

# THE GAZETTE

*"a news-sheet, a periodical publication giving an account of current events"*

West Falmouth Religious Society of Friends

APRIL 2020



***"To Friends, to stand still in trouble,  
and see the strength of the Lord."***

Stand still in that which is pure, after ye see yourselves; and then mercy comes in. After thou seest thy thoughts, and the temptations, do not think, but submit; and then power comes."

From George Fox, Epistle X. (10). See <https://esr.earlham.edu/qbi/gfe/e001-020.htm>

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## Quaker Birthdays

### April

- Bobbi Bailin, 2
- Buffy Curtis, 2
- Sunny Davidson, 2
- Gina Lyman, 5
- Larry Jordan, 6
- Jay O'Hara, 9
- Albert Bradley, 14
- Sally Fritz, 19
- Jim Robb, 20
- Rich Armstrong, 25



## Officers

**Fran Lightsom, clerk**

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**Molly Cornell, recording clerk**

**Clyde Tyndale, treasurer**

## Regular Events

### Adult Discussion Group

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

### Peace and Social Order

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday at 12:00 p.m.

(April 12, May 10)

Larry Jordan, convener

### Growth and Learning

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 12:00 p.m.

(April 19, May 17)

Sunny Davidson, convener

### Empathy Practice (NVC)

Usually 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 9:30–11:45

(April 4, May 2)

Brenda Nolan, convener

### Restorative Circle Practice

Usually 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 1:00–3:00

(April 4, May 2)

Brenda Nolan, convener

### Ministry & Counsel

Deborah Bradley, convener

(508-564-4744)

Carolyne Jordan

Sunny Davidson

Larry Jordan

Jonathan Joyal

Abigail Young

### West Falmouth Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business

Usually 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday (April 26; May 24)

## Upcoming Events

### New England Yearly Meeting

#### Virtual Meditation practice

daily, beginning **March 18 through April 8**. Join a 15-minute meditation practice on Zoom. The meditation begins at 8:15 a.m., but newcomers should arrive on the Zoom call at

8:00 a.m. for an introduction. See <https://neym.org/events-calendar/2020/03/daily-virtual-meditation>



#### The Future of Quakers – an FCNL-sponsored virtual event.

**April 15** at 6:30 p.m. EDT. How can Friends deepen our connection to prophetic vision and rekindle our history of radical witness in these times of injustice and inequity? We will discuss this and more during our virtual event, [“The Future of Quakers”](#).

**Young Friends First-Ever Virtual Retreat** for high school-aged youth! Theme is “Sexuality, Gender, and Relationships.” This retreat will take place with several video call segments starting on Friday evening **April 17th and continuing through Saturday April 18th**. Contact Cynthia Rankin. Register at <https://neym.org/events-calendar/2020/04/young-friends-first-ever-virtual-retreat>.

**Living Faith, Saturday, April 4. Postponed.** See

<https://neym.org/events-calendar/2020/04/living-faith-postponed>

### Sandwich Quarterly Meeting

**Sandwich Quarterly Meeting, Saturday, April 25** in Westport, MA. Plans are uncertain at this time.

**24 Hour Prayer Vigil, Friday, April 3, 12 noon – Saturday, April 4, 12 noon.** Prayer can be whatever is comfortable for you-- reading the Bible or *Faith and Practice*, watching sacred music on YouTube, singing hymns, etc. Sign up for a 15-minute time slot with Pam Cole, 774-328-1490, [pamcole@mindspring.com](mailto:pamcole@mindspring.com), of Smith Neck MM.

### Sandwich Monthly Meeting

**Sandwich Monthly Meeting, Sunday, April 5** in West Falmouth. **Canceled.**

## **Events in West Falmouth**

For now, **weekly Sunday Worship** is being held via Zoom. We particularly invite Friends from Yarmouth and East Sandwich. Check your March 28 e-mail for the specifics on how to join in on this virtual format. Contact Steve Gates or Brenda Nolan if you need further help. Steve or Brenda will open the Zoom meeting at 9:30 a.m. and worship will begin at 10:00 a.m.

**Mid-Week Quaker Meeting** at Atria in Falmouth, normally held **Wednesdays**, at 9:45 a.m., has been suspended until further notice.

**Quaker Women** -- At this time of isolation, we are happy to announce that we will be gathering *more* frequently than usual! We will meet weekly via Zoom on **Thursdays** at 7 p.m.

