



# The Go-Back Club

Newsbooklet of the Simple-Living Brigade: #20, April 2015

*This is OUR paper: [www.gobackclub.org](http://www.gobackclub.org)*

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

## Deep in the Amazon, a Tiny Tribe Is Beating Big Oil



Photos by Caroline Bennett

*Nina Gualinga, Sarayaku resident and international activist on indigenous rights, traveling on the Bobonaza River, Sarayaku, Ecuador.*

The people of Sarayaku are a leading force in 21<sup>st</sup> century indigenous resistance, engaging the western world politically, legally and philosophically.

David Goodman, *excerpt*  
YES! Magazine: February 12, 2015

*Author David Goodman traveled to the Amazon to cover the path-breaking activism of indigenous people. "The global fossil fuel industry often appears invincible," David told YES! Magazine. "But what I encountered in the Ecuadorian Amazon*

*stunned me: a small indigenous community that has successfully fought off Big Oil. This tiny village is advancing the idea that nature has rights and that a more harmonious way of living on Earth is possible."*

**P**atricia Gualinga stands serenely as chaos swirls about her. I find this petite woman with striking black and red face paint at the head of the People's Climate March in New York City on September 21, 2014. She is adorned with earrings made of brilliant bird feathers and a thick necklace of yellow and blue beads. She has come here from Sarayaku, a community deep in the heart of the Amazon rainforest in Ecuador.

Behind Gualinga, 400,000 people are in the streets calling for global action to

stop climate change. Beside her, celebrities Leonardo DiCaprio, Sting and Mark Ruffalo prepare to lead the historic march alongside a group of indigenous leaders. Gualinga stands beneath a sign, "Keep the Oil in the Ground." She has traveled across continents and cultures to deliver this message.

"Our ancestors and our spiritual leaders have been talking about climate change for a long time," she tells me in Spanish above the din, flashing a soft smile as photographers crush around the celebrities. She motions to the throngs around her. "We are actually speaking the same language right now."

A year earlier, I traveled to her village in the Ecuadorian Amazon to research the improbable story of a rainforest community of 1,200 Kichwa people that has successfully

**Tiny Tribe** *continued on page 4*



# CompassionSurveyResults

*Last month we invited our compassionate readers who are willing to spend lots of time and energy helping others and/or the environment, how they got that way. Here are our answers:*

## Ekwe Chiwundu Charles Nigeria

I am this kind of person that hates to see people suffer and I get moved easily when I see people in a helpless situation. When I was little I thought I could turn into Superman and transform the world.

I was too young to understand that some people are just born different with less privileges, Sometimes I wish I could stop all the suffering in my country but at a time I knew I could not do it all, I just feel nobody deserves to be malnourished or drink dirty water just to survive. I want to be able to change things, make some kind of difference in my own little way. God willing, I will be able to achieve something soon.

## Gloria DeSousa, Vermont

I think I was born compassionate. From my first memories, I always loved all creatures, from animals to ants. My mother told me stories of

how I defended the animals from my drunken uncle, when we lived on my aunt's farm in Portugal. I was only two to three years old. As I got older, that love extended to trees and all the rest that Earth has to offer. My challenge is to extend that level of compassion to humans and myself.

I kept thinking about your question. I don't think we're all born compassionate. I've heard of babies that are withdrawn from birth and I wonder if psychopaths are born as a psychopath. I think our chemistry is fragile and brains can be altered/damaged easily from either drugs that mothers take during pregnancy or the environment. That's my take on it.

### Iona's ideas:

[from my upcoming book] I'm not sure where my helping heart came from — my childhood asthma and being hospitalized or Mom's MS — but, once I set my mind to it, nursing was the path I followed. Mom had a good heart. In her early years of marriage, she wrote a hymn, "There is a Yearning in my Heart," (on the right) which we sang at her funeral.

[now] I do know that the more read and the more I did for our Earth, the better I felt about my life so I just continued doing more and more.

## There is a Yearning in My Heart

By Margaret Dyer Norris  
(Iona's mother)

There is a yearning in my heart,  
To live a nobler way,  
To love, to give, to have a part,  
In brightening someone's day.  
(chorus) Lord God, I pray,  
Lead me Thy Way.  
Let me find someone to serve today.

There is a hoping in my mind,  
That midst the poor and lone  
Some may a little comfort find,  
I sharing what I own. (chorus)

I have a feeling deep inside,  
That will not let me rest  
'Til we have stayed the growing tide,  
Of our world's dark distress. (chorus)

I have a longing in my soul,  
To serve the ones who need.  
Despairing, they have lost their goal,  
And want a friend to lead. (chorus)

There is a yearning in my heart,  
To live a nobler way,  
With love and joy to do my part,  
To make a better day. (chorus)

## What on Earth is The Go-Back Club? A Simple-Living Brigade.

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



Fair Use Logo

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**Contributors:** Carole Baker, Ekwe Chiwundu Charles, Allen Hengst, Marjorie Palmer Hudson, Pyong Roh, Bob Schmetzer, Judy Weglar-ski and Collin Yeoh

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### What is The Go-Back Club about?

We want to change people's hearts. Our members live simply (or try to) so that our collective carbon footprint grows smaller and

smaller every day. We are working toward a common goal of reducing our individual impacts on climate change to protect future generations and all life.

### Who are we trying to attract?

We hope to reach people who are concerned about global warming and realize that they are part of the problem but don't know what to do. We invite them to join our Club.

### What are we trying to achieve?

Our members are part of the global movement of people who know that global warming is an immediate threat and who want to prevent further harm and even reverse the situation.

We look to others for inspiration.

**People are "like a blind man walking randomly toward a cliff. The only thing that will save him is to go backwards."** Michael Mann (climate scientist and member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), to John and Iona Conner about climate tipping points on a visit to Penn State, where Mann is director of the Earth Systems Science Center

**"Our life is frittered away by detail. Simplify, simplify, simplify! Simplicity of life and elevation of purpose."** Henry David Thoreau

Please send us your stories and photos. We rely on our members' contributions.

# The Grocery Bag and “The Green Thing”

Submitted by Doug Davis (Ohio),  
Carole Baker (Pennsylvania)  
and Joe Daurio (New Jersey)

Checking out at the store, the young cashier suggested to the much older lady that she should bring her own grocery bags, because plastic bags are not good for the environment.

