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This Issue’s Theme:

Blue Boat Home - Our Earth

May 2022

Issue 11

Redwood Circle

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City



When we decided on the theme for this issue “Blue Boat Home,” we looked into the history of the song that is dubbed the “Freebird” of Unitarian Universalism, meaning that it is a hugely popular song in UU gatherings that folks play again and again. Written by Peter Mayer and Rowland Huw Prichard, the melody comes from an old Welsh hymn “Hyfrydol” meaning “delightful, agreeable, pleasing, pleasant, beautiful, fair, fine; sweet, melodious.” Mayer is an active singer and songwriter in Minnesota while the melody of the hymn goes back to the mid 1800’s. Mayer also writes songs about “dress hats,

pumpkins and pajamas, and other important stuff.” Blue Boat Home celebrates the fragile beauty of our planet in a spirit and rhytm that feels like a boat on the water: “... I give thanks to the waves upholding me/Hail the great winds urging me on/Greet the infinite sea before me...” is a UU anthem which connects us to each other as we sing about a spiritual connection with the earth.

If you’d like to hear Blue Boat Home, [follow this link for a variety of versions.](#)

Come, sail with us! - UUFRC Zine Team

Welcome to our eleventh Redwood Circle zine. The theme is **BLUE BOAT HOME**. We are exploring what means to be living on this beautiful, fragile planet. In this issue you will learn more about Lillian Svec, our outgoing Interim Director of Youth and Families. You will find inspiration in what our families are doing to care for the planet as well as a list of books and films to explore. Learn about how UUFRC joins with Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action (PICA). Some members will delight you with climate/earth based poems. And finally, our Circle of Life celebrates what is happening in the lives of UUFRCers and the joyful Installation of Rev. Brian, which we celebrated on May 1st.

Our next issue will be **Rest and Refresh**, focusing on how we choose to take a break, recharge, reset our lives. Please reach out to us if you have something you’d like us to explore. We welcome your suggestions for articles in this and future issues. Contact us at zine@uufrc.org.



The Zine Team, some holding a bit of nature, meeting for the current issue (Clockwise: Beth Harrison, Susie Idzik, Sally Mentzer, David Vallerger, Jeanne DeShazo, JoAn Vaughan)

LILLIAN SVEC, UUFRC'S INTERIM DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY (DYAF)
AND MEMBER

By Beth Harrison



Lillian Svec

As Lillian Svec enters the last phase of her role as UUFRC's Interim Director of Youth and Family (DYAF), I spoke with her about her experience of taking on this important position at such a critical time in our fellowship.

Picture the climbing tree to the left of UUFRC's

front entrance. It's the height of "lockdown" in the fall of 2020, before vaccines and variants, when most of us spent most of our time inside in front of computer screens. The neighborhood is quiet and UUFRC's windows are dark. But draped on the tree's branches are colorful decorations—bright paper strings, origami cranes, flower chains—all signs of activity and community life.

Decorating our tree was our first UUFRC All Ages Activities during the pandemic, and for Lillian, it symbolized what became so important for our community and her role as DYAF. "It helped to keep our community spirit alive," she observed, "Not just for ourselves but for our neighbors as well. And it inspired joy and surprise for everyone who saw it."

Lillian included a monthly slideshow of the All Ages Activity in our online worship services and paired it with reading a children's book that tied in with the theme of the activity. Other popular All Ages Activities included painting rocks with messages of hope, decking the tree with "gratitude ribbons," and making "seed bombs" for planting wildflowers to feed bee and insect pollinators in our area.

She took this emphasis on intergenerational community building into devising Religious Education

activities during the next two years. Planning and executing virtual Religious Education classes for our children and youth was quite challenging during 2020 - 2021, but by collaborating with UU San Mateo's Director of Lifespan Faith Engagement, Tanya Webster, Lillian was able to offer a full range of programs for our UUFRC families and also taught two of the online classes.

Another challenge and "pivot" occurred in fall 2021 when a new virus surge made returning to in person classes at UUFRC problematic. Lillian found a social-emotional based curriculum that could be taught outdoors and quickly figured out how to "build" outdoor classrooms for two different age cohorts of children. You may have encountered our fourth through eighth graders gathered in a circle in our front garden learning mindfulness techniques or heard giggles from preschoolers through first-graders in the back playground.

