



The Go-Back Club

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

These are OUR stories: www.gobackclub.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

away from the sounds of sonar.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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.*

Founder/Editor: Iona Conner

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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. Please tell your family and friends about us. They can go to www.gobackclub.org to see what we do.

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 Inter-governmental 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.

Fair Use Law: <http://copyright.gov/fair-use/>

Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses—such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship and research—as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use. Section 107 calls for consideration of the following four factors in evaluating a question of fair use:

(1) Purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes: Courts look at how the party claiming fair use is using the copyrighted work and are more likely to find that nonprofit educational and noncommercial uses are fair. This does not mean, however, that all nonprofit education and noncommercial uses are fair and all commercial uses are not fair; instead, courts will balance the purpose and character of the use against the other factors below. Additionally, "transformative" uses are more likely to be considered fair. Transformative uses are those that add something new, with a further purpose or different character, and do not substi-

tute for the original use of the work.

(2) Nature of the copyrighted work: This factor analyzes the degree to which the work that was used relates to copyright's purpose of encouraging creative expression. Thus, using a more creative or imaginative work (such as a novel, movie or song) is less likely to support a claim of a fair use than using a factual work (such as a technical article or news item). In addition, use of an unpublished work is less likely to be considered fair.

(3) Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole: Under this factor, courts look at both the quantity and quality of the copyrighted material that was used. If the use includes a large portion of the copyrighted work, fair use is less likely to be found; if the use employs only a small amount of copyrighted material, fair use is more likely. That said, some courts have found use of an entire work to be fair under certain circumstances. And in other contexts, using even a small amount of a copyrighted work was determined not to be fair because the selection was an important part—or the "heart"—of the work.

(4) Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work: Here, courts review whether, and to

what extent, the unlicensed use harms the existing or future market for the copyright owner's original work. In assessing this factor, courts consider whether the use is hurting the current market for the original work (for example, by displacing sales of the original) and/or whether the use could cause substantial harm if it were to become widespread.

In addition to the above, other factors may also be considered by a court in weighing a fair use question, depending upon the circumstances. Courts evaluate fair use claims on a case-by-case basis and the outcome of any given case depends on a fact-specific inquiry. This means that there is no formula to ensure that a predetermined percentage or amount of a work—or specific number of words, lines, pages, copies—may be used without permission.

Please note that the Copyright Office is unable to provide specific legal advice to individual members of the public about questions of fair use. See 37 C.F.R. 201.2(a)(3).



Fair Use Logo

Milk Basket NGO/GBC Partnership

A Plea and a Plan to End Poverty

By Ekwe Chiwundu Charles, Nigeria

Young children are creative and curious creatures. The future of education requires us to tap into this curiosity to inspire the next generation of problem solvers, collaborators, and critical thinkers.

And we know the first 1,000 days of a child's education are the most important. How can primary and secondary schools prepare the next generation of problem solvers, collaborators, and critical thinkers—especially in communities where no one cares? Researchers have found that poverty can harm the brains of small children. Children from low-income families had a brain surface area on average 6 percent smaller than that of children in high-income families. Jack Shonkoff, from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, says neuroscience shows us the opportunity where we can make a big difference for poor children.

What can we do to change the cycle of poverty? A wide body of research shows teaching poor parents to stimulate their children can have significant, long-term impact on the kids' earning power.

We can't solve the rich-poor gap with school. We have to solve it with family.

For children everywhere, education is the best hope for breaking free from poverty. Yet even school supplies are hard to come by for the millions of children whose families struggle to eat and live in underdeveloped communities in Nigeria.

The time has come to challenge poverty to a fight to the finish. Enough of the harassment, intimidation, and fear! You have a score to settle with lack, poverty, and want, and it is a war that you will win! This requires using the right weapons to prosecute it, so permit me to share what you can use to eliminate poverty.

If there's one war you must wage in order to live a good life, it's the war against



Children in the oil-rich Niger Delta area of Nigeria suffer from severe poverty. The Milk Basket/GBC partnership is helping them. Will you help, too? (Photo: Ekwe Chiwundu Charles)

poverty. We need to create long-term solutions to overcome poverty and hunger that are science backed. We all have to help people grow their own food and help make farming profitable in interior communities. This can be achieved by providing better farming technologies and techniques, affordable processing equipment, better linkages to markets to sell the products, helping build new agribusinesses, and more. Special emphasis should be given to women in the programs to build job options and to empower them in decision making. Livelihood options for the youth are also important to ensure long-term growth.

This is a time of difficult and dangerous conditions. You should not be seduced into struggling, striving, or seeking solutions through aggressive action. Success is met only by waiting modestly for the guidance of the Creative.

This is why we have to start changing the way children think about education by helping them get comfortable in the school

environment.

Help could be in the form of educational materials and extra moral classes, it could be art and drama classes to help kids learn new things every day. These programs will improve the child's thinking about his/her country, therefore bringing an everlasting end to the militancy in Nigeria.

Please check the beautiful Milk Basket website to learn more about Ekwe's work: <http://milkbasketng.com/> or contact him directly at support@milkbasketng.com or 011-234-81600-29731 in Nigeria. We are looking for partners, sponsors, volunteers, and donors. You will see that these children's needs are great but the supplies are minimal. Any donation, large or small, will go a long way in helping these young people become good citizens.

ENOUGH OF THIS INJUSTICE

WWW.NIGERDELTA AVENGERS.ORG

Since the day crude oil was discovered in commercial quantity and quality in Oloibiri (present-day Bayelsa state), what we have been asking from successive governments in Nigeria is portable drinking water in the midst of plenty of water mass, electricity, roads, employment, quality education/

educational facilities, resource control, participation in the oil business, and inclusive governance that will engender substantial freedom.

The reserve have been the case, from Oloibiri, Brass LNLG and export terminals in Bayelsa; Bonny LNLG and export terminals in River State; ExxonMobil in Akwa Ibom; Escravos EGTL/Tankfarm and

export terminals; Forcados Tankfarm and export terminals in Delta State operated respectively by Anglo-Dutch Shell, Chevron/Texaco Overseas, Agip ENI, ExxonMobil.


The history of the communal lives is terror, poverty, inhumanity, and desolate living conditions. But when you move into

Injustice continued on page 10

Arctic Sea Ice Crashes to Record Low for June

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

From mid-June onwards, ice cover disappeared at an average rate of 29,000 miles a day, about 70% faster than the typical rate of ice loss, NSIDC says.

By Suzanne Goldenberg@suzyji 
The Guardian: July 7, 2016

The summer sea ice cover over the Arctic raced towards oblivion in June, crashing through previous records to reach a new all-time low.

The Arctic sea ice extent was a staggering 260,000 square kilometers (100,000 square miles) below the previous record for June, set in 2010. And it was 1.36 million square kilometers (525,000 square miles) below the 1981-2010 long-term average, according to the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC).

That means a vast expanse of ice—an area about twice the size of Texas—has vanished over the past 30 years, and the rate of that retreat has accelerated.

Aside from March, each month in 2016 has set a grim new low for sea ice cover, after a record warm winter.

January and February obliterated global temperature records, setting up conditions for the further retreat of the Arctic summer ice cover, scientists have warned.

Researchers did not go so far as to predict a new low for the entire 2016 season. But they said the ice pack over the Beaufort Sea was studded with newer, thinner ice, which is more vulnerable to melting. Ice cover along the Alaska coast was very thin, less than 0.5 meters (1.6 feet).

The loss of the reflective white ice cover in the polar regions exposes more of the absorptive dark ocean to solar heat, causing the water to warm up. This goes on to raise air temperatures and melt more ice—reinforcing the warming trend.

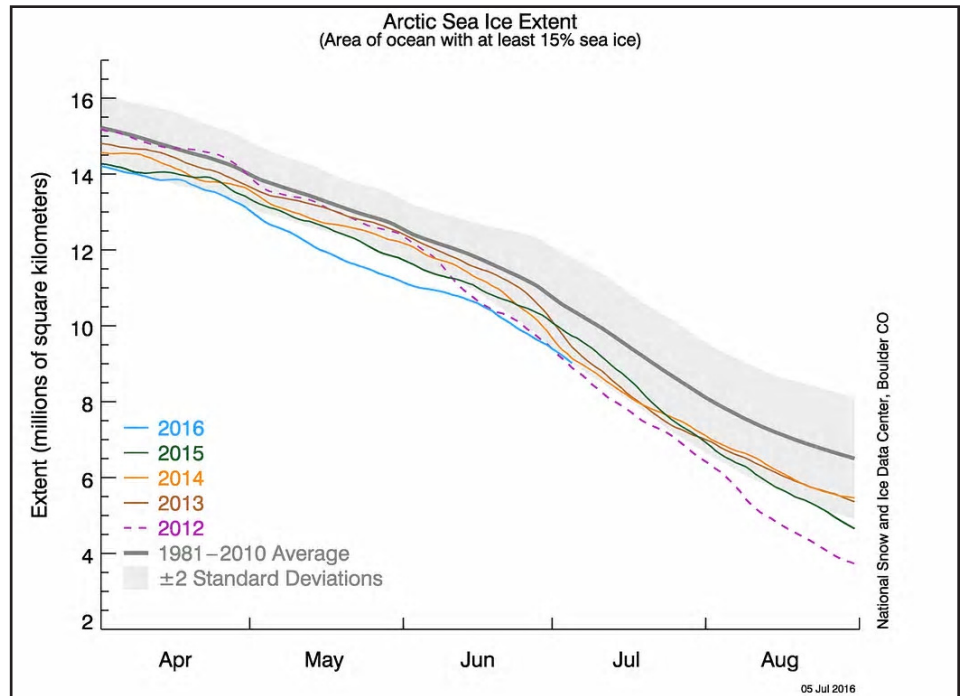
Scientists have warned the extra heat is the equivalent of 20 years of carbon emissions.

