



BRIDGING THE GAP

The Quaker Intentional Village Project Newsletter



Come Join Us

Our community housing is fuller than full and we are thriving! We have a steady stream of people inquiring about living at QIVC and possibly trying out a short-term stint on the land, and we ask them to find ways to get to know us through attendance at Friday potluck dinners and friendly visits with residents.

We anticipate having at least one house for sale in the coming year and welcome individuals or families looking for a long-term relationship. At the same time, when we do have a rental for a short stint, we'll let people know.

The Latest News from QIV-Canaan

APRIL 2019

Greetings all! The Spring has gotten off to a mud-luscious start, with peepers singing day and night, and friends spending more time playing outside, gardening, and taking care of the land. Lots has been happening on personal projects as well as communal planning and enjoyable living. Here are a few updates:

- This past summer, one of our college-age youth hosted a three-week "community intensive" program during which a group of young people from New College in Florida participated in QIVC life and worked on aspects of a more hands-on life.
- In September, we joyfully welcomed a new family into the beautifully renovated East House.
- The hard work of one of our members and one of our advisors has come to fruition with the opening of worker-owned Random Harvest, a reboot of a historic co-op in Craryville. One of

our youth now works there too.

- There are now three of us engaged with local fire companies as volunteer firefighters.
- Another of our members is preparing for production of a play she wrote and in which she'll star, put on by a top-notch local theater company, and our local classical musician is leading a major regional choral group as well as directing orchestras nearby and in Albany.
- At year's end, we once again held our very special home blessing, moving to each house in the community where we blessed the home and residents and committed to help them welcome in, throughout the new year, the energy and spirit that each identified.
- We recently reviewed together some of the concepts that support our conscious efforts to build a culture based on our five Intentions.

We are grateful for the love, support, and friendship so many of you have provided over the years! We hope 2019 brings you intriguing new ideas, a good measure of satisfaction, and peace of heart.



Support our projects

Help us continue to protect the land, ensure sustainability, provide grants, and pursue other projects that fulfill our five intentions.

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A Report on "The Beans"

by Carolyn Beer

The "Beans" summer program ran from July 16th to August 3rd, and was intended to bring young adults to the community to experience life at QIVC. We expected to be working and doing projects for 4-6 hours daily

and to have a few evening discussions or workshops weekly. We planned to visit other intentional communities, farms and local events.

The program was overall a good, intense, formative experience for both participants and myself. Highlights included spending time together as a group, young energy on the land, and evening workshops. The participants and the community expressed joy in the frequent community meals, and it was good to see so much of each other. The workshops were wonderful, participants were engaged, and various members were happy to be sharing their skills with others.

The Beans enjoyed going to Quaker meeting for worship, blueberry picking, learning about Quaker decision making, wood chopping, gardening, hiking, playing frisbee, acro-yoga, workshops, and foraging. On the part of the community, we were reminded how much we value youthful energy, curious minds, and the opportunity to share our values, knowledge and dreams.

The Beans got into a car accident on the first Saturday of the program, and the event ended up being difficult for the group but also positive. After the accident, the Beans were able to get real-life practice dealing with “crisis-in-community.” With help from Dee and Jens, we had a couple meetings and worked through, as best we could, the post-accident feelings. While this was not hoped for, it ended up being a valuable experience for everyone involved.

The program was a positive experience, and many of us expressed interest in having similar events in the future. I appreciated the opportunity to construct and run a program for the first time, and all of the support I received from QIVC, Quaker Intentional Village Project (QIVP), Old Chatham Quaker Meeting and our wider community.

Here are a few of the activities we did:

- Kanban board + Self-directed programming
- Slideshow about QIVC
- Gardening and foraging
- Replanting baby walnut trees
- “How to Run a Good Meeting” Workshop
- Quaker process workshop
- International Humanitarian Aid workshop
- Acro Yoga
- Making benches and stools
- Blueberry picking and jam making
- Chicken care, slaughter and processing
- Trivia night in Chatham, music festival at Beer Diviner
- Tiny Hut space clearing + Fairy houses
- Fertility awareness discussion
- Community dinners, breakfasts and potluck
- Honey extraction
- Meeting for Worship at Old Chatham Monthly Meeting
- Visits to Abode of the Message and Cantine’s Island Cohousing
- Sunday concert at food co-op
- Tanglewood concert
- Harvey Mountain Blueberry festival
- Rock collecting
- Wood chopping and stacking

Wintergreen. Checkerberry. Mountain-tea.

He who seeks the cool shade of the evergreens on a hot July day is likely to discover the nodding wax-like flowers of this little plant. They are delicate and pretty, with a background of shining leaves. These leaves when young have a pleasant aromatic flavor similar to that of the sweet birch; they are sometimes used as a substitute for tea. The bright red berries are also edible and savory, and are much appreciated by the hungry birds and deer during the winter. If not thus consumed they remain upon the plant until the following spring, when they either drop or rot upon the stem, thus allowing the seeds to escape.

- from *How to Know the Wild Flowers* by Mrs. William Starr Dana

On the Concept of Fairness

by Noah Palmer

"I don't believe in fairness." One member speaks boldly at our recent community retreat.

That got me thinking. Things are not fair. They never are. Could we learn to abandon the idea of fairness? Instead, let's go for the guiding intentions of love and spirit, and do our work in the world with openness, allowing new standards of collective goodness to emerge in its place.

If we abandon fairness, then leadings from the heart in relationship become evident, and we don't need to revert to old and dry measures. If we abandon fairness, then "the way things are" - the ground of being - becomes stable and secure, which is particularly important when helping children to become grounded in their disappointment that "things are not fair."

