Get ready! THIS NEW YEAR'S ISSUE of BeFriending Creation highlights the many resources that are available to help us be stronger and better informed witnesses for the earth.

For us gardeners, winter is a kind of Sabbath. It is our time to rest up, to reassess our achievements, and plan for the planting and harvesting to come.

In this issue, we invite you to set aside time to try out the recommended readings and reflect on them. As the late Donella Meadows said, "There is too much bad news to justify complacency and too much good news to justify despair." Then let us look for ways to get involved and contribute to making that good news last. "This is too much bad news to justify neglect, but it is too much good news to justify despair." The importance of our faith in the earth and its role in our spiritual development is highlighted through these recommended readings.

Solutions to ecological problems are elusive in part because so many people today have a time-perception problem. That is, they may understand clock time or calendar time, but they have forgotten how to experience Earth Time. Here's a parable to explain what I mean—from a made-for-televisiove movie of the early 1990s:

It's 1945. An American intelligence agent awakens in a disoriented state in a U.S. Army hospital in occupied Germany. The attending physicians break the good news that while he had lain in a long coma, World War II had ended with Allied victory. They encourage him to share his last memories—a kind of a desperate fight with Nazi agents who believed he had information about the impending Allied D-Day invasion—as an aid to recovery from his trauma, they say.

The American feigns impaired recall because he has an uneasy feeling about what's going on. He eventually figures out that he is in the middle of a clever con game: the war isn't over. D-Day still hasn't happened. In his earlier clash with enemy agents he was captured and drugged. The "American hospital" he was brought to is a detailed replica that the Nazis had painstakingly created behind the front lines to lull him into believing, upon awakening, that he is living in a later time—so that the Allied invasion plan would no longer be viewed as a secret to be guarded.

Many of us today are feeling similarly uneasy and puzzled by some of the things going on around us. Suspicion grows that it may be later than we think, despite the glib statements of our political and corporate leaders that the GNP is growing, that there is still ample oil and other resources to support the "American way of life," that our enemies are on the run. Our quality of life is an issue that our meager resources are available to help us strengthen our own resources and better inform the many responses that BeFriending Creation highlights in this issue. We invite you to explore these in this issue of BeFriending Creation.
BeFriending Creation

January-February 2006

It is possible to relate to the world in terms of many different time frames simultaneously. We use a calendar that embodies the time-line of the early Christian church; but this doesn't keep us from thinking of ourselves on an evolutionary time-line.

For the last third of the 20th century we were reminded constantly by our culture of being part of the "post-war generation," the "space age," the "computer age," the "Aquarian age," or the "post-modern period." Each framing sends a subtle but powerful message about what to expect from life and what goals to strive for.

Interestingly, environmentalists have been characterizing whatever decade they are in as a "decade of decision," but the struggle goes on.

Today people are marking permanent shifts in consciousness in terms of "post-9/11 attacks," and "post-Hurricane Katrina." "The New American Century" maps out a Neo-conservative agenda.

Those of us who want to engage the future in a positive way need to be aware when such time-framing is happening and to actively explore alternate time orientations. For instance, "Earth Time" can help put us back "in sync" with the fundamental processes of nature on which all life depends.

Mary Coelho, QEW supporter and author of Unfolding Universe, Emerging Personhood, notes that there was a time, about a century ago, when the need, the resources, the tools, and the conditions were right to build the New York City subway system. Such an undertaking would not be possible today because the potential has changed. The Industrial Revolution itself had to wait until certain people had lived and certain discoveries had happened. Similarly, the modern environmental movement could not have unfolded as it has until visionaries like Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, and Wendell Berry had come on the scene, with their insights and warnings.

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Time, from page 1
George Fox taught the need for integrity, or wholeness, in everyday life. What we profess on the Sabbath should be carried over into every other day of the week. Our “no” should mean “no,” and our “yes” should mean “yes,” and all our commitments should be fulfilled.