In the meantime, Lillian planned a comprehensive OWL (Our Whole Lives) curriculum for the spring term. This also required creative thinking and flexibility as another virus surge delayed the start of the program, and the sensitive nature of the course required indoor classrooms. We have a robust group of participants attending this spring in two classes: kindergarten to first grade and fifth through seventh-grades. More families have also joined in other UUFRC events such as our Work Day and All Ages Active outings. Lillian observed: "It was critical that we offer OWL classes this year. For the little ones, the curriculum is specific to their maturity-level now and for the older ones, puberty doesn't wait!"

A major component of Lillian's Interim DYAF position was envisioning a new approach to UUFRC's religious education. When she was hired in October 2020,

**LILLIAN SVEC, UUFRC'S INTERIM DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY (DYAF)
AND MEMBER (CONTINUED)**

Lillian was excited about bringing her expertise in design thinking to the planning process. "I knew our program needed to change radically in order to survive," she explained. "I volunteered in our RE program for over 10 years, following my son Griffin from preschool through 8th grade as an RE instructor, and then I served as a youth advisor and on the Youth and Family Committee."

When Lillian began working with volunteers for the Children and Youth and Family Visioning Task Force (CYFVTF) she had no idea it would be re-designing our whole Sunday worship program as an inter-generational experience. That realization evolved for the whole group as members researched programs at other UU churches, interviewed UUFRC and unaffiliated families and used design thinking methods of "ideation" to consider different possible new approaches to re-vitalizing our programs. Facilitating task force meetings over six months mostly online provided another challenge: how to adapt a hands-on interactive design process to virtual interaction. Nonetheless, with Lillian's guidance, the task force completed its mission and gave both in person and online presentations of its proposal to our congregation last month.

Passing the torch to Maeve Knoth as the chair of our new "implementation team," Lillian feels satisfied for many reasons: for the design process she introduced, the dedication of the task force members, and the support and trust of our fellowship in moving forward with the program.

What's next for Lillian after she finishes her tenure in June? "I hope to take this experience and the leadership skills I've developed to a new context," she reflected. "I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our UUFRC community as DYAF during these two pandemic years. I've strived to support our children, youth and families and the larger congregation, helping members and friends stay connected and I am indebted to the many, many people who have helped me in this role."

Lillian looks forward to seeing UUFRC "experiment with the new Sunday worship model developed by the CYFVTF and hopes it will help the community grow, thrive and make a difference in the world." Quoting from her Annual Report to the UUFRC Board, she affirms: "the greatest gift we can give to the future is to prepare our children to take on the challenges they'll face, as well as to find joy, purpose and meaning in life. Our UU faith provides an excellent platform for this important multigenerational work."



UUFRC FAMILIES CARE FOR OUR BLUE BOAT HOME

Here is what our UUFRC families, children and youth say about protecting our “blue boat home.”

From the Page Goslee family (Tovis, George, Zev, Milo)

One thing our family does for the earth is try not to buy things in single-use plastic. We do this because we care a lot about the oceans. Right now 14 million tons of plastic end up in the oceans every year, which is bad for ocean life. For a while the hardest plastic to avoid was yogurt containers. Now mom makes yogurt so we don't have to buy it. We sometimes participate in plastic clean-ups and ocean sweeps to collect trash and count up which companies are making the plastic that ends up as litter. Plastic water bottles are the most common. We sometimes make lemonade with our own lemons and sell it at the top of our driveway and give the money to Ocean Clean-Up. We also have a vegetable garden and some fruit trees, and we don't use chemicals on them. We have chickens so don't have to buy eggs in plastic or from factory farms. Last year we sold my dad's car and leased an electric car. We mostly just drive the electric car now. Tovis is a vegetarian and George mostly is too, and we don't eat fish.



Photo by Anastasia Taioglou on Unsplash



From the Frank family (Zoe, Bill, Isabelle)

Zoe, Isabelle, Bill and I try to do our part. We have an EV vehicle, walk to school most days, compost and recycle. We like to grow things although there is no formal garden at our new place yet. That is our project for this summer. We try to limit disposable items where we can. We teach our girls about water conservation and being aware of the natural world and limited resources around them.