**Memorial Meeting -- April 25** Memorial Meeting for Rudolf Scheltema has been postponed.

## **Also of Interest**

**Pendle Hill** is holding **daily** worship via Zoom at 8:30 a.m. See <https://pendlehill.org/explore/worship/join-us-online-for-worship-in-the-barn/>

**Virtual Witness Wednesday Silent Reflection** with Friends Committee on National Legislation, Wednesdays in **April and May**, 5:15 p.m. Take a moment to reflect in keeping with the Quaker practice of silent worship. Join in virtually on Zoom or by phone for a period of shared reflection as we seek community in this time of isolation. RSVP at <https://act.fcni.org/event/quaker-welcome-center/>.

## **Religious Education – Youth**



### ***Virtual First Day School***

*Allison Diana, Angela Diana and Andrew Diana*

On Sunday, March 22, we attended virtual Sunday school. Instead of going to Quaker House, we sat in our living rooms and communicated via Zoom. There were 7 participants: Esteban and Valentín Hernández, Angela, Andrew, and Allison Diana, Brenda Nolan and Deborah Bradley. In addition, there was our mother, who was occasionally heard but not seen. Al Bradley, and Gustav (the dog) made guest appearances. We went around the “circle” and talked about what had changed in the past week. The children were doing schoolwork at home. Valentín had taken to drawing. Brenda was fairly quiet for the meeting. We ended up talking about favorite children’s books. Overall, it was nice to see everyone again and get reconnected.

## Readers Write

### *Love in the Time of Coronavirus*

*Rita O'Donnell*

So much has changed in the last month. Our last issue of the Gazette seems a lifetime ago. Many of us have been sheltering in place for several weeks now. Our announcements overwhelmingly reflect cancellation, postponement or movement to virtual platforms. We meet by Zoom.

West Falmouth had our first Zoom meeting for worship on Sunday, March 22. Since I am writing this during Women's History month, however, I would be seriously remiss if I did not mention that West Falmouth Quaker women met by Zoom on Thursday, March 19. That is, **we did it first** and it worked so well that the women have decided to meet this way every Thursday for the time being.

Our Zoom meeting for worship also went very well. Roughly twenty households participated. Our children had their own meeting in a breakout room after which they rejoined us just like they always do. (They describe their experience on p. 3.) This time, though, Friends looked at each other's faces rather than at each other's backs. I was struck by both the beauty and the longing I saw in those faces, by Friends' expressed yearning for the meetinghouse, and by their acceptance of the fact that we will not be there for a while. One Friend pointed out that, in the meantime, a webcam would allow us to at least see our meetinghouse and the beautiful, historic windows we normally look through.

In what could have been a preface to our special section on Earth Day, we also heard a powerful message about the earth taking back its own. This theme surfaces in several of the articles that follow. As usual, Friends have written from a variety of perspectives—reflecting on this transformative moment, looking forward and looking back, celebrating the beauty of this earth and mourning what we have done to it.

In all the fear and sadness, there have been joys. Zoom has brought us connection with Friends we don't normally see until summer and with local and monthly meeting Friends we don't see often enough. Our attention is perhaps more focused on the beauty of the world that, for many of us, is now outside. Maybe we are thinking more about our meeting and what exactly a meeting is. We will meet again. Until then, see pages 17-19.



## *Some Thoughts on the Coronavirus*

*Maggie Saab*



The news can be very scary and confusing. We don't know where we stand or whom to believe.

We are not accustomed to wars without guns, missiles, or explosions. This is a war against nature.

The coronavirus is so tiny, and surprisingly beautiful as seen by scanning electronic microscopy as in the image

shown in *Nature* (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-00639-8>). You cannot see it under a regular microscope and yet it is devastating and paralyzing our world!

We think of nature as beautiful, breathtaking with its marvelous trees, flowers, oceans and rivers. And so it is. But nature is also volcanoes erupting, fires ravaging millions of acres and extinguishing all forms of life, and tsunamis drowning thousands.

Our enemy, the virus, is unseen but we are witnessing its poisonous effects on all of us. We ask ourselves if we're taking enough precautions or the right precautions, we question our own actions, and worry about our health and our financial situation.

We should take the matter into our hands, listen to health care providers, be vigilant, do our own cooking, use paper products sparingly, use social distancing, stay connected with family and friends, and help out those in need.

Pray all the time! Ask God the Almighty to help us overcome this unseen enemy that has already taken so many lives, over ten thousand in Italy alone.

Let us have hope, hope of working together, of staying connected, and of removing fear.

*"There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter."* From *The Sense of Wonder* by Rachel Carson and Charles Pratt, (New York: Harper & Row), 1965.

## **Special Section on Earth Day**

### ***Meditation for Earth Day 2020***

Will I live to see this one?