Early Quaker history is rich with examples of how those first Quakers lived by the Testimony of Integrity. As Cecil Hinshaw wrote in 1974, “The essence of early Quakerism is precisely a demand for complete integrity of the individual in his relation to God, to other people, and to himself...”

How does integrity relate to Quakers seeking “an earth restored”?

The environmental degradation we see everywhere today is often traced to lack of integrity. Many people in our culture seem to have no qualms about lying, stealing, and cheating to exploit the natural resources of the earth. The commitments of national leaders to the environment are frequently riddled with covers, deception, and fraud. Even ordinary people, without profit or power motives, do not seem to be concerned about their participation in the degradation of the earth.

Before we can restore the integrity of Creation, we need to bring about greater integrity in ourselves and in our society. As we manifest power and wholeness from being fed by the Spirit and rooted in the earth, our integrity can move outward to our friends and family, from there to our communities and state and national governments and then on to the international stage.

Practicing Earthcare with Integrity in 2006

Pray!

1. Spend time in prayer.

2. Spend time in natural places, connecting with the Spirit revealed in God’s Creation.

3. Ask for divine assistance in discerning how you are called to care for the earth.

Learn!

4. Read at least one book about the environment. Check out the book reviews in this issue. Become a regular reader of BeFriending Creation and QNL’s bimonthly Quaker Eco-Bulletin.

5. Check out the publications and videos available from Quaker Earthcare Witness. Order something of interest and share it with Quaker friends.

Act!

6. Renew your membership in Quaker Earthcare Witness with a generous contribution. Make sure your Monthly and Yearly meetings are making generous contributions to QEW.

7. Get five friends to join QEW.

8. Join or form an Earthcare Committee in your Monthly Meeting and/or Yearly Meeting. Contact the QEW Outreach Committee for assistance.

9. Make sure your Yearly Meeting appoints representatives to the Steering Committee of QEW; consider becoming a representative.

10. Lead Earthcare-related activities in your Monthly Meeting, such as helping Friends measure their ecological footprints or teaching about spirituality and ecology in Quaker religious education.

11. Be patterns and examples. Model mindfulness of the limits of the earth’s resources and the need for right sharing among all species.

12. Recycle, conserve, bicycle, and walk. Support your local economies and food systems.

13. Get involved in local, state, and national environmental initiatives. Write to your representatives.

14. Arrange for someone from QEW to speak to your Monthly or Yearly meeting or other Quaker group on some aspect of Earthcare, or send in ideas or leads for articles.

Pray! How will we resolve to heal the earth in 2006?

Let us all today renew our commitment to this vital work. We cannot stand on the sidelines and hope that another faith community, political party, or environmental group will take charge. A Quaker woman from Kenya once told me that God had shown her the many hungry orphans in her hometown, and she was responsible for addressing their needs. We have recognized the problems with the environment, and we need to address them. Our Quaker history is rich with examples of how those first Friends addressed the need for integrity, or wholeness, in their everyday life.

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Two books to scare the bejeebers out of you...

Boiling Point
by Ross Gelbspan
Basic Books, 2004

Plan B 2.0
by Lester R. Brown
Updated and Expanded

Lester R. Brown, president of the Earth Policy Institute, distributed a copy of his Plan B to everyone who attended his evening talk at the 2004 FGC Gathering in Amherst, Mass. Brown matter-of-factly explained that food shortages will be first of many severe crises about to descend on the world. Shortfalls in food production are brewing now from the combined effects of over-reliance on "fossil water" (non-rechargeable aquifers) for irrigation, loss of topsoil and soil fertility, depletion of petroleum reserves, and population growth.

Brown's book outlines other ways in which the earth's carrying capacity is being undermined by foolish and extravagant uses of resources, careless release of toxins and disruptive chemicals into the environment, and the stress of global warming on biological systems that undergird the ecological stability of the planet.