From the Stewart Williams Family (Sarah, Oren, Gibson, Connor)

Our family is so grateful for our “blue-boat home.” Sarah got her PhD in chemical engineering and has dedicated her career to improving electrochemical systems like batteries and fuel cells for transportation. When Sarah met Oren, he was driving an early Prius - and they soon learned they shared many similar values, including vegetarianism. Oren is dedicated to vegan fashion and shops for clothing with an eye for sustainability. We give to charities like Environment California and Greenpeace. And we try to care for our planet by lifting people up through music, which is another passion of ours. Oren drums in the indie rock band, Pirate Radio, and Sarah sings and plays guitar. We always strive to do more - and look forward to volunteering with Each Green Corner as a family to tend urban gardens and collect food that would waste otherwise. We are also saving up for solar panels when it comes time to replace our roof in a few years. A quick tip for friends - check out carboncounter.com when shopping for your next car.

**From the Laderman-Jones Family
(Barbie, Jason, Sabastian)**

Our family tries to practice good stewardship of the earth in many different ways, which affect nearly every aspect of our lives. Most importantly, we eat a mostly plant-based diet to reduce our carbon footprint, as well as reduce suffering of animals. We do still consume some animal products, and opt for certified-humane dairy and eggs from our own chickens or other backyard flocks. Another big goal is to live off cleaner energy by installing solar panels, driving electric vehicles, taking public transit when possible and converting over to an induction cooktop. We also avoid using air-conditioning and have smart-thermostats, and participate in Ohm-Hours, a program to reduce energy usage when demand peaks to prevent “dirty” power-plants coming online. We are committed recyclers and composters. We reduce single-use, difficult-to-recycle materials whenever possible by always refusing the bag, and electing products with little to no packaging, or opting for aluminum, glass or compostable packaging. Also, we re-use whatever we can—produce bags, gift wrap, foil, paper bags, straws, plastic cutlery, envelopes, etc. Rather than opting for cheap “throw-away” goods, we purchase durable products and consider the least-carbon-emitting manner of getting the products. We try to conserve water by using a smart watering system for our yard and, when we eat out, we bring our water bottles and pour any leftover water from our glasses into our bottles.