Arctic sea ice fell to record low for May.

This year could be the worst ever for melt as data shows average sea ice extent for last



An area of Arctic sea ice about twice the size of Texas has vanished over the last 30 years, and the rate of that retreat has accelerated. (Photo: NASA/Reuters)



A graph of the Arctic sea ice extent. (Photo: National Snow and Ice Data Center)

month was more than half a million square kilometres (310,500 square miles) smaller than the previous record of May 2012.

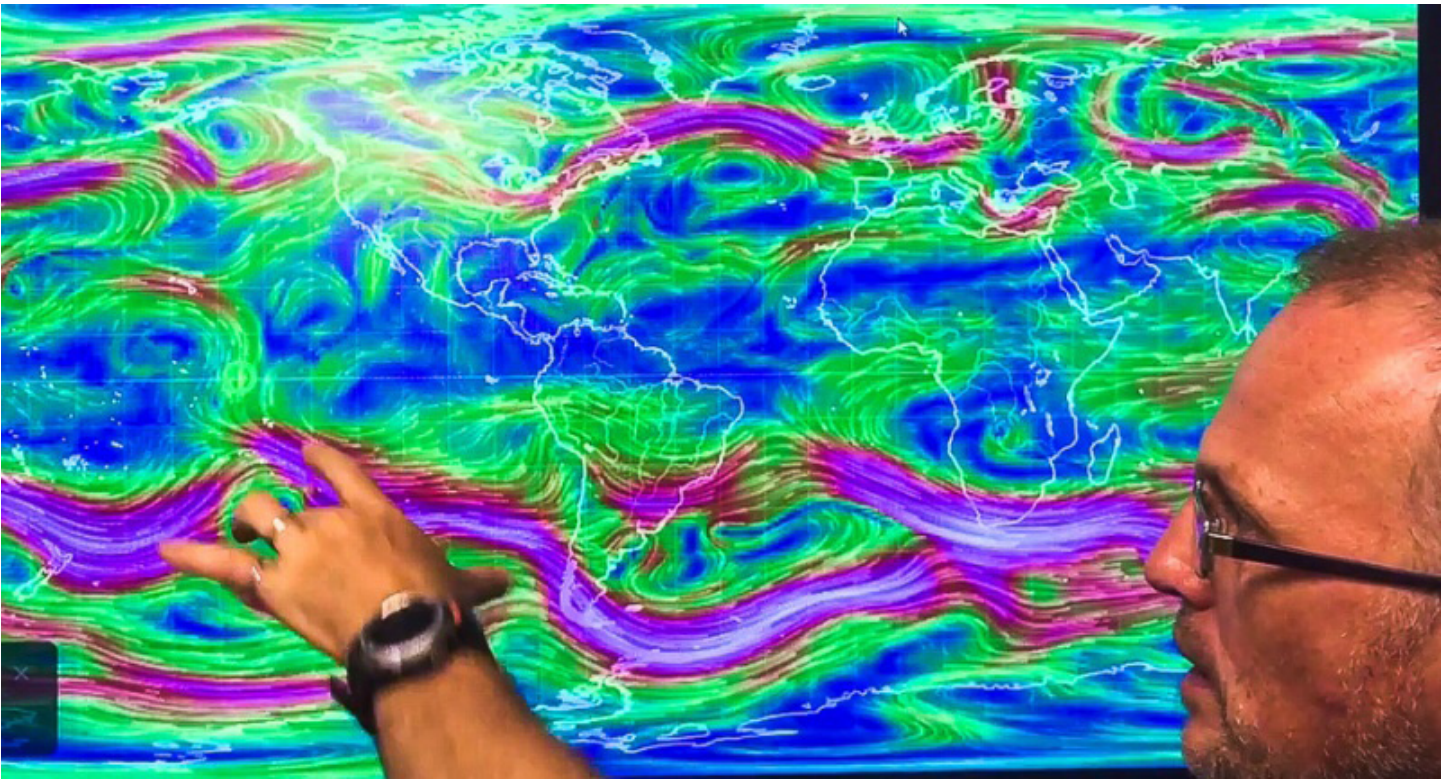
Sea ice loss in the first half of the month proceeded at a lower pace, only 37,000 square kilometers (14,000 square miles) a day.

The overall Arctic sea ice cover during June averaged 10.60 million square kilometers (4.09 million square miles), the

lowest in the satellite record for the month, according to the NSIDC.

There was more open water than average in the Kara and Barents seas as well as in the Beaufort Sea, despite below average temperatures, the NSIDC said.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/jul/07/arctic-sea-ice-crashes-to-record-low-for-june>



Unprecedented Scientists Declare ‘Global Climate Emergency’ as Jet Stream Crosses Equator

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By David Edwards, *excerpt*
Raw Story: June 29, 2016

Climate scientists this week expressed alarm after “unprecedented” data showed the Northern Hemisphere Jet Stream crossing the Equator. In a column on Tuesday, environmental blogger, Robert Scribblor, noted that the Northern Hemisphere Jet Stream had merged with the Southern Hemisphere Jet Stream. “It’s the very picture of weather weirding due to climate change. Something

that would absolutely not happen in a normal world,” he wrote . . .

Scribblor explained: “Historically, the Tropics—which produce the tallest and thickest air mass in the world—have served as a mostly impenetrable barrier to upper level winds moving from one Hemisphere to another. But as the Poles have warmed due to human-forced climate change, the hemispherical Jet Streams have moved out of the Middle Latitudes more and more” . . .

Scribblor continued, “You get this weather-destabilizing and extreme weather generating mixing of seasons that is all part of a very difficult to deal with ‘Death of

Winter’ type scenario.”

University of Ottawa climate scientist, Paul Beckwith, called the new behavior “unprecedented” . . .

Beckwith observed: “Welcome to climate chaos. We must declare a global climate emergency.” In a YouTube video, Beckwith said that the Jet Stream behavior signaled “massive hits to the food supply” and “massive geopolitical unrest.”

Watch Scribblor's YouTube at: <http://www.rawstory.com/2016/06/unprecedented-scientists-declare-global-climate-emergency-after-jet-stream-crosses-equator>.



Consumer Liberation

Use it up, wear it out
Make it do or do without.

Go-Back Club Members in Action

“Deadly Pigs” – GBC CAFO Activist Sends Letter to Editor

By Marty Hann
McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania

Currently there is a conflict between local citizens and Big Agriculture Corporations over the invasion of Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) into our communities. At the heart of the conflict are the questions, Exactly what are these animal factories? and, Do they benefit the local community?

These CAFOs confine thousands of animals in a small area to generate corporate profit. They are not family farms. On a family farm, the family raises crops and livestock on their land and uses the waste to fertilize their own farm. The family farmer takes great pride in being self sufficient. They do not impose a burden on their neighbors or community to support their business.

These concentrated animal factories are not self sufficient. These corporate animal factories do depend on using the community's resources to generate profits for the corporate home office. They use huge amounts of water, which affects neighbors' wells. They generate so much waste that they must distribute millions of gallons of sewage throughout the community. They must import feed for their livestock. The reason they import instead of buying local grain is they have special ingredients in their feed. One such ingredient used by CAFOs is antibiotics. They do not feed the livestock antibiotics because they are sick, they feed them antibiotics to help the animals grow bigger and faster, thus increasing profit.

Is there a hidden cost to the community caused by these practices? We all know that Big Tobacco for decades denied that smoking caused cancer; Big Oil claimed that deep-water drilling was completely safe in the Gulf of Mexico; and in 2008 Wall Street was telling the public that their junk bonds were safe.

Does Big Agriculture have a dirty little secret? Maybe history can give us an answer.

When the Europeans settled the New World, Native Americans who had contact with the settlers became sick. The settlers, who were mostly poor, exposed the natives to diseases that did not exist in the New World. The natives' bodies could not fight the sicknesses because their immune systems were never exposed to them. Whole villages died after contact with Europeans.

How did this happen? The Europeans came from a system where fewer than 1% of the population controlled most of the wealth, the monarch system—Kings and Lords. In this system, the peasants were living in very poor conditions. They were living with their animals in direct contact with them 24 hours a day. With that direct contact, they traded bacteria and viruses with their livestock. After generations of doing this, their immune systems developed defenses to a lot of them.

Native Americans lived in a community where they hunted and gathered and shared the resources available to them. They had no livestock (or ownership of creatures), so their immune systems were not exposed to the dirty and dangerous contagions that the Europeans were exposed to.

