

Unity With Nature Committee Report for Pacific Yearly Meeting Representative Committee Winter 2013

At the 2012 annual gathering UWN sponsored three interest groups. One focused on Quaker mysticism, one on food and food systems, and a third on sustainable responses to climate change and fossil-fuel addiction. All were well received and sparked discussion around what choices Quakers can make in their personal lives to evolve toward a sustainable and healthy Earth.

Scheduling conflicts pushed our annual committee retreat forward to a January weekend, when we met at Susan Swanstrom's delightful retreat house on the Russian River.

UWN is again offering mini-grants for monthly meeting projects, and we have sent applications and information to our list of monthly meeting contacts. This year, UWN is co-sponsoring a service learning camp for youth at Quaker Oaks farm in Visalia. (Soon we will know for sure if enrollment suffices for organizers to hold it as planned.) These and other items of interest have also been shared with monthly meetings. UWN hopes to continue to strengthen its relationships with all Friends, and with Earthcare Quaker organizations such as Earthlight magazine, as well as all those mentioned below.

UWN proposes an interest group for the 2013 annual gathering, about the various Friends organizations that work on earth healing: Quaker Earthcare Witness, Quaker Institute for the Future, Right Sharing of World Resources, Friends Committee on National Legislation, etc. UWN is again proposing a simple meal at the 2013 gathering, and will provide a supporting essay in the Daily Miracle. We plan to hold an affinity group (Live What You Believe: An Affinity Group for Quakers Seeking to Live in Integrity With Their Environmental Values), and we would be very happy to offer nature-oriented worship or worship-sharing queries for annual gathering. Lastly, we urge the Yearly Meeting to consider a keynote speaker on Earthcare.

UWN welcomes comments and questions from Friends pursuant to its charge in Faith and Practice to be "empowered to act on behalf of the Yearly Meeting on spiritual concerns as related to the environment and to develop its charge as way opens." We invite the Yearly Meeting to consider how Friends can respond meaningfully to the wasting away of our Earth home.

Respectfully submitted by Muriel Strand and Maia Wolff, co-clerks