Since "Plan A" (business as usual) obviously isn't working, Brown outlines a radically different agenda to be carried out immediately on an international scale. The ability of the United States to quickly tool up for war production in the early 1940s provides ample evidence that his proposals for emergency measures are within the realm of possibility.

In Boiling Point, Gelbspan re-examines the latest research, as well as numerous accounts of unprecendented weather extremes around the world, to reinforce his original warnings. He also exposes the well-funded campaign of misinformation and intimidation that has been carried on by politicians, trade groups, and others in recent years to cast doubt on the reality of climate change.

While the world's media and institutions barely mention the subject of climate change, the Bush administration continues to roll out new oil exploration projects, even as the climate scientists warn of the dire consequences of continued greenhouse gas emissions.

Bill McKibben, who in 1989 wrote The End of Nature (one of the first books on global warming written for popular consumption), praises Gelbspan's reporting: "On the highest stakes issue of our time he has broken new ground.... His proposals make urgent sense. Most of all, he manages to get through just how desperate our situation is, how little room for error there is, and how immediate the need for action."

Copies of Plan B 2.0 can be ordered for $14 from the Earth Policy Institute, 1350 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 403, Washington DC 20036. Bulk rates are available.
BeFriending Creation

January-February 2006

And two books to inspire and give you hope

The Splendor of Creation by Ellen Bernstein

This workbook offers a series of short readings and stimulating activities for children, expanding on the good news that “You are a part of the wonderful web of life.” At first look, it’s a creatively packaged set of junior-level lessons about nature. But rather than demystifying nature, as so many conventional scientific texts do, these fun activities celebrate the mystery of how the earth, this accumulation of dust from ancient exploding stars, has unfolded to be a miraculous oasis in space, home to us and all other living things.

Included are breathtaking Hubble Telescope photos of deep space galaxies and nebulae, as well as fascinating microscopic views of crystals and butterfly wings, supplemented by delightful pen-and-ink illustrations.

The readings and activities cover all the basic earth processes: photosynthesis and respiration, erosion and weathering, expansion and contraction, and more. They are written in language young children can read and enjoy, yet offer a deep, meaningful exploration of how we are connected to all other living things.

Bernstein believes that the modern science of ecology and the creation story of the Book of Genesis are really different ways of talking about the same reality. Each of her seven chapters highlights basic ecological issues in terms of the central themes of the seven days of Creation. She maintains that the controversial term “dominion,” as translated from Hebrew into English, never meant that humans had a divine right to crowd out other species and prevent them from thriving in their rightful habitats. On the contrary, it is the very awareness of our power to exploit, abuse, and destroy the earth’s life that can lead us to vigilance and care.

Bernstein also explains how the commandment of keeping the Sabbath by refraining from work is a corrective to humankind’s tendency to mistake its role on earth as one of mastery over nature.

ISBN: 0-9762568-0-0

Awesome Stuff by Charlene Brotman

This book of short readings and stimulating activities for children explores the good news that “You are a part of the wonderful web of life.” It is a creatively packaged set of junior-level lessons about nature. But rather than demystifying nature, as so many conventional scientific texts do, these fun activities celebrate the mystery of how the earth, this accumulation of dust from ancient exploding stars, has unfolded to be a miraculous oasis in space, home to us and all other living things.

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Bernstein also explains how the commandment of keeping the Sabbath by refraining from work is a corrective to humankind’s tendency to mistake its role on earth as one of mastery over nature.

ISBN: 0-9762568-0-0

Ellen Bernstein

founded Shomrei Adamah, the first national Jewish environmental organization, in the early 1990s. There are fascinating parallels between this author’s thoughts and experiences and my involvement with Quaker Earthcare Witness since the late 1980s. We both had been active for many years in the secular environmental movement, trying to reach people through facts and persuasion. But after suffering frustration and disillusionment, we both had come to the conclusion that people must be engaged at a deeper, spiritual level before they will care enough to significantly change the way they treat the earth. Returning to the roots of our religious traditions, we both were surprised and delighted to find a rich vein of teachings about right relationship to Creation in the Bible as well as in the principles and practices of our particular faith traditions.