Then in 1918, a pandemic sickness arrived killing between 20 and 100 million people worldwide. Pigs were getting sick and dying also. This epidemic was the first time the medical community realized that pigs and humans share some sicknesses. This swine flu was designated H1N1. Most of the theories of the root cause of this pandemic deal with the soldiers of WWI living close to pigs. The world learned that sick pigs and humans should isolate themselves when catching the flu.

From 1918 thru 1976 there was no major outbreak. Our pork was raised by principled and devoted, true family farmers. The farmers would isolate themselves and their pigs if anyone was sick. With CAFOs, you have people in contact with thousands of pigs 24 hours a day, and no way of isolation until after a major outbreak is detected.

In the early 1970s Big AG started building CAFOs. Guess what? In 1977 and 1978 another H1N1 outbreak (the Russian Flu) arose with an unknown number of casualties. This was the point of no return.

Let me quote Wikipedia “The mid-1970s were important for the evolution of flu strains. First, the re-emergence of the human H1N1 strain became a seasonal strain. Then, a small outbreak of swine H1N1 occurred in humans, and finally, the human H2N2 strain apparently became extinct. Around 1979, the avian H1N1 strain infected pigs and gave rise to Euroasiatic swine flu and H1N1 Euroasiatic swine virus, which is still being transmitted in swine populations.”

The flu became seasonal. In 2009 and 2010 another H1N1 outbreak occurred, killing

Pigs continued on next page



Pigs are Prone to Plotting, and in More Ways They're Just Like Us

New Scientific White Paper Concludes that Pigs Are Behaviorally, Cognitively, and Emotionally Complex Individuals

NEW YORK, New York (July 12, 2016)—According to a new white paper released today by Farm Sanctuary's The Someone Project, pigs prepare for the future, perform as well or better than dogs on some tests of behavioral and cognitive sophistication, and compare favorably to dogs and chimpanzees, a beloved companion animal species and humans' closest genetic relatives, on many other tasks.

The paper, *Thinking Pigs: Cognition, Emotion, and Personality—An Exploration of the Cognitive Complexity of *Sus Domesticus*, The Domestic Pig*, written by neuroscientist Dr. Lori Marino and Emory University Prof. Christina M. Colvin, reviews pigs' full range of abilities by detailing dozens of studies and extrapolating from those results to determine what we do and do not know about pigs. The areas examined by the article include cognition, emotion, self-awareness, personality, and social complexity . . .

<http://www.farmsanctuary.org/media/2016-press-releases/pigs-are-prone-to-plotting-and-more-ways-theyre-just-like-us/>

Introducing Climate Vegan

Submitted by Len Frenkel, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania with this note: All the environmental reasons for being vegan.

Climate Vegan promotes an individual and general transition to a plant-based, vegan way of life as good in itself and an essential strategy to save our climate. Go to <http://www.climatevegan.org/>

Mission Statement: Climate Vegan's mission is to raise awareness that the most impactful way to combat the climate crisis (the biggest threat to our planet) is to adopt a vegan, whole-foods, plant-based lifestyle.

Global warming is the greatest threat to life on Earth. Earth is heading for catastrophic climate change without radical shifts in human behavior. Already, some tipping points are being crossed.

Animal agriculture is responsible for at least 14% of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions, more than the exhaust fumes from all transportation combined, according to conservative estimates by the Food and Agriculture Organization. World Bank experts Robert Goodland and Jeff Anhang have estimated animal agriculture is responsible for 51% of greenhouse gas emissions using a full life-cycle analysis . . .

Politicians are shackled by the interests of big corporate donors who benefit from inertia. The public needs to mobilize and organize around this issue, attain mass media coverage, and force political leaders to take action . . .



Pigs continued from previous page

between 105,700 and 395,600 humans.

Nice history lesson, but you may ask, "What's happening today?"

Well let me tell you. NBC News reported, "A drug-resistant 'superbug' that doctors have been dreading has shown up in the U.S. for the first time. The mutant E. coli germ MCR-1 was found in a Pennsylvania woman with symptoms of a urinary tract infection, but it does not appear to be spreading at epidemic proportions. Scientists fear an E. coli bacteria with the MCR-1 gene could pass it to another superbug with other mutations—creating a truly super-superbug that resists all known antibiotics."

The Health And Human Services Department said scientists had also found the MCR-1 mutation in a sample from a pig. "Out of 949 animal samples screened so far, one strain of colistin-resistant E. coli was found in a pig intestinal sample."

Now, how do these "Superbugs" develop? I will let the *Central Penn Business Journal* answer that. "Outside the halls of medicine, the MCR-1 issue could reverberate through

the world of agriculture. Colistin largely fell out of favor for human use because of its high toxicity. But as *National Geographic* reports, it found widespread use in some countries as an antibiotic for farm animals, especially in China. Holy Spirit's DeLone said it's time "to re-evaluate the widespread use of antibiotics in livestock and other food animals."

Though a 'last resort' for humans, antibiotics are in "widespread" use in Big Ag, weakening their effectiveness to treat humans.

Now the question is, "What can we do to protect ourselves?"

Here is the *Journal's* answer: "The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Pennsylvania Department of Health officials say that many standard anti-infection precautions apply—washing hands, avoiding contact with fecal matter, and ensuring food is properly cooked."

How do you avoid contact with fecal matter when the CAFO's spread millions of gallons of fecal matter throughout our

communities?

What does the CDC say about pigs?

Nancy Cox, head of the influenza division at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has said, "Pigs have been termed 'the mixing vessel of flu' because they can be infected both by avian flu viruses, which rarely directly infect people, and by human viruses. When pigs become simultaneously infected with more than one virus, the viruses can swap genes, producing new variants which can pass to humans and sometimes spread amongst them. Unlike the situation with birds and humans, we have a situation with pigs and humans where there's a two-way street of exchange of viruses. With pigs it's very much a two-way street."

Here in Pennsylvania, the peasants are living with pigs and the natives are getting sick. George Santayana is known to be the originator of the quote: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

If you have any questions, please contact Marty Hann at martyhann@comcast.net.

GBC Member Travels to Small, Clean, Green Places

We can make our environment clean and green and we can live a simple life rather than a luxurious one.

By Pyong Ui Roh: Daegu, Korea

I had a great experience in my long trip to northern Europe. I am not interested in man-made things as you know. But I will describe my trip all together. I left Incheon International Airport on June 24th for Moscow, Russia. The time difference is five hours.

We arrived at Moscow in the evening. The suburbs of Moscow have good forests. Most of them are birch trees, whose skins are white. We went to the downtown of Moscow by bus and the traffic was a nightmare. The roads are packed by cars and trucks.

The following morning we went to Red Square, which is a great plaza. It is said that the military honor guard perform military parades on national holidays. There is a department store, which is very huge, but the gate guards check the customers' bags at the gate. There is a military memorial site and the statue of Marshall Zhukov stands over there. The Marshall is mounted on a horse. He is the hero of World War II.

We went to the Kremlin, which means 'red walls.' The buildings are surrounded by red walls. The office of the President of Russia, located in a building, and Lenin's tomb are in the Kremlin. Many people lined up to get into the tomb. There are many cathedrals in the Kremlin for former royal families. On the streets there are many statues of the emperor and famous people such as Lenin and Yuri Gagarin, an astronaut who went to space. A river is running in the middle of the city and it became a canal for people and goods.

We came to Moscow International Airport to catch a flight for St. Petersburg. The traffic was very slow, too. We went to St. Petersburg and stayed at a hotel close to the summer palace of the emperors. We walked to the palace in the morning. This palace reminded me of Versailles in Paris, France.

Peter the great went to Western European countries to learn advanced culture, science, and technology. When he came back to Russia he tried to modernize the backward Russia, and he built a city on the reclaimed marsh at Petersburg. There are many islands in this city and they are connected by canals and bridges. A big river is running in the middle of this city. The summer palace has

a huge garden and there are many beautiful trees and plants. Many gold-plated statues stand on the platform of the palace. And there is a small canal connected to the sea. The water fountains are beautiful.

The winter palace is located in the downtown area and Queen Catherine collected many masterpieces of fine arts.

Now it is a museum. It is one of the most famous museums in the world. There are many rooms in this palace and some rooms are gold plated. I could feel the agony of the ordinary people to build this beautiful palace. It is said that many laborers died because of hard work and heat produced in the rooms.

There are many cathedrals for the former royal families. And the buildings are beautiful. This city was preplanned and the heights of the buildings were regulated by law at that time. In the evening, I went to a traditional Russian folk dance and music. I tasted real Russian folk music. The following morning we went to the border area to go to Finland by a chartered bus.

Part II

I crossed the borders of Russia and Finland. We took a highway heading to Helsinki. There are many trees along the highway. Finland is a small country, and its territory is about 338,000 square kilometers (210,000 square miles) and its population is about 5.3 million. But their GDP per capita is \$50,000. Their social welfare system is one of the best in the world. And forest covers about 70 percent of the territory. There are many lakes (180,000) and islands (30,000). The water is clean and clear.

Helsinki is the capital city of Finland and it is well organized and green and clean. There are bicycle roads for cyclists. The traffic is



The Little Mermaid: Copenhagen, Denmark (Photo copenhagenet.dk)

not heavy. The markets are not big like shopping malls but they are clean and neat. The Sibelius part is marvelous. Sibelius was a great composer in Finland and a big, pipe-organ monument is standing in the park. It is said, "Small is beautiful." Finland is a small country but the quality of life seems to be superb. I moved to Turku, a town at the tip of Finland, to take a ship for Stockholm, Sweden. The highway is winding and well maintained. There are many trees along the highways.

In the evening, I took a big boat for Stockholm, the capital city of Sweden. The ship is really huge and it has many cabins for passengers. A cabin has two beds and they are cozy. I spent a night on the ship but I could not feel any movement of the ship because the sea is not an open ocean. In the morning I landed in Stockholm.

I went to the Nobel Committee building in the downtown, where the committee members select the Nobel laureates. I went to city hall, where the Nobel Prize winners have dinner with dignitaries. Nobel established the Nobel Foundation after he made a fortune by inventing stable dynamite. Nobel prizes for chemistry, physics, medicine, and economics are awarded in Sweden, but the prize for peace is awarded in Oslo, Norway. Nobel asked his committee members to give the peace award in Oslo, Norway. But nobody knows why he did so. I went to the royal palace. The honor guard cavalry

Travel continued on next page

Travel *continued from previous page*

performed a military parade for the change of guards. They were marvelous.

Stockholm is the Venice of Sweden. There are many islands and they are connected by bridges and canals. Street cars are running on the streets and there are many bicycle roads. Cyclists have priority to walkers on the cycle roads. The cars are small and the pedestrians are relaxed and they do not hurry. This is a real slow city. Vasa Museum is an interesting place. The warship Vasa was built in 1628, and sailed out in the same year, but it sank not far from the harbor. It was found in 1961 and hauled to the harbor. They made a museum for the warship. I was impressed by the size of the warship. Vikings were good in shipbuilding and navigation but this warship is very gigantic.

There are many lakes in Sweden and the water is clean and clear. Fifty percent of the territory is covered with forest. Their GDP per capita is very high and the social welfare system is one of the best in the world. Of course they pay higher taxes while they are working. By the same token, the population of Sweden is less than 10 million, but their high-tech industries, shipbuilding, and paper mills are very strong.

We moved down to the tip of southern Sweden to catch a car ferry going to Denmark. The strait is very narrow and I could see Denmark from the harbor with my bare eyes. We arrived at Copenhagen. I went to the mermaid princess statue park. She is sitting on a rock at the edge of the harbor. Many people came over there to see here from every corner of the world.

I went to the parliament building. There is a bicycle parking lot in front of the building. It is said that the members of parliament use bicycles for commuting. The building is small and humble. I saw an electricity station for cars. Many small cars got electric energy by electric wire. Street cars were running on the streets and the street light bulbs were hanging in the air because of strong winds. Interesting.

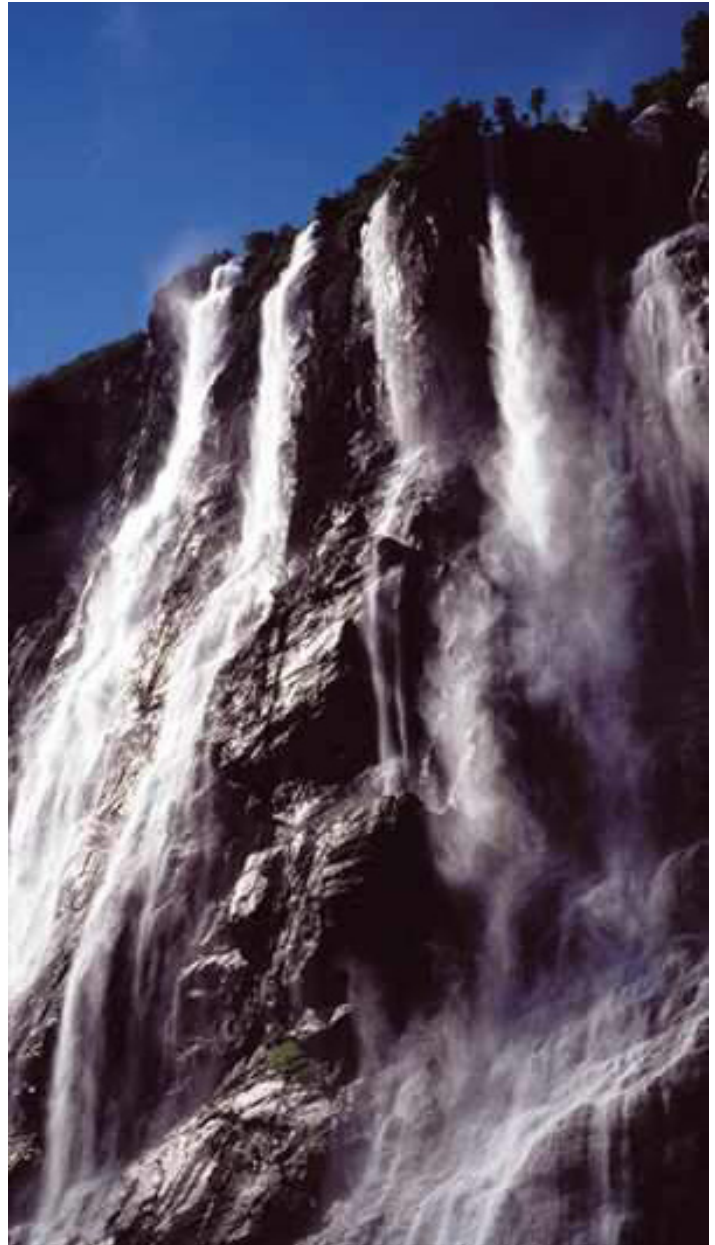
Copenhagen University is famous and it produced 14 Nobel laureates. Denmark is a small country and its population is around five million but they are strong in pharmaceutical products, high tech, and dairy products. Many people—women, men, and students use bicycles rather than cars. The streets are clean and green. And the pedestrians are not in a hurry. Another slow city. We moved to the harbor to ride a boat going to Oslo in the evening. We slept on the ship, which is huge. The cabins are cozy and comfortable. I did not feel any movement of the ship while sailing. In the morning we arrived at Oslo harbor.

Part III

Norway is a relatively newborn country, and Oslo is the capital city. It became an independent country in 1905 from Sweden. It is situated between 52-57 parallel and the territory is 350,000 square kilometers (271,350 square miles). Only three percent of the land is arable. Most of the country is mountains. But it is the second richest country in the world after Luxembourg. Of course the social welfare system is one of the best in the world. The major industries are petroleum, forestry, fishing, and high techs.

After we landed at Oslo, we moved to the mountainous areas. The road is narrow and winding. There are many lakes and rivers and the water is crystal clean and clear. There are small houses on the hills and at the foot of mountains. The roofs of the houses are not steep because the snow is not wet snow in winter time. And the houses have grass on the roofs. The people put soil on the roofs and grass grows on them. They keep the houses warm by protecting the houses by soil and grass on the roofs.

We drove to the valley areas and there are patches of snow on the



Seven Sisters Waterfall, Norway. (Photo: www.visitnorway.com)

tops of the mountains. There are many cascades and big waterfalls from the cliffs of big mountains. There are no industrial complexes in this valley. The air was clean and crisp. It was very chilly over there. There are many mirror-like lakes in this valley.

We went up to the top of the valley. The road is narrow and winding. It is zig-zag. The top of the hill is about 800 meters (2,625 feet) from sea level. They call this hill troll (fairy) stigen. There is a big waterfall coming from a high mountain (about 1,800 meters—5,905 feet) from sea level. There are timber lines (above at 800 meters—2,625 feet—from sea level) and no trees grow over there. At the top of the hill there is a flat area and we could see the waterfalls closer. We drove down the hills on the zig-zag, winding roads and arrived at Geiranger Fjord harbor.

It is the very first time for me to see a fjord in my whole life. It is said that the fjord was made by glaciers many and many millions of years ago. This fjord is very deep (about 200 meters—656 feet) and it is very wide. There were a couple of cruise ships anchored at the

Injustice *continued from page 3*

facilities operated by the Multinational Oil Corporations, they are living like Kings and Presidents.

For over five decades, we have given Multinational Oil Corporations and their collaborator (the Nigerian State) peace, cooperation, and love for the crude oil to flow unhindered from our land. The continuous tranquility is only manifesting in the development of mountains, rock, valleys, deserts, and lagoons but the Niger Delta territory continually is alienated from all types of development and all essence of quality human life, while all successive governments worship the crude oil taken from the region. Our communities and the people are only good at securing the pipelines, oil and gas facilities. What a tragedy!

We are calling on the international community especially Britain, France, the United State of America, Russia, China and the European Union to speak up against this ongoing terror and come to the aid of the Niger Delta, as witnesses to this grave inhumanity and history of terror perpetuated against the people of the Niger Delta daily.

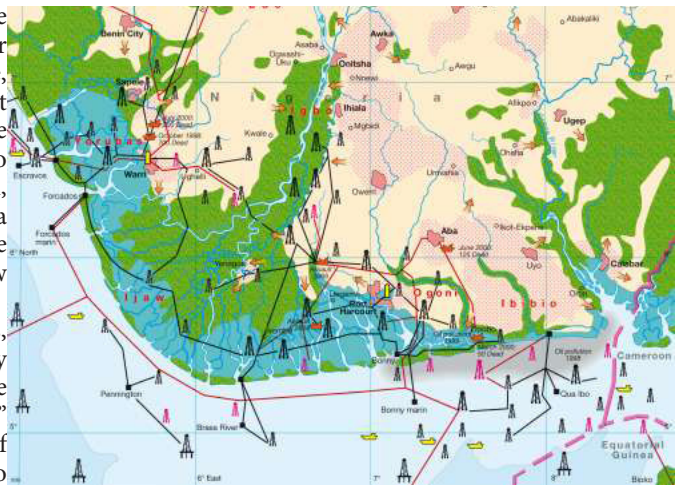
This history of terror, we the Niger Delta Avengers will resist and correct with every means necessary. We have nothing to loose in the battles ahead; justice they say is only

found within the structure of a nation state. Rather than provide this justice, the Nigerian government has decided to mobilise her military might to intimidate, torture, maim, victimize, and bombard a section of the nation state and her citizenry to allow the free flow of our oil.

Some persons, groups, and commentators may ask, "What do the people of Niger delta want?" We are not like some of these personalities who run champagne parties or turn Rivers State Government House into a house patrimony of god-sons and prebendalism (cronyism and corruption). They say the progress and success of a nation state is the reflection of her constitution that is not manufactured to favor some section and excludes the yearning and aspirations of others; but the indwelling spiritual and historical development of its people.

Since the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 to date, our resources have been used to sustain the political administrative live wire of Nigeria to the exclusion of the Niger Delta.

Finally, we are calling on the international



community to come and support the restoration of our right to peaceful self-determination from this tragedy of 1914 that has expired since 2014. We want our resources back to restore the essence of human life in our region for generations to come because Nigeria has failed to do that.

The world should not wait until we go the Sudan ways. Enough is enough

God Bless Niger Delta People.
Brigadier General Mudoch Agbinibo
Spokesperson

[map: <http://www.diercke.com/>]

Travel *continued from page 9*

harbor. There are only a few buildings at the harbor village. We were riding a car ferry on this fjord. There are huge mountains on both sides. We sailed a few minutes and I saw great Seven Sisters Waterfalls from the tops of the mountains. It is the master piece of Mother Nature. There are abandoned farms on the cliffs and at the foot of the mountains. It is said that the farmers raised sheep, goats, and cows until the 1990s.

We came to a glacier museum. I saw the work of glaciers on the video. I realized the power of Mother Nature and I was thrilled. We moved to the mountainside to see the real glacier. Tons of snow ice were there. They move down to the lakes and rivers.

We went to a hotel in a remote mountain village. I noticed the double-pane windows. In the morning, water was pouring down from the roofs. The frost piled up during the night, melted down by the sunlight and it became liquid and poured down like a waterfall. We passed the longest tunnel in the world (24.5 kilometers—15 miles). There are many tunnels in this mountain area.

We arrived at Bergen, which is located at the west coast of Norway. This city is the second largest city in Norway but it is quiet, clean, and calm. The buildings are

well organized and there are many houses on the hills. Grieg, who was the composer of Sovegi's Song, was born here. There is a small fish market and many tourists from every corner of the world taste all kinds of fish. The harbor is pretty and clean. A few cruise ships were anchored for tourists. Bergen was designated by UNESCO as the treasure of culture. There are three-story, wooden buildings which are neat and beautiful. They are old but still intact.

We moved to Flam Fjord harbor. There is a train going up the mountain. We could see gigantic and beautiful scenes from the train. We drove to high mountain areas and there are plateaus on the tops of the mountains. There is a huge lake. And the water is still icy cold in the middle of June. There are sheep, goats, lambs, and cows in small scale. And there are isolated farmers' houses which are small and pretty. Norway has abundant water resources and almost all electric energy is produced by hydro power plants. It was really chilly and windy over there.

We came to Oslo, the capital city. The population of Oslo is 650,000 and the city is clean and quiet. Street cars are running on the streets and there are many bicycles on designated roads. The cars are small and

pedestrians are not in a rush.

We went to a sculpture park. It is a huge park for 214 sculptures. Gustav Gligend spent almost his life for these sculptures. He tried to show us the life cycle of human beings and agony of human life. Human beings try to live on other people's shoulders. We have to have fair and justice society. That is what he tried to teach us, I believe.

We went to the city hall, where the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded. Other Nobel prizes are awarded in Stockholm, Sweden but only the peace prize is awarded in this city. It was raining but not many people use umbrellas. The houses and buildings are not gigantic, but they are well organized and maintained.

In conclusion we can make our environment clean and green and we can live a simple life rather than luxurious ones. The northern European countries are not big and they do have the best social welfare system. Of course, they pay higher taxes but they get about 80 percent of their peak pay after retirement. And they get free health care and free education. Are they from Mars? They are same as we are, I believe.

We can do it, can't we? We think of that.

German Government Agrees to Ban Fracking Indefinitely

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By Holger Hansen and Andrea Shalal, *excerpt* ©
Reuters: June 21, 2016

Germany's coalition government agreed to ban fracking for shale gas indefinitely on Tuesday, after years of fractious talks over the issue, but environmental groups said the ban did not go far enough and vowed to fight the deal.

Test drilling will be allowed, but only with the permission of the respective state government, officials said. German industry is keen to keep the door open to fracking—which involves blasting chemicals and water into rocks to release trapped gas—arguing it could help lower energy costs, but opposition is strong in the country, where a powerful green lobby has warned about possible risks to drinking water.

If the law is approved by parliament, Germany will follow France, which has banned fracking, whereas Britain allows it subject to strict environmental and safety guidelines. Germany was on the verge of a parliamentary vote on similar legislation to ban fracking a year ago, but the effort stalled amid disagreements between Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative Christian Democrats and the left Social Democrats. The two parties agreed on Tuesday to an indefinite ban, but the compromise legislation calls for the German parliament to reassess whether the decision is still valid in 2021 . . .

Friends of the Earth Germany criticized the proposal and said that by setting a date for a fresh look, the coalition had essentially agreed to allow fracking in five years. "The coalition's agreement on a fracking permission law is hair-raising. The law must be stopped and replaced with a true fracking ban," Hubert Weiger, who heads the environmental group, said in a statement.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-fracking-idUSKCN0Z71YY>



Fracking Victory

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

Submitted by Bill Boteler
Washington, D.C.

Email received July 11, 2016

After a long and hard-fought battle to pass new protections from fracking (known as Chapter 78), we took two steps forward but one step back.

The good news is: after years of pressing Pennsylvania's environmental officials to ban dangerous open-air fracking waste pits, we've been able to get that much-needed proposal over the finish line, plus additional rules to protect Pennsylvanians from this unconventional drilling practice.

This is crucial for protecting our air, water, and health from toxic fracking waste and other hazards—and it happened thanks to PennEnvironment members like you who spoke up over the past five years.

Forward this important announcement about fracking waste pits to let your friends and family know we've

made it another step closer to protecting Pennsylvanians from the hazards of fracking.

At the same time, Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was forced back to the drawing board by the state legislature when it came to updating regulations for traditional oil and gas drilling (often called 'conventional' drilling).

There aren't words to describe how disappointing it is that our representatives and senators overrode efforts to protect us from ALL types of oil and gas drilling.

PennEnvironment is ready to double-down on ensuring that DEP swiftly goes back to the drawing board, and gets these protections over the finish line for conventional drilling as quickly as possible.

I hope you'll be there to help us in this endeavor in the upcoming months.

Thanks for your support in this fight.

David Masur, Executive Director
PennEnvironment



Here Comes the Sun

A Renewable Energy Boom

Submitted by John Conner
Shade Gap, Pennsylvania

By The Editorial Board, *excerpt* ©
The New York Times: April 4, 2016

Some world leaders, especially in developing countries like India, have long said it's hard to reduce the emissions that are warming the planet because they need to use rela-

tively inexpensive but highly carbon-intensive fuels like coal to keep energy affordable. That argument is losing its salience as the cost of renewable energy sources like wind and solar continues to fall.

Last year, for the first time, renewables accounted for a majority of new electricity-generating capacity added around the world, according to a recent United Nations report. More than half the \$286 billion invested in wind, solar, and other renewables occurred in emerging markets like China, India, and Brazil—also for the first time. Excluding large hydroelectric plants, 10.3 percent

of all electricity generated globally in 2015 came from renewables, roughly double the amount in 2007, according to the report.

The average global cost of generating electricity from solar panels fell 61 percent between 2009 and 2015 and 14 percent for land-based wind turbines. In sunny parts of the world like India and Dubai, developers of solar farms have recently offered to sell electricity for less than half the global average price. In November, the accounting firm KPMG predicted that by 2020 solar energy in India could be 10 percent cheaper than electricity generated by burning coal . . .



Viessmann ten-panel Solar Domestic Hot Water System mounted on the south-facing gymnasium wall. (Photos by Curt Bierly)

Solar Hot Water Solution for Old Gregg School Community Center

By Curt Bierly: Millheim, Pennsylvania

The Old Gregg School Community Center is located in Spring Mills, Pennsylvania, and is a model to consider if you have an abandoned school building in your community and a bunch of community-minded people that want to utilize it for the betterment of the community.

Headed by the Gregg Township Supervisors and numerous committees, it has proven to be a financial success by not placing any burden on the local taxpayer for any associated building costs, yet providing a recreational facility for all to use for a very reasonable membership fee.

Most of the 'classrooms' are rented to individuals or organizations and that lease money is used to pay the bills and make improvements. They have utilized this success and a grant from the West Penn Sustainability Energy Fund to finance the latest improvement which is the installation of a

Domestic Hot Water (DHW) Solar System.

It all started with the tenants not being satisfied with the time required to have hot water at the sink when they wanted to wash their hands or do dishes in the kitchen or take a shower after a workout in the weight room or gymnasium. The first job was to install a DHW recirculation system like you would find in a Holiday Inn, i.e. instant hot water at the faucet. This was completed in the Summer of 2012 using a Navien High-Efficiency Propane Fired Condensing Water Heater and an Alfa Laval Stainless Steel Heat Exchanger.

Next, they wanted to consider a Hot Water Solar System to reduce the amount of propane usage. An application was filed with Joel Morrison, who directs the distribution of money from the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund. They received approval for the grant in early 2015 and the system was completed in the fall of 2015.

Ten Viessmann Solar Hot Water Panels were installed on the south wall of the

gymnasium to capture the sun's solar heat. The supervisors didn't want them installed on the roof as it would make a rubber roof replacement more difficult—so, although it cost more, it was decided to attach it to the south wall. A structural engineer was retained to work with the contractor to design a mounting system that could withstand the local wind and snow load. This was solved by installing 'kickers' inside the gymnasium from the bottom of the panels to the steel beam holding the roof.

Next, a 410-gallon, insulated hot water tank was installed in a room directly below the solar panels. This tank was needed to store hot water heated by the sun but not needed immediately. Two Alfa Laval Stainless Steel Heat Exchangers were used to transfer heat from the solar fluid to the tank water and from the tank water to the recirculation loop. A solar controller decides when to turn on the circulator pumps. The solar fluid temperature from the panels will

Solar continued on next page

Solar *continued from previous page*



Structural 'kickers' designed to protect the south gymnasium wall against snow and wind load on the panels



Insulated Solar Tank and associated Controller / Circulators / Heat Exchangers



Navien High-Efficiency Gas Water Heater with Recirculation Loop on the former Gregg School

peak at 250° F on a sunny day. The amazing power of the sun!!

Recently the Penns Valley Conservation Association and Penns Valley Science teachers organized a trip by over 100 Penns Valley Area High School Students to view

the Old Gregg School Solar System and learn about its features. Other interested groups can contact Doug Bierly at 814-422-8218 to arrange a showing. Be sure it's a sunny day!!

Curt Bierly is president of the bierly group incorporated (sic), of which Stanley C. Bierly is a division. He is chair of the Penn College HVAC Advisory Board. You can contact him at his business in Millheim (814-349-3000, cbierly@bierlygroup.com).



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10,000 March in Philly for Clean Energy Revolution

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By Sandra Steingraber
EcoWatch: July 25, 2016

At High Noon Sunday, with temperatures heading toward 95 degrees, I'm confident I was not the only one preparing to march through the streets of downtown Philadelphia who recalled that old elementary-school story about the wig-wearing drafters of the Declaration of Independence huddled inside of Independence Hall on a sweltering July day. In fact, on the eve of the Democratic National Convention, Independence Hall was the literal destination of this march to declare our independence from fossil fuels.

In spite of the dangerous heat—or maybe precisely because there are now simply way too many extremely hot days like this one—marchers showed up in huge numbers, and they brought with them a revolutionary frame of mind.

Convened by Pennsylvanians Against Fracking and Americans Against Fracking (for which I serve as science advisor),

the March for a Clean Energy Revolution attracted more than 10,000 people and was endorsed by more than 900 environmental, health, labor, political, faith, justice, indigenous, and student organizations groups from all 50 states of the union.

The day kicked off with a press conference at City Hall that featured local and national advocacy leaders as well as individuals from communities decimated by various fossil fuel extraction, transport, and storage projects. All together, these speakers called on current and future elected leaders to ban fracking, keep fossil fuels in the ground, stop dirty energy, transition to 100 percent renewable energy, and ensure environmental justice for all . . .

"Today, after listening to the science, more Americans are opposed to fracking than support it," noted Winonah Hauter of Food & Water Watch, referring to the most recent Gallup poll that shows that Americans oppose fracking 51 to 36 percent. Also speaking at the press conference, Teresa Hill of ACTION United decried the plan to turn Philadelphia itself into a major energy hub for fracked gas which includes a proposed import/export terminal on the Delaware River . . .

During the march itself, I walked with the We Are Seneca Lake brigade . . .

Intersectionality, to use the buzzword of the climate justice movement, was on display everywhere. The peace and justice community had a visible and vocal presence at the march, as did the public health community and the labor movement. The message, in both signs and words: replacing fossil fuel dependency with investments in renewable energy serves to de-escalate political conflicts around the globe, prevent chronic diseases linked to toxic exposure, and create jobs that don't blow workers up.

Just last week, a Johns Hopkins study published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*, found that people with asthma who live near drilling and fracking operations in Pennsylvania are 1.5 to 4 times more likely to suffer asthma attacks than those who live farther away. According to another recent, peer-reviewed study that analyzed all of the relevant literature on fracking, "The great majority of science contains findings that indicate concerns for public health, air quality, and water quality."

Source: <http://www.ecowatch.com/10000-march-in-philly-calling-for-a-clean-energy-revolution-1943067458.html>

Buddhist Monks Buy 600 Pounds of Lobster, then Release Them into the Ocean

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By Rachael Pells
The Independent: July 10, 2016

More than 600 pounds of lobsters have been spared the pot thanks to a liberation project arranged by a group of Buddhist monks in Canada. The monks, from the Great Enlightenment Buddhist Institute Society, bought the lobsters from various sources around Prince Edward Island in Eastern Canada, before taking them out to sea. Taking the lobsters on board a fishing boat, the monks released them back into the ocean off the coast of Wood Islands, a small fishing community on the south of Prince Edward Island.

Venerable Dan, a spokesman for the monks involved, said the purpose of the mission was to “cultivate compassion,” not just for the lobsters, but for all human beings. Speaking to CBA news before the crustaceans were released, he said he hoped the group would “find a spot where there are no cages waiting for them...”

The Great Enlightenment Buddhist Institute Society has lived on Prince Edward Island for the past eight years. Hundreds of monks travel to the island from Asia each year to study Buddhism in their monastery all year round . . .

According to the group, islanders—including fisherman—have supported the cause, even helping to find the monks a better place to release the animals so they wouldn't be captured again. “If your loved ones were in this situation, what would they like you to do?” said Venerable Dan. “To give them a helping hand, and put them back to where they feel comfortable, and we believe if everybody's able to do that, it will become a better place, a more harmonic place.”

Source: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/buddhist-monks-buy-600lbs-of-lobster-to-release-them-back-into-the-ocean-a7129696.html>



Hundreds of lobsters were purchased and released back into the ocean.
(Photo: Jessica Doria-Brown)



Pipeline Company Agrees to \$177M Settlement for Spill

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By Timothy Cama, *excerpt*
The Hill: July 20, 2016
Photo: Thinkstock

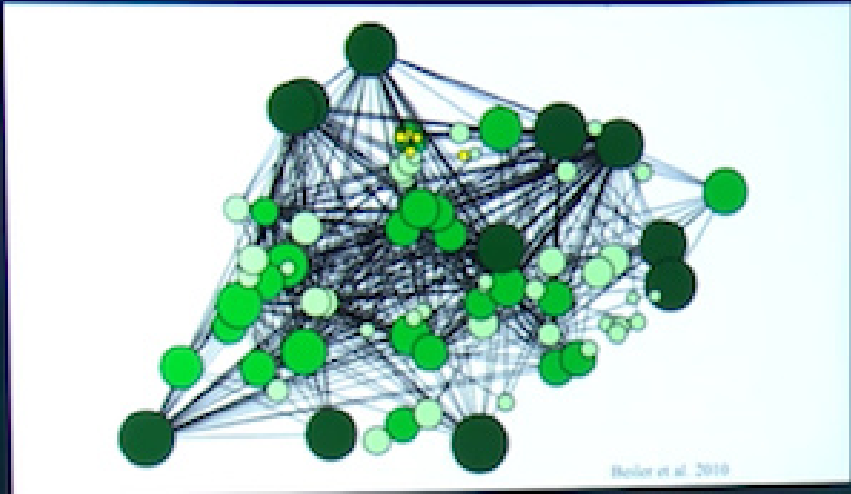
Enbridge Inc. has agreed to a \$177 million settlement with the federal government to resolve charges related to a pair of oil pipeline spills in 2010 in Michigan and Illinois. The agreement includes a \$62 million fine, \$5 million to reimburse the federal government's cleanup costs, and implementation of a program to prevent future spills worth at least \$110 million. It's the second-largest federal fine for an oil spill in the country's history, behind the \$18.7 billion settlement BP reached for the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster . . .

In July 2010, Enbridge's 6B line ruptured at the spot where it crosses a tributary of the Kalamazoo River in Michigan, spilling at least 850,000 gallons of heavy crude oil from Canada into the water. It was the worst onshore oil spill in United States history. The spill harmed wildlife, plants, and ecosystems, and caused much of the river to be closed for years while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Coast Guard, and state officials cleaned it up.

The disaster spurred significant new attention toward the safety of oil pipelines and federal opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline, which President Obama rejected last year. Enbridge took responsibility for the spill. It settled with the state of Michigan for \$75 million last year . . .

The National Wildlife Federation blasted the settlement, calling it a slap on the wrist. “A \$62 million penalty and promises to maintain pipelines as a penalty for the worst inland oil disaster in U.S. history is woefully insufficient and shows that Congress and the Obama administration must work together to strengthen penalties,” Collin O'Mara, the group's president, said in a statement. The EPA and Justice Department will accept comments from the public for 60 days on the proposed settlement. A federal judge will then decide whether to approve it . . .

Read complete article at <http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/288505-pipeline-company-agrees-to-177m-settlement-for-2010-oil-spill>.



TED

We call those hub trees,

We made this map by examining the short sequences of DNA of every tree and every fungal individual in a patch of Douglas fir forest. In this picture, the circles represent the Douglas fir, or the nodes, and the lines represent the interlinking fungal highways, or the links. The biggest, darkest nodes are the busiest nodes. We call those hub trees, or more fondly, mother trees, because it turns out that those hub trees nurture their young, the ones growing in the understory. And if you can see those yellow dots, those are the young seedlings that have established within the network of the old mother trees.

TED Talk Tells How Trees Talk to Each Other

Submitted by Allen Hengst, Wire Editor

By Suzanne Simard
TED Summit: June 2016

Trees are the foundation of forests, but a forest is much more than what you see, and today I want to change the way you think about forests. You see, underground there is this other world, a world of infinite biological pathways that connect trees and allow them to communicate and allow the forest to behave as though it's a single organism. It might remind you of a sort of intelligence . . .

I conducted some experiments deep in the forest, 25 years ago. I grew 80 replicates of three species: paper birch, Douglas fir,

and western red cedar. I figured the birch and the fir would be connected in a below-ground web, but not the cedar . . .

The evidence was clear. The [stable isotope] Carbon-13 and [radioactive] Carbon-14 were showing me that paper birch and Douglas fir were in a lively two-way conversation.

It turns out, at that time of the year, in the summer, that birch was sending more carbon to fir than fir was sending back to birch, especially when the fir was shaded. And then in later experiments, we found the opposite, that fir was sending more carbon to birch than birch was sending to fir, and this was because the fir was still growing while the birch was leafless.

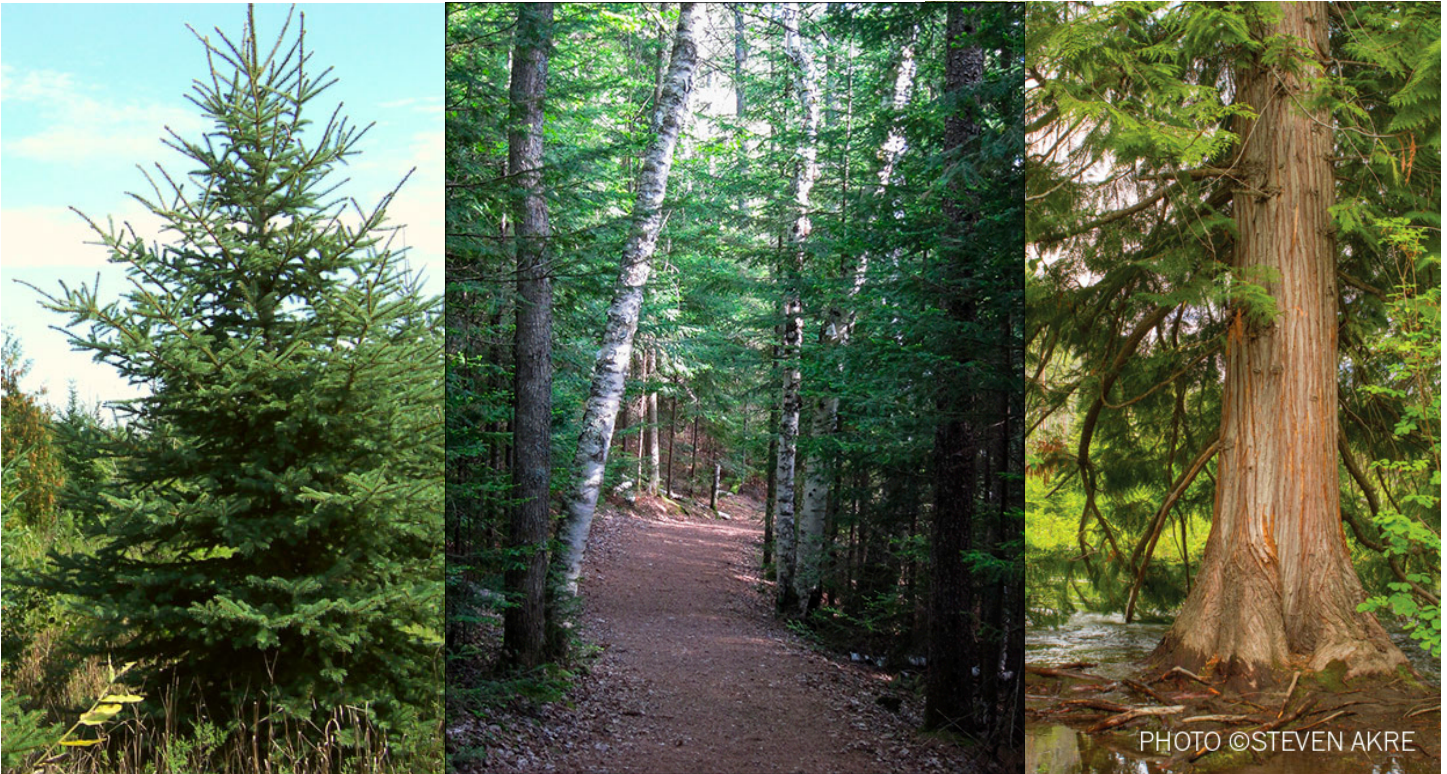
So it turns out the two species were interdependent, like yin and yang.

And at that moment, everything came into focus for me. I knew I had found something big, something that would change the way we look at how trees interact in forests, from not just competitors but to cooperators. And I had found solid evidence of this massive below-ground communications network, the other world . . .

How were paper birch and Douglas fir communicating?

Well, it turns out they were conversing not only in the language of carbon but also nitrogen and phosphorus and water and defense signals and allelic chemicals and hormones . . . Scientists had thought that this below ground mutualistic symbiosis called a mycorrhiza was involved. Mycorrhiza

Trees continued on next page



Douglas fir (left, photo:www.ritagiang.com); *paper birch* (center, photo: adirondackvic.org), and *western red cedar* (right, photo: fwp.mt.gov)

Trees *continued from previous page*

literally means “fungus root.” You see their reproductive organs when you walk through the forest. They’re the mushrooms. The mushrooms, though, are just the tip of the iceberg, because coming out of those stems are fungal threads that form a mycelium, and that mycelium infects and colonizes the roots of all the trees and plants. And where the fungal cells interact with the root cells, there’s a trade of carbon for nutrients, and that fungus gets those nutrients by growing through the soil and coating every soil particle.

The web is so dense that there can be hundreds of kilometers of mycelium under a single footstep. And not only that, that mycelium connects different individuals in the forest, individuals not only of the same species but between species, like birch and fir, and it works kind of like the Internet.

You see, like all networks, mycorrhizal networks have nodes and links. We made this map by examining the short sequences of DNA of every tree and every fungal

individual in a patch of Douglas fir forest. In this picture, the circles represent the Douglas fir, or the nodes, and the lines represent the interlinking fungal highways, or the links. The biggest, darkest nodes are the busiest nodes. We call those hub trees, or more fondly, mother trees, because it turns out that those hub trees nurture their young, the ones growing in the understory. And if you can see those yellow dots, those are the young seedlings that have established within the network of the old mother trees.

In a single forest, a mother tree can be connected to hundreds of other trees. And using our isotope tracers, we have found that mother trees will send their excess carbon through the mycorrhizal network to the understory seedlings, and we’ve associated this with increased seedling survival by four times . . .

Could Douglas fir recognize its own kin, like mama grizzly and her cub?

So we set about an experiment, and we grew mother trees with kin and stranger’s

seedlings. And it turns out they do recognize their kin. Mother trees colonize their kin with bigger mycorrhizal networks. They send them more carbon below ground. They even reduce their own root competition to make elbow room for their kids. When mother trees are injured or dying, they also send messages of wisdom on to the next generation of seedlings.

So we’ve used isotope tracing to trace carbon moving from an injured mother tree down her trunk into the mycorrhizal network and into her neighboring seedlings, not only carbon but also defense signals. And these two compounds have increased the resistance of those seedlings to future stresses.

So trees talk. Through back and forth conversations, they increase the resilience of the whole community. It probably reminds you of our own social communities, and our families, well, at least some families.

You can listen to this TED talk at http://www.ted.com/talks/suzanne_simard_how_trees_talk_to_each_other.

Almost everything will work again if you unplug it
for a few minutes, including you.

-- Ann Lamont, *Real Simple* --

Submitted by Kathy Seeburger Mahon, Florida

What if every lawn was transformed into an edible garden?



Submitted by anonymous GBC member
July 22, 2016

In many countries today, well-maintained, closely cut, green lawns seem to be almost everywhere. In fact, lawns are the single largest crop in the United States, covering 32 million acres.

But what if we grew edible gardens, not lawns?

We've got about 16 million acres in the United States now growing all of our fruits and vegetables. This means the space American lawns occupy could provide enough land to grow more fruits and vegetables than are now eaten by the entire nation's population.

Problems with Lawns

Lawns aren't natural, and they're very demanding—of our time and money. So why do we tend to them at all?

Lawns began in Europe, where the moist, mild climate is good for grass to grow. The spaces around the homes of the wealthy were cultivated with grass—and became status symbols.

When early immigrants came to North America, they brought lawn culture with them. However, the North American climate doesn't generally support lawn growth. Yet for many Americans, maintaining the perfect lawn continues to this

day to be a status symbol and a sign of money and success.

The typical American lawn uses 10,000 gallons of supplemental water (not including rainwater) annually. This is a serious problem, especially as we see more and more areas facing water shortages and droughts.

Of course, edible gardens need to be watered, too. But data pulled together by Urban Plantations from the EPA, the Public Policy Institute of California, and the Alliance for Water Efficiency suggests that gardens use 66% less water than lawns.

Another serious problem with lawn maintenance is the huge amounts of harmful chemicals sprayed on them each year—about 80 million U.S. households dump 90 million pounds of pesticides and herbicides on their lawns each year, according to the EPA.

To put this into perspective, an article in Rodale's *Organic Life* says, "Lawn care is as much of a danger to our health and the environment as conventional agriculture is."

Here are some problems caused by lawn pesticides:

- They contaminate our water supply. A study from Virginia Tech found that most homeowners apply chemicals to their lawns in ways that pollute our drinking water.
- They create serious health risks for wildlife and pets. A 2013 study published in *Science of the Total Environment* found that dogs exposed to lawn care chemicals can

Gardens continued on next page



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have a higher risk of bladder cancer.

- They get into our homes and present health risks. They are correlated with increased risk of a variety of cancers, nervous system disorders, and other illnesses.

- Children get exposed to them. Research in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* found that exposure to lawn pesticides can increase the risk of childhood leukemia almost seven times.

When thinking about lawns, mowing is another concern. Americans use about eight million gallons of gas mowing their lawns each year. And the EPA estimates that gas-powered lawn and garden equipment is responsible for 5% of our air pollution, not to mention the noise pollution these machines cause.

Growing Food, Not Lawns

If you want to keep a lawn, then choosing an organic lawn maintenance system will likely be a better choice for your health and for the health of the planet.

But more and more people are ditching their lawns. Many are choosing to spend their time, energy, and money growing food, instead—improving the health and sustainability of their family and their community in the process.

And even if a small number of people chose to replace their lawns with gardens, it would make a big impact.

Looking for an inspiring example? Check out David Young, an urban farmer in New Orleans, who grows food for people in need for free or at low cost.



Nine Top Benefits from Growing Your Own Food

- You and your family will be more likely to eat fresh vegetables and fruits—and that’s a very good thing for your health.

- The fruits and veggies you eat will have more nutrients. The average plate of food travels 1,500 miles before it gets to your plate, and nutrients are lost during this process. Fresh and local are best—and you can’t get more fresh or more local than your own garden!

- The fruits and vegetables you eat will be safer. Food safety is an increasing problem, from Salmonella to E. coli, and if you grow your garden organically, you can also avoid pesticide residues on your produce.

- You will save money. Organic food is healthier and better for the planet—but it can be costly to buy. When you grow your own, you can save money on groceries. One couple in South Carolina saves up to \$24,000 per year by growing their own food in their yard.

- Vegetable gardens are ecologically responsible. They reduce your carbon footprint, save the environment, and are more efficient and less wasteful than lawns or flower gardens.

- They’re good for your spirit and your health. Gardens increase your time outdoors, relieve stress, make you more relaxed, and even boost your immune system.

- Gardens increase community. Americans are increasingly disconnected, but getting together with family, friends, and neighbors to grow and share food and knowledge can bring people together.

- Vegetable gardens teach children vital life lessons. Kids love to garden and can

GARDENS over LAWNS

California's past 3 years were the driest stretch in **120 years**

Gardens take up **less space** than turf because of paths for accessibility. *That means less area for you to water!*

66% less water than lawns	50% of outdoor water due to misdirection & overspray	Nearly 100% of water via drip irrigation hits its mark
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Save money. Grow food. Conserve water.

URBAN PLANTATIONS

Data and statistics from the EPA, the Public Policy Institute of California, and the Alliance for Water Efficiency. July 2015.

learn important lessons, including the ability to grow their own food and take charge of their health.

- Food independence and food security. There’s a wonderful feeling of freedom and self-reliance that comes with growing your own food.

Thinking about growing your own food? I wrote an article about that, too. Go to <https://foodrevolution.org/blog/food-and-health/edible-gardens-how-to-get-started-growing-your-own-food/> for tips and tools to get started growing an edible garden on your land.

Source: <https://foodrevolution.org/blog/food-and-health/edible-garden-food-not-lawns/>

A Message from the Trees ~ Send Gratitude and Love

By Mare Cromwell
Buckeystown, Maryland
April 25, 2016

Recently a huge, healthy Matriarch Tree was cut in a neighbor's yard, and I was spiritually asked to do ceremony that night for the tree. Here is a powerful message that came through that evening from the Tree Devas for all of us to follow globally:

A Call for Gratitude and Love from the Trees

A very large, ancient Matriarch Tree (silver maple) was cut today in my neighborhood. It was healthy but too close to a carriage house, and the owners finally decided it needed to go.

I had no idea this tree and another one on the same property were slated to be cut. All I knew was that I was spiritually called to walk to that part of the neighborhood early this morning, a walk I never do at that time of the day. When I discovered the tree company trucks and realized what was about to take place, I knew I needed to honor and bless both trees, with the permission of the owner who was kinda open to me. I essentially talked with them and loved them up. They both knew full well what was about to happen.

I even tried to convince the owner to only take the one large limb from the Matriarch Tree that was hanging over the deck of the carriage house. But the decision was already made for a complete death.

The Matriarch Tree asked me to do Sacred Fire ceremony tonight to truly honor the two trees. I promised I would.

For an Earth empath like me, and plant communicator, the grief in my

neighborhood was palpable as the day transpired. The other trees were grieving and quivering with fright that they would be next. I could feel their fear. I was grieving from the cutting of this huge Matriarch Tree, and trying not to empathically absorb the fear of the tree community around where I live.

It was hard for me all day to be focused and upbeat, in truth. I kept on trying to stave off the sadness and fear permeating the air.

I did do the Fire Ceremony this evening to honor the trees. It's important to keep one's word, even with trees. Maybe especially with trees and other beings in the nature realms. I needed to do this and send prayers to the trees of the world with all that they have lost, so heartlessly. The Matriarch Tree and the other one were honored in a good way. It was a healing ceremony around the Fire.

I have a Message from the Tree Kingdom to share though. (Not from Mother, everything is talking with me these days.) They are asking that we send them more gratitude. For too long, they have been harvested, cut with no awareness of their consciousness, and never a Thank-You from pretty much all others than the rare few.

They are asking for us to reach out to them and express our gratitude. It could be a forest you drive by. A tree in the parking lot. In your yard. Across from your office. Any tree or forest or grove you see. Just send them love and gratitude from your heart. It's really so easy.



Matriarch Tree that was cut/passed today in Buckeystown, Maryland. (Photo: Mare Cromwell)

The energy behind a sincerely felt Thank-You from your heart is more powerful than most know.

And if you can save a tree or grove or forest from being cut, even better. Or plant a new, baby tree to replace one that has been cut that could not be prevented, that's super beautiful. Especially if you plant it with Love and Kindness and tend to it to ensure it survives.

Thank you to all of you who will read this and share it.

GBC Member Mare Cromwell's *Great Mother Bible* Wins Inspiration Award

Message from Mare:

Most Exciting! I learned last week (while out in Washington State doing events) that the *Great Mother Bible* won the 2016 Coalition of Visionary Resources Book Award in Inspiration. This is great news!

This is the competition that readers could vote for, so I want to thank all of you who took the time to log in to their website and vote. I'm so grateful to all of you. The book also won in the Readers Choice for that category, and tied for the Retailers Choice. Wonderful kudos for the book. Thank you!

This is on top of the book being honored as a Finalist in the 2016 International Book

Awards in the Spirituality/Inspiration category that was announced in May. That was a significant honor since that competition is open to big publishing houses along with Indies and self-published folks. Whoo-hoo!

Thank you, all of you, for your support and kindness and great Love of Mother and her messages.

My healing practice continues to grow. If you are interested in learning more, check out my website (marecromwell.com) or contact me directly. You can purchase my books at my website for a personally autographed copy. They are also available

on Kindle, Nook, and all the other ebook platforms.