The woman apologized to the young girl and explained, “We didn’t have this ‘green thing’ back in my earlier days.”

The young clerk responded, “That’s our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations.”

The older lady said that she was right — our generation didn’t have the “green thing” in its day. The older lady went on to explain:

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled. But we didn’t have the “green thing” back in our day.

Grocery stores bagged our groceries in brown paper bags that we reused for numerous things. Most memorable besides household garbage bags was the use of brown paper bags as book covers for our school books. This was to ensure that public property (the books provided for our use by the school) was not defaced by our scribbling’s. Then we were able to personalize our books on the brown paper bags. But, too bad we didn’t do the “green thing” back then.

We walked up stairs because we didn’t have an escalator in every store and office



Photo NorthernSun.com

*Reusable cloth bags are popular nowadays but few people bother to use them. This canvas one is available for \$6 from NorthernSun.com.*

building. We walked to the grocery store and didn’t climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks.

But she was right. We didn’t have the “green thing” in our day.

Back then we washed the baby’s diapers because we didn’t have the throw away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy-gobbling machine burning up 220volts. Wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that young lady is right; we didn’t have the “green thing” back in our day.

Back then we had one TV, or radio, in the house — not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not

a screen the size of the state of Montana. In the kitchen we blended and stirred by hand because we didn’t have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn’t fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn’t need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But she’s right; we didn’t have the “green thing” back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blade in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull.

But we didn’t have the “green thing” back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service in the family’s \$45,000 SUV or van, which cost what a whole house did before the “green thing.” We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn’t need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 23,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest burger joint.

But isn’t it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn’t have the “green thing” back then?

Teaching from the International Nature Loving Association

By Mr. Wang Tzu Kwang, Founder and President of INLA

Endowed by the Creator,  
All Lives are Dignified, Supreme and Equally Precious.  
Let’s Create a Path of Survival For Humanity.  
Let’s Open a Fortune Gate for All.



**Tiny Tribe** *continued from page 1*

intent on exploiting their land for profit. How, I wondered, has Sarayaku been winning?

This is not the story most people know from Ecuador. Headlines have focused on northern Ecuador, where Chevron is fighting a landmark \$9.5 billion judgment for dumping millions of gallons of toxic wastewater into rivers and leaving unlined pits of contaminated sludge that poisoned thousands of people.

Sarayaku lies in southern Ecuador, where the government is selling drilling rights to a vast swath of indigenous lands — except for Sarayaku. The community has become a beacon of hope to other indigenous groups and to global climate change activists as it mobilizes to stop a new round of oil exploration.

What I found in Sarayaku was not just a community defending its territory. I encountered a people who believe that their lifestyle, deeply connected to nature, holds promise for humans to save themselves from global warming and extinction. They are fighting back by advancing a counter-capitalist vision called *sumak kawsay* — Kichwa for “living well” — living in harmony with the natural world and insisting that nature has rights deserving of protection.

Naively romantic? Think again: In 2008, Ecuador’s constitution became the first in the world to codify the rights of nature and specifically *sumak kawsay*. Bolivia’s constitution has a similar provision, and rights-of-nature ordinances are now being passed in communities in the United States.

Sarayaku residents describe *sumak kawsay* as “choosing our responsibility to the seventh generation over quarterly earnings, regeneration over economic growth, and the pursuit of well-being and harmony over wealth and financial success.”

The people of Sarayaku are the face of 21st-century indigenous resistance. Sarayaku may be a remote, pastoral community, but it is engaging the Western world politically, legally, and philosophically. Patricia Gualinga and other Sarayaku community members have traveled to Europe to meet with foreign leaders and warn energy company executives about their opposition to oil extraction from their lands, produced their own documentary film about their struggle, filed lawsuits, leveraged their message with international groups such as Amazon Watch and Amnesty International, marched thousands of kilometers in public protest, and testified at the United Nations. Sarayaku’s resistance has angered the pro-development Ecuadorian government — which bizarrely hails *sumak kawsay*



*Sabino Gualinga, traditional healer and community elder.*

while selling hotly contested oil drilling leases — but has inspired other indigenous communities across the globe.

### Defending Life and Land

I climb aboard a four-seater Cessna parked at a small airstrip in the town of Shell, a rambling settlement on the edge of the Amazon rainforest in southeastern Ecuador. The town is named for Shell Oil Company, which established operations here a half century ago.

Our plane flies low over the thick green jungle. The dense growth below is broken only by rivers the color of chocolate milk, the sinewy arteries of the rainforest.

The forest canopy parts to reveal a grass airstrip and clusters of thatched huts. This is Sarayaku. Moist jungle air envelops me as I step out of the plane. The villagers escort me and my daughter, Ariel, who has been living in Ecuador and is translating for me, past a large communal hut where a woman tends a small fire. Gerardo Gualinga, Patricia’s brother and one of the community leaders, arrives dressed in jeans, a T-shirt and knee-high rubber boots, the signature footwear of the rainforest. He carries a tall, carved wooden staff, a symbol of his authority.

“The community is in the middle of a three-day meeting to plan our political and development work for the next year. Come along — I think you will find it interesting,” he says, motioning for us to follow him down to the edge of the Bobonaza River.

We board a motorized canoe and head upstream, passing slender dugouts propelled

by men pushing long poles. In 10 minutes, we clamber out on the river bank and hike up to a sandy village square.

Inside an oval building with a thatched roof, we find José Gualinga, another of Patricia’s brothers, who was then president of Sarayaku. He is holding his ceremonial staff and wearing a black headband and a Che Guevara T-shirt. Gualinga is leading a discussion of how the community should pressure the Ecuadorian government to comply with the judgment of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights, which ruled in 2012 that the Ecuadorian government should have obtained the consent of the native people when it permitted oil drilling on Sarayaku’s territory. Following hearings in Costa Rica, the court ordered the government to apologize and pay Sarayaku \$1.25 million, plus attorney’s fees.

The court decision, declared Mario Melo, attorney for Sarayaku from the Quito-based Fundación Pachamama, is “a significant contribution to a more profound safeguard of indigenous peoples’ rights and it is an example of dignity that will surely inspire many other nations and peoples around the world.”

