that need rethinking if we are to live sustainably as part of the family of life on this planet. In the process, she demonstrated that Earthcare requires not only a new manner of living on the earth but a transformed consciousness about our place in Creation.

Copies may be ordered for \$4.00 + \$1.00 S & H from the

QEW office or from <www.quakerearthcare.org>.



Steering Committee to meet April 26–29; YM activists invited

QEW'S Steering Committee will gather for its annual spring work session at the Cenacle Retreat & Conference Center in Chicago, Ill., from Thursday evening, April 26, through noon Sunday, April 29, 2007.

Although this is a time for committees and interest groups to conduct face-to-face business, QEW is also encouraging other Friends who are working on Earthcare in their Yearly Meetings to join in. Registration forms are available from the QEW office or <www.quakerearthcare.org>.

May 25–28 in Pennsylvania

Grounding for a Green Life: Crossing the Mysteries of Nature and Psyche

THE FRIENDS CONFERENCE on Religion & Psychology presents "Grounding for a Green Life: Crossing the Mysteries of Nature and Psyche," with Bill Plotkin on Memorial Day Weekend, May 25–28, 2007, at Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pa.

To encounter the soul is to discover the truth at the center of the image you were born with, a truth that reveals the nature of your gift, your particular way of belonging to the world, the well-spring of your passion, and the path to your greatest fulfillment.

Bill Plotkin is a depth psychologist, ecotherapist, and wilderness guide. In his work, Bill has tapped into the wisdom of nature-based spiritual traditions found throughout the world. He has become a master at guiding people into wild lands and into the under-

June 8–10 in Kentucky

EarthSpirit Rising, a Return to Earth's Wisdom

THE 6th EARTHSPIRIT RISING Conference is scheduled for June 8–10, 2007 at Bellarmine University, Louisville, Ky. Titled "EarthSpirit Rising, a Return to Earth's Wisdom," the conference will focus on listening to and learning from the ways of Earth. At the heart of this conference is the conviction that the spiritual dimension of life offers the greatest untapped reservoir of power, imagination, and courage to meet this challenge to return to Earth's wisdom.

Knowing that you are someone deeply aware of the crises of our time, we'd like to invite you to participate in an opportunity for transformation.

Crisis: Crisis-management seems to be our primary cultural response to the endangered life systems of Earth. Crises surely abound, from global warming to the pollution of air and water; from corporate greed to terrible violence. Things continue to worsen as we experience the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lebanon, as well as the effects of global warming. The list goes on and on. When we focus on the problems, the results can only be fear and despair.



EarthSpirit Rising
Return to Earth Wisdom

Opportunity: The solution to these crises will be found when we begin looking at Earth in a whole different way.

When we see, as Thomas Berry says, that there is only one sacred community, one Earth community; and when we understand that there cannot be a healthy human community on an unhealthy planet, then the possibility for real change arises. As we grow in this deep love for Earth, we come to know that it is not only a necessity, but also an ideal way to live.

Since 1998 the EarthSpirit Rising conferences have provided many people who have awakened to this deep love for Earth with an opportunity to come together, share their efforts, learn from visionary speakers, and leave feeling empowered to continue their part of the Great Work.

Conference organizers, Imago and Cultivating Connections, have gathered visionary thinkers Jean Houston, Kirkpatrick Sale, Jerry Mander, Starhawk, Margaret Wheatley, Paul Rogat Loeb, and Jane Siberry for this conference. <www.earthspiritrising.org>



world of the soul. Bill's life and work are steeped in Jungian thought, the poetic tradition, and the intimate study of nature. He invites us to make a deep connection with the natural world we are a part of and dependent upon. Bill works with emerging visionaries, leaders, and artists of cultural renaissance, whom he has asked one important question, a question that is vital for us all:

"What is the one conversation with the world that only you can have?"

Bill is the author of *Soulcraft: Crossing into the Mysteries of Nature and Psyche* and is currently completing *A Natural History of the Soul: the Ecopsychology of Human Development*, to be published in 2007.

On-line registration available in March, <<http://fcrp.quaker.org>>.

Quaker Earthcare Witness Order Form

Name

Address

City/State/ZIP

Country

E-mail

Phone

Home Mtg

Yearly Mtg

Interests

Please check the appropriate boxes

- 1-year support for Quaker Earthcare Witness
(includes subscription to **BeFriending Creation**)
- \$500/US \$100/US \$50/US (avg) \$35/US Other \$ _____/US

Make checks payable to **Quaker Earthcare Witness**. Send with this form to
Quaker Earthcare Witness, 173-B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT. 05401-1607.

TOTAL \$

Canadians may contribute through Canadian Yearly Meeting for a tax receipt, starting at \$45/Can. Please send check to Canadian Yearly Meeting, 91-A Fourth Ave., Ottawa, ON K1S 2L1. CYM needs to know that the money is for QEW support. Forward this form to QEW to let us know that you have chosen to contribute through CYM.

BeFriending Creation

BeFriending Creation, Vol. 20, No. 2, March-April 2007. Newsletter of **Quaker Earthcare Witness** (formerly Friends Committee on Unity with Nature). ISSN 1050-0332. Published bi-monthly.