As Gaia\* and her atmosphere react to  
rotting fruit thrown on the floor  
our Monkey Mind Greed Horror  
with delicate organisms needing  
only half a degree C to send panic  
into centers of our ant nests  
killing off mostly the old the weak  
that's me by the way  
pronouncements are made actions taken  
as if Gaia with super volcanoes in her arsenal  
could or would call off her minions  
to spare us another decade or two as we hurtle  
into the deepest possible sadness of  
self-induced self-aware extinction.

And yet and yet  
Yellowstone Caldera comes to mind  
roughly due to blow give or take 300,000 years  
which could kill nearly all of us  
if not all of us nearly everything  
depending on the magnitude of  
explosion making our largest  
thermonuclear devices look like a  
match being struck  
it's all happened before gang  
sparing not even the gated wealthy.

Gaia can generate force beyond our  
reckoning is a force beyond our  
reckoning though I reckon  
we the Anthropocene we  
have tested that reality in  
our hubris war on everything  
in the geologic short run.

\*Earth as living entity

*Bill Holcombe  
East Sandwich Preparative Meeting*



What will happen to the  
Big Climate Strike worldwide  
which US of Angst of Ahhh  
generally eschews  
but which others would have  
might have done now that  
we're driven into ourselves  
by something barely lifelike?

Life goes on we suppose  
until it doesn't old babushkas  
come to mind after the  
Soviet collapse left without  
their meager pensions with  
nothing or hyperinflation victims  
from Germany Argentina  
victims of this victims of that  
of our own exchange sophistries  
with collapse built into their very structures.

We know so much so unimaginably much  
yet can do so little about the messes  
we create and leave behind for someone  
on the down the timeline road to clean up....except for maybe the Finns....

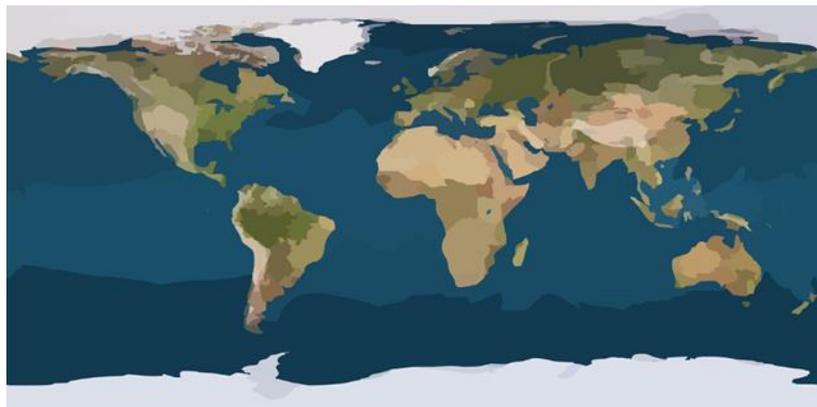
And yet and yet for a little while  
stuck with our selves  
neighbors exchange news offer help and  
children write letters hand delivered and  
people walk outside on feet and plant gardens  
and for now we spew less crud into our atmosphere  
United Shit Works and travel effluvia largely shut down....

Oh for a return to something less than normal  
less than business as usual easy for me  
to say living out my last days but there  
is no law certainly not God's Law  
that says we must make second mortgage  
payments to keep those pleasure boats running.



## How Deep an Earth Day Do We Want?

Rod Zwirner



Two years ago a *Scientific American* columnist published a short statement on the belief in oneness that encapsulated my own Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN)/ Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) experience.<sup>1</sup> Now, as we approach 50 years of Earth Days, I would like to offer a brief reflection as to what meanings have developed in me by using

Earth Day as a portal.

Firstly, I cannot separate 1970 from the surrounding decade that was such a pivotal portion of my life. In 1965 I had finished my Army service, college, and a year of teaching 7th grade science in that order and had arrived in Borneo to teach as a Peace Corps volunteer in the new country of Malaysia. By 1975 I was married and living at The Meeting School (TMS) in New Hampshire with a growing understanding of my family tradition in the Society of Friends. The teach-in we knew as Earth Day was a common understanding because every day was Earth Day on the farm at TMS since it was at the heart of the curriculum. Spaceship Earth as a concept framing our condition was really developing, mainly because of the work of Quaker poet and economist Ken Boulding, Buckminster Fuller, and the Blue Marble photo that got wide exposure as on Whole Earth catalogs.

When Senator Gaylord Nelson refocused in 1990 on what he had helped start twenty years earlier, the celebration took on increasing annual importance. The 1980s had clearly shown that the United States was the leader in trashing our planetary home and Quakers were two years away from presenting a Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Minute on Sustainability to worldwide Friends. Three years earlier, in 1987, Friends Committee on Unity with Nature was formed to help us understand that earth values could be part of all Friends testimonies.

