

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

November 20, 2025

I started publishing newspapers in 2005. Some of these look very different from others because I changed printing places and occasionally, they changed their format. 2012 is missing because I was exhausted from spending most of my free time working on these newspapers while working full-time in a sewing factory to pay for printing and postage to mail a "real" broadsheet, I took a year off. Once I decided to publish online and use copy-paper size layouts, there was more uniformity. Here are screenshots of sample front pages as things evolved. All the papers from 2008 forward are on my website, www.ionaconner.com. This is a photo essay followed by two of my all-time favorite articles by people in our Global Family. My newspaper has always been a team effort and there are no words to adequately express my gratitude for everyone who submitted stories, photos, encouragement, and feedback. I will be continuing with an exciting new version of this work in January.

I love creating these for you and feel more alive when I'm doing this.

How and Why I Started My Own Newspaper

Published in *H.E.R. Local: Her Everyday Resource* by The Herald-Mail Company, Fall 2008.

Just when most people would have been dreaming of retirement, I was dreaming of starting my own newspaper.

The urge goes way back. Thirty-five years ago, our daily paper arrived face-up on the door mat. The photo of a naked, dead woman's body in a ravine, though microscopic, shocked me. I ran into the house and cancelled our subscription, thankful that I had seen it before my little sons arrived home from school. I was unnerved.

I don't like the way women are portrayed in underwear ads, crying or simply as helpmates. I abhor the gruesome, ugly and trivial content of most papers.

And I believe that, in these times of grave global warming threats, people aren't seeing the immediacy and truth through their beloved mainstream papers because that would necessitate ruffling the feathers of valuable advertisers.

In addition to these negative reasons for creating an alternative newspaper, I love to write. I have dabbled in newspaper editing for non-profit organizations for decades, including publishing my own newsletters on 8 1/2 by 11" copy paper. I enjoy finding people who are doing wonderful work and talking about them to others.

So, at 61, I decided to publish what I believe is the nation's first, hard-copy, global warming newspaper, *The Order of the Earth: News, Views and Musings* (a name I thought of

years ago). I focus more on women and peace than men and war. I focus more on preserving forests and trees and on income-producing clean energy in the fight against catastrophic climate change. I do not believe this world is as awful as it appears to be through the eyes of news gatherers who scan the world for the gory, the scary, the tragic, the weird. Meanwhile, people everywhere are overcoming obstacles and working hard to create a brighter future. I like to find the kind, the beautiful, the thoughtful, the outrageous. I work long hours to uncover stories showing that we can indeed transform this country to minimize and survive ghastly environmental conditions that climate change is forcing on us.

How on Earth are we as a so-

Continued on page 26

The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings

Volume 2, Number 1: January 2, 2005

*A newspaper dedicated to environmental activism:
building a better world, one action at a time.*

*"The three principal endeavors of a Bard: One is to learn and collect sciences;
The second is to teach; And the third is to make peace And to put an end to all injury;
For to do contrary to these things Is not usual or becoming to a Bard.
—from The Triads of Britain found in Celtic Sacred Landscapes by Nigel Pennick*

Editorial

Dearhearts,

We had a wonderful Meeting of the Hearts and Minds on New Year's Eve.

My preparation included:

1. answering my questions myself (next),
2. reading up on the sale of state-owned parks and forest lands,
3. suggesting mediation in the battle between Chesapeake Climate Action Network, which endorses putting windmills atop mountains in Western Maryland and the Sierra Club, which has information about serious bat deaths due to these windmills and which doesn't want clear-cutting to make paths for the windmills,
4. Simplicity Circles as explained on the Web site www.simplicity-matters.org,
5. Spirituality of the Earth as practiced at Genesis Farm in Blairstown, New Jersey, and finally,
6. A description of "Entrance Transitions" gleaned from reading The Timeless Way of Building by Christopher Alexander from the Pattern Language series. This to be used as a tool to bring new people in. (See page 2) Remember, every new one makes us stronger.

It turns out that we are all involved in The Great Work (as Thomas Berry describes in a book by the same name) and we shared our thoughts and dreams on a very personal level for 3 ½ hours. See stories in the future..

For the Earth,
Iona

7. How can a small group of us have a wide- range effect?

By reaching out to new people and forming

Subscribe Today

"The Order of the Earth News"

\$20 a year payable to Iona;
send check to HCR 83 Box 881,
Shade Gap, Pennsylvania 1725
(note new address)

Iona's Answers to the Questions Posed for The Hearts and Minds Meeting

1. What is the most important thing we need to do?

Encourage young people.

2. What is the single worst issue facing humanity and the planet now?

Brain-/heart-deadness in people today.

3. What skills, talents, attributes do you personally bring to deal with these issues?

Free thinker, enthusiasm, life experience, dedication, newspaper to counteract mainstream media.

4. What are your immediate needs for the short term?

Self-care (lose weight, exercise more, eat better), hibernate in Pennsylvania to work on newspaper, research family newspaper history with "The New York Times," settle into new house, dance.

5. What are your long-term needs?

Stability, inner peace which has not been possible while working for others as this, my real work, goes undone.

6. How can we help you meet them so you will be able to function at your peak?

Keep me informed of your progress so I can share it with others in "The Order of the Earth News."

I see this newspaper as being an amplified voice for my friends who are involved in Earth Work. So please be sure to send me your stories. Successes and failures are welcome! I've had plenty of both.

new relationships. "Every new one makes us stronger." (Pete Seeger) The Hundredth Monkey story.

8. What are you willing to be responsible for?

Two more meetings while I still live in Maryland.

9. How will we grow and stay connected?

Do we want to? (group decision)

The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings

Volume 6, Number 12, Issue 57: December 2, 2006

Goal: To create a hugely successful weekday newspaper that will report the story of the transformation—the people’s paper; beyond politics, beyond nationalism, beyond gender or race or age. It will contain good, wholesome, life-promoting news, views and musings.

Mission: To inspire and encourage readers to think seriously,
act intelligently and be peaceful, compassionate and creative.

The Dream: Humans can co-exist with Nature and, once they do, both will flourish again.

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. This is not a way of life at all in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 16, 1963

(from a speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors)

Soft and silent is the gospel
of gently falling snow,
enfolding the world
in white swaddling bands
of Christmas hope and peace.

Gentle and delicate is the miracle
of fragile falling snowflakes
that easily bend earthward
the branches of sturdy pines
with the peace of Christmas.

Meek is the sacrament of snow,
yet when it’s deep enough
it stalls our mightiest machines.
So, too, an avalanche of peaceful people
may surely halt
the great engines of war
and needless violence.

May Christmas Peace fill your heart and home to overflowing.

*(Verse on a Christmas card we received from a peace-activist friend last year.
It was made by Forest of Peace in Indiana—800-282-1865; www.forestofpeace.com.)*

The Order of the Earth ***News, Views and Musings***

Volume 7, Number 2, Issue 59: February 4, 2007

Goal: To create a hugely successful weekday newspaper that will report the story of the transformation—the people’s paper; beyond politics, beyond nationalism, beyond gender or race or age. It will contain good, wholesome, life-promoting news, views and musings.

Mission: To inspire and encourage readers to think seriously, act intelligently and be peaceful, compassionate and creative.

The Dream: Humans can co-exist with Nature and, once they do, both will flourish again.

Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Release of Climate Change Report Shakes World

U.N. Climate Panel Says Warming is Man-Made

Juliet Eilperin

PARIS, France (*The Washington Post* February 2, 2007)—There is no longer any reasonable doubt that human activities are warming the planet at a dangerous rate, according to a new worldwide assessment of climate science released today by the authoritative Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). With at least 90 percent certainty, the IPCC’s “Summary For Policymakers” concludes human-generated greenhouse gases account for most of the global rise in temperatures over the past half century. Hundreds of scientists from 113 countries prepared the report, which represents the most comprehensive overview of scientific climate research since 2001.

Carbon Dioxide Rate Is At Highest Level For 650,000 Years

Steve Connor

PARIS, France (*The Independent* February 3, 2007)—Concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are at their highest levels for at least 650,000 years and this rise began with the birth of the Industrial Revolution 250 years ago, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Carbon dioxide is the principal greenhouse gas responsible for global warming and, in 2005, concentrations stood at 379 parts per million (ppm). This compares to a pre-industrial level of 278 ppm, and a range over the previous 650,000 years of between 180 and 300 ppm, the report says.

UN Delivers Definitive Warnings on Dangers of Climate Change

Michael McCarthy

PARIS, France (*The Independent* February 3, 2007)—A terrifying leap in average global temperatures of 6.4° C (11.52° F) with higher figures nearer the poles could occur over the next century, according to the most authoritative report yet on global warming. The rise, which would make agriculture, even life, almost impossible over much of the Earth, was the worst-case scenario envisaged by hundreds of scientists on the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. They reported yesterday on their three-year study of how temperatures are likely to rise as global warming takes hold.



The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings about our Planet

The Order of the Earth Volume 8, Number 1, Issue 70: January 2008

the poet's prayer

by Cole Hons, State College, PA

may these words i speak
right here, right now
go forth from my mind
fly out from my lips
and deliver the subtle contents of my
heart and soul
beyond the confines of my body
beyond my individual self
out into the heart of the world
and back into the soul of the universe
which first planted them in my brain

may these words remind each heart
and soul they touch
that in the beginning, we are all of one heart
that in the end, we are all of one soul
and that, in the middle, we forget this
fundamental truth
at our own mortal peril

may these words i speak
right here, right now
strike the ears of all who hear them
like fingers plucking strings
like tiny wooden hammers
beneath the graceful hoods of grand pianos
erupting in warm vibrations of universal,
emotional communion

may these words cause hearts to sing
may they dream their way inside you
may they come to rest like small, soft
animals on your shoulder
whispering from the place where your body
connects with your mind
may their music seduce you gently
into harmony
with the greater music of the greater song

the song that's sung by daylight
the song that's sung at midnight
the song that's sung in quiet, lonely, noisy,
crowded rooms
the song that's sung in terror
the song that's hewn from laughter
the song that's sung in cradles, schoolyards,
forests, towns and tombs

may these words cause hearts to sing
may these words cause souls to hunger
for the greater song to be remembered

for the greater song to be sung back to life
on the lips of the world

A Look at the Latest Global Warming Report

Compiled by Iona

Introduction: Since this is primarily a global warming newspaper, I was going to try to summarize the final report, released November 17, for you but found it so interesting that I will start a 9-part series giving you the entire content of the Synthesis Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fourth Assessment Report. Another one won't be out for years. It is very tedious and strenuous work with thousands of different people trying to reach consensus. Here are a few brief excerpts in chronological order from major newspapers at the time of its release. You can go directly to the site and read the whole Summary for Policymakers if you feel so inclined: www.ipcc.org.



U.N. Report Describes Risks of Inaction on Climate Change

by Elisabeth Rosenthal and Andrew C. Revkin, excerpt
VALENCIA, Spain (The New York Times November 17, 2007)—In its final and most powerful report, a

United Nations panel of scientists meeting here describes the mounting risks of climate change in language that is both more specific and forceful than its previous assessments, according to scientists here.

Synthesizing reams of data from its three previous reports, the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for the first time specifically points out important risks if governments fail to respond: melting ice sheets that could lead to a rapid rise in sea levels and the extinction of large numbers of species brought about by even moderate amounts of warming, on the order of 1 to 3 degrees.

The report carries heightened significance because it is (to page 4)



Andrea Glidden, a 26-year-old single mother, opens Huntingdon County, PA's first solar store. Photo by Iona.

Andrea Glidden's eyes light up when she talks about her new solar energy business in Shirleysburg, Pennsylvania. Hidden behind the Augwick Flea Market and down the lane, is Glidden Alternative Energy Products and More.

Andrea, a 26-year-old, single mother from Petersburg, is in the early stages of becoming Huntingdon County's first solar energy store

Young Woman Opens County's First Solar Energy Shop

by Iona

owner. She and her father, Mark Glidden of Three Springs, are partners and they are methodically bringing in inventory, starting with high-efficiency wood-burning stoves, all manufactured in the United States. Andrea expects her future solar product suppliers to help her learn the engineering and technical aspects of the systems so that she will be able to do the installations with her father.

Mark has 30 years of experience in the heating, cooling and electrical industry. He is teaching his daughter how these things operate. "He's the best teacher in the world," she smiles.

With the energy crisis upon us, the Gliddens' goal is to help local homeowners upgrade their heating and cooling systems to save on utility bills in the future while reducing their fossil fuel consumption.

Andrea sees solar as the ultimate long-term solution to many of our country's problems. She has a list of

items she is ready to order: solar Christmas tree lights, dusk-to-dawn lights, garden lights, and her favorite item—solar hot water systems.

"I have a three-year-old daughter and if there's anything to be done to preserve the planet, obviously you care about that," said Andrea, when asked about the reasons she decided to start this business. She also said that she saw an open market for solar energy since "nobody else is doing it." When electric companies are de-regulated in 2010, "prices of oil and utility bills are going to go through the roof," Andrea explained. Having the sun heat your water or home or light your lights will help save money in the long run. A typical hot water heater can cost \$500 or \$600 but a solar system is not much more—\$1,000, estimates Andrea.

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The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

January 2009

Vol. 9 No. 1 (Issue 82) To print: 1/2/23/09

\$1.00

UPDATES

Plankton Death Bloom: A Warning on Warming

By David Pedman
San Francisco Chronicle

November 22 (a-c)
The sea has brought on by climate change is causing the rapidly increasing microscopic marine plants called phytoplankton to bloom explosively and die away as never before, a phenomenon that is likely to create harm among regulatory creatures that rely on the ocean food, Stanford scientists found.

A few organisms may benefit from this disruption of the Arctic's fragile ecology but a variety of animals, from gray whales to seabirds, will suffer, said Stanford biological oceanographer Kevin E. Arp. "It's all a question of timing," Arp said. "If migratory animals reach the Arctic and find the phytoplankton's gone, they'll have missed the boat."

Carbon Trading's Benefits in Doubt

David Dobson via
Environmental News Network

December 30 (a-c)
The European Union (EU) started with the most high-minded of ecological goals: to create a market that would encourage companies to reduce greenhouse gases by making them pay for each ton emitted into the atmosphere.

Four years later, the carbon trading system has created a multibillion euro windfall for some of the continent's biggest polluters, with little or no noticeable benefit to the environment.

The lessons learned are coming under fresh scrutiny now, both in Europe and abroad. EU leaders will meet this week to work on the next phase of their system, asking, they say, how to extend its scope and content to firms. And in the United States, President-elect Barack Obama has pledged to move quickly on a similar program.

As originally envisioned, Europe's cap-and-trade system would buy most if not all of the permits needed to cover their projected carbon dioxide emissions for a year, one permit good for each metric ton of CO₂, the main greenhouse gas. If they produced more gas than expected, they would have to buy more permits.

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NEWS READER Coal River Mine Permit Appealed by Wind Backers
Environmental groups said that they were appealing the Mountain
administration's approval of a key permit change for a Massey Energy strip
mine at a site where citizen groups are promoting alternative plans for a wind-
energy facility. (December 28 email from CENM.org.)



Black Mountain, West County Virginia. Coal companies say that mountaintop removal means jobs and prosperity, but the reality is quite different. 20% of all the land area in West County has been destroyed by mountaintop removal but 20% of all the citizens still live in poverty. Photo by J. W. Randolph

Students Learn About Blowing Up Mountains for Coal

Teens Plan and Run Environmental Meeting

By Emily Hatcher
Harrisonburg, Maryland

On November 16th, Roy Lewis (Vernonburg, Tenn. 2002) and the Green Earth Club from Westminster High School in Westminster, Maryland hosted a talk by J.W. Randolph on mountaintop removal. Mr. Randolph is a columnist for the new profile Appalachian Times.

The meeting was held at the Westminster High School media center and 32 students, faculty members and teachers attended.

Although the meeting was locally advertised via the county newspaper and several citizens

groups, no members of the general public were present. This was a disappointment to the students, as they had hoped to spread the word about how a good portion of the electricity produced for Carroll County actually comes from mountaintop removal.

To place the subject of mountaintop removal in context, Gov. 2002 President Eric Kayser started the evening with a 21 minute video called "The Story of Coal" by Anne Leonard. This film can be found on www.storyofcoal.com and is a basic overview of how our current economic system works and why it won't keep working for long if we don't make fundamental changes and move to a sustainable, closed-loop system of producing goods and services.

The video described the human suffering caused during mountaintop removal and different

phases of materials production and how deadly toxins are produced during many steps of the process. It also went into detail about how the U.S., back in the days of President Eisenhower, made a conscious decision to make over-increasing consumption of goods the basis of the American economy. In this system, the primary value of the American citizen is as a consumer of goods.

The video showed that 98% of products become trash within six months and that three times are designed to last just long enough so that the buyer decides to treat the manufacturer and buy another one. By the end, the video had made a compelling argument that all of today's "waste" hasn't made people happier and that society needs to make some big changes really soon.

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Earthjustice Works to Stop Mongolian Mining

By Alice Thomas
Earthjustice International

Earth's Most Mongolian coal mining reserves are being plundered without much concern for environmental safety and environmental issues. Earthjustice (a-c) attorney Alice Thomas provides this special report on her efforts to halt these devastating practices.

Situated between Russia and China, Mongolia is characterized by the dramatic beauty of its landscape and the fertility of its nomadic herders, descendants of Genghis Khan. But Mongolia's environment and culture are imperiled by what many, unfortunately, consider its most valuable asset: its vast mining reserves.

Mongolia's mines contain some of the largest mineral deposits in the world. The use of outdated mining technology and illegal mining practices has resulted in significant adverse impacts on the country's fragile water, soil, and pastureland upon which its indigenous herders and their livestock rely. (Mongolia receives about 22,000 cubic meters of water per square kilometer of territory, placing it among the lowest 24 countries in the world in terms of water resources.)

Moreover, the situation is likely to grow worse. The opening up to foreign investment in 1997 — and the discovery of some of the world's largest deposits of coal, uranium, copper and gold — has led to an explosion in the mining sector. Thousands of exploration licenses have been issued in the large mining companies, eager to exploit these vast resources, from China, Russia, the United States, Canada, and elsewhere.

To address this threat, Earthjustice's International Program is working with Mongolian lawyers to strengthen their litigation skills and help them participate more effectively in the mine licensing and environmental impact

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Next Generation of Earth Caretakers

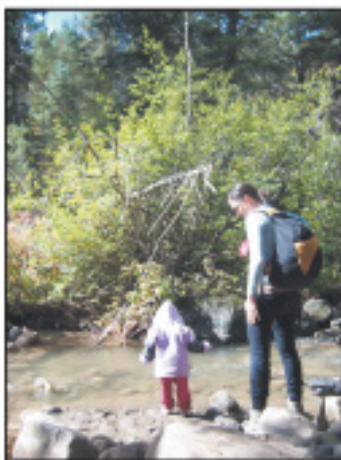
By Heidi Shivers
Columbia, Colorado

Sustainability, going green, solar power, composting — whatever reason brings you to read this newspaper — you are probably aware that the changes that you make in your lifetime will most likely affect the quality of life of the next generation. Most readers have lived their eighty years or so in this planet and even with extreme changes in our production toward fuel efficiency, we know that our choices will have much longer-term impacts.

So, I ask you this: What is the most important thing we can do to ensure that our efforts to create a cleaner, more sustainable future are supported and embraced? The key is to raise children who feel a connection to the earth and who are invested in the joy that the outdoors brings to their lives.

Our responsibility as folks who "think green" is to share with children our knowledge and passion in a way that will lead them to their own commitments to action. Kids (adults, too!) love to play. We make sure that, through play, they have a connection to the natural world and later grow into caring and responsible stewards of the Earth. Outdoor play — whether it be climbing, playing in a field, hiking, surfing or canoeing — offers children opportunities to experience nature in a real and meaningful way.

That is why I started OutdoorBaby.net. It's a chance to go



Heidi Shivers measures time outdoors with her daughters. Knowing the importance of raising children to care for and protect the planet, Heidi created a Web site for families and children called OutdoorBaby.net. Photo by Heidi Shivers' husband

beyond just raising that my own children grow up with a understanding of the wonders of our planet, but to share the love here

with other families who may not have as much knowledge.

OutdoorBaby.net is a free resource for parents with a variety of

approaches to enjoying the outdoors but with one shared goal: to be outdoors with their children and to share ideas with other parents. Families with children from birth through age 18 use the site to share ideas about how to facilitate the outdoors with children and they use it for inspiration from other parents.

I want folks who care deeply about the future of our planet to think of ways to share their passion with our young ones. OutdoorBaby.net was created to support the long-lasting benefits of outdoor play in children. Please take the time to share your ideas on this important information-sharing site.

Here are some stories to inspire you:

Heidi (my husband) and I were getting ready to meet our little girl and we wondered how much outdoor activity would be possible at our arrival. So, when I was six months pregnant, I went on one last cross-country skiing trip at 9:00 AM. I felt very strong. Then a friend of mine told me that she had been hiking at the National Monument in Grand Junction. She was seven months pregnant. It was hot and the road was steep, very steep, with no cash. My accomplishment did not seem so huge after that.

Then a friend of mine who has always enjoyed the outdoors but never did anything really adventurous, called to me about her

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THE ORDER OF THE EARTH NEWS
P.O. BOX 884
DUNDEE, PENNSYLVANIA 17228

The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

July 2010

theorderoftheearth.com

Vol. 10 No. 6 Issue 99 To print: \$16/10

\$1.00

Sick About the BP Oil Calamity? DO SOMETHING — REALLY!

Stop Driving; Stay Home; Plant a Garden; Get a Bike



Photo by Bob Cardillo. Reprinted with permission from Country Gardens Magazine. ©Copyright 2008 Meredith Corporation. All Rights Reserved. *John Collier tends to plants on his and his husband's land in Ohio.*

A Gardener's Dream Comes True

By John Collier
Suffolk, Ohio

"Backyard Habitat"

Being an old farm was the perfect setting for all my passions and visions of planting gardens on the land and welcoming nature and wildlife to move in and take up roots.

What used to be 40 acres is now reduced to 2 1/2 with the original barn and several outbuildings (outdoors included) and a nice stand of woods behind the house. There are nearly 20 separate naturalized gardens.

There was a large Apple orchard that stood in the 1800s and all is gone now, save for a couple of old trees that remain, as living on into the 21st century. The previous owners made their own Apple Butter and Cider here on the farm and grew vegetables in cell.

After 14 years of living here, my vision of what it could all be has finally come full circle. The outbuildings are great backdrops for several of the gardens as is an old 1800s log cabin we moved here in the '90s and attached to the house, which I immediately surrounded with several gardens.

After many years I decided to get certified with the National Wildlife Federation for the Backyard Habitat program. I have a sign on front now to show that I am doing my part for the Native States and Wildlife (see page 2). It's important! Anyone having a large or small garden should get certified as all you need is to have Water, Shelter, Food and nesting areas for the birds and wildlife.

I have fulfilled my dream on my property of using every bit of space for gardens and now I have run out of room... but, in reality, I will never be done and the

ingenuity will never be without the earth dirt in them.

The property now has several varieties of trees such as Hemlocks, various Pines and Yuccas, Dunes Redwood (an ancient old man from prehistoric days), Birch -- and many honey suckles (this one here on the property such as raspberries, blackberries and some blueberries and winterberry).

I purchase 10 different Adonis and I've always had a love affair with them since childhood on old family farms, two of which are Grapes and one is Hops. The others are ornamental vine arbors.

There is now a greenhouse in the back yard and a small water garden in the front yard. The original Vegetable garden in the back yard is the one we use today.

In closing, I would make a suggestion to anyone to look into it. Continued on next page



Photo by John Hamill

Bikers travel the bend of the Roanoke River Greenway near Roanoke Memorial Hospital during a May Day celebration of all other than work cycling enthusiasts have done to promote and enable safe biking in their home town.

Citizens Celebrate Mayor Leads

By Mark Peterson
Roanoke, Virginia

ROANOKE, Virginia — One hundred twenty cyclists celebrated National Bike Month on May 1st by riding their bicycles with Roanoke Mayor David Brumby. It was an effort to encourage more bicycling as a

means of recreation and transportation. Brumby was getting the greenways on the Roanoke Valley residents are more miles added to the Roanoke River Trail. Mayor Brumby feels that strong neighborhoods are essential to the growth and success of Roanoke City.

A key factor of the greenways is that they connect to several parts of the City's health, employment and entertainment. In Mayor Brumby led the two-mile ride to show that more bicycle traffic on Roanoke streets creates healthier people and cleaner air.

The Blue Ridge Bicycle Club sponsored the event. The post-Continued on page 10

Want to Prevent Oil Spill Disasters? Stop Driving



Photo supplied by Caroline Commons

By Jason Henderson
Suffolk, May 1, 2010

Environmental disaster is nothing new in the Gulf of Mexico.

The BP Horizon rig blew up, leaked through Earth Day tanks, and now a subsea well is spilling a river of oil toward Louisiana and the Gulf Coast. Birds and fish will die, wetlands and beaches will be ruined. People will be outraged and people will cry. Offshore drilling -- "drill, baby drill" -- is back and order must again. But this time environmental destruction dominates the skyline.

In response to this situation

political progressives need to ramp it up a notch. The emphasis by many progressives on "green cars" has been a distraction. Progressives need to get over it. Green cars need oil. You need oil. Instead, now is the time for progressives to reflect upon the relationship between oil and driving and to question the way in which driving perpetuates the ecological destruction now under way in the Gulf.

To be sure, oil is fascinating. It is one of the most versatile natural resources known to humans. Oil stores a tremendous amount of energy. It may be transported long distances by pipeline, rail, ship and truck, and can sit for a

very long time without spoiling or degrading. It can be refined and distilled easily and has many uses. In petroleum by products are used in plastics and pharmaceuticals and are part of the energy systems for agriculture and the transport of food. Before there was Silicon Valley and the Internet there was Houston and New Orleans and destruction in oil. Oil is in the laptops and servers that belong to all the progressives who talk of oil and oil companies. Oil underpins the modernization of everyday life in America. And we'll need to keep drilling for it.

But we do not need to keep drilling for it. Continued on page 1

The Order of the Earth

News, Views and Musings About Our Planet

January 2011

theorderoftheearth.com Vol. 11 No. 1 Issue 104: To press 12/16/10 \$1.00

Special Report: National People's Oil and Gas Summit, Pittsburgh 11/19-21/10

Pittsburgh Bans Natural Gas Drilling

Adopts first-in-the-nation ordinance; elevates right of community to decide, not corporations

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund
Pennsylvania Community Rights Network

PITTSBURGH, November 16, 2010 — Today, the Pittsburgh City Council unanimously adopted an ordinance banning corporations from conducting natural gas drilling in the city.

The ordinance was drafted by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) at the invitation of Councilman Bill Peduto and was introduced by Councilman Doug Shields.

Pittsburgh's first-in-the-nation ordinance confronts the threat of Marcellus Shale drilling — an activity permitted by the state which allows corporations to site drilling activities over the wishes of a community.

Energy corporations are setting up shop in communities across Pennsylvania to drill for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale formation. The gas extraction technique known as "fracking" has been cited as a threat to surface and groundwater and has been blamed for fatal explosions, the contamination of drinking water, local rivers and streams. Collateral damage includes lost property value, ingestion of toxins for livestock, drying up of mortgage loans for prospective home buyers and threatened loss of organic certification for farmers in affected communities.

Councilman Shields stated, "This ordinance recognizes and secures expanded civil rights for the people of Pittsburgh and it prohibits activities which would violate those rights. It protects the authority of the people of Pittsburgh to pass this ordinance by undoing corporate privileges that place the rights of the people of Pittsburgh at the mercy of gas corporations."

Shields added, "With this vote we are asserting the right of the city to make critical decisions to protect our health, safety

and welfare. We are not a colony of the state and will not sit quietly by as our city gets drilled. We encourage communities across the region to take this step and join with us to elevate the rights of communities and people over corporations."

CELDF's Ben Price, who is engaging with communities across the state seeking to protect themselves from drilling, said, "Communities are coming to recognize that our state laws and government are not in place to protect their interests but rather the interests of private corporations." Price applauded the city for taking a stand on behalf of community rights. "Some will say that the municipality doesn't have the authority to ban this noxious practice associated with gas drilling. The only way that's true is if the state has the authority to strip the residents of their rights and it doesn't."

Under the ordinance, corporations that violate the ordinance or that seek to drill in the city will not be afforded "personhood" rights under the U.S. or Pennsylvania Constitution, nor will they be afforded protections under the Commerce Clause or Contracts Clause under the federal or state constitution.

In addition, the ordinance recognizes the legally enforceable Rights of Nature to exist and flourish. Residents of the city shall possess legal standing to enforce those rights on behalf of natural communities and ecosystems.

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, located in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, has been working with people in Pennsylvania since 1995 to assert their fundamental rights to democratic local self-governance and to enact laws which end destructive and rights-denying corporate action aided and abetted by state and federal governments.

CONTACT: Ben Price, (717) 254-5233; benprice@celdf.org or Mari Margil, Associate Director, Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, at 503-381-1753; Skype: mari.margil; mmargil@celdf.org; www.celfd.org



Photo by Iona

People came from 26 states, The Onondaga Nation, Canada and Germany to share their stories, ideas and goals on combating the horrors of natural gas drilling and create a plan to deal with this rapidly-growing issue.

National Gathering of Anti-Fracking Activists in Pittsburgh Days After Ban on Drilling is Enacted There

By Iona
Shade Gap, Pennsylvania

People are sick and sick of natural gas drilling ruining their communities, their health, their land, their property values and all that they hold dear.

I and over 200 others went to the seventh People's Oil and Gas Summit sponsored by Earthworks in Pittsburgh on November 19th and 20th because OE has been following hydraulic fracturing for a long, long time, this was relatively close to home, I was able to work out my work schedule to attend and I am always rejuvenated when I'm with sister/rel-

low environmentalists.

This conference was organized by people from the West who have been fighting gas and oil drilling malpractices for decades and now the East is getting involved so this meeting was very important because it brought together the entire country, including people from Germany (a film crew), The Onondaga Nation of New York and Canada.

BUT this issue is not just environmental — it is about health, politics, the economy, human rights, nature's rights, democracy, property values, social values, clean water, clean air — things that matter to everyone.

I took notes furiously and will do my best to give you the essence of the meeting. The speakers were excellent and moving, the visuals outstanding and the spirit of the audience hushed and attentive. I was only able to attend one of two days but everything is on the Earthworks' Web site earthworks-action.org.

Hydraulic fracturing to force natural gas out of the earth has the potential to contaminate nearly all of the drinking water in our country so people everywhere need to get involved. I hope to see you all at next year's gathering and I hope to be able to stay for the entire event next time.

Panel 1: Health Impacts from Drilling, Fracking, Waste Pits and Gas Production



Photo by Iona

(left to right) John Fenton (Pavilion, Wyoming, in movie *Gasland*); Lisa Parr (severe health effects for her and her eight-year-old daughter in Texas); Wilma Subra (health surveys done in Texas and Wyoming); Wes Wilson (fighting in for Theo Colburn) and "Texas Sharon" ("I never wanted to be Texas Sharon").

John Fenton of Pavilion, Wyoming, said he has experienced "horrible impacts from shoddy workmanship" and that Wyoming has had nearly every corner touched by gas drilling. There are 24 gas wells on his property, some as close as 250 feet to his ranch.

Gas company representatives told him they would be "good neighbors" by providing jobs and making their community rich but Fenton said they only made themselves rich. The contaminated dust blows all over the dry land. "You can smell it, you can taste it, it drips from the air," he says. We're out there working in it, too. They are sacrificing the young men who are working. "This can't go on in this country; it's people like us who are going to make this go away."

He pointed to a map of the area where he lives and explained that the gas wells are so thick that "I didn't

See Panel 1 on page 3

Panel 2: Community Socio-Economic Impacts of Natural Gas Development



"When driving on the gravel Clarkston Road, down the center of the heavy tractor-trailers rush past trailing thick plumes of dust that make it impossible to see oncoming traffic."

Bill Morrison of the Powder River Basin Resource Council in Wyoming, told everyone about the social problems communities encounter when gas drilling operations come to town. Crime rates rise, roads deteriorate, there are more sleepy truck drivers threatening normal drivers, more sex crimes are committed.

One example of this was discussed in the *Casper Star Tribune* on August 20, 2007: "Many of these workers are considered to be the riskiest kind of driver — young men willing to take chances and reluctant to wear seat belts. They're also bringing more alcohol and drugs onto the highways and they gobble up hotel rooms, forcing sleepy travelers in some cases to stay behind the wheel. There definitely are a lot of guys who are pushing the envelope," said Brian Bragorner, a Wyoming Highway Patrol trooper who was stationed near the heart of one of the state's busiest natural gas fields at "Warminster."

Another example is road dust, as chronicled April 6, 2010 in the *Star-Tribune*: "From a distance, the entire valley is under a long, dense haze. And when driving on the gravel Clarkston Road, down the center of the haze, tractor-trailers rush past trailing thick plumes of dust that make it impossible to see oncoming traffic."

"It's a health issue, not only for people but for crops, livestock and the wildlife," said Mildred Marquis, who has lived with her husband on Clarkston Road for 18 years. Commissioners had set aside about \$5 million in the annual budget for the road and bridge department. However, the county has a limited number of trucks that can haul dust-controlling material from outside the county. Weakly said. Also, the county is scrambling for what seems to be a limited supply of rock-mill, or asphalt."

See Panel 2 on page 4

The Go-Back Club

Newsletter of the Simple-Living Brigade

September 2013

Seventeen members in six states, the District of Columbia and three countries.

This is OUR Paper!

Comments from the First Few Members of The Go-Back Club

W. & A. S., Pennsylvania: GO GO GO!!!!!! Love to see and join....

A.H., D.C.: Congratulations on your new career! Please sign me up for the Go-Back Club. I know a couple of publishers here in DC and will send their contact info later.

G.D., Vermont: Sign me up! Sounds like a great idea. Can't promise I'll read it all the time though, but happy to support you.

B.B., Maryland: I am very happy for you.

D.M., Pennsylvania I'll support you 100% ... How are you on camera??? I have two anchor/news people who will 'interview' you and you can have the column available on C99 News — 99 Coalition site — I think people are truly worded out — tired of reading so much — I think they want more video live action discussions — with follow up stories . . . Would you be interested in a taping of your column — then a re-direct to your paper???

D.R., Pennsylvania: Sounds like a GREAT IDEA, count me in!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

S.C., Canada: "The way forward is back," as T. S. Eliot once wrote! Very best of luck in your new venture! Please add me to your list. What is the snail-mailing address?

K.M., Florida: Congrats on your new endeavor — best of luck, too — you can do it!!

T.M., Virginia: The Go-Back Club sounds like a great idea. Does "go back" refer to when we used less energy to live a good life? You can count me "in". I admire your creativity, quite remarkable.

PS. "Go back" makes me think about our young lives on Osborn Avenue in Mamaroneck, NY. I remember playing on the stone wall behind our house, exploring behind the Miller's house down by the river and in winter sledding down the hill on the snow. No need for extra power sources there.

Our Paper continued on page 2

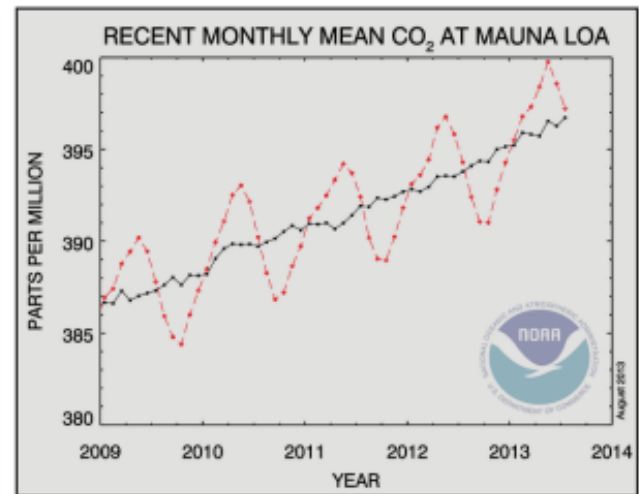


Photo courtesy NOAA

Atmospheric carbon dioxide reached 400 ppm in May, the highest point in millions of years.

Climate Milestone is a Moment of Symbolic Significance on Road of Idiocy

The only way forward is back: to retrace our steps and seek to return atmospheric concentrations to around 350 ppm

By George Monbiot

First published in *The Guardian* at www.guardian.co.uk and www.monbiot.com on May 10, 2013.

The data go back 800,000 years: that's the age of the oldest

fossil air bubbles extracted from Dome C, an ice-bound summit in the high Antarctic. And throughout that time there has been nothing like this. At no point in the preindustrial record have concentrations of carbon dioxide in the air risen above 300 parts per million (ppm). 400 ppm is a figure that belongs to a different era.

The difference between 399 ppm and 400 ppm is small, in terms of its impacts on the

Idiocy continued on page 2

What on Earth is The Go-Back Club?

It's *not* social networking. It's merely a list of people who long for and are willing to use their own lives to purposefully go back to using less energy, living more simply, etc. I'm calling this a Simple-Living Brigade. When new people sign up, I'm going to print their comments in this newsletter and print the new total membership numbers at the end of each column published in

regular newspapers, too. Just numbers.

For the comments, I'll only use initials and states as above. No further demands, no money, just a monthly online newsletter. If you want to share your tips with my readers in the columns or this newsletter, I'll be happy to publish them as long as I really like them. I'll be looking for creative and new ideas.

Thanks for reading this little blurb. You can reach me at gobackclub@pa.net or <http://www.gobackclub.com>.

The Go-Back Club

Newspaper of the Simple-Living Brigade

February 2014

Forty-two members in eight states, the District of Columbia and three countries.

PA Supreme Court's Landmark Ruling on Gas Drilling Sets Constitutional Precedent

Mistake by Gov. Corbett's legal team helped court render its decision.

By Steve Esack, *excerpt*

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL: JANUARY 5, 2014

HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania — Environmentalists and municipal officials have been celebrating a Pennsylvania state Supreme Court decision striking down key elements of a 2012 law that eliminated local zoning laws in favor of statewide regulations that allowed energy companies to dig gas wells anywhere they wished.

But the court's December 19th decision invalidating most of Act 13 — a signature piece of Governor Tom Corbett's jobs and economic policy — was no ordinary zoning ruling to settle a run-of-the-mill lawsuit.

The court's 4 to 2 majority decision set a landmark constitutional precedent for Pennsylvania.

That precedent — which the Corbett administration now wants the court to reconsider — could have far-reaching legal, policy and political ramifications beyond where wells and drilling equipment can be located.

A misstep by the state's legal defense team opened the door for the Supreme Court to set the precedent, which was based on a literal reading of the Pennsylvania Constitution's guarantee that citizens have a right to natural resources, court records show.

Writing for the majority, Chief Justice Ron Castille said Commonwealth Court was correct when it ruled the state could not supersede local zoning laws related to natural gas drilling. But Castille also said Commonwealth Court was wrong to reject a claim by the plaintiffs that Act 13 violated the state Constitution's Vietnam-era amendment guaranteeing Pennsylvanians the right "to clean air, pure water and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment."



Photo Abraham Lustgarten/ProPublica

Abraham Lustgarten has been relentlessly following the problems with gas drilling since 2008 for a public-interest news organization, ProPublica. This photo of a gas drilling site accompanied his first article. To read his series, go to <http://www.propublica.org/about/>.

The amendment (Article 1 Section 27) says the Commonwealth must guarantee people's environmental rights, Castille wrote. So the Governor and Legislature did not have the right to adopt statewide regulations that abolished local drilling-related zoning laws municipalities had created to ensure all property owners can leisurely and financially enjoy their land, Castille wrote.

"The type of constitutional challenge presented today is as unprecedented in Pennsylvania as is the legislation that engendered it," Castille wrote. "The Commonwealth's efforts to minimize the import of this litigation by suggesting it is simply a dispute over public policy voiced by a disappointed minority requires a blindness to the reality here and to Pennsylvania history, including Pennsylvania constitutional history; and the position ignores the reality that Act 13 has the potential to affect the reserved rights of every citizen of this Commonwealth now and in the future."

That decision has been criticized as too

liberal, Duquesne University law professor Bruce Ledewitz said. But the ruling, issued by Republican Castille and three Democratic justices, was the type of literal constitutional interpretation advanced by conservatives like U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, Ledewitz said.

"It was a Scalia original," said Ledewitz, a constitutional scholar. "Castille made the claim — the people who wrote and adopted this amendment really meant what they said."

That literal interpretation could affect other aspects of environmental law, Ledewitz said, making passage more difficult for one such bill to loosen the state's decades-old endangered species laws as energy companies and developers want. The decision also could open the state to legal claims it is not doing enough to limit industrial greenhouse gas emissions, he said. ...

Last week, the Corbett administration asked the court to reconsider its ruling. In a news release, the administration's top

Precedent continued on page 2



The Go-Back Club

Newsbooklet of the Simple-Living Brigade: #18, February 2015

This is OUR paper: www.gobackclub.org

Our members live in 18 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Korea and Nigeria.



Photo Gordon Dimming

Dylan Miller, a senior at Juniata College, outside the hut he constructed of downed trees, leaves and other materials for the final credits of his college degree.

Juniata College Senior, Following Thoreau, Living in Hut in the Woods

By Bill Schackner
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: November 30, 2014

Independent study in college can be an isolating affair but Dylan Miller is taking matters to extremes.

Determined not to simply phone in his capstone research project on minimalist life, the Juniata College senior this fall is forgoing the warmth of a campus residence for an unheated hut he built deep in the woods of a nearby nature reserve. It is a structure fashioned from fallen pine trees that leaves him without electricity or plumbing — not to

mention student necessities like YouTube.

The 9-foot-tall, 17-by-17-foot structure is where Mr. Miller, 21, of Meadville intends to live and sleep this winter and spring so he can nail down the final credits of a degree in literary and philosophical studies.

Make no mistake, it would be easier to devour a reading list including works by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and a Buddhist text titled “The Dhammapada” while ensconced with friends in the campus library stacks, rather than bundled alone at night in a sleeping bag. But Mr. Miller said he hopes to use his

solitary experiences to better understand those authors’ works.

He also wants to demonstrate a larger point: that one can be as happy, if not more so, without material excess.

“Basically, I’m keeping a journal of my daily experiences, things that I’ve noted, things that have changed in me by virtue of the lifestyle,” he said.

Students on the liberal arts campus in Huntingdon, a rural setting between Altoona and State College, have had varying reactions to word that one of their own — a man whose outdoor résumé already includes

Thoreau continued on page 3



The Go-Back Club

Newsbooklet of the Simple-Living Brigade: #31, Late Summer 2016

These are OUR stories: www.gobackclub.org

Our members live in 20 states, Washington D.C., two Canadian provinces, Korea, Nigeria, and UK.

Court Rules Against U.S. Navy's Current Use of Whale-Harming Sonar

By Melissa Breyer@MelissaelissaBreyer
Business/Environmental Policy
via Trehugger Daily News: July 18, 2016

Life just got better for whales, dolphins, and other marine mammals.

The use of low-frequency sonar in the world's oceans has been a point of controversy and contention ... and no shortage of court decisions. In the latest, a federal appeals court in San Francisco has ruled that U.S. officials shouldn't have allowed the Navy to use sonar at levels that could harm whales and other marine mammals.

In 2012 the National Marine Fisheries Service granted the Navy approval of limited use of sonar—with requirements to reduce sonar levels in areas where marine mammal populations were high. The standard, however, lacked an order for similar protections in other areas where the animals' presence was unknown. These included some offshore areas that had previous protection, and other zones which scientists say could be likely habitats, according to the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Sonar is used by the U.S. Navy to detect submarines, but it also can prove devastating to whales, seals, and pinnipeds by disrupting their feeding and mating habits.

As described by *Scientific American*, "Sonar systems—first developed by the U.S. Navy to detect enemy submarines—generate slow-rolling sound waves topping out at around 235 decibels; the world's loudest rock bands top out at only 130. These sound waves can travel for hundreds of miles under water, and can retain an intensity of 140 decibels as far as 300 miles from their source. [Editor's note: Humans' 'safe' maximum decibel level is 85.]

"These rolling walls of noise are no doubt too much for some marine wildlife. While little is known about any direct physiological effects of sonar waves on marine species, evidence shows that whales will swim hundreds of miles, rapidly change their depth (sometime leading to bleeding from the eyes and ears), and even beach themselves to get



(above) Dolphins in front of U.S. Navy ship Benfold. Marine life will now be protected from Navy sonar. (Photo: Mark Wilson/Reuters) (below) Sonar is used by the U.S. Navy to detect submarines, but it also can prove devastating to whales, seals, and pinnipeds by disrupting their feeding and mating habits. (Photo: 2.0 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/noaaphotolib/5187320081/>)

away from the sounds of sonar.

Following the 2012 approval, environmental groups led by the Natural Resources Defense Council filed suit in San Francisco arguing that the federal administration had approved emissions at sound levels that violated the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Reports SF Gate, "A federal magistrate disagreed but was overruled Friday by the appeals court, which said government officials had disregarded their own experts' warnings about sonar's potential impacts."

The 2012 standard protects zones that show a "bias toward U.S. waters," the court said, with some zones on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the U.S., but none on the Pacific coast of South America and only a scattered few in other waters.

"The result is that a meaningful proportion of the world's marine mammal habitat is under-protected," said Judge Ronald Gould in the 3-0 ruling, which would also set

standards for later renewals of the program. He said the government had failed to comply with a law that requires it to make sure its peacetime oceanic programs have "the least practicable adverse impact on marine mammals."

See the ruling at <https://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2016/07/15/14-16375.pdf>.

Source: <http://www.treehugger.com/environmental-policy/court-rules-against-us-navys-use-whale-harming-sonar.html>





The Go-Back Club

Newspaper of the Simple-Living Brigade: Back in Action

These are OUR stories: www.gobackclub.org

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

Issue No. 32: November 2017

Something New: Iona's Column



Iona posing in front of The World, hoping this newspaper will travel to all corners of Earth. (Mermaid earrings made by Linda in Idaho — see page 9—necklace with a stone from the island of Iona from Rainbow.)

I'm back, my friends, in better shape than ever. I learned a LOT during the past year and don't regret it. Mostly I learned that I never want to have a government job again, where I must conceal my honest, spontaneous personality.

Here are a few things I am wiser about:

1. I love doing this newspaper but had to squelch my inner activist to get and keep my job.
2. My open, friendly nature backfired. I wasn't free to be open and friendly.
3. I want to be home-based, wear jeans and jewelry, and be free to create my own schedule, my own life, in order to be available when my husband, family, and/or friends need me.
4. As long as I'm not hot and sweaty, I can wear the same clothes all week, unlike office work where everyone seems to think they need to show up in a different outfit every day.
4. Hopefully, I can survive on freelance work and helping friends who pay for my brain or body to assist them when they need help.
5. A woman I used to do Zumba with is open-

Iona continued on page 12

Highlights of the Findings of the U.S. Global Change Research Program's Climate Science Special Report

Submitted by John Conner, Shade Gap PA

GlobalChange.gov (U.S. Global Change Research Group)
and NOAA website: November 3, 2017

November 3, 2017 U.S. Global Change Research Program's (USGCRP) Climate Science Special Report (CSSR), which serves as Volume I of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, describes current trends in the climate globally and for the U.S., and projects trends in temperature, precipitation, sea-level rise, and Arctic sea ice for the remainder of this century.

Findings include:

- Global and U.S. temperatures continue to rise.
- The annual average temperature for the globe and the contiguous U.S. has increased 1.8 degrees °F from 1901 to 2016.
- Sixteen of the warmest years on record for the globe occurred in the last 17 years; the last three years were the warmest.
- Variability in temperature and precipitation is increasing.
- Heavy precipitation has increased in intensity and frequency across most parts of the U.S. since 1901, though there are important regional differences.
- Heatwaves have become more frequent in the U.S. since the 1960s.
- Cold temperatures and cold waves have decreased since the early 1900s.
- Annual trends toward earlier Spring snow-melt and reduced snowpack are already affecting water resources in the western U.S.
- Ocean temperatures are warming.
- Global average sea level has risen by about 7-8 inches since 1900.
- Global average sea level is expected to rise by several inches in the next 15 years.
- Temperature increases in Alaska and across the Arctic are greater than the rest of the globe.
- Annual average, near-surface air temperature in Alaska and across the Arctic has in-

creased over the last 50 years at a rate more than twice as fast as the global average temperature.

- Since the early 1980s, Arctic sea ice extent has decreased between 3.5 percent and 4.1 percent per decade, has become thinner by between 4.3 and 7.5 feet, and on average the season of melting lasts 15 more days per year.

BACKGROUND

In June 2013, President Obama launched a comprehensive Climate Action Plan for the U.S. Government to cut carbon pollution, provide climate preparedness tools and information, and lead international efforts to address climate change. The Plan invokes the critical role of USGCRP in developing sound science to manage climate change impacts.

Since 1990, USGCRP has been advancing Earth system science and growing the knowledge base needed to respond to a changing climate and a transforming world.

Report development was overseen by the Subcommittee on Global Change Research (SGCR) through a Federal Science Steering Committee (SSC), made up of representatives from USGCRP agencies and appointed by the SGCR. NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) serves as the administrative agency for CSSR (i.e., NOAA established the procedures for the report and released Federal Register Notices).

The SSC selected three Coordinating Lead Authors, all of whom were Federal employees, during the development of this report. Following a public call (via Federal Register Notice) for technical contributor nominations in March 2016, the SSC endorsed writing team selections, consisting of scientists representing Federal agencies, national laboratories, universities, and the private sector.

Contributing Authors were selected based on specific needs identified by the authors. Review Editors were chosen from the technical contributor pool and endorsed by SSC to ensure

Report continued on page 3



Groundswell News

Newspaper of The Go-Back Club, a Simple-Living/Action Brigade

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Issue No. 41: August 2018

Iona's Column: Changing Method for Incoming Articles and Photos



Dear Reader,
I admit to being upset that Agence France-Presse's PicRights.com is asking me to pay \$1,695 for a photo I used back in January 2016

which went with a good story about female genital mutilation in Africa being banned.

At this point, I'm trying to get free legal advice and am going to "play it safe(r)" in this issue. I've been eagerly using the Fair Use Law to support my tiny attempt to get great stories and photos to my readers and relying on it to protect me from such nonsense. I happen to be a firm believer in the rapid dissemination of quality stories during these troubling times and that's what I've tried my best to do.

Fortunately, two of our members (John Conner and Chiwundu Charles Ekwe) have written their own work and even though it's long, it's safe to publish their pieces.

I am leaning toward protecting myself for the most part and yet I love the article about the 10 Most Dangerous Countries for Women so much that I tried to get permission to use their photos and went round and round in circles with no results. The text is allowable but I had to screenshot the magnificent photos so you could see them. I want the whole world to know about this.

That story and pictures went viral globally so what's the difference? For the Earth,

Iona



Teenagers' Climate Lawsuit Against Trump Can Proceed, Supreme Court Rules

By Julia Conley
Common Dreams: July 31, 2018

Children will be able to present "scientific evidence linking the U.S. government's actions and policies to climate change impacts like wildfire and droughts" in U.S. District Court.

The Supreme Court rejected the Trump administration's request that it halt a case brought by several teenagers and children, who say the President has not done enough to help halt the climate crisis.

A group of teenagers and younger children secured a victory in their case against the Trump administration this week, as the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that their lawsuit demanding that the federal government take stronger action against the climate crisis can proceed.

The high court rejected the Trump administration's request that the case be halted. The ruling follows similar decisions from the U.S. District Court in Oregon and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit. The case, known as *Juliana vs. the United States*, will now be heard by the Oregon court.

"This decision should give young people courage and hope that their third branch of government, all the way up to the Supreme Court, has given them the green light to go to trial in this critical case about their unalienable rights," said Julia Olson, chief legal counsel and executive director of Our Children's Trust, which is representing the plaintiffs. "We look forward to presenting the scientific evidence of the harms and dangers these

children face as a result of the actions their government has taken to cause the climate crisis."

Twenty-one children and teenagers – ranging in age from eight to 19 – first brought the case against the federal government in 2015, arguing that the Obama administration was not doing enough to curb carbon emissions and other activities that contribute to the warming of the Earth.

"Kids understand the threats climate change will have on our future," then-13-year-old Zoe Foster, one of the plaintiffs, told *Slate* at the time. "I'm not going to sit by and watch my government do nothing. We don't have time to waste. I'm pushing my government to take real action on climate, and I won't stop until change is made."

Since President Donald Trump took office in 2017, the President has withdrawn the U.S. from the Paris climate agreement and spearheaded a number of anti-regulatory actions, weakening clean car standards and rolling back portions of the Clean Air Act.

The plaintiffs argue that such actions violate their constitutional rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

"The scientific evidence linking the U.S. government's actions and policies to climate change impacts like wildfire and droughts that harm us youth must be presented before our country's justice system in its entirety to ensure that our rights may be protected," said a 21-year-old plaintiff named Jacob.

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Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2018/07/31/teenagers-climate-lawsuit-against-trump-can-proceed-supreme-court-rules>



Groundswell News

Newspaper of The Go-Back Club, a Simple-Living/Action Brigade

We Are One Family. These are OUR stories: www.gobackclub.org

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without.

A Celebration of Youth, Issue No. 48: March 2019



Photos Courtesy PAVON

Pan-Afrikan Volunteers Network (PAVON) has established herself as the most reliable and vibrant youth movement promoting youth involvement in the achievement of the (U.N.'s) Sustainable Development Goals with a lot of hard work and also some fun. (below) Four PAVON members model the group's new shirts: (left to right) Usman Kromah, Aisha Konneh, Fombah Baybay, and J. Randolph Keah.

85 Liberian Youth Volunteers Enjoy Eco-Explore Tour, Learn Team Building

By Kromah Usman Socrates II, Liberia

Pan-Afrikan Volunteers Network (PAVON) is an African youth network established to serve as a bridge between community volunteers, youth activists, and community-based organizations to collectively drive the needed changes in their communities by taking social, economic, and environmental actions. In Liberia, West Africa, the institution kicked off its first eco-explore project aimed at promoting internal touristic activities amongst young Liberians.

The project brought together 85 young people from five different counties in Liberia to travel to the historic Blue Lake,

PAVON *continued on page 3*



Groundswell News Journal

A project of the Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice

We are a Global Family. News by and about Climate Activists.

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

A Celebration of Youth. www.gobackclub.org. Issue No. 60: March 2020

Iona's Column: Generosity



Dear Reader,

One of my most precious dreams for this newspaper of mine, ever since I met Gbujie Daniel Chidubem of Team 54 and had a flood of new friends from

Africa, has been the hope that my more affluent American readers would contribute to their great work in very poor countries. Most of these people are trying extremely hard to improve the lives of the people in their communities and protect the Earth. So far, I don't think that has been working very well. I hope that perhaps this issue will open some hearts and spark some generosity. What I do know, however, is that over time I have grown to trust the people whose stories I publish.

I'm looking forward to taking a break for a few months to take care of things I have let slide while my life has been so busy. Many of them will be to strengthen my efforts to build a very successful publication and hopefully get some grant money so I don't need to become a wage slave, as I've often done before.

May you all thrive in my absence. I will still be checking emails and Facebook, hoping to remain in touch with everyone.

"Carry on!"

Love,

Iona

CORRECTIONS

IN OUR JANUARY 2020 ISSUE ON PAGE 26, WE WROTE THAT OMITO ABRAHAM OWUOR IS FROM UGANDA BUT HE IS FROM KENYA. MANY APOLOGIES, ABRAHAM.

ALSO, OUR WIRE EDITOR NOTICED THAT THE BOOK HURRICAN OF RACISM IS NOT AVAILABLE AT AMAZON; THE CORRECT LINK IS ON PAGE 31.



Photo: Nma Galvez-Shorts/Earth Day Network

Jerome Foster II is the 17-year-old helming the Fridays for Future strike in Washington, D.C., the founder of the OneMillionOfUs movement to mobilize young voters, and the voice of a generation demanding climate action now.

He's Leading D.C.'s Movement for Climate Action – and He's a High School Senior

Submitted by Allen Hengst
Washington, DC

By Karen L. Smith-Janssen
NRDC: January 30, 2019

High school senior Jerome Foster II crams a lot in on a typical Friday. There's his internship with U.S. Representative John Lewis. And his afternoon #FridaysforFuture protests in front of the White House, where he's held a handwritten sign reading "School Strike for Climate" each week since last February. Lately he's also been participating in #FireDrillFriday during the mornings, at the Capitol or elsewhere. Through these demonstrations, inspired by Greta Thunberg's weekly protests outside Sweden's parliament building, the 17-year-old D.C. activist is energetically highlighting dilemmas that adults have been unable to solve, against the backdrop of a federal administration that's

repeatedly called climate change a hoax.

Simultaneously, Foster is calling for unity. At a press conference last September ahead of the global climate strike, he said, "We need a truly diverse and multigenerational movement made of people from all ages and backgrounds, not just the youth." His message has resonated far. After the D.C. strike, which attracted 10,000 participants, Foster received an email from one of Jane Fonda's representatives saying that the actress/activist wanted to meet with him, find out what events he was holding, and join the rallies. In a wholly uncalculated public relations coup, the subsequent repeated arrests of Fonda and her famous friends starting in October made #FireDrillFriday a household term across age groups.

Foster is a bright-eyed teen who speaks in rapid-fire delivery, as if he's running out of time – an attitude many climate scientists

Jerome continued on page 3

Groundswell News Journal

A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice

We are a Global Family. News by and about Climate and Social Justice Activists.

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

Our Slogan: The way forward: cycle back to basics.

A Celebration of Youth. www.groundswellnews.org. Issue No. 76: June 12, 2021



Photos Courtesy HOBFI

The banner reads: Institut De Formation Professionnelle "Hope for a Better Future." Then it lists all the courses which will be offered; they are also listed on page 3.

Hope for a Better Future Vocational Training Institute Opens in Cameroon

By the Hope for a Better Future Team

Overview

Hope for a Better Future Vocational Training Institute (HOBFI), with authorization from the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, Cameroon, is in partnership with Master Peace International, Turing Foundation, and Noorderpoort to prepare students for a better life with a three-year comprehensive practical training in very useful trades and skills.

It seeks to provide sound practical training to youths with much priority to young women. It also seeks to impart to her students sound moral and spiritual values. The Institute is aimed at inculcating in the students a high sense of civic responsibility

through community participation in its activities; for example, peace building and employment creation.

HOBFI provides skill development through technical and vocational training in order to equip youths with relevant skills demanded by the labor market. Upon completion of the vocational courses, students will be attached to the respective companies for industrial training to acquire hands-on skills and experience. This exposure to the world of work is expected to increase their employability and subsequently, sustainability.

The project was jointly developed by Ngo Banfoga (founder of H4BF) and Dorothée J.C. Meijer (MasterPeace Foundation's African's clubs coordinator). MasterPeace

is a young, positive, international peace movement. They are active in more than 40 countries. The project was funded by Turing Foundation and Noorderpoort, who will assist in developing the training courses and also train trainers who will manage the center. We are still in need of both funding and technical partners to fill gaps in various sectors.

Our Target Group

Our target group is youths, who will subsequently establish businesses and create employment opportunities for other youth in the Renewable Energy value chain, ICT industry, Textiles, and Agriculture through courses like Web and

Training continued on page 3

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Grassroots Coalition News



A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice
We are a Global Family. News by and about Climate and Social Justice Activists.

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

Our Slogan: The way forward: cycle back to basics.

Our Word: Invincible: Too powerful to be defeated or overcome.

A Celebration of Youth: www.gceej.org. Issue No. 84: February 2022

What if Every Child in the World Knew How to Grow Food? Youngest Certified Organic Farmer in Georgia, U.S. is Six Years Old!



Photo Courtesy agrowkulture.com

Note from Iona: *I always look for great front-page stories. My heart leaped with joy seeing Kendall's amazing project at age 6, when most U.S. children are in kindergarten or first grade. This is the direction we need to go in to alleviate poverty and hunger while simultaneously helping our climate heal.*

Cobbled together by Iona Conner
 December 27, 2021

**Submitted by Joan Norris Daurio
 New Jersey USA**

aGROWKulture is an Urban Farm located in the soul of Southwest Atlanta. It's owned by "The Youngest Certified Farmer in the State of Georgia" at the age of 6. She currently sells food basket subscriptions, donated food boxes, grow boxes, fun garden merchandise, and hosts classes.

Southern Living's December 9, 2021 article by Tara Massouleh McCay gives a little background:

While most kids her age are having nap time and playing make believe, 6-year-old Kendall Rae Johnson is busy planting seeds, watering crops, and harvesting the week's bounty. As the state of Georgia's youngest certified farmer, she has quite the job to

do running her very real farming business, aGROWKulture.

A resident of Atlanta, Kendall started farming when she was just 3 years old. Her great grandmother Laura "Kate" Williams taught her how to plant cucumber seeds, peppers, tomatoes, and broken collard green stems on her tiny patio garden. At 4, Kendall's parents built her a garden bed around the premise of their yard and her passion for growing took off. Soon, she was inviting kids from all over her neighborhood to come see what she had grown. Eventually, the daily tours turned into aGROWKulture, a business where she teaches other children about gardening and sells fruit and vegetable subscription boxes.

Grow Fresh Eat Fresh Kulture

Support the youngest (6 years old) USDA registered and certified farmer living out her dreams to help teach every kid how to

grow their own foods, one seed at a time.

Donate at https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=AB28THRHSQLF4

Sign Up For Kendall Rae's Garden 4H Club

Kendall and 4H are currently accepting registrations from little ones to high schoolers. Sign up with the University of Georgia Extension at https://ugeorgia.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aYwBW9s8K1RPdUW.

Kendall even has a YouTube show with a woman named Olivia called Farm to Kitchen. You can watch it @agrowkulture. She also has an online store with sweatshirts, masks, T-shirts, and fanny packs.

What if every child in the world (or even every adult) knew how to grow their own food? Just imagine....

Source: <https://www.agrowkulture.com/>

Treehuggers United = Invincible

Invincible: Too powerful to be defeated or overcome.

Think about it: What are you doing to and for our future?

Volume 1: March 1, 2023



Photo: Nature.org

"We are at a critical point for the future of the planet. We have years, not decades, to address the interconnected crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. What we do between now and 2030 will determine whether we slow warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius – the level scientists agree will avoid the worst impacts of climate change. Fortunately, science shows that natural climate solutions can deliver up to a third of the emission reductions we need by 2030." (The Nature Conservancy)

Natural Climate Solutions

By Iona, February 19, 2023

Why am I doing this? And who am I anyhow?

My name is Iona Conner. I have been an active and avid environmentalist in one form or another for my entire adult life.

I published a global warming newspaper for the past 15 years. Even though I was born and raised in New York, moved to New Jersey as a young bride, and have lived in Maryland and Pennsylvania, I always considered New Jersey my home. I loved being super active here both professionally and as a grassroots activist but then I fell in love

with John Conner in 1990 and moved to Columbia, Maryland where we started the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice, now terminated.

After he died on August 18, 2019, I moved back to my family in New Jersey.

I groped around diligently trying to find the best environmental group to work with and became a volunteer Ocean County Coordinator with the Old-Growth Forest Network, which seeks ancient forests all over the country and then works to protect them forever from logging.

Many hours of the COP27 event

were devoted to "nature-based solutions." If we leave the Earth alone, it will heal. We need trees and forests much more than we need solar installations, wind turbines, and electric cars.

Admittedly, I don't know a lot about trees or forests but I've been reading used books about trees and am learning. I have no idea how effective my efforts will be but I'm hoping this new effort will inspire others.

I've been pondering what is the best thing I can possibly do as one person to help the climate crisis.

And here it is.

Earth Speaks

Volume 1: August 9, 2024

www.ionaconner.com

Brick, New Jersey Climate Café

By Iona
August 4, 2024

After reading Greta Thunberg's *The Climate Book*, I knew I couldn't keep relaxing. I had seen the term "Resilience Café" on a website similar to Facebook called Deep Transition Network (DTN). Unlike Facebook, the people who use this site are potential world changers and don't post family photos and trivia. These are intelligent, compassionate people; I enjoy sending and receiving messages to and from them.

I wasn't wild about the term "resilience" and decide to go simply with "Climate Café" and to keep this effort primarily limited to the land and water in my hometown of Brick, New Jersey.

There is a page on DTN named "Do-Ables" where we can post things that the average person can do. Even though I worked extremely hard thinking about how to start this group up, I discovered that lots of people do it more easily, therefore more readily copyable. I want this to be copyable, especially in the United States.

I made a list of "How To's" for DTN and posted this:

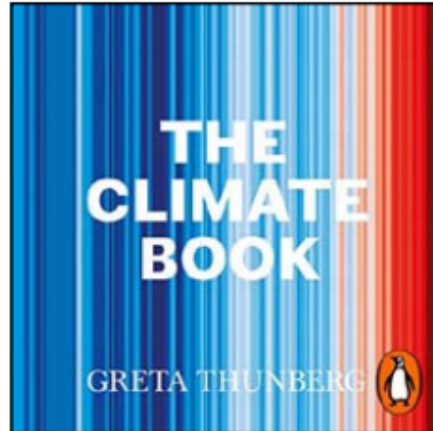
STEPS TO STARTING CLIMATE CAFÉS... STEP BY STEP

STEP ONE: Do a lot of thinking and reading. (Hopefully that is Do-Able or maybe you've already done it?)

After reading Greta's book, I made a list of the other books I had read, most of which I bought used:

The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach by my friend Robert J. Burrows

Fulcrum: Generational World



Transformation by my friend and DTN member David Pinto

Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television by Jerry Mander

Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change edited by Susanne C. Moser and Lisa Dilling (new, was a gift)

The Theory of the Leisure Class by Thorstein Veblen

The END of the Suburbs: Where the American Dream is Moving by Leigh Gallagher

The Language of Trees: A Rewilding of Literature and Landscape by Katie Holten

The End of Night: Searching for Natural Darkness in an Age of Artificial Light by Paul Bogard

Pay It Forward by Catherine Ryan Hyde (I also watched the movie; this is what I'm hoping people who attend Climate Cafés will do.)

Because I have not had a TV for about 40 years, I do a lot of reading instead. I was going to ask the library to buy a copy of each book for our work but they're so formal that I changed my mind. I will be my own library and loan my books to people who show up,

despite the risk of losing them. Once these books have done their job of hopefully getting people to read serious things, these books can go out into the world; they do no good sitting in my bookcase. I notice on Zoom meetings that most people whose homes are visible, have enormous collections of books. Why not send them out to do some good if you're done with them?

I forgot "Adbusters." I discovered them long ago and subscribed recently. I love them!

STEP TWO: Get to know who in your local government is working on environmental issues. Go to their meetings and listen. Find out what's going on.

STEP THREE: Ditto environmental groups and people who care about the Earth in your hometown. Call or email them and tell them what you're doing and ask if they would like to help you get started.

STEP THREE continued: Focus entirely on your hometown. For the start-up, ignore regional, state, national, and international groups/people. Stick with your town folks. As we grow, we can extend our reach and make partnerships but for now, we need to work hard to get this idea off the ground locally.

STEP FOUR: Make a decision to use "nature-based solutions" to the climate crisis, not technology which continues to destroy the Earth. Learn about Deep Ecology if you're unfamiliar with it.

STEP FIVE: Think about your goal, strategy, tactics even though you realize that when the group has formed, this may change but hopefully not drastically. Be clear and concise.

Continued on next page

NEXT CULTURE NEWS



Volume 1: August 25, 2025

www.ionaconner.com

This newspaper is a bridge between patriarchy and the new culture which is being created around the world. Welcome to Archiarchy, where archetypal women and archetypal men (Archans) work together and things get better.

SCOPE Kenya Works With Students, Teachers, and Parents to Reconnect Children with Nature, Healthy Lifestyles, & Environmental Stewardship.



John (SCOPE Kenya, middle) getting feedback about the school garden from the school head teacher, right, and the agriculture teacher in a white dust coat, during a project monitoring visit in May 2025. Photos Courtesy SCOPE

Dear Iona,

Cordial greetings from SCOPE Kenya.

The world has become a global village where we all live in. We all have a collective responsibility to protect and make it better for our benefit and that of future generations. We may be experiencing difficulties in life due to mistakes made by our grandparents, but we should not pass them on to the next generation. I always admire the noble role you play, especially in documentation and sharing information on landscapes and forest restoration.

On our side, we are committed to incorporating "rooting Land restoration for food security, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood improvement" into Kenya's education system. We believe this will foster a culture of people living harmoniously with nature. Children and their families will learn how to plant the right tree in the right place, and empowered communities will take the lead in this beautiful process.

As you pointed out, SCOPE Kenya happily shares our knowledge and experience on sustainable land use practices through per-

maculture approaches to anyone interested, and we also value learning from others.

We warmly welcome support from anyone or any organization willing to help us extend the work to benefit more people. Your support makes a difference, and we're grateful for your kindness and encouragement.

To advance the work to great heights, we are in the process of fostering a working partnership with Jomo Kenya University and Machakos University. This will ensure that students graduating from institutions of higher learning are well prepared and equipped with knowledge and practical skills in land regeneration and biodiversity conservation practices.

Please allow me to share pictures from our work this year. [Page 3]

With Kind Regards,
John Macharia, National Coordinator, SCOPE KENYA

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/scopekenya1>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/scopekenya/?hl=en>

Linkedin: <https://ke.linkedin.com/>

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'Mindset' Change Community Can Help Fix Climate Problems

*By Herbert Bagyenji Kajoki,
Uganda, member Grassroots
Coalition for Environmental and
Economic Justice
Special to Grassroots Coalition
News*

What is Mindset?

In simple terms, Mindset change is someone's mental attitude or inclination or on the other hand, it's a fixed state of someone's mind. Being happy and successful is something we all aspire to. It's very likely that when asked, "What's your aim in life?" most of us would answer – to be happy. But on some days, this "small and modest" goal just seems light years away.

The good and bad news is this – it's all in our head. Even when it seems impossible to look on the bright side of things, it's actually 100% in our power to transform the way we see life or think.

One Village Uganda is a grassroots, community-based organization operating in Kyanamira subcounty, Kabale District, Uganda working to support communities in environmental/climate change through agriculture, education, health outreaches, and sustainable tourism for future generation's use.

The only way to achieve this is through positive Mindset Change programs.

In developing countries, many grants, donations, and support have been given out through funding programs but the more the funding or support, the more need. Especially when you look at education funding, donors have put in a lot of money in sponsoring children, building schools, orphanages, among others, but still

many children continue to be born recklessly, population increases, and lack of responsibility, among others; however, this has greatly affected our environment as well as the effects of climate change.

The case in point is, as long as our communities in developing countries or third-world countries do not change their mindset in the areas of responsibility in children production, environmental use, and modern methods of agriculture, then we still suffer the consequences.

When you look at the idea of Orphanages, especially in Africa, many of the children they take care of are not orphans but vulnerable children born due to unwanted pregnancies, irresponsible parents who produce many children that they cannot afford to take care of, hardened heart/mind to change things from a traditional way of doing things, and lack of awareness of the future generation.

Donations/support/funding are not sustainable, so this means that where there is no funding, the community or previously funded project is stark.

For example, if you are educating a child from elementary class and before this student is or has finished the university and the sponsorship is lost, this student has no future whatsoever. But if his or her family/ parents are aware that if I produce a child, it's me/my responsibility to take care of the child and the government gets into that. Then we shall have a reasonable number of children produced by the couple/family and whom they can take care of and hence sustainable and the future will be

looked at as amazing and with joy.

One of the most causes of environmental threats and climate changes in the whole world is over-population, which has endangered and encroached our natural environment for both agriculture with its associated challenges that cause climate change patterns. Therefore, to address these mindset programs like health outreach for family planning education and initiation should be emphasized with great need and support for Community engagements on development areas and livelihood support through agriculture.

What does Mindset Change require of us?

For so many years, we are used to always wanting more and striving to be better. However, sometimes we just need to appreciate what we already have, and suddenly a different world will open up right in front of us.

Changing our mindset to being grateful is really one of the most powerful eye-openers in developing countries, especially in Africa. It is too hard to be that effective, but we have to practice it in everything we do and plan.

Instead of striving to make people/children happy through building orphanages or schools, you should fund sustainable fulfillment like family planning outreaches and initiation in rural areas, livelihood agriculture/farming, education that benefits children in their existing schools, rather than constructing new ones and other home development programs like revolving financing loans (microloans that can

Continued on next page

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help in development). Increasingly more psychologists and thinkers are stressing that happiness is not a product of getting what you want, but rather the byproduct of the different challenges you've overcome and milestones you've reached to get there.

In other words, donations or support or funding alone isn't enough without pursuing things, competing and struggling for sustainability. Remember – happiness is not the destination – it's a side effect to living your life to the fullest.

Receiving donations/support is not a bad thing essentially. But it

can become harmful if you overdo it or rely on it, especially when stopped at a time you are not aware of. If you are too demanding towards yourself, you can experience depression and project burn-out. If you are expecting too much of other people, they can get tired or scared of you or even avoid you.

When your expectations towards funding from others are too high, and you feel like they owe you something, here's the harsh truth. Nobody owes you anything.

So, I have established that funding/support/donations are not an end-products or a finish line that

I cross and stay content for the rest of my life. On the contrary, these are the by-products that you experience while you're leading a fulfilled and varied life.

Donations and support/funding success is not within arms' reach or sustainable.

Herbert Bagyenji Kajoki is an advocate to climate change/environmental threats, sustainable Tourism, and a Tour operator with ONE VILLAGE TOURS & TRAVEL. **Email:** onevillage2013@gmail.com; **WhatsApp:** +256701233725

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Revolution

Imagine the World YOU Want to Live In

*By Surnai Ó Maoildhia, Ireland
Parabola: Spring 2020*

There came a time when the square concrete slabs sitting heavy along the suburban streets were pried up with crowbars and the squashed soil beneath sucked in the fresh air and people kneeled down along the stretches of dark earth and said Sorry.

There came a time when all of the lightbulbs in each of the streetlights in each of the streets were unscrewed. And in the night the stars shone down unblinded.

The bricks of derelict houses were pulled from tired walls by many sets of hands and were stacked, like the building blocks of children, in wheelbarrows, to be wheeled away and used again.

Then the foundations of the lonely houses crumbled and were swept away and soil flew in on the breeze carrying dandelion seeds with it, and those many hands with soil in the curves of their fingerprints placed tiny seeds in tiny pressed hollows that grew to be oak and sycamore and birch and ash.

The black smoke that once wheezed from car exhausts and chimneys and seeped up into the sky, staining the white clouds dark, was now only in the burning of fallen branches on beaches from bonfires, and the smoke was grey, not black, and the red sparks wove within it a fiery embroidery that sparkled beneath the unveiled stars.

The trees that lived in their circles in the pavement in the cities now stretched their roots out, stretched the length of them,

stretched long and lovely and intoxicatingly as all that concrete was changed to loose earth and so the roots could uncoil and the trees could stand steady.

And in this time, this time that came, on Sunday mornings, people went to the sea and kneeled and saw the waves swell against the cliffs or lap against the stones or soak into the sand. They went to the forest and kneeled and looked at the trees shiver, shake, and lose themselves in the wind. They went to the mountains and kneeled and watched, straining their eyes to see the breaths in the earth of the mountains, the mountains that breathe so slowly in their millennial meditation that one cannot see the rise and fall.

And above this breathing, above this spiraling of roots and trickling of water in the hollows in the soil, and alongside the curling of the waves and amidst the frolicking of the dandelion seeds, is the turning, turning, turning of bicycle wheels as people make their way through their day, to the sea or to work or play or school...

To school where children have risen from beds to kneel against rows of different beds and gently pluck out weeds and water the seedlings and the growing bulbs, and place potatoes in their patterns and name each one before they bury them...

To school where children solve puzzles with simultaneous equations and build contraptions with blueprints and nimble fingers and then discover the workings of plants, animals, atoms, space, and the rhythms of a story as they read and read and read... writes the author.

To school where children fill the halls with music and the foot-stomping of dancing and the pounding of running feet and the careful breathing of yoga and meditation as they learn to stretch their limbs and minds and where to stretch them so as to get the most light...

The light that fruit and vegetables have used to swell and ripen, to be gathered then in baskets on bicycles or pooled in cloth bags, and the soil is brushed off with fingers and the slugs are placed outside and the vegetables, each one a different shape, are chopped and cooked.

And the flowers are nourished by that same light, the flowers that were planted in the ground and in boxes and baskets and on rooftops and in the old bulbs of streetlights hanging upside down from loops of twine. The same light that's sprinkled like sugar onto the fields and fields of daisies, fields bursting with daisies, trimmed with pink and centered by their own little suns, and if you look quickly, especially at dusk, it is only pink you see; oh, but how can you only glance? Of all the standards of beauty, there is nothing more lovely than a field full of daisies...

And in a house where all the windows are open a bumble bee has found himself trapped and a young girl sees him and gasps and she runs for a glass. And following him on tiptoe through the different rooms of the home, she finally moves the glass over him and places a book on the end and shifts the buzzing bee, buzzing, buzzing, buzzing, into the garden where he swoops up into the air, pauses, buzzes, and swoops

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again and disappears.

And though the girl can't see – but can imagine – the bee moseys over miles of green grass, dotted with pockets of gardens and houses and trees, and the bee crisscrosses with swallows who have tuned the sounds of spring to summer with the forks of their tails. And the bee pauses on a sunflower planted in a stretch of space that was once a graveyard, and is still, but the rectangles of gravel and the squares of headstones have been swapped with shrubs and flowers and so bluebells grow from the bodies and the memories of lost ones, who are not truly lost, simply shifted, and their names are painted on pebbles that have been moved from the shore.

And all of that rubbish that dropped from all of those cluttered lives, the rubbish that could not decompose, that could not die – immortal – heaped on top of nature, smothering; and then on top of itself, piling, over and over, minute after

minute, until it leaked into the cracks in the planet, filling the gaps and then overflowing until it spilled and spilled into all of the bellies of all of the whales, cleared. It was cleared.

And there came a time when the ocean released that breath it had been holding and eased down a few winches. And the wounds in the sky were allowed to heal and knit back together and dolphins could sew their threads through the clean, blue waters again.

And there came a time when the treetops were patched up and noisy again and orangutans collected their armfuls of fruit again and all that crumbling, wilting, dying turned to growth and the world was fresh and clean, as after a spring rain.

And the poles became solid once more.

And the famine ended.

And people learned to love this nature.

Loved it wholly and completely and unconditionally. And they learned that they are not excluded,

that they are nature too. And the indomitable nature within them loved the uncontrollableness, the insuppressible-ness, the irrepressible-ness...loved the wildness of it all, the mess and the chaos; they learned to love the life in it, the life in them, in us, the organic, circular movement of everything.

And we learned to say, Sorry.

Surnai Ó Maoilidhia was raised on Inis Mór, a small island off the west coast of Ireland. She was homeschooled there along with her siblings. Homeschooling is certainly a way to encourage creativity. Her parents ran an organic garden and housed volunteers. She just got married and lives in the Aran Islands, Galway, Ireland. See page 14 of my last newspaper. [email received January 14, 2023] "Thank you so much for choosing to include my story again in your wonderful newspaper – I'm honoured and very grateful." <https://www.surnaimolloy.com/homebird>

Continuation from previous page

ciety going to find the strength, intelligence and courage to radically change the way the world operates (which has been compared to a car going 100 miles an hour toward a brick wall) if we are numb and depressed from the news?

Given all of the above, I evaluated my talents and my passion (environmentalism after 40 years in the movement both as a professional and as a volunteer) and asked, "What do I want to do for the rest of my life and what needs are not being met in the world of activism?"

Instead of easing back to play bridge, golf or sit in my rocking chair reading on the porch, I look forward to working deliberately long hours. My newspaper is peopled with folks I admire. It is also sprinkled with news from investigative journalists who uncover corruption in all levels of government and corporations. We are an entirely volunteer publication with many talented, intelligent and compassionate people contributing ideas and articles.

The Order of the Earth is a 16-page, colored, monthly publication; we hope to expand to a 24-page weekly during the next couple of years.

The only obstacle I face is money.

Even though this idea had been building for 35 years, I didn't fully understand (and still don't) the economics of this plan. My husband and I choose to live in near-poverty to run our non-profit Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and

Economic Justice. I need to work part-time to help pay for printing, postage and cartridges. Somehow or other, I must bring in between \$650 and \$800 a month over and above our Social Security, on which we try to live.

The paper would never have been born if it weren't for two close friends who agreed to put some energy and generosity behind my dream. One insisted that it was time to switch to newsprint and the other said she'd pay for my publishing software and our first press run.

I nearly forgot someone. A woman I never met in Frederick got her hands on one of my black and white newsletters a year ago and quietly transformed our front page into a beautiful, colorful depiction of the Earth's glory. I was astonished that such a thing was possible since I had zero publishing/graphics background. At that point I knew that *The Order of the Earth* would be not only a valuable tool for people in years ahead but it would be a beautiful newspaper. I was ecstatic.

With that loving spirit behind me, we planned our "Big Launch" for January 1, 2008. We hoped to bring the environmental community into the homes of the mainstream community. I shopped around for the cheapest printing price and went with a company that was not the cheapest but the friendliest and most convenient to my friends in Frederick, who were going to help me distribute the papers. That company hap-

pened to be *The Herald-Mail*.

Since my comparison shopping had been based on 2,000 papers, I unquestioningly ordered 2,000. Do you realize how many papers that is? Imagine getting a 16-page paper every single day and piling them all up for recycling. The 2,000 papers *The Herald-Mail* staff joyfully put in my Ford Escort the day I arrived to pick up our January papers was equivalent to four-and-a-half years of newsprint. What on Earth was I going to do with all those papers?

In my eagerness to put together a great paper, I had failed to construct a distribution system. So I mailed them out in little bunches to all my friends around the country and gave my Frederick colleagues 200 each. In time we sent them all on their way. For February we cut back to 1,500. When money is tight, I go back down to 1,000. We ship them to the great groups we invite to write for us and they help us distribute them in their locations in hopes that their memberships and campaigns will get stronger through our publicity and our subscriptions and ads will increase.

Let me back up a minute here to say that we lived in Frederick until three and a half years ago, when we found a lovely home with land we could afford in a place unlike any other I've ever lived. It's heavenly here in rural Pennsylvania but logging, hunting and racing junk cars are common, women are referred to

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as 'girls' and everybody knows everybody else or is somehow related. These are hard-working, unpretentious people living in "God's Country." This is not a high-income area, nor is it populated with well-paying companies so it's hard to find work offering more than minimum wage.

I have been disappointed in the low number of subscriptions and ads after publishing 11,000 newspapers and giving away roughly 10,000 of them through

coffee shops, book stores, supportive businesses and eco-events. Admittedly, I am not strong at sales; however, I have made face-to-face

arrangements with seven businesses in our conservative area to sell *The Order* for \$.50 to compete with local papers. We are slowly developing a following.

I love every minute I spend on the paper and trust that finances will work themselves out as climate change gets worse and

people's desire to read a different type of news grows.

The Order of the Earth and I will be here to help.

[*This appeared after my story in H.E.R. Magazine.*] Iona Conner is a freelance writer and former teacher, nurse and New Jersey air pollution inspector, where in 1986 she first realized we were cooking the Earth. Iona can be reached at ionaconner@pa.net.

COMING NEXT TIME