At a lunch break, Marlon Santi, Sarayaku’s president until 2008, explains the history of the struggle here.

In the early 2000s, “The government let oil businesses exploit and explore for oil in this territory. There was no consultation. Many communities sold out to the oil companies.

**Tiny Tribe** *continued from previous page*

Sarayaku was the only pueblo that didn't sell the right for oil companies to explore."

Ecuador's government ignored the community's refusal to sell oil-drilling rights and signed a contract in 1996 with the Argentinian oil company C.G.C. to explore for oil in Sarayaku. In 2003, C.G.C. petroleros — oil workers and private security guards — and Ecuadorian soldiers came by helicopter to lay explosives and dig test wells.

Sarayaku mobilized. "We stopped the schools and our own work and dedicated ourselves to the struggle for six months," says Santi. As the oil workers cleared a large area of forest — which was community farmland—the citizens of Sarayaku retreated deep into the jungle, where they established emergency camps and plotted their resistance.

"In the six months of struggle, there was torture, rape and strong suffering of our people, especially our mothers and children," Santi recounts. "We returned with psychological illness. All the military who came ..." He pauses to compose himself. "This was a very, very bad time."

In their jungle camps, the Sarayaku leaders hatched a plan. The women of the community prepared a strong batch of chicha, the traditional Ecuadorian homebrew made from fermented cassava. One night, a group of them traveled stealthily through the jungle, shadowed by men of the village. The women emerged at the main encampment of the petroleros. They offered their chicha and watched as the oil workers happily partied.

As their drinking binge ended, the petroleros fell asleep. When they awoke, what they saw sobered them: They were staring into the muzzles of their own automatic weapons. Wielding the guns were the women and men of Sarayaku.

The Sarayaku residents ordered the petroleros off their ancestral land. The terrified workers called in helicopters and fled, abandoning their weapons. The oil workers never returned. An Ecuadorian general came later and negotiated with community leaders — five of whom had been arrested and beaten — for the return of the weapons.

I ask Santi why Sarayaku has resisted. His tan, weathered face breaks into a gentle smile even as he recounts a difficult story.

"Our fathers told us that for future generations not to suffer, we needed to struggle for our territory and our liberty. So we wouldn't be slaves of the new kind of colonization.

"The waterfall, the insects, the animals, the jungle gives us life," he tells me. "Because



*Patricia Gualinga, a community leader who has traveled the world speaking out in defense of indigenous rights, at her home in Sarayaku, Ecuador.*

man and the jungle have a relationship. For the Western capitalist world, the jungle is simply for exploiting resources and ending all this. The indigenous pueblos without jungle — we can't live."

Sarayaku now wants to help indigenous people around the world resist and defend their way of life. "Our message that we are also taking to Asia, Africa, Brazil, and other countries that are discussing climate change, we propose an alternative development — the development of life. This is our economy for living — *sumak kawsay* — not just for us but for the Western world. They don't have to be afraid of global warming if they support the life of the jungle.

"It's not a big thing," he says understatedly. "It's just to continue living."

### Indigenous Climate Change Warriors

The Sarayaku story is just the latest in a long-running battle over Ecuador's natural resources. Oil extraction began in northern Ecuador in 1964 when the American oil giant Texaco set up drilling operations in indigenous lands (Chevron later purchased Texaco). When the oil company exited in 1992, it "left behind the worst oil-related environmental disaster on the planet," according to Amazon Watch, a nonprofit organization that defends indigenous rights. The devastated and poisoned region is known as the "Rainforest Chernobyl."

Despite pursuing Chevron for damages, the Ecuadorian government of President Rafael Correa has embarked on an aggressive new round of oil development in southern Ecuador, opening thousands of acres to exploration. The government has

cracked down on resisters, recently ordering the closure of the Quito headquarters of CONAIE, Ecuador's national indigenous organization, attempting to stop Ecuadorian activists opposed to oil drilling from attending a U.N. climate summit in Peru and closing Fundación Pachamama, an NGO supporting indigenous groups. Most of Sarayaku's land has been excluded in the new round of oil drilling, though nearby communities, including those of the neighboring Sápara people, are threatened. Sarayaku is joining the protests of its neighbors.

José Gualinga says these struggles have bigger implications. "We are doing this to stop carbon emissions and global warming. This struggle of indigenous pueblos is a doorway to saving Pachamama [Mother Earth]."

Women have been at the center of the indigenous resistance. Patricia Gualinga tells me, "The women have been very steadfast and strong in saying we are not negotiating about this. We are the ones who have mobilized for life." She recounts how, in 2013, 100 women from seven different indigenous groups marched 250 kilometers (155 miles) from their jungle communities to Quito, where they addressed the National Assembly. In the 1990s, Patricia's mother embarked on a similar march with thousands of other indigenous women.

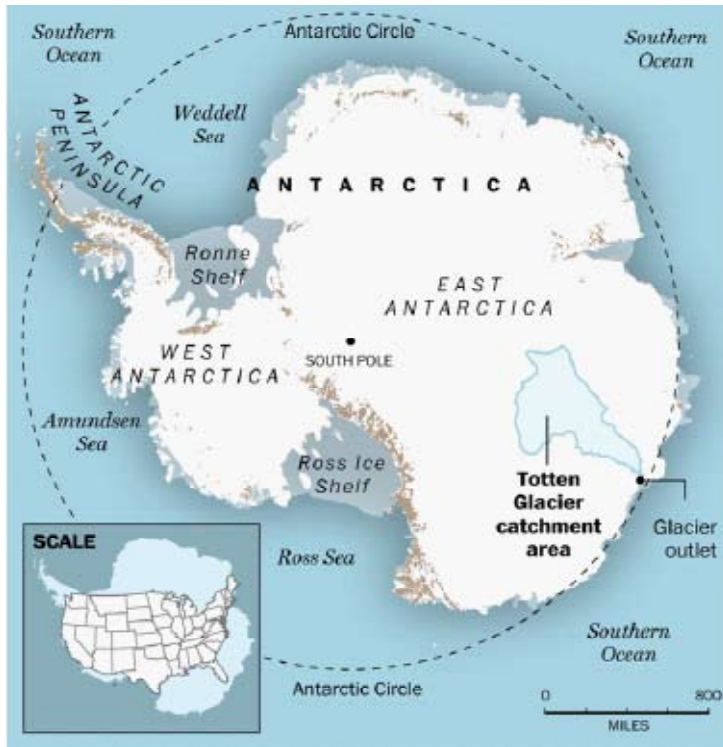
Sarayaku community members travel widely around Ecuador and beyond, but most return to their pastoral village.