My Earth Day experiences can also be seen through the lens of Society of Friends activities during the last thirty years. Most Earth Days when I was able to participate involved earth care activities, like road and river cleanups and getting out in the community and showing concern for the lack of respect and the resulting unsightly trash. During the same period Friends' activities showed increasing concern for the earth values, even to the extent of calling it a new testimony. There was a long struggle at FCNL to raise up "An Earth Restored."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://getpocket.com/explore/item/what-would-happen-if-everyone-truly-believed-everything-is-one?utm\\_source=pocket-newtab](https://getpocket.com/explore/item/what-would-happen-if-everyone-truly-believed-everything-is-one?utm_source=pocket-newtab)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fcnl.org/about/policy/the-world-we-seek>

The early '90s saw the formation of New England Friends in Unity with Nature (NEFUN) which in this century became the Earthcare Ministry Committee (EMC) following the lead of Friends Centering on Nature changing to Quaker Earthcare Witness. A lot could be said about this alphabet soup exchange, but let us just say that the emphasis was intended to be more on action and to shed what some perceived as a pantheistic approach. (The theological concept of panentheism was just gaining currency). In hindsight, it would have been helpful if the new names had reflected some attention to the unity process.

While I was formally doing more with American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) during this decade, I stayed close to NEFUN because Monadnock Meeting members brought reports to our active study group. Each year we would vicariously experience the retreat cycles based on Earth, Water, Air and Fire. We threshed ideas about sustainability, and participated in actions over Hydro Québec's injustice to Canadian tribes. Remember, the Clinton era saw the rise of the neoliberal, post-Cold War paradigm that started us on the way to oligarchy and American Exceptionalism. AFSC had a very important program, Democratizing the Global Economy, that tried to influence this and the corporatization of NAFTA.

For me, a highlight of this era was The Meeting School declaring itself GMO-free and participating in the Battle in Seattle (1999) where the International Monetary Fund was trying to restructure the world economy over debt and challenging national sovereignties. About 1998 a Sessions plenary speaker claimed most cadavers should be treated as toxic waste according to EPA rules. This led indirectly to NEFUN getting Sessions to pass a minute on Ecological Integrity and Public Health which could be very relevant today if we'd been able to hold it in our consciousness and continually acted on it. Among the important initiatives that September 11 cut short was an exciting effort led by younger Friends, the Economic Globalization Group. It was so short lived I don't think anything ever made it into NEYM documents. One older leader was editor of AFSC's *Peacework* magazine who died shortly after. Friends were sensitive to so many issues at once that finding unity was too much of a challenge. A very interesting discussion could be had on the topic of what happened to AFSC and the Peace movement during the last twenty years, especially in light of the understanding that "peace on earth is peace with earth"....

Now that we have experienced decades of war and attempts at regime changing, we have drained both our coffers and our energy for focusing on the existential struggle with climate disruption. How do we focus on Earth Day 2020? If it is to be mainly virtual, then prayer and teach-in activities will predominate. There is so much to be done, but the deeper we go, the better. The War of the Lamb, anyone?



Note: Be sure to check out [earthday.org](http://earthday.org) for lots of information, action ideas, and fun quizzes to test your knowledge on whale conservation, clean energy, oceans and plastic pollution and many other subjects.

## ***Bearing Witness to Nature***

*Gail Melix*

*East Sandwich Preparative Meeting*

*“We name ourselves after the land we live with. Because, not only are we breathing in, we are also drinking from the water that is flavored by that very land. Whatever is deposited in the soil is in that water is in us. So, we are all one thing, and we name ourselves after the place that is our nurturing. That sustains our life.”<sup>1</sup>*

Science proves what Native people have known all along: that humans and all forms of life on earth share common DNA and are interdependent on one another for survival. Humans have kinship with all plants including trees, animals, bacteria, fungi, protists and archaea. We also share a relationship with all of nature, which is everything in our physical world not made by man. This relationship connects us to the web of life, the intricacies of which we struggle to understand.

One of our Quaker testimonies, Stewardship, speaks to care for the Earth and all its inhabitants. In my mind, Stewardship carries as much weight as our other testimonies: Peace, Equality, Integrity, Community, and Simplicity. Most often these Quaker testimonies interface, providing a rich environment that nourishes growth, discernment and leadings. Bearing witness to the state of the natural world helps us stay in right place, in right relationship with all of nature.

I feel very fortunate to have grown up on Cape Cod in the 50s and 60s, when the land still had a rural feel. I wish every child could have the experiences I had. My father, a Wampanoag, taught me how to catch a fish and fillet it, dig clams and quahogs and shuck them, make chowder, plant a garden, tend to it, harvest and can vegetables. In season we picked raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, grapes, pears, beach plums and rose hips, cranberries and apples and made jelly and jam. Relishes and apple butter, too. Dandelion greens were steamed and buttered. Watercress and sautéed fiddleheads were anticipated the winter long.

