

Eugene Friends Meeting Earthcare Support Group Newsletter

June 17, 2022

All Nations, All Faiths, One Prayer:

Call for Unity to Protect Earth: Chief Arvol Looking Horse, 19th Keeper of the Sacred White Buffalo Calf Pipe, calls on people from around the globe to gather at sacred places on **June 21** and join in prayer for the healing and protection of Grandmother Earth. (From Fran G.)



Shelley Tanenbaum, the General Secretary of QEW, recently wrote *"...last month, heatwaves in India and Pakistan sounded an ominous alarm, with record-breaking extreme temperatures reaching 113-115°F across a large territory. This extreme heat is wreaking havoc across both countries, with massive crop failures and suffering for 1.5 billion people. Our work as Friends in North America is to pay attention, speak out, offer resources, and empower our communities to engage, not hide from, these kind of tragedies. We have a global responsibility to advocate for just policies; those most affected by climate catastrophe are the least responsible. Our strength and stamina come from our spiritual connection with the living world, and with each other."*

Recycling Options Expand: Due to changes in recycling commodities markets, we can now put some #1 and #2 plastic jars, bottles, and jugs (and empty pizza boxes) into our commingled recycling.

But is it really going to be recycled? Excuse me for being pessimistic! My suspicion is that the county (and the plastics industry) is tired of listening to us complain. Please continue to reduce plastics use!

Plastic Recycling Doesn't Work and Will Never Work. [This article from the Atlantic](#) starts off with these sobering statistics: *"The United States in 2021 had a dismal recycling rate of about 5 percent for post-consumer plastic waste, down from a high of 9.5 percent in 2014, when the U.S. exported millions of tons of plastic waste to China and counted it as recycled—even though much of it wasn't. ... The problem with recycling plastic lies not with the concept or process but with the material itself."*



The article lists reasons - the thousands of varieties and colors of plastics that can't be mixed, the dangerous flammability of plastic waste, the fact that plastics can and do absorb toxins, and that it is simply cheaper to make new plastic. *"Despite this stark failure, the plastics industry has waged a decades-long campaign to perpetuate the myth that the material is recyclable."*

"We need the facts so that individuals and policy makers can take concrete action. Proven solutions to the U.S.'s plastic-waste and pollution problems exist and can be quickly replicated across the country." Solutions include bans on single-use plastic bags and plastic food-service products.

"If the plastics industry is following the tobacco industry's playbook, it may never admit to the failure of plastics recycling. Although we may not be able to stop them from trying to fool us, we can pass effective laws to make real progress. ... Consumers can put pressure on companies to stop filling store shelves with single-use plastics by not buying them and instead choosing reusables and products in better packaging. And we should all keep recycling our paper, boxes, cans, and glass, because that actually works. (from Becky S.)"

Bulk Refill Station: Mollie DeCost has opened a business at 18th and Willamette at the Meridian Building with eco-friendly choices of household cleaning and personal care products such as dish soap, laundry detergent, all purpose cleaner, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, and Castile soap. You can bring in your empty container and refill it to cut down on individual plastic waste. (Carol G.)

Slow water: can we tame urban floods by going with the flow? [This article from the Guardian](#) talks about the epic flooding and draughts we are experiencing worldwide, and why higher levees, bigger drains and longer aqueducts are not the answer. *"Because sooner or later, water always wins. ... The answers that the detectives are finding – in cities, fields, swamps, marshes, floodplains, mountains and forests – are that we should be conserving or repairing natural systems, or mimicking nature to restore some natural functions – and not building more concrete infrastructure. These reparative approaches go by various names: nature-based systems, green infrastructure, low-impact development, water-sensitive urban design."*

Slow Water approaches work with local landscapes, climates and cultures rather than try to control or change them. (From Jill H.)

Next Earthcare Support Meeting: Monday, July 4th, at 5:30 p.m. (We decided to meet early because of possible noise pollution after dark). Please join us every month on the first Monday, by zoom, to share our ideas for creative actions and celebrate our successes. If you want the link, let me know! Cynthia Black (541-344-3082, cynblack55@gmail.com).

EFM Earthcare Mission: At our March 7th meeting the Earthcare Support Group adopted this statement:

Support: Share about our individual efforts for earth-care, offer encouragement, and celebrate our successes.

Education: Offer educational opportunities and suggestions for earth-care action, with each other and the Meeting.

Action: Plan and work together on earth-care actions as a community of Friends, under the care of the Peace and Justice Committee.



Eugene Friends Meeting Earthcare Support Group Newsletter is distributed monthly or bi-monthly, and will include:

1. Reports of positive Earthcare related steps we have taken or intend to take. These can be small or large, anything at all related to caring for the earth.
2. Information on topics of interest, such as plastics recycling and oceans. Send me any links or information you have researched, with the sources listed.
3. Links and dates for upcoming earthcare action events.

Next publication date: approximately July 9th, 2022. Please send news and information that relates to earthcare to Cynthia Black, editor, cynblack55@gmail.com.