Is there a way to communicate and achieve equality without talking about fairness? Or are Equality and Fairness two sides of the same rusty coin that has lost its value? Is there a way to communicate what it means to distribute things in a certain way? Or why we distribute them in such a way?

Perhaps this is part of a larger discussion: how do we embody the values we want to live by without clinging to them? How do we act from a place of love without stereotyping our values and having them become hardened, spiritualized clichés of themselves? It seems that clinging onto any quantitative measure, fairness or other, is a form of spiritual death. Payback, tit for tat, equality, justice, even freedom as a measurable concept can destabilize us.

So, when the kids ask why one got slightly more snack than the other, or more time with a toy than the other, let's not invoke fairness. Let's invoke solidity and a sense of reality - that's how it is sometimes, it's ok, you will have your time. This is how the universe just is.

And when we talk about balance in our relationships, we should not cling to "Balance." Love comes before Balance, or Equality, or Fairness. It's like the gift circle - we do loving things for each other because we love each other, not because of some sense of accumulated debt. What goes around comes around.



Top left: *Phallus rubicundus* eggs
Top right: *Phallus rubicundus* one day later, hatched



Our Little Free Library: A Few Titles

- The Bromeliad Trilogy* by Terry Pratchett
- The Art Forger* by B. A. Shapiro
- Opening Belle* by Maureen Sherry
- Under a Dark Summer Sky* by Vanessa Lafaye
- Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolfe?* by Edward Albee
- The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* by Stieg Larsson
- The Gardens of Light* by Amin Maalouf
- The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri

Click [here](#) to learn about Little Free Libraries.



Land Values

By Hana Askren

The last year we still had sheep, I gathered the hides after slaughter and laid them out to dry. That first day I used gloves to protect my hands from the smears of blood, the grease, the smell of once-living animal. Later, after I had spent more time with the hides, sprinkling salt over them, constantly moving them to keep them from rats and weather, I disregarded the gloves and simply washed my hands afterward. The lanolin made my hands soft.

It was a struggle, first moving them from where they were laid out on the grass, to the wood storage in the machine shed, to slung over the old fence, to my very own basement. They were heavy. Each one almost ten pounds at first, later losing half or more of their weight as they dried. I got to know them individually - this one with longer, fluffier wool, that one with short, crimped wool in two colors. Some were much smaller. Some were crusted with burrs and other seeds, and some were fairly clean. I had 21 at first but I lost a few to the rats.

You can buy a 2'x3' sheepskin rug on the internet for \$48.99 plus free shipping. By the time I was ready to send them to be tanned, I had already spent some money on salt and a lot of time and effort, and that didn't include the vast amount of time Jens had spent caring for the animals, bringing them fresh water every day, making sure the fence was energized and checking for ant nests in the solar panels, moving that fence among the burdock and milkweed and bedstraw every few days. The contribution of the land was in those hides too - the sun in the grass and the minerals the sheep had eaten, the shade under the pines, the debt that financed the land purchase, debt that is still carried by QIVC today.

Still, I bundled them up in boxes and convinced Sandy to drive them to Pennsylvania, and convinced her and others to pick up the finished hides and drive them back. Gas, wear and tear on the car, the hassle of navigating to a new place.

They came back absolutely gorgeous. Every nuance of color and crimp was on display in these incredible things, and you could feel that they came from something living. I paid the tanner about \$65 each and I

consider it worth every penny.

My original idea had been to sell them as a QIVC fundraiser. But what was the correct price? What value, in dollar terms, had the sun stored in the grass that nourished the animal and had miraculously been transubstantiated into this wool? How much of a premium should I add for the extra checking and care Jens gave during lambing season? Should I use the IRS calculation for the mileage of driving and drop-off? Would it be reasonable to tack something on for the ongoing cost of debt service, without which we would not be living on this land? Do I include the cost of salt?

I get to thinking about those \$48.99 plus free shipping hides. I can't help thinking that there must be suffering in the background that allows them to be sold so cheaply, suffering of the land and of the people and perhaps the animals evicted from the trees felled on the drilling site that produced the hydrocarbons that fueled the ship that brought them over from China. And I think about other products that we can purchase for a few dollars, and wonder at whose expense.

And now, my closet is full of beautiful sheepskins that I can't bring myself to put a price on. But they are durable products of this beautiful land, and clearness always comes if you wait long enough.



The Prompting

by Bob Elmendorf

Be still my heart for another heart is beating,
be still my breath another chest does rise.
Cease looking, another has your eyes,
no listening save for what has stopped retreating.
No voice for all syllables are fleeting,
no thought to ambush you in wild surprise.
No touch no smile no smell no taste no cry,
each wound you have another now is healing.

Wings lift to soar above their earth
the domain of sky its sun, moon and stars
celebrate the second of your births.
With each infant's face God has gone so far
to form a look that ends its mother's search.
Call on your divine and the unfamiliar.

Our Five Intentions

We believe conscious culture creation in community can be a means to advance our intentions:

1. To live in worship, increasing our mindfulness, spiritual focus, and God-centeredness by intertwining our daily lives with others who share these intentions.
2. To create a village setting that values and engages participation by people of all ages, expands our experience of family, and supports our expression in the world.
3. To create wealth that embodies integrity and Truth by carefully examining our engagement in the current economic order and stepping away from its destructive elements.
4. To live in unity & harmony with the earth by considering the near and far environmental impact of our actions while striving for thriving.
5. To include a good measure of joy, fun, creativity, and service in our lives.

We believe that our community's success in achieving these five intentions will be aided by membership diverse in race, age, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, and economic situations, and therefore it is our aim to gather a community whose members are diverse in these ways as well as others.

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