Some fruits have enough pectin of their own for making jelly while others don't. The expense of paying for the pectin had to be considered. My brother, four sisters, many cousins, and I grew up outdoors. If it wasn't storming and the temperature wasn't in the teens, we wanted to be outdoors. It's just a matter of

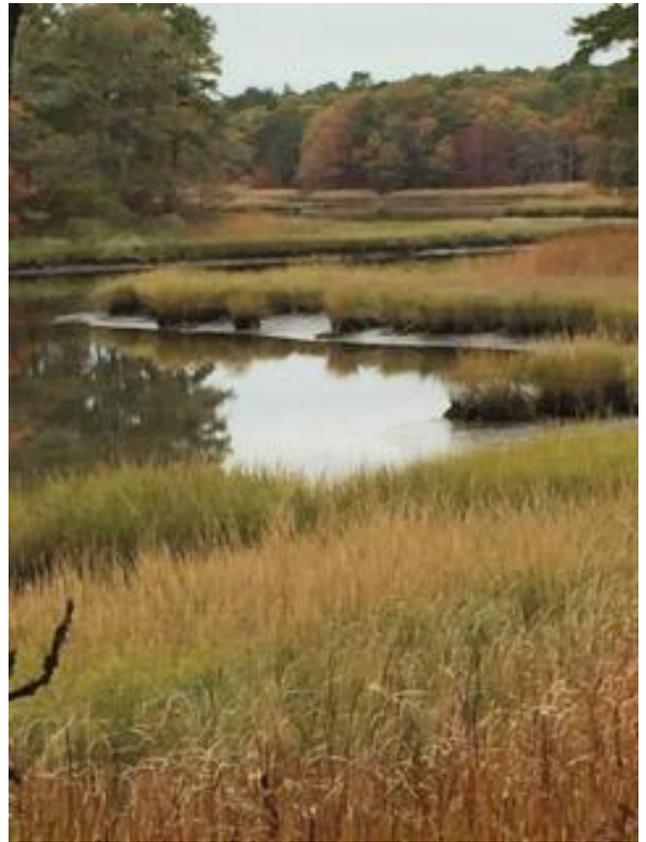


Photo of Mashpee River by Gail Melix

<sup>1</sup> Quotation from Ramona/Nosapocket Peters, member of the Bear Clan of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe-- People of the First Light. She lives on Cape Cod in Mashpee, Massachusetts and belongs to the tribe who met the Pilgrims and kindly helped them survive. Quotation used with permission.

bundling correctly. Packing a picnic and snacks allowed us to wander at will for whole days during summertime, the only constraint to be home before dark. We had our favorite paths, ponds, marshes and trees. One of the joys of a tree was finding one big enough, yet supple enough at the top to climb and rock back and forth. The tops of the right trees won't break and you are almost upside down while rocking.

We made forts and tree houses, built boats and lay down in that thick, soft green moss that likes to grow at the base of trees in damp earth-scented soil. We loved sledding and, in the Autumn, when the field grass turns brown and lies flat you can take a flattened cardboard box and slide down a hill just as nicely as on snow. One day we saw about eight cowlick-shaped circles in a field, all close together. Dad said that's where deer were lying. Imagining those deer as a child filled me with wonder. Bearing witness to the beauty of nature comes naturally to children who are allowed to explore the outdoors.

I went hunting for deer with dad once. It was winter with four inches of snow on the ground. Black leafless trees, no evergreens and a grey sky surrounded us. The gun was fired. The deer was found lying on her side in the snow, nose tucked into her chest. The contrast of the red of the blood saturating the snow, against the leafless trees, against the dark grey sky made me sadder than I had ever been in my life at ten years old. I never went again. Dad stopped hunting shortly after that. He said he was a fishing man not a hunting man.

I've been thinking a lot lately about our Quaker practice of bearing witness, of the ways we speak truth to power, of the importance of truth. To my way of thinking when we bear witness, we are doing three things: we are bearing witness to the injustice and the ones who suffer because of it. We are also bearing witness for whoever is actively addressing the injustice, the ones on the front line who need our support. AND we are bearing witness for ourselves, to help us stay in right place, so that we don't become numb, apathetic, or just "used to" injustice. Saving the earth and all life therein requires us to bear witness.