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—Louis Cox
We have forgotten who we are. We ask forgiveness. We ask for the gift of remembering.

We have turned our backs on the movement of the world. We have forgotten who we are. We have become estranged from the unity of all that we are, that we do, that we are, that we do.

We have destroyed our knowledge. We have abused our power. We have forgotten who we are. Now the land is barren, the waters poisoned, the air polluted. We have turned our backs on the movement of the world. We have become estranged from the unity of all that we are, that we do, that we are, that we do. We have destroyed our knowledge. We have abused our power. We have forgotten who we are.

We have alienated ourselves from the natural world. We have forgotten who we are. We have sought only our own security. We have turned our backs on the movement of the world. We have become estranged from the unity of all that we are, that we do, that we are, that we do. We have destroyed our knowledge. We have abused our power. We have forgotten who we are.

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IN THIS ERA of much talk of moral values, religion, and science, this little book is very timely. How can we think about the nature of things both scientifically and religiously? Gary Kowalski, a Unitarian minister, has written a basic handbook about the evolving universe and its relevance to our lives today, in a very readable and easily understood format.

Kowalski begins with an examination of the fragmentation between science and religion and looks at the history that has brought us to this schism. He then lays the groundwork for the basis for a new conversation between the two camps. He examines the new physics and quantum theory and never loses the reader in dry explanations. I appreciated the review of how our universe began, in scientific terms, yet being regularly reminded of the great unexplainable mystery. If you have not read about the “immense journey” from stars to humans, this would be a good place to begin. Kowalski does not avoid the scientific explanations, but his descriptions are easily understood. He then gives us an overview of the development of science from matter to Darwin. But what I found profound are his conclusions:

“To see the wonder in each bit of time and space is indeed the occupation of a scientist or a saint. To perceive the mystery that lies behind and beneath this world is to live in a state of astonishment and reverence for What Is. All things exist, yet only we, the human creation, are fully aware that we exist. To become completely conscious of the mystery within us and around us, to look steadily at the unknown, to contemplate the infinite heights and depths of existence, is what it means to be most deeply human and most genuinely alive.”

Kowalski argues that many of the ills of the modern world—such as the rise of fundamentalist intolerance to secular society’s endless (and empty) search for thrills—stem from the mistaken view that science and faith are antagonists rather than natural allies. He suggests that science and faith compel us now to move beyond materialism toward an understanding of the world that includes the realities of consciousness and spirit.

This is an excellent book for Friends. We often do not involve ourselves with science/religious discussions. This book will help the reader become aware of the issues and it will give us a basis for being rooted both in the world and in the spirit.

Recommends the book: Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed by Jared Diamond. Written by Michael Moore.
Heinberg brings together an informal group of retired and indefinite petroleum geologists… whose message is that petroleum resources will run out and much sooner than anticipated. Heinberg, is a book that I think everyone should read. Who actually set energy policy and whose message is that petroleum resources will run out and much sooner than anticipated? Heinberg documents the reality of the emerging energy crisis. He instructs us, “Try to follow some of the strands of the web of relationships between energy sources and technologies, followed by collective voice belongs to an emerging ensemble called ‘new society publishers’.”

The core message is that North Americans’ current way of life, which has us guzzling energy at a prodigious pace, is about to change. Heinberg, says, “A more strident voice issues from environmental activists, who view energy as merely one ingredient in the broader cocktail of life. They argue that our current way of life is unsustainable and that we need to change our values and habits, to act on that commitment.”

Heinberg engages the reader in a provocative and informative experiment, which has us sitting in the middle of a typical North American city for at least 20 minutes. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane. This is quite a read. His son will ride a camel. I drive a car. My son flies a jet airplane.
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2006

Dear Readers,

I have compiled a list of books that I believe are essential for anyone interested in deep ecology. These books explore the interconnectedness of all life and the need for a holistic approach to environmental and social issues. I hope you find them as inspiring as I do.


I hope you find these books as enlightening as I do. They are essential reading for anyone interested in deep ecology and the pursuit of a more sustainable and harmonious relationship with the natural world.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]
From Sea to Rising Sea

The story of the 10,000 km
Climate Change Caravan

AFTER ANOTHER FAILED INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE, A GROUP OF STUDENTS ARE FRUSTRATED BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S INABILITY TO ADDRESS THE LARGEST THREAT THE WORLD HAS FACED. WITH THE HELP OF ENVIRONMENTALISTS FROM ACROSS CANADA, THE CLIMATE CHANGE CARAVAN BEGINS IN TOFLOO, B.C., WITH A VEG-OIL POWDERED BUS AND TWO MODEST GOALS: TO CYCLE ACROSS THE SECOND LARGEST COUNTRY ON THE PLANET AND TO BUILD A NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT ALONG THE WAY.

From Sea to Rising Sea tells an inspiring story of idealism coming face to face with reality, as young environmentalists with staggering determination are put through a 10,000-km cross-Canada road test. Faced day to day with endless challenges, the realities of their ambitious endeavor quickly become visible. Halfway across the country the group is burnt out and struggling to lead the sustainable lifestyle they are promoting.

Entering the final leg of their trip, the tired Caravaners' perspective on their campaign changes, and spirits lift as they receive an unexpected source of inspiration. Arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the group feels a new sense of success for their amazing accomplishment, which might not have happened if not for the support of others. They realize that their efforts are making a difference, and hope to continue their journey into the future.

This DVD is now available through the QEW video lending library.

### Quaker Earthcare Witness Order Form

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

**Please submit this form to:**

Quaker Earthcare Witness, 173-B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-1607.

**Name**

**Address**

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

**TOTAL**
January-February 2006

Tom Fox and the other Christian Peacemaker Team members who were recently abducted in Iraq are in our prayers. As BeFriending Creation goes to press, on December 9th, we still do not know the outcome of this tragedy.

Tom Fox is a member of Baltimore Yearly Meeting attending Langley Hills Friends Meeting and is known by a number of QEW Steer Committee members. Louis and I know others who have served with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and know of the fine work of this organization. CPT offers an organized nonviolent alternative to war and other forms of lethal inter-group conflict. CPT provides organizational support to persons committed to faith-based nonviolent alternatives in situations where lethal conflict is an immediate reality or is supported by public policy. CPT seeks to enlist the response of the whole church in conscientious objection to war, and in the development of nonviolent alternatives to lethal conflict.

CPT projects connect intimately with the spiritual lives of constituent congregations. Quaker Earthcare Witness, along with Friends Committee on National Legislation, has attempted to reveal the connections between our increasing dependence on imported fossil fuels in the United States and our willingness to put our men and women at great risk in wars. John Woolman reminded Friends to discern whether the seeds of war may be finding nourishment in the things we are directly or indirectly connected with. Most of our possessions today are directly or indirectly created with fossil fuels. A Friend from Burlington (Vt.) Meeting recently was arrested during a human rights protest at the School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Ca, and our prayers for her abundance during a human rights protest are with friends.

Quaker Earthcare Witness’s upcoming report on dependence on imported fossil fuels in the U.S. and the connections between our increasing dependence on imported fossil fuels in the U.S. and our willingness to put our men and women at great risk in wars is in process.

We do not know the outcome of this tragedy.

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17 Jared Diamond's Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed
16 Science and the Search for God: Theology as if Animals Mattered
15 Northwest Pacific Quarterly: Deepening our relationship to the earth
14 Some books to terrify you and some books to inspire you
13 Clerks' message: Practicing Earthcare with integrity in 2006
12 What time is it? A year of decision for the earth
11 January-February 2006