We publish **BeFriending Creation** to promote the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness, stimulate discussion and action, share insights, practical ideas, and news of our actions, and encourage among Friends a sense of community and spiritual connection with all Creation. Opinions expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of Quaker Earthcare Witness, or of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). The editor is responsible for unsigned items. Submission deadlines are February 7, April 7, June 7, August 7, October 7, and December 7.

Contents of **BeFriending Creation** copyright ©2007 Quaker Earthcare Witness, except as noted. Permission to reprint **newsletter** material must be requested in advance from the editor.

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

VISION AND WITNESS

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

Steering Committee Clerk: Barbara Williamson, 2710 E. Leigh St., Richmond VA 23223; 804/643-0461; barbaraawmson@juno.com.

Gen. Secretary: Ruah Swennerfelt, 173-B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401. 802/658-0308; Ruah@QuakerEarthcare.org.

BFC Editor: Louis Cox, 173-B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401. 802/658-0308; e-mail: Louis@QuakerEarthcare.org.

Website: www.QuakerEarthcare.org

EARTHLight shines again in this 'best' and new articles collection

EarthLight—Spiritual Wisdom for an Ecological Age

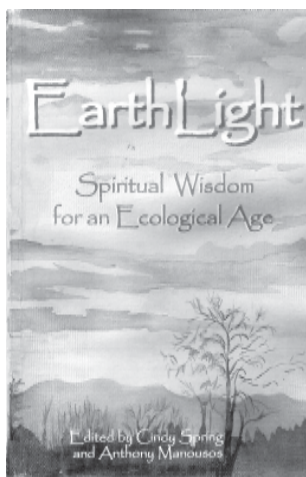
Edited by Cindy Spring and Anthony Manousos

Friends Bulletin, 2007. ISBN 0-9700410-2-0 \$20.00 US

ALTHOUGH *BFC*'s "sister" publication, *EarthLight* magazine, stopped publishing a couple of years ago, devoted readers cherish their back issues as sources of spiritual wisdom and encouragement in these often gloomy times.

Now, with the help of *Friends Bulletin*, *EL*'s 15 years of "celebrating the living Earth and our 13-billion-year story of the universe" have been distilled into a 344-page book, along with many new articles in the same tradition of spirituality and ecology.

Articles by more than 40 leading thinkers and writers are grouped according to the seven *EarthLight* principles of "Conscious Evolution," "Sacred Rela-



tionship," "Collective Wisdom," "Mutual Learning," "Conscious Choice," "Inclusivity," and "Celebration."

In his inspiring introduction, "Spiritual Ecology: a Practice of the Heart," former *EarthLight* Editor K. Lauren de Boer writes, "More than just a theory, spiritual ecology describes a way of being in the world. It

is ancient in the sense that peoples have lived it in many times and places. It is contemporary in that it integrates the discoveries of science and a new sense of our evolutionary story."

For more information please contact the *Friends Bulletin* editor at [<friendsbulletin@aol.com>](mailto:friendsbulletin@aol.com) or go to [<www.westernquaker.net>](http://www.westernquaker.net).

BeFriending Creation

March-April 2007

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper, bleached without chlorine

✓ Sustainable development success builds on cultural sensitivity.	1
✓ Awareness, individual actions can help slow global warming.	2
✓ Scientists and evangelicals unite to protect Creation.	4
✓ FCNL's legislative priorities address global climate change.	6
✓ Carl Magruder: "I am not an environmentalist."	7
✓ Are we aware of environmental costs of computer production?	8

Ruah & Louis begin 1,400-mile 'Peace for Earth' walk in November

BEGINNING November 1, 2007, we will begin a 1,400-mile "Peace for Earth Walk" from Vancouver, B.C. to San Diego, Calif. During this six-month sabbatical, we will talk with Friends Meetings and churches about how John Woolman's call to live in "right relationship" with all Creation is as relevant in the 21st century as it was 250 years ago. Like Woolman, we will be traveling on foot and, as much as possible, staying with Friends along the way.

Although Woolman is best known for his witness against slavery and other social injustices, he also was increasingly concerned about the spiritual health of the Religious Society of Friends because many Friends had lost touch with their witness to Truth and were getting caught up in materialism, overwork, and insensitivity toward non-human creatures.

Similarly, we are seeking to deepen and strengthen 21st century Friends' work for peace, justice, and Earthcare by focusing on the unifying spiritual foundation of these concerns. We will show how reverence for life cannot be separated from maintaining the integrity and health of ecological systems.

This growing understanding has called us to

make radical changes in our own lifestyles and to work for critical public policy changes. We hope that our words and actions during this journey will be a catalyst for others to take similar actions.

Woolman's prophetic message about simple living is relevant today because so many wars are based on unjust and unsustainable use of nonrenewable resources. We also see many social and ecological disruptions stemming from overconsumption and population pressures.



Our method will be to listen and to share with others what we have learned about living simply, justly, and richly in a world of limited resources. We will facilitate discussions and role-playing to discern what Woolman would advise today about living with greater simplicity and integrity, in order to experience greater peace, inwardly and outwardly.

We will leave copies of a study guide we have compiled to encourage Friends to continue learning from John Woolman's words and example. We are developing a website, <www.peaceforearth.org>, where Friends will be able to follow our plans and journey.

—Ruah Swennerfelt and Louis Cox