When it comes to Stewardship it has been my experience that Indigenous peoples and Quakers share many of the same values and beliefs. The quote by Wampanoag, Ramona/Nosapocket at the beginning of this article strikes to the core of the matter of climate devastation. We are not separate from the land; whatever is in the air and in the water is IN us. The interconnectedness of all living things is an undeniable truth. I would like to think that as we move forward with our faith and practice involving climate crisis, we might consider forming relationships and collaborative projects/practices with local tribes. This teamwork might bear fruit.

While finishing up this article, I realized that my definition of bearing witness to nature is missing something. Something important. Along with speaking truth to power on her behalf, the earth could use the adoration and affirmation of humans simply bearing witness to her beauty.

## ***In Honor of Earth Day's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary***

*Barbara Lambdin*

*Yarmouth Preparative Meeting*

The creation of Earth Day gave voice to an emerging public awareness of the state of our planet. Prior to that leded gasoline, smog, toxic dumps, and DDT were the norm and we were oblivious. Thankfully, Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*<sup>1</sup> and many newsworthy pollution events became the wake-up calls we needed. On that first Earth Day 20 million Americans from coast to coast and from all walks of life (Republican-Democrat, urban-rural, rich-poor, business-labor) rallied to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment. By the end of the year President Nixon had established the Environmental Protection Agency and Congress had passed the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts.

As we enter the 21st century it's time to take another look as Climate Change moves to the top spot on the priority list. The science is clear (and was well established by 1980) that CO<sub>2</sub> and methane trap heat, warm the planet, and acidify the oceans. Core samples from ice show that for millennia CO<sub>2</sub> levels ranged between 170 parts per million to a high of 300 ppm and have averaged 280 ppm. But now things have changed dramatically. Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution the concentration has shot up to 407 ppm, which is stunningly fast. Not only have we been adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, but the increase creates feedback loops that exacerbate and accelerate the warming.

As people of faith, we have a moral responsibility to act. "The earth is the LORD's"<sup>2</sup> and we are called to care for it, not abuse it. If a house is on fire, you don't stand around debating who started it or how bad it will get, you put out the fire. We are also called to care for others: "[You shall] love your neighbor as yourself"<sup>3</sup> and "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these ..., you did it to me."<sup>4</sup>

We know increased temperatures will cause sea level rise. We see it already here on the Cape. But 53% of Americans live near the coast and globally there are 400 million people who live in coastal cities. Countless more are affected by droughts, wildfires, and flooding. That's a lot of people, most of whom are poor... and they are our neighbors.

All this seems pretty grim, and it is, but we have choices. Will we stay comfortably in denial or take a different path? What can one person do?

First- Don't despair!!! Get busy. Do what you can to reduce your own carbon footprint. Individual actions serve as examples and inspiration to others. (Why did we wear mini-skirts in the 60s, bellbottoms in the 70s, and skinny jeans in the 10s?). Learn about the many ways to lower your carbon footprint. A helpful list used by the New England Yearly Meeting can be found at <http://climatecalculator.org/ClimateCalculator.html>. Among the many possibilities: we can drive less,



<sup>1</sup> Carson, R. *Silent Spring*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1962.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 24:1, NRSV.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 22:37, NRSV.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 25:40, NRSV.

hang our clothes out to dry, ditch single use plastic, eat less meat, and get a free energy audit from Cape Light Compact. Learn more about Climate change, fossil fuels, agriculture, plastics, water use, diet, fertilizers, and pollution. There are literally hundreds of books, great movies, and educational events to choose from.<sup>5</sup>

We don't have to solve these problems alone. Join others who are working on this issue, too. Take comfort (and direction) from Archbishop Desmond Tutu's observation that the sea is made up of single drops of water and that each one counts. "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."<sup>6</sup>

Don't be afraid to become an activist. This was so hard for me because I never saw myself that way and actually don't want to be one. But when there is a crisis (and we do have a crisis) we all must step up and do more than we thought we could. Much needs to be done at a national policy level and, unfortunately, our "leaders" are followers. If enough folks make enough noise, they may find it necessary to act.

Honor the earth this Earth Day and every day.



<sup>4</sup> A few I've found useful: Friedman, T. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution—And How It Can Renew America*. New York, NY: [Farrar, Straus and Giroux](#), 2008.

Rich, N. *Losing Earth: A Recent History*. New York, NY: [Farrar, Straus and Giroux](#), 2019. A short version that appeared in the New York Times in August 2019 can be found at <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/08/01/magazine/climate-change-losing-earth.html#main>

An interesting PBS video, *Decoding the Weather Machine*, can be found at <https://www.pbs.org/video/decoding-the-weather-machine-vgqhot/>

<sup>5</sup>See <http://www.tutufoundationusa.org/2015/10/07/10-pieces-of-wisdom-from-desmond-tutu-on-his-birthday/>

## ***Earth Day 2070 -- A Letter from the Future***

*Steve Gates*

Friends, it is a joy to be writing to you about Earth Day, 2070. It's been a long, perilous journey, but this year, for the first time, we are no longer putting additional CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. Net Zero, as they used to say!

As I look out from my floating home on the beautiful blue ocean as a citizen of New Miami, I think about what our tiny planet has gone through to get to Net Zero.



I only have clear records dating back to the time of my great-great-grandfather (after whom I am named), back near the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. But even then, it was obvious something needed to be done about the Global Climate Meltdown, although they had much more benign terms for it then. How could they not have taken decisive action, while it was still possible? I don't understand it. I mourn the world they lost for us.

Admittedly, a few of them in my great-great-grandfather's generation made some well-

intentioned attempts. They did things like using more energy-efficient light bulbs, and those old, clunky rooftop solar panels. But the population of the world, and the consumption of "stuff" grew faster, overwhelming those pitiful efforts.

In my great-grandfather's time, it became more obvious what the problem was. They couldn't even prepare properly for the first of the Great 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pandemics, which killed millions world-wide, and which was upon them in the blink of an eye – so how could they prepare for the Global Climate Meltdown, when it was still thirty-five years ahead of them?

It was only in the time of my grandfather that governments began to seriously consider truly reducing the rise of global greenhouse gases. As you may know, my grandfather led the group that convinced first tiny Norway, then all of Europe, to mandate electric driverless cars, in 2051. And this was, I think, the seminal moment, when Europeans realized these massive changes actually made life better, even though they bankrupted most of the oil companies. Electric planes for long-distance travel quickly became the norm. And as terrible as they were, the second and third of the Great 21<sup>st</sup> Century pandemics had a tiny silver lining, in that populations did not rebuild, and the overall world population began declining rapidly even in times between pandemics. Of course, that decline came in part from the disruption caused by moving 10% of the world population away from the coastal areas most affected by the 2-foot sea-level rise.

So the world was ready for the work of my father's generation, namely to mandate totally renewable energy generation. Fortunately, they came to realize that "renewable" meant not just the energy itself but also the equipment used to generate, transport, and store it. The massive EES's (earth-energy storage systems) of that day became a new Wonder of the World. And my mother was the chief engineer. She

died in the Sinking of Miami, which all of us remember as the time that we finally understood the classic fate of Atlantis.

So the focus of my life, which I have dedicated to the memory of my mother, has been to complete the Third Triad, namely the rebuilding of agriculture and manufacturing, so that they, too, are carbon neutral. But you've lived that story.

And I'm proud of my daughter, who has followed in the family tradition, by building the infrastructure for what I hope will be the last phase, namely the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. That I may not happen in my lifetime, but I am hopeful. Perhaps, maybe even by the end of this century, we will be able to return to the days when CO<sub>2</sub> levels were constant over thousands of years. Who knows what that will mean --- perhaps in another thousand years or so, we can return the oceans to their pre-catastrophe state and boundaries.

That is the dream I have – of my descendants finally being able to return to a time when Miami was actually above water. Who knows? Perhaps then, even democracy and universal equality will triumph!

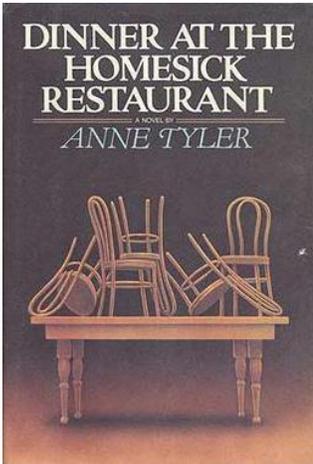
Peace,  
One of your descendants  
New Miami, 2070



## What We're Reading

***Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*** by Anne Tyler

Len Kreidermacher



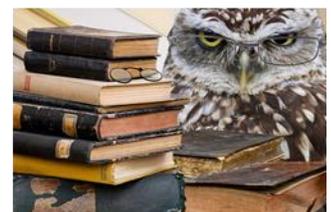
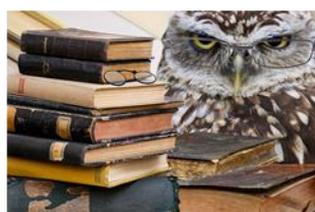
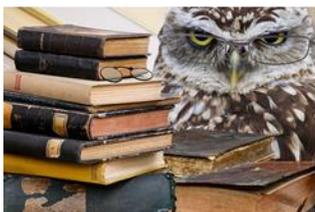
When Sunny and I lived in Cambridge in the '80s and '90s I used to audit evening courses through the Harvard Extension Department. In Modern American Novels, one of the novels we were assigned was *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler. Anne was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1941. Her parents were Quakers and lived in Celo, a Quaker community in North Carolina from 1948 to 1952.

I enjoyed *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* and subsequently read her other twenty-one novels. Her next novel is due out this year. Critics describe Anne's characters as quirky. They remind me of people that I have met, so maybe all of us are quirky at times; or maybe I am. Would you go out to eat at an establishment called the Homesick Restaurant? Or, if you were to open a restaurant, would you call it by that name? I am sure that I would not. So the title of this novel seems to be quirky, too. Her characters are quite likable, even the rascals. Anne says that if she

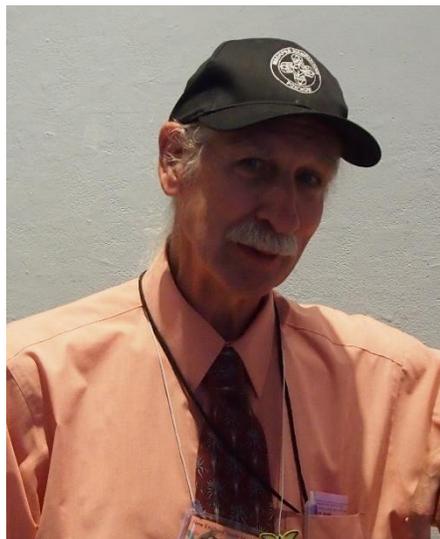
does not like one of her characters, she rewrites the story to leave the character out or make him less of a rascal. I guess we do that too. We rewrite our story to subdue the rascals in our life by changing jobs or getting a divorce or whatever.

Of course, there are situations where it is very difficult to rewrite our story enough to subdue a character who seems to be out of control. However, I find that I can interpret a story in a way that makes it less uncomfortable to me than to some of my friends and family. One way I reinterpret a story with an unsavory character is to imagine I am watching a movie with a lousy actor who is trying to be a comedian and instead is reciting some pathetic lines that someone else wrote for him and his whole mannerism is making the movie worse. I am accustomed to talking to someone later who praises the movie that appalled me. I think that I am one of Anne Tyler's biggest fans. At this stage of my life I am used to sometimes meeting people who have different likes than I do. However, I remind myself that people are sometimes quirky or maybe I am.

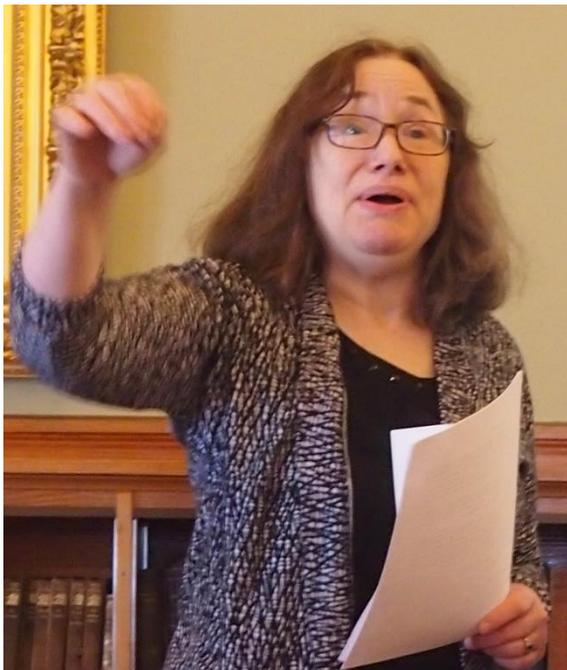
Tyler, A. *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982.



We will meet again ....







## Donations Requested

**Belonging to Each Other** -- Since November, twenty-nine of our local homeless brothers and sisters have been helped. Nineteen now have housing with ten more needing placement before the program closes for the season on April 15. Alan Burt notes that this time of anxiety is particularly hard on the homeless and that agency funding has slowed. Donations are needed. The timeliest way to help at this point is to send checks to East Sandwich Friends Meeting, P. O. Box 198, East Sandwich, MA 02537. Make checks payable to East Sandwich Preparative Meeting, noting A. Burt: *Homeless housing placements* in the memo line. Contact Alan: 508-648-2246; alanburtmail@yahoo.com.



The **Louis Brown Peace Institute** does excellent work in Dorchester especially with families who have experienced homicide. A member of the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, WFPM contributes annually to their cause. The Mother's Day Walk for Peace, their major fundraiser, has been canceled (although their main web site does not yet reflect this). Please consider visiting their web site and making a donation to help support their excellent work. <http://www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org/> Contact: Nan Garrett-Logan.



**Next Gazette Deadline  
Friday, April 24**



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