"We want to continue living a good life within the forest," Patricia tells me. "We want to be respected, and we want to be a model that could be replicated. ..."




# News Briefs Submitted by Our Members

## Melting of Antarctica Just Got Worse



Submitted by John Conner, Pennsylvania

By Chris Mooney,  excerpt  
*Washington Post*: March 16, 2015  
Graphic from *Nature Geoscience*

A hundred years from now, humans may remember 2014 as the year that we first learned that we may have irreversibly destabilized the great ice sheet of West Antarctica and thus set in motion more than 10 feet of sea level rise.

Meanwhile, 2015 could be the year of the double whammy — when we learned the same about one gigantic glacier of East Antarctica, which could set in motion roughly the same amount all over again. Northern Hemisphere residents and Americans in particular should take note — when the bottom of the world loses vast amounts of ice, those of us living closer to its top get more sea level rise than the rest of the planet, thanks to the law of gravity.

The findings about East Antarctica emerge from a new paper just out in *Nature Geoscience* by an international team of scientists representing the United States, Britain, France and Australia. They flew a number of research flights over the Totten Glacier of East Antarctica — the fastest-thinning sector of the world's largest ice sheet — and took a variety of measurements to try to figure out the reasons behind its retreat. And the news wasn't good: It appears that Totten, too, is losing ice because warm ocean water is getting underneath it. ...

The following articles submitted  
by Allen Hengst, Washington, D.C.

### *Miami Herald*: 'Climate change' — There, We Said It!

Editorial, *Miami Herald*: March 12, 2015, excerpt

**F**lorida Governor Rick Scott has denied — and his office continues to deny — that there is an official policy banning state employees from using the terms “climate change” and “global warming” in state documents. But days after the news broke, additional current and former staffers say it's true that the terms were discouraged from use ... The controversy began Sunday when a story by Tristram Korten, of the Florida Center for Investigative Reporting, disclosed that employees of the Department of Environmental Protection have long had orders not to mention the terms “in any official information” ... Climate change's reality is rejected by many conservative politicians, among them Gov. Scott, who during his first campaign for office in 2010 said he was not convinced that there was climate change. In 2014, when asked again about his stance, he replied, glibly,

that he was not a scientist ... Glaciers and massive sheets of ice around the world are melting. It's happening in the Himalayas, it's happening in Alaska and the Andes, it's even occurring on Mount Kilimanjaro, in Tanzania — the tropics. During the past century, ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica have lost mass. One of the most noticeable results? Sea-level rise, which is lapping up on South Florida's own doorstep ... Mr. Scott can call it “Mother Earth's little hot flash,” if he wants. But it's irresponsible to force his ideological blinders onto how Florida responds to what is so obvious. Denial is strong but those rising seas are stronger. ....

<http://www.miamiherald.com/opinion/editorials/article13935395.html>

### North Carolina Fines Duke Energy \$25 Million for Coal Ash Contamination

By Bruce Henderson, excerpt  
*Charlotte Observer*: March 11, 2015

The state-record \$25 million fine North Carolina's environmental agency filed Tuesday penalized Duke Energy for years of

groundwater contamination. Ash elements found in test wells around the Sutton power plant in Wilmington had broken state standards for as many as five years, state documents say ... The fine is the state's largest for environmental damage, quadrupling the \$5.7 million levied as part of a 1986 air-quality case ... Advocates in Wilmington said the fine does little to protect the Flemington neighborhood. Contaminated groundwater from Sutton is moving toward its community wells. “Until the state actually forces Duke to clean up the mess that people are sitting in right next to that plant, \$25 million doesn't mean anything to them,” Cape Fear Riverkeeper Kemp Burdette said. Under the coal ash law adopted last year, Duke is probing deeper into the tainted groundwater that has been found at all 14 of its North Carolina coal plants ... DENR is also pursuing civil violations of the federal Clean Water Act, for illegal leaks from ash ponds, with the Environmental Protection Agency. Duke agreed last month to a \$102 million settlement of federal criminal charges over its ash practices. ....

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/article13207667.html> I am writing about the Iberian Lynx, in Spain. It's sad how many species have been reduced in By

## News Briefs Submitted by Our Members

Bill Boteler, Washington, D.C.

I am writing about the Iberian Lynx, in Spain. It's sad how many species have been reduced in their numbers in our lifetimes — this one by 80% from the 1960s to the 1980s and 80% again up to now. We alter our world too much. To stop a mass extinction we really need to set aside the remaining “natural lands” and not use them in ways that stress the remaining animals (and plants) and we need to restore some of the places we have ruined to. If we keep up the consumption of resources as usual we will wipe out most of the wild species in 50 or 100 years.

Here is something I just wrote. It felt good to write it.

### Iberian Lynx is Back in Town

According to the World Wildlife Fund the rare and critically endangered Iberian Lynx, a male named Kentaro to be exact, has shown up in the vicinity of Madrid, Spain after a 40 year absence. Kentaro was released from a captive breeding program into the wilds of Toledo and apparently wandered 60 miles to Madrid while being tracked by his radio collar. Ramón Pérez de Ayala, head of the WWF-backed LIFE-Iberlynce recovery program says that “He is not going to meet any females this way”.<sup>1</sup>



Photo from [www.arkive.org](http://www.arkive.org)

*The Iberian Lynx is the world's most threatened species of cat is the Iberian lynx*

The Iberian Lynx is the most endangered species of big cat on the planet. While other big cat's are in trouble, the Iberian Lynx could be the first unique species of big cat to face extinction in 2000 years. The Iberian Lynx declined in population by 80% between 1960 and the 1980s and then another 80% since the 1980s. while it may exist in small numbers in other areas of Spain and Portugal, only two small breeding populations are known to exist — both in Southern Spain. The total number of these populations is estimated at 84 to 143 adults.

What brought about the rapid decline in the Iberian Lynx was probably a combination of it's diet, almost totally dependent on the European Rabbit, and its preference for the Maquis scrub forests as a habitat. Agricultural and urban

development and have altered the Lynx's habitat and eliminated or fragmented the Mediterranean scrub forests. To learn more about this unique and important ecosystem which is home to many other species read: <http://www.arkive.org/eco-regions/mediterranean-basin/image-H144>.

Also, the European Rabbit, the main prey of the Lynx have been done in by a couple of diseases — myxomatosis and Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease (RHD).

To save the Iberian Lynx conservationists have engaged the public to change attitudes towards it. Spain has created a captive breeding program to increase the numbers of species and Portugal has a plan to reintroduce Lynxes. It is thought that the Iberian Lynx still survives in Portugal but in small populations that may not be breeding. As with all endangered species, low population numbers bring the danger that individuals will not meet and breed. Other measures planned include the preservation of remaining Lynx habitat and rebuilding populations of the European Rabbit.

While the Iberian Lynx is still very endangered, an action plan is in place. And hopefully Kentaro will find a mate.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/spain/11467501/Iberian-lynx-returns-to-Madrid-after-40years.html>

<sup>2</sup><http://articles.latimes.com/2013/jul/22/science/la-sci-sn-lynx-extinction-climate-change-20130722>

### Gore Says Climate-Change Deniers Should Pay Political Price

By John Carpenter

Chicago Tribune: March 13, 2015

AUSTIN, Texas — Former Vice President Al Gore on Friday called on SXSW attendees to punish climate-change deniers, saying politicians should pay a price for rejecting “accepted science.” Gore said smart investors are moving away from companies tied to fossil fuels and toward companies investing in alternative energy. “We need to put a price on carbon to accelerate these market trends,” Gore said, referring to a proposed federal cap-and-trade system that would penalize companies that exceeded their carbon-emission limits. “And in order to do that, we need to put a price on denial in politics” ... Gore, who has made climate change an overriding theme since he lost to George W. Bush in the 2000 presidential election, made no mention of his political future ... He said he hoped his third SXSW

appearance would help promote the fight against climate change and to help put pressure on those who say it's not a problem. “We have this denial industry cranked up constantly,” Gore said. “In addition to 99 percent of the scientists and all the professional scientific organizations, now Mother Nature is weighing in.” He led a presentation on major weather events that he said could be attributed to human activity. He linked troubles in the Middle East at least partially to climate change, saying that drought drove more than a million Syrian refugees into cities already crowded with refugees from the Iraq war.

### Hope for Monarch Butterfly After Mexican Logging Halted

By Imogene Mathers, excerpt

Positive News: March 5, 2015

When millions of monarch butterflies take to the sky and fly thousands of kilometres from the United States and southern

Canada to Mexico, the view is breathtaking. But over the last few decades, their numbers have plummeted, and last year hit an all-time low.

Illegal logging in Mexican forests, where the monarchs hibernate during winter, has traditionally been to blame. But large-scale logging by companies appears to have been halted. And now small-scale logging by local people for firewood and timber — a “growing concern in 2013” — has also stopped, according to a study published in October in Biological Conservation.

This is partly due to “decade-long financial support from Mexican and international philanthropists and businesses to create local alternative income generation and employment,” it says. Schemes such as community tree nurseries, the growing ecotourism sector and community surveillance of illegal logging have generated new sources of income for local people.







Photos by Dan Coyro, Santa Cruz Sentinel

*Ruby is a 117-square-foot trailer-mounted "tiny home" Ronzano began building at age 16 in her Westside backyard. Last week, Ruby figuratively rolled off into the sunset, on its way to Austin, Texas. The house will provide shelter to a homeless person or family in a budding-supportive housing community there.*

## Woman Builds Tiny House for Homeless

By Jessica A. York  
Santa Cruz Sentinel: February 17, 2015

After a complicated, arduous three-and-a-half-year relationship, "Ruby" feels like a family member to Kendall Ronzano.

Ruby is a 117-square-foot trailer-mounted "tiny home" Ronzano began building at age 16 in her Westside backyard. Last week, Ruby figuratively rolled off into the sunset, on its way to Austin, Texas. The house will provide shelter to a homeless person or family in a budding-supportive housing community there.

"Preferably, I wanted a place in Santa Cruz," Ronzano said of plans to donate her tiny home. "Because I love the amount of support for our community, it's been amazing. Even just the local industries.

"But, as soon as I found this organization, it really kind of appealed to me is I was watching Alan Graham's videos, just his views and concepts, and he's been working for the past 10 years on creating this plan," Ronzano said. "One of the things that I've admired is they just have it together on that

portion."

The lessons Ronzano learned along the way, in addition to the practical skills needed to build a home single-handedly, were about community support and gender prejudices inherent in her chosen future career field of design in mechanical engineering.

Ronzano created her own web site and construction blog, dubbed her effort Nerd Girl Homes blog, and solicited public donations of cash in materials amounting to nearly \$16,000 from more than 200 people. Now a 20-year-old Dartmouth College sophomore, Ronzano said she has felt better equipped to progress professionally.

"It definitely taught me some lessons along the way. Something about keeping with it, getting back on the horse as fast as you can," Ronzano said inside her recently finished project. "I received some emails along the way from people who thought I didn't have the right intention. I was kind of surprised, like, 'You don't even know me.' They thought that I was just trying to take people's money, to build it for myself."

The scaled-down pine-wood home, complete with porch and loft, consists of a

living room, dining area, kitchen, bathroom, and two sleeping areas. The house has its own electrical and plumbing systems, and propane boat heater. In building it and dealing with some friends' and neighbors skepticisms about the ability of a 16-year-old girl to build a home from scratch, family friend Victor "Chip" Bogaard III, president of Santa Cruz-based Bogard Construction, said that although he has always known that Ronzano is "a big thinker and is not afraid of anything," he was somewhat surprised at her undertaking nearly four years ago.

"In terms of employer and general contractor, the fact that she took this on to do herself because she was curious is great," Bogaard said. "If I see a resume that comes in my office and everything else is equal, that would stand out in my mind. Not even just for construction; for any field. (The house) is amazing. It's great. It looks just like it should."

Last week, Ronzano saw her plan through to near completion, as volunteers from the Austin-based Mobile Loaves and Fishes arrived in Santa Cruz to drive Ruby across

**Woman** continued on next page



Woman *continued from page 8*

the country to join the 27-acre homeless Community First! Village. The housing project will allow the home to be used at the site into perpetuity, even if its future family outgrows it, Ronzano said. The Community First! plan also provides supportive services for its residents, who are expected to work and pay rent, and has funding and oversight, Ronzano said. She said she first heard about the initiative through public referrals on her blog.

The impetus behind Ronzano's project was to donate the completed and self-contained house to a homeless person or family in great need. Ronzano, the daughter of a contractor, said she has had a lifelong interest in figuring out how things work and compassion for homeless people she saw daily in her commute to York School in Monterey. Combining the two interests, Ronzano launched a project that would require more than 800 hours of her time, and which would choose to not apply toward high school community service requirements.

As the days were counting down on Ronzano's time with her tiny house, Community First! organizers asked her what she wanted to have on the dedication plaque that will reside in front of the home in Texas. Ronzano said she decided to name it Ruby, in honor of her grandmother Dorothy, "my biggest supporter and fan," who died in 2013.

"My grandma always told me to remember that no matter what I did or where I went, there really is no place like home and, just like Dorothy in the "Wizard of Oz," I should just click my ruby slippers," Ronzano said. "I wanted to name it Ruby as a token of good luck for it."

Ronzano plans to travel to Austin later this month to make sure that Ruby made the trip safely and to see where it will permanently reside.

Reprinted with permission  
from The Santa Cruz Sentinel



*Kendall Ronzano, 20, started building a mini-home when she was 16. She's now at Dartmouth and, last week, saw her house (named "Ruby") head to Austin, Texas, donated to an organization that houses the homeless.*

## GBC Member Urges Us to UNPLUG

By Bill Boteler, Washington, D.C.

I know you started The Go-Back Club because you decided the pace of modern life is crazy. It's hard because a lot of interesting stuff is on the Internet. For some of us, it is a library and a portal to activism all in one. It can be an escape from the dullness of our overscheduled, overworked lives or a thing to fill up emptiness. It can also suck away your life.

There are hundreds of emails in my Inbox I can never read. I apply for a job and suddenly there are hundreds of jobs in my Inbox that I could never have time to apply for (or even want to apply for). I get on a dating site and suddenly there are hundreds of people to look at in my Inbox. This is NOT NORMAL. This is overwhelm. The

old days were normal.

I want to see a movement to abandon email and social media as the center of life and get people back in face to face activities or real activities like gardening or bird watching or painting or something. It's hard since I think we also have to be activists and the internet is full of activist stuff.

But an over-full email Inbox is just a symptom of imbalance. A full life is not imbalanced and burdensome.

**Editor's Reply:** Bill — THIS IS FABULOUS! This is exactly what we need to be doing in getting ourselves out of the electronic mess and flood of emails. I loved my email sabbatical but today, I have way too many emails still in my Inbox. Imagine the life of a newspaper publisher

groping for news and receiving more than she can ever, ever put in. That's me. Thanks so much for this brilliant thinking.

**More from Bill:** I think it's like a traffic jam proving that cars are not efficient. Technology has unintended consequences like poisoning birds to make apples perfect. The principle is at work everywhere. Elites push technology then the world grapples with the fallout. People who doubt technology are called backward but with time they may be proven right. The whole world is addicted.

**Editor:** I'm addicted; to counteract that I'm turning off my computer now. Care to join me?

# Courageous Activists Tell Their Story— The Burglary: The Discovery of J. Edgar Hoover's Secret FBI

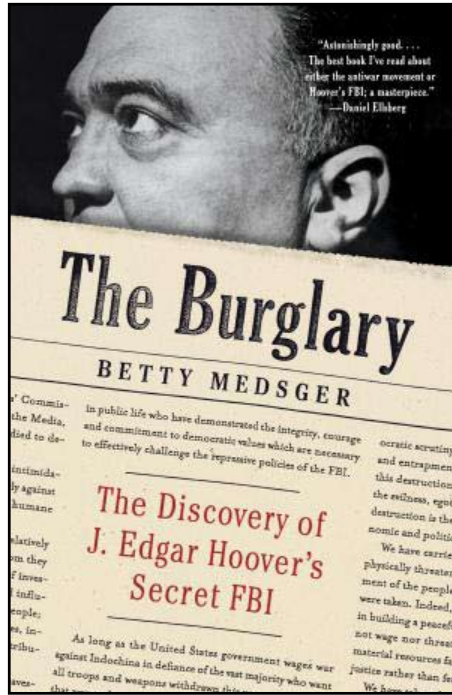
*From the book jacket:* “In late 1970, a mild-mannered Haverford College physics professor privately asked a few people this question: ‘What do you think of burglarizing an FBI office?’ In remarkable detail and with stunning depth of research, Betty Medsger reveals the never-before-told story of the history-changing break-in at the Media, Pennsylvania FBI offices. Through their exploits, a group of unlikely activists exposed the shocking truth that J. Edgar Hoover was operating a shadow Bureau engaged in illegal surveillance and harassment of the American people.

“The Burglary brings the Media burglars, who had kept their secret for 43 years, into the public eye for the first time — including, new to this edition, the recent discovery of the eighth and final member of the team. The burglars’ story of personal sacrifice and civil disobedience is a vital episode in the American whistle-blower tradition that includes the Pentagon Papers, Watergate’s Deep Throat and, most recently, Edward Snowden and the NSA.”

*Excerpt from The Burglary:* (pages 475 to 478) Statement by and about one of the burglar’s, Bonnie Raines

Just as John’s (her husband’s) experience in the South had informed him about the depth of inequality that existed in the United States, Bonnie’s experiences as a young teacher in East Harlem provided her with similar lessons. That was her first close exposure to profound inequality. In one class she taught there were 44 children, most of whom could not speak English. She continued to believe a dedicated teacher could make the difference students needed but she realized the public school system put up barriers to successful teaching. Each new experience — as a student, as a new teacher in city schools, as a politically aware person — strengthened her resolve to become an activist. She was confronted repeatedly with evidence of injustice and inequality that made her react: “This just can’t go on. People have to stand up. I was angry at the abuse of power — in the South, in the education system, in the war policies.”

She thought carefully about how to weave together diverse roles — how to be a student, a new teacher, a new mother and a committed political activist. Very happy personally, she found she was otherwise



angry and idealistic at the same time, two qualities that continued to be demanding and constructive forces throughout a life that has been dedicated to improving the lives of children.

In the absence of choices, she concluded she would have to create them in order to invent the life she wanted. She discovered that doing so often was difficult and lonely. She was acutely aware in those early-1960s days of the warning that was repeatedly announced, including in her own head. “Women don’t do that.” She decided that before she could commit herself to taking part in acts of resistance to fight injustice, she needed to establish in her own life the foundation that would make it possible for her to be the fully engaged woman she was determined to become — personally, professionally and politically. That meant going “against my socialization.”

“My first act of resistance,” Bonnie recalls, “was to pull it all together before there was a women’s movement, a feminist movement.” She revolted with a determination to come out of the other side “sure that I didn’t have to feel there was something wrong with me. I was stubborn and I decided at some point in the early ‘60s, I was going to advance this life.”

As part of that effort, she concluded she “could not just be involved in liberating myself and making sure that my daughters

were going to have more opportunity and choice.” She wanted to have the courage to take risks “for something larger than just my own self-actualization and my daughter’s self-actualization.”

IN THOSE EARLY YEARS of their marriage in New York, the Raines talked with each other often about how both of them could be good parents and also engage in resistance together. Contemplating how to be that kind of couple was no less difficult — perhaps even more so — than figuring out how Bonnie could be the kind of woman she wanted to be. Their goal of dual activism posed profound practical and moral questions. Most of the people they met in movements, first in civil rights and later in the antiwar movement, were single. “They were living an ascetic lifestyle and feeling free to take risks. That was so different from our situation,” she said. “We talked a lot about the tendency when you marry and have children to feel a certain level of comfort and sense that you will work your way through the rest of your life like that,” in a protective family shell. They were concerned about the fact that, soon after people had children, it was assumed they should exit from the parts of civic life that needed the most commitment. This meant that as far as activism was concerned, a sizable part of the population was essentially on hold until they became middle-aged or older, if not forever.

The absence of engagement by parents during the child-rearing years, they thought, had a heavy impact on society. They concluded, said Bonnie Raines, that “each generation seems to have its own version of tyranny and needs to know how to resist it. We thought that just because we had children didn’t mean that we were exempt from the responsibility of our generation to address these things. ... There was a real temptation to let other people, say, religious people, take care of those things. It was a temptation to say, ‘let them carry the banner for the rest of us. We’ll applaud them and bail them out of jail when they are arrested, but we’ll not engage in the same activities.’ We thought about that a lot. We thought it would be a cop-out.”

It was then, in those New York years, that the Raines made the promise to each other that made it possible for them to say “Yes” to William Davidson’s December 1970 question about burglarizing an FBI office. After much

**Burglary** continued on next page



## 500-Year-Old Tree Saved by Tree-Sitter

By John Weekes, NZME. News Service  
Otago Daily Times: March 12, 2015, *excerpt*

The man who spent four days up a kauri tree to save it from destruction is elated after developers pledged to keep the tree.

But protesters have promised to take their campaign to Parliament, with the country's environmental laws in their sights this evening.

Save our Kauri spokeswoman Aprilanne Bonar said Michael Tavares was not worried after being charged today with trespassing and summoned to appear in court next month.

"He's great. He's resting," Ms. Bonar said this evening. "He's elated and really optimistic for our future here."

Mr. Tavares scaled the kauri in Titirangi,

West Auckland, on Monday. Others gathered on the ground at the Paturoa Road property to protest the proposed felling of the kauri and a nearby nikau. An upbeat Mr. Tavares came down to cheers after property owners John Lenihan and Jane Greensmith issued an open letter today. The letter included a promise to keep the kauri and a nearby old rimu tree but also said compromise was needed, so other trees might be felled.

"What's clear is that the kauri and rimu will stay," she said. "It symbolizes the need



for more dialogue in decision-making." Ms Bonar understood an "elated" Mr. Tavares was already thinking about the next cause worth fighting for.

More than 26,000 people signed an online petition to save the kauri. ...

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### Burglary *continued from previous page*

reflection in that New York apartment nearly a decade before his question, they promised each other that when injustice reached extreme levels, they hoped both of them, not just John, would be willing to risk their freedom to fight injustice. It was extremely difficult to make this promise, for their children were at the center of their lives. But so was their love of justice and their belief that ALL citizens should take responsibility for opposing injustice in times of crisis. They forced themselves to face a painful challenge that few people contemplated — joint resistance.

After John Raines completed his doctoral studies at Union Seminary in 1966, the Raineses moved to Philadelphia, where he became a tenure-track professor in the new Department of Religion at Temple University, where he still teaches part-time after retiring in December 2011. It was an exciting academic environment that suited him well, unique in the diversity of its faculty and courses: Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and, a few years after he arrived, Muslim studies. Within little more than a year after he started teaching at Temple, Raines created one of the first courses offered in the United States on the Holocaust. Later he would be instrumental in the department's adding the study of Islam. It became a favorite place for Muslim graduate students from predominantly Muslim countries to study comparative religions and then encourage universities in their home countries to offer comparative religion studies instead of only the study of Islam.

Soon after they moved to Philadelphia, the Raineses were drawn to the large antiwar community there. Before long their home in the Germantown section of the city was

a gathering place for antiwar activists who, over casual dinners prepared by Bonnie, discussed how to end the war in Vietnam. Bonnie's role as Earth Mother expanded. Often nearly everyone else talked strategy while she cooked big meals for them. She loved this environment, but sometimes a depressing thought gnawed at the edges of her soul: "You know you really aren't as good as they are."

Though the Raineses found it difficult not to feel hopeless as the war continued, they also were still essentially optimistic people. That was part of why they had become activists. They believed that active dissent could cause change. But after 1968, they had lost much of their optimism. Increasingly, confidence in the federal government was replaced by alienation. For them and many other people, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, more than anyone, symbolized the loss of hope in the government. In 1964, as a senator, he had been crucial in the development and successful passage of the Civil Rights Act, which outlawed racial discrimination in public facilities. But as the war in Vietnam continued, Humphrey tumbled precipitously from being a source of hope among liberals to being a source of despair and anger. In a forceful private memo to President Johnson in February 1964, he had strongly opposed the war but, his opinion coldly rejected by Johnson, Humphrey soon publicly reversed his position, condemned people who opposed the war and openly speculated, as Johnson did — despite contrary evidence — that antiwar protests were supported by money from foreign governments.

Like William Davidon, the Raineses felt hope was becoming scarce. Like him

they also were looking for more powerful nonviolent ways to protest the war. Their path into more serious resistance was very similar to Davidon's. One of John's graduate students — Sister Sarah Fahy, a nun who was the daughter of Judge Charles Fahy, a senior judge then on the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. — introduced them to people in the Catholic peace movement. The Raineses found their optimism renewed, as Davidon did, by the Catholic resisters. John remembers being impressed by the fact that the Catholic peace movement resisters were "angry but they also were optimistic and hopeful." The Raineses — whose protest and resistance grew originally out of a "deep liking for the country rather than a deep hatred of the country" — came to feel they shared common ground with the Catholic activists. "They wanted to do something that would have effect, not just cause havoc," says John. "They wanted to do things that would have real consequences."

The Raineses joined about two dozen people organized by the Catholic peace activists in a draft board raid in North Philadelphia in February 1970. Less than a year later, they accepted Davidon's invitation to consider burglarizing the Media FBI office. In doing so, they did indeed do something that had real consequences for the country." ...

**Editor's Note:** I loved this book! Now there is a movie about it called "1971." *The New York Times Book Review* says, "Impeccably researched, elegantly presented, engaging ... For those seeking a particularly egregious example of what can happen when secrecy gets out of hand, *The Burglary* is a natural place to begin."

# Letters and Emails from our Members



[Email #1]

**Dear Iona,**

Yes, I know that Congress didn't ratify it [Kyoto Protocol], but we did say we were going to sign it at the least which means, we have to contribute to some point and; Neither did congress, say no or repeal that or say they were not going to ratify it. Short of like being a member of something but never actually doing anything or saying your official member or saying your part of it but never officially being part of it. Once you have signed to something you can not ignore not ratifying it or ratifying it. Also once you sign it (and not Ratify it) it's sort of a free trial. But like a free trial it runs out and sooner or later, Congress is going to have to Ratify it or not Ratify it. Or will not be a signatory. Also during it being signed but waiting to be ratified. They have to agree to it.

I'm not sure how to explain it, obviously. Just look at the signatories of Antarctic Treaty Organization. By the way Signatory is treated as a Ratification if they are signed or ratified. Specially the big Oil companies. Most Oil Companies go internationally. If they cross borders into countries that have signed and Ratified it.

Leading Companies based in other countries: BP=UK; Total SA=France; Shell=Netherlands; ExxonMobil; Chevron; ConocoPhillips; Shell

By the way the story about Harry Potter fans, chocolates, child labor. I'm glad, they were stopped — very glad! But I'm also glad that I haven't seen or heard of them, because then that means I haven't eaten any of them and that probably means they aren't that big of a company.

[Email #2]

I found some curious Info. Exxon Mobile works in the arctic. In Russia, Norway, Alaska, Canada. Russia, Norway have signed it and Ratified it. So we could get in those places. What happened in Canada was they signed it and ratified it. Then they repealed their ratification. But it is the same as the U.S. so we can get them their too.

Here is something weird. Apparently people kill Monkeys for food. But Monkeys have a lot of diseases including, Ebola. I don't understand why anyone would kill a monkey.

*Brendan Wissinger, Pennsylvania*

**Dear Iona, sister in the Universe,**

I gave a presentation to a group of professors and researchers at Gyeongju. The subject? Life-style chronic diseases and preventive measures. I talked a lot about plant-based foods and the benefits of plant-based diets. Their response was very positive. And you know what? The American government announced that cholesterol levels are not related to heart diseases. A Korean newspaper quoted the American nutrition guidelines. They make people confused. Shame! The letter you got from China is a wonderful greeting. You are so popular and you got a letter from northern China. The translation is as follows:

*How are you, Ms. Iona? You are a great educator. You know how to love people and nature. When we give love to others, the love comes back to us. I wish for you and your husband all the happiness and joy that life can bring. Happy lunar new year!*

I am sad to hear that the forests in

Indonesia are destroyed. I have a plan to visit Indonesia this year some time. What a wonderful work! You are a born activist. You are so sweet and soft but your voice is heard all over the world. Laoze said, "Soft wins Tough." When a strong wind blows the trees bend but they do not surrender to the wind. Let us continue our holy mission for the only Earth.

*Pyong Roh, brother in the Universe, Korea*

**Hi Iona,**

Thank you for your commitment and beautiful work...!

*Mare Cromwell, Maryland*

**Hello, Iona.**

Good work you're doing! I'm working on anti-fracking in Maryland anti TPP, need to do something positive.....

*Sylvia Diss, Maryland*

(after sending GBC Activists an alert Dancing the World into Being: A Conversation with Idle No More's Leanne Simpson YES! Magazine: In December 2012, the Indigenous protests known as Idle No More exploded onto the Canadian political scene, with huge round dances taking place in shopping malls, busy intersections, and public spaces across North America, as well as solidarity actions as far away as New Zealand and Gaza.

**Dear Iona,**

Thank you, Iona. Excellent item! I am sending this to all the activists that I can think of — and one is in Northern California. We have a major national park — Gros Morne — that would be threatened by roads and fracking.

*Sandy Chilcote, Newfoundland, Canada*

## Poetry by Sandy Chilcote, Newfoundland, Canada

goldfinches and purple finches  
flipping and tipping  
in the black cherry tree  
the first petals of spring --  
gold and purple feathers  
mixed with dreams of cherry blossoms

