

Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN): Accomplishments and New Directions for 2003 / 2004

By Lynne Phillips

MEMBERS OF QEAN HAVE BEEN ACTIVE OVER THE PAST YEAR. In spite of difficulties with communications through our old topica list-serve, we have shared information and concerns about the ecology. We now have a new list-serve address at: qean-l@quaker.ca. Any one can join QEAN. Send your name and email address to the QEAN-L list-keeper Peggy Land at: peggyland@rogers.com.

Our biggest accomplishment in 2002 was the design of a protocol for decision-making via email only. My summary (not the “official” form) of the “Protocol” is as follows:

The E-Clerk of QEAN flags an issue being discussed on the QEAN list-serve. It must be an environmental and/or ecological issue that could result in a Minute for CYM which will further the aims of QEAN and CYM, as stated in its August 2001 Minute on Sustainability. The E-Clerk asks the originator to provide brief background material and finds, among list members, one who is willing to “shepherd” the proposal (i.e. receive the responses from members, and draft a Minute). If no one is able or willing to shepherd the proposal, it is returned to the originator. If shepherded, the E-Clerk posts a message to QEAN-L with subject line DECISION REQUIRED, including background information, and a request for responses to be sent directly to the shepherd (not to the entire QEAN list) within ten days. After ten days the shepherd puts responses together, determines areas of agreement, and proposes a Minute which seems to reflect the best (i.e., Spirit led) way forward. This Minute goes for approval ONLY to those who responded. If there are concerns or suggestions for

change, discussion continues within this “response group” until a revised Minute is accepted. The shepherd then posts the Minute to QEAN-L. QEAN members who have substantive difficulties with the Minute but did not take part in the decision list for any reason, including being new to the list since the DECISION REQUIRED went out, are encouraged to send their thoughts “to the full QEAN group meeting at CYM, with the understanding that these difficulties do not delay implementation of the Minute following its approval under this process” (Quotation is from the Protocol.)

This protocol has been tested twice: once to decide whether to promote the Earth Charter (EC) by encouraging our monthly meetings to study the Earth Charter. We agreed to buy EC pamphlets and to present a special interest group (SIG) at CYM 2003. About a dozen people attended that SIG. They recognized and celebrated the fact that there is already a considerable overlap between many EC principles, and Canadian Quaker testimonies and actions by CYM committees and monthly meetings. The group hopes that monthly meetings will endorse the EC and choose to implement a few EC recommendations through new actions. If enough monthly meetings endorse the EarthCharter, it could be brought to CYM 2004 for endorsement by CYM. New York YM has already endorsed the Charter. If you are interested in learning about the Earth Charter and bringing it to your monthly meeting, you can contact Lynne Phillips at: lphillip@netidea.com. If you want information on how to bring the EC to relevant groups in your community, contact John Scull at: jscull@island.net. For more information, look at

OUR BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT...WAS THE DESIGN OF A PROTOCOL FOR DECISION-MAKING VIA EMAIL ONLY.

the website: «www.earthcharter.org» or learn about community Earth Charter activities in Canada from Earth Charter Cowichan at: «www.island.net/~ecc»; or by email from: «ecc@island.net».

The second use of the protocol was to decide whether to buy and show the video *Escape from Affluenza* at yearly meeting. We did, and it was shown twice: first, to about 20 adults; and later, to Young Friends. At both showings, there was a good discussion, and agreement that this video should be made available to monthly meetings. It will be added to the adult travelling library of CYM.

Various members have contributed articles on ecological concerns for *The Canadian Friend* and *Befriending Creation*, publication of the Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN). Articles have covered topics such as calculations on the impacts of travel to CYM events, and the benefits of going car-less. We have also supported important work done by two of our members: Anne Mitchell on the issues of biotechnology and patenting of life forms (the “onco-mouse” case), and skye farris, with her pamphlet on nuclear waste disposal.

We see continued potential for QEAN through wide spread information sharing and stimulation of discussion with our web page, email list-serve and articles in publications. We hope to stimulate action by members in local meetings and community organisations. We would like to bring at least one practical idea a month for Friends to consider and act upon. This might be done through the David Suzuki Nature Challenge. We have a new E-Clerk, Joe Ackerman, member of Prairie Monthly Meeting. Lynne Phillips, the outgoing E-clerk of QEAN, would like to thank all the members who have

ESCAPE FROM AFFLUENZA

The screening of the video, “Escape from Affluenza” helped QEAN motivate a discussion around simplicity as it relates to environment, waste, and a sustainable future. The one-hour video “Affluenza” relates experiences of several families from both the United States and the Netherlands. Family members described ways they had cut back and benefited with more time for themselves and a less complex life style.

In a discussion, transportation was recognised as a major area for collective and individual action and concern. Some commented that simplicity could be pursued equally in both the city and countryside. We also heard about Cuba where, in response to chemical and fuel shortfalls, intensive and chemical-free mixed-agriculture is being accelerated all around the perimeter of the cities. Food can often be taken in to the city markets by bicycle.

corresponded with her over the past two years, giving her information, inspiration and incentive. Does that make them an in-group? No, because anyone can belong to QEAN. Why don't *you* join today? ✨

Lynne Phillips is a member of Argenta Monthly Meeting.

FROM DRAFT CHAPTER – FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH – FOR THE NEW CYM FAITH AND PRACTICE

21. *An X-ray crystallographer, one of the first two women to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, Kathleen Lonsdale refused to register for civil defence duties during World War II and was jailed for her witness.*

If we know all the answers, there would be no point in carrying out scientific research. Because we do not, it is stimulating, exciting and challenging. So, too, is the Christian life, lived experimentally. If we knew all the answers, it would not be nearly such fun.

– *Kathleen Lonsdale, 1964*