

## Excerpt from story told by Michael Phillips

I looked around. There was a view of wooded ridges with bony spines, deep creek canyons, the distant plain. The sun was too bright and I lowered my eyes. Right there in front of me, growing out of the bare stony talus, was a small clump of flowers. Lacy leaves trembled in the faint breeze, clear sky blue flowers nodded. I couldn't quite take it in - my interior life was nearly quelled - sick and miserable, just hanging on to simple persistence - while immediately before me was this pure example of surging buoyant unpretentious, joyous, persevering, surviving life. I had no personal defenses left. The flood of wonder and joy unmanned me. I was released...

The mystery of the unity of all being must necessarily transcend the capacities of our little minds, Horatio. Show a little humility. The way open to us to know God is through our yearning, not through either our telescopes or our theology. And what is revealed to us there, while indubitable, is characteristically human, is the human perception of, and participation in divinity. Each aspect, creation, element, cross-section, whatever, of reality yearns its way into being, characteristically. All being, any being, is ultimate, but each being is characteristic of its kind, yearns in its own way. Frogs and stones, saints and stars, sing their particular praises of God, exactly as well as I do. There is no opening to the divine that is unworthy of it.

*Michael Phillips, Victoria Friends Meeting*

[From Michael's story "Yearning" told at 'Soup and Stories' held by Victoria Meeting at Fern St. May 2008. Watch for the complete piece in a future issue dedicated to seeking and finding our way to a spiritual home. Please send your stories so this issue will be possible! Ed.]

## "Groups seek to protect endangered bird's Prairie dance floor"

It is urgent that we humans "...protect the Prairie habitat needed by the endangered sage grouse to strut its spectacular mating dance.

The birds, native to southeast Alberta and southwest Saskatchewan, gather in breeding grounds called leks every spring. But the leks are being squeezed out by human activity, including oil and gas drilling, highway expansion and cattle grazing.

The federal plan doesn't protect the breeding grounds critical for its survival, as required by Canada's Species at Risk Act. The birds have been on the endangered species list since 1998.

The population of the birds in Canada has gone from 6,000 to about 600 in the last few decades, and the number of active dancing sites has gone from 82 to 17."

*CBC news Thursday February 14, 2008.*

[I was reminded by Roger Davies' poem of this news item. Ed.]



*Sketch by Clare Singleton*