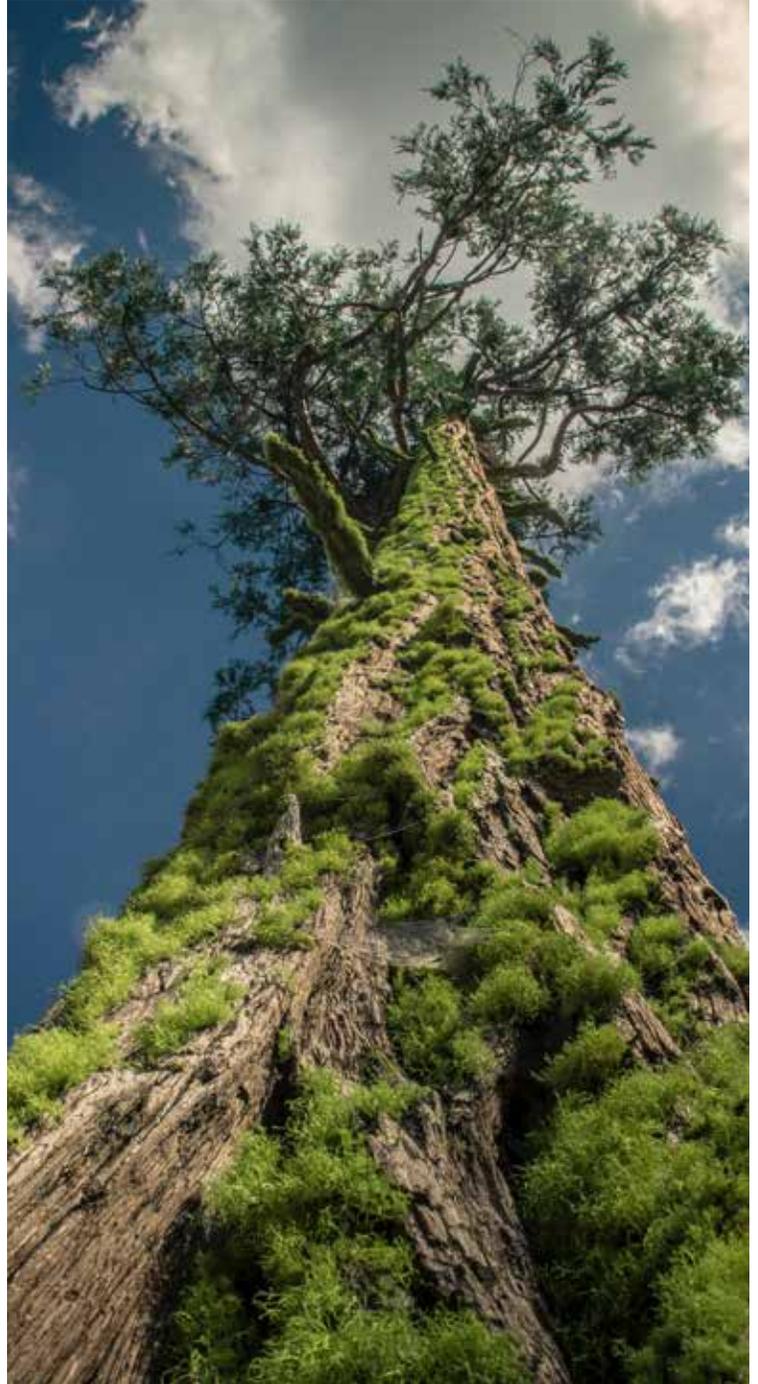


Photo by Joe Dudeck on Unsplash

HOW UUFRC PARTICIPATES IN PICA (PENINSULA INTERFAITH CLIMATE ACTION)

By Debbie Mytels



Debbie Mytels

Did you know that UUFRC is part of a local interfaith organization that is focused on protecting earth's climate? Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action (PICA) began in 2014 when people got together from a dozen Mid-Peninsula congregations

who were eager to engage their members in climate protection activities. Since then, the group has expanded to include representatives from over two dozen faith groups from San Mateo to Los Gatos.

PICA's mission is to protect humanity and all Creation from the disasters caused by climate change. PICA members do this in three ways: eliminating carbon emissions from their facilities, educating their members and the general public about climate change and its solutions, and working with elected officials to support a renewable energy economy.

When the group began, UUFRC was the only congregation that had solar panels on its roof. By now, however, about half of the congregations are crowned by solar -- with more putting them up this year! Over the years, members have traded tips on fund-raising for solar panels, shared plans for converting lawns to meditation gardens planted with California natives, and learned about low-cost ways to install EV chargers in their parking lots. Currently, a couple of congregations -- including our UU friends in Palo Alto -- are considering a resolution similar to one passed by the Trinity Episcopal Church in Menlo Park, which made a plan to switch all their gas-burning equipment to electric when they stop working.

PICA's monthly meetings include educational presentations that offer ideas and inspiration for local congregations. One talk detailed how the Campus Lutheran Church created their Indigenous Land

Acknowledgement statement. Another speaker was from Home Intel, which offers a free, online home energy analysis with recommendations for reducing your home energy use. This fall, Len Materman from San Mateo County's One Shoreline explained how they are coordinating efforts by Bayside cities to reduce the negative impact of sea level rise.

Lastly, as a "working group" of California Interfaith Power and Light (CIPL), PICA engages its congregations to support current legislation in Sacramento that expands use of renewable energy and reduces carbon emissions. PICA prepares petitions and letters for congregation members to let our elected reps know our concerns about protecting Earth's climate for future generations -- and the



need to do this in an equitable way. Examples of this include the recent letter-writing campaign to encourage Governor Newsom and the CA Public Utilities Commission to rescind the proposal to significantly raise the monthly fee paid by rooftop solar customers -- like UUFRC!

If you have suggestions or would like to get involved, please contact UUFRC member Debbie Mytels at debbie.mytels@gmail.com

POETRY CORNER: POEMS ABOUT OUR BLUE BOAT HOME

The Windy Day

Such a mighty wind
Has stolen my hat with it
But the air is fresh

—Jen Gill



Origin Story

God created all of this
He was washing dishes
And dropped a blue
Fiestaware plate
One fragment
Became the Earth

—John Anning

Grandmother Earth

for Salvina Gaia

Wizened as an apple witch,
three teeth in her bottom gum,
sipping vino rosso
from a peanut butter jar --
she has nothing
for the kids from the city,
the children of her youngest son.
They don't speak her language,
they rush and bawl like sparrows,
they hunt cookies and Coke.
There is no joy in continuity
here in the dark clays and muds,
the thick woods of Memphis.
She yearns for the Piedmont,
the rows of cypress in military file,
the fields of wheat and beans,
the hills of grapes,
the sky open to the giant Alps.
On the rise to the south
the train for Rome packing the valley's poor away
to Argentina and Australia and the American South.
The poor, they are too much with us,
the Dago waste which sweetens
the fields of this world.

—Lee Rossi



Higgledy Piggledy

Zine master Beth implored
Detail your journey on
Our blue boat home

Semi-acknowledging
Lack of creativeness
Herewith submitted my
One Earth Day poem

—Alex Stagner

Wax-y-Wing

Oh what a bird is the wax-y-wing!
The tips of their wings
are so eye-catching.
Yellow tail you can't
miss,
Face made up like
KISS,
And a song like a
basement door
creaking!



—Susan Kibre (written April 2021)

Zip!

Baby birds on twigs a-twitter,
bumble-bees in blossom-cups
gathering honey's gritty ingredients:
tokens of spring-tide. And stretched-out cats!
But one that warms my heart after winter
in particular, well I'll tell you:
little lizards lying so still
on sun-warm rocks, 'til they see you--zip!

—Nick Kibre

When are you from?

"When are you from?" she asks, with bemused awareness of the deluge of gifts that will soon light up the Comments section.

I am from One Who Is Becoming, with vulnerability to say, "Let there be heat" and willingness to repeat the experiment as often as it takes.

I am from the Great Flaring Forth, a universe of elementary particles, willing to wait 150 million years to respond to desire and bond atoms.

I am from first generation stars, forging the periodic table in their bellies and giving their lives in spectacular supernovae, so second generation stars can form planets.

I am from Sun and Gaia, entangled in temperature regulation (another exercise in patience); to this day, a model for mothers and children everywhere.

I am from Ariel, the first prokaryotic cell, appearing without explanation in the sea, after millions of years of gestation in a crucible incubator of Ur-Lightning.

I am from Adams, First Men all, waking up conscious as the first fruit drops from the tree, blaming the Woman for each inevitable transgression.

I am from Original Blessing, gift of life, animism of indigenous tribes, lighting the whole sky with a banner of stars proclaiming "I live!" "I burn!" "I give!"

I am from the conquerors, the colonizers, the conquered, and the colonized, hungry and fed, slaving and resisting, rule-making and administering, meaning-makers all.

I am from coyote, raven, and rabbit, trickster archetypes, full of insistence upon appetite, with resilience and ingenuity to snatch bait without tripping traps.

I am from the King's Court, an artist sheltered from the storm and all manner of cruelties, speaking truth to power, expressly and subversively, until favor is withdrawn.

I am from peasant farmers who never saw the inside of the King's Court, dying on someone else's land with arrows in their backs.

I am from Celtic poets and songsters, dancing about their stone architectures with dreams of liberation and hope that abide, unrestricted by time and place.

I am from Puritans who parlayed molasses into rum and loaded it with bibles onto slave ships, freeing themselves to hang witches as they pleased; and their descendants, who disowned my grandfather for marrying an Irish girl.

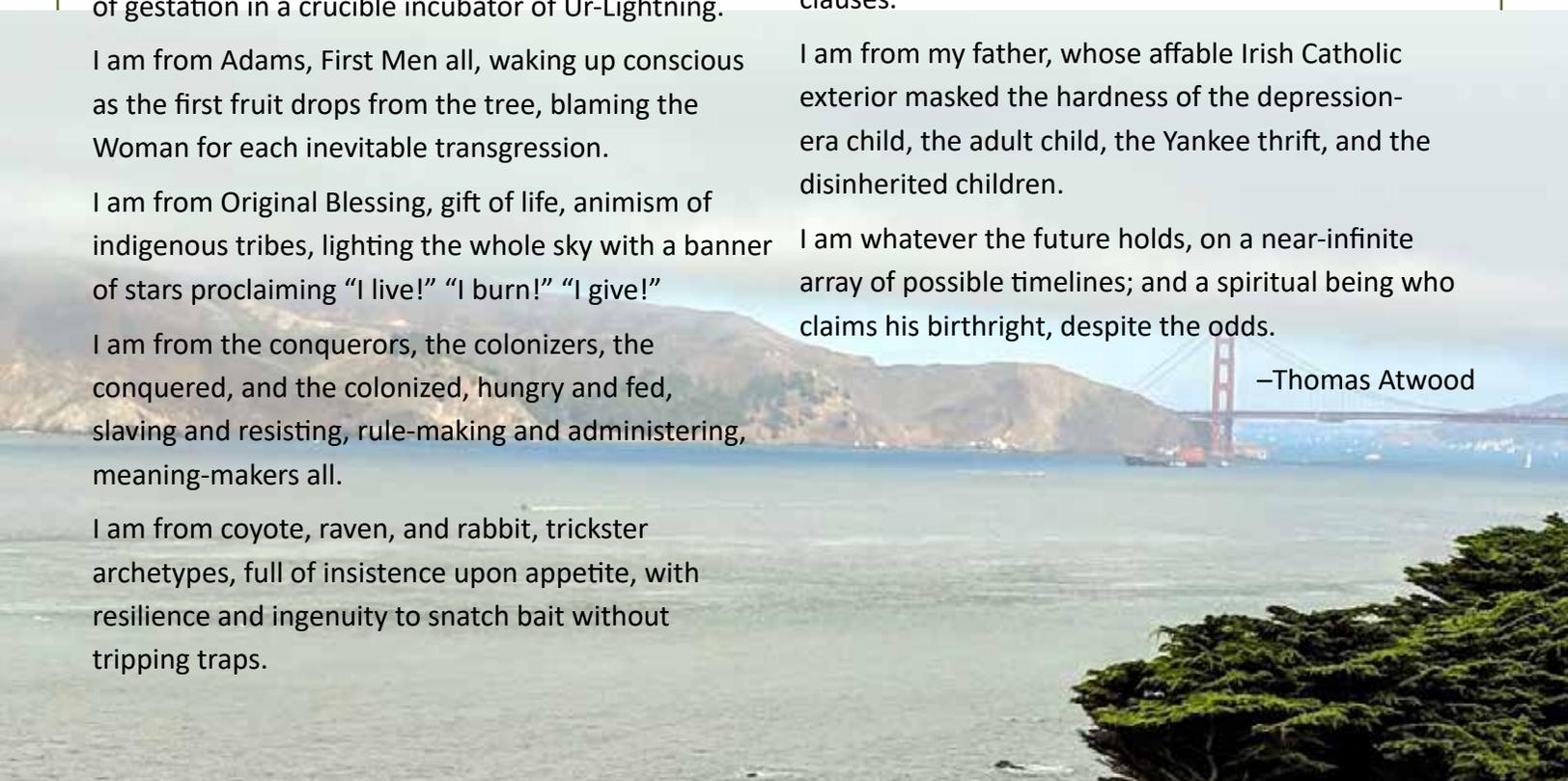
I am from addled French aristocracy, inbreeding far too often and long, jewels sewn into the linings of dresses on ships headed for New France.

I am from 19th-century Hermetic initiates, writing 300-page books on alchemy, able to make the most fascinating of subjects turgid with subordinate clauses.

I am from my father, whose affable Irish Catholic exterior masked the hardness of the depression-era child, the adult child, the Yankee thrift, and the disinherited children.

I am whatever the future holds, on a near-infinite array of possible timelines; and a spiritual being who claims his birthright, despite the odds.

—Thomas Atwood





HELP PROTECT EARTH'S CLIMATE

To curb climate disruption, we have to tackle the things that produce the biggest carbon emissions — and make these changes quickly. Here are the top priorities:

1. Stop using electricity from fossil fuels: You can increase your carbon-free electricity to 100% by signing up for PCE's Eco100 rate. See www.peninsulacleanenergy.com/opt-up/
2. Stop using gasoline for transportation:
 - a. Buy or lease an electric vehicle. Learn about them at the non-profit Acterra's GoEV! programs where you can meet with EV owners, learn about purchase incentives, and even discover rebates for buying used EVs. See www.acterra.org/goev
 - b. Get a Clipper card to make using public transportation easy -- and get a reduced fare! Go to www.clippercard.com to request your personal card.
 - c. Tune-up that bicycle in the garage and use it for those short trips to the store. Join the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition to learn more about safe bike riding for people of all ages.
3. Switch appliances from gas to electricity:
 - a. Plan now to change your gas hot water heater to an electric heat pump model, which is more efficient than older electric models. Order and get one installed before your older gas model fails; with a rebate from PCE your cost will be about the same as a gas replacement.
 - b. Try out an induction cook-top for cooking. Contact me to borrow one for two weeks to see how you like it.
 - c. Change your gas-burning furnace to a heat pump model — and get an air conditioner at the same time! These systems can also filter indoor air when there's heavy smoke or smog outside.

Contact Debbie Mytels at debbie.mytels@gmail.com for more information about these options.

READ AND SEE: BOOKS AND FILMS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

UUFRC's Social Action Committee assembled an annotated list of books and films about climate change. Here are a few excerpts from each list. You can access both lists via the UUFRC website: [UUFRC SAC annotated lists](#). Thanks to Marianna Raymond for compiling and editing the book list and Philip Sanfilippo for the film list.

Recommended Books, by Marianna Raymond
Hawken, Paul ed. **Drawdown: the most comprehensive plan ever proposed to reverse global warming.**

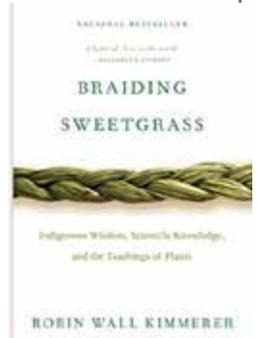


Penguin Books, 2017. This generously illustrated and meticulously researched book is a compendium of essays detailing the 80 impactful solutions to both reduce greenhouse emissions and sequester carbon in soils and vegetation. The goal is to achieve “drawdown”-- that point at which greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere peak and start to come down. One major tenet of the book is that the climate crisis cannot be solved solely by implementing wind and solar energy or the use of electric vehicles and appliances, although those are by no means discounted. The wide-ranging and often place-based solutions are organized into sections including: energy, food, women and girls, buildings and cities, land use, and transportation. After each entry, it has been calculated how many metric tons of greenhouse gas can be drawn down by that particular action.

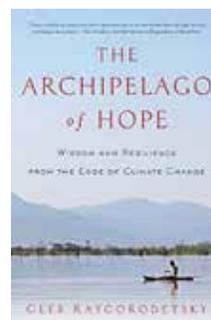
The solutions are ranked in terms of their impact. Refrigerant Management was at the top of the list! The section on food may surprise the reader. In this volume and his follow-up book, the ever-hopeful and ebullient Hawken recognizes the enormity of the problem, while still believing humans can rise to the occasion.

Kimmerer, Robin Wall. **Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants.** Milkweed Editions, 2013.

This is a collection of essays in which Kimmerer, drawing on her experience as a mother, botanist, professor, and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, delights us with her deep understanding of the natural world and our kinship with it. She does so in graceful, transcendent prose, always honoring earth's gifts and reminding us of indigenous wisdom. We seek to understand the nuanced and complex relationships in nature, be grateful, never take more than half, find ways to nurture and give back.



A common thread throughout is that there need not be a separation between modern science and traditional wisdom and legend, between the material and spiritual world. We are a part of the animate world, not above it or more worthy of respect and moral concern. We should all have a professor like Kimmerer. In a couple of essays, she relates the story of a camping trip to a wetland with college students who had never truly gotten their hands dirty in the wild.. They dig in soft, clean humus for spruce roots, follow their long, pliant strands, note the entwined, colorful fungal pathways, and finally weave baskets with their collected roots.



Raycorodetsky, Gleb. **The Archipelago of Hope: Wisdom and Resilience from the Edge of Climate Change.** Pegasus Books, 2017.

Early on in this brutally honest, yet hopeful, narrative, author Raycorodetsky informs us that although

continued on next page

indigenous people comprise only 4% of the world's population, they are caretakers of more than a fifth of the earth's surface, with close to 80% of the planet's remaining biodiversity found on their traditional lands and in the seas upon which they depend for their way of life. In over two decades of travel, he gained friendships with an intimate knowledge of the people, immersing himself in their ways of life.

We meet the Skolt Sami of Finland, the Sapara of Ecuador, the Karen of Myanmar, and the Tla-o-qui-aht of Canada. Although we of the industrialized world are all facing climate change, habitat loss, and many forms of environmental degradation, the threat to indigenous people's very existence is cruelly felt every single day. They, who bear so little of the responsibility for climate chaos, must find ways to survive. They do this by being flexible and resilient and, at times employing modern technology, such as meteorological weather predictions to plan the best planting and harvesting times. Politically, they are gaining a voice in land use decisions. They have formed collaboratives and worked with both government and non-government agencies to reclaim some of their traditional lands, protect old growth forests, establish limits to logging, whaling and fishing, lobby against destructive mining on their land, restore degraded wetlands, and more. They are an "archipelago of hope" and humankind's best chance to understand how to take care of the earth.



Recommended Films, by Philip Sanfilippo

The True Cost

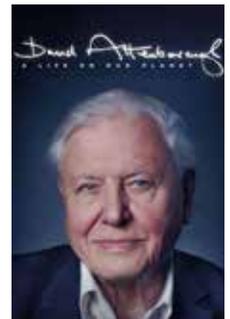
Topic: Fast Fashion, economic injustice, waste streams, industrial pollution
This is a story about clothing. It's about the clothes we wear, the people who make them, and the impact the industry is having on our world. The price of clothing has been decreasing for decades, while the human and environmental costs have grown dramatically.



This is a groundbreaking documentary film that pulls back the curtain on the untold story and asks us to consider, who really pays the price for our clothing?
View: via the filmmakers or on Netflix.

A Life on Our Planet

Topic: climate change, environmental destruction, mass extinction event. Learning to life with not in opposition to nature. David Attenborough recounts his life and the evolutionary history of life on Earth, to grieve the loss of wild places and offer a vision for the future. View: on Netflix.



2040



Topic: climate change; focus on solutions Concerned about his young daughter's future, filmmaker Damon Gameau travels the world in search of new approaches and solutions to climate change. He meets with innovators and changemakers in many fields to draw on their expertise. Many educational resources are listed on the web site. View: Apple TV, YouTube and other streaming or via the website.

CIRCLE OF LIFE

In each issue, we publish announcements of transitions of our members including: marriages, births, deaths, moves, graduations, job changes, anniversaries, retirements, significant birthdays, or whatever else members would like to share with the community.



by Sally Mentzer

Brett and Anna Dyer are proud of their son, Joseph, who is graduating from the University of Washington in Seattle with a double major in Business and Psychology. The very next work-day after graduation he will start an internship in Seattle with the marketing department for Lululemon, focusing on diversity and inclusion strategies.

Elizabeth and Lee Rossi share that their son, Leo, graduates this month from Birmingham Southern College, one of the fifty *Colleges That Change Lives*, with a double major in Economics and Media Studies. He refuses to say whether it changed his life. Because of the pandemic, Leo couldn't study abroad until his last semester, which he spent at the University of Limerick in Ireland. He said he found his time in Ireland a welcome diversion from education.

Eduardo and Erika Pretell are looking forward to attending daughter Sofia's graduation from Tufts the weekend of May 21st. Sofia majored in International Literary and Visual Studies (an interdisciplinary major combining Film and Media Studies with Spanish and Latin American Studies) and minored in Geological Sciences.

Joel Jensen's Celebration of Life: Many of us joined Joel's family, friends and colleagues on April 2nd at the San Mateo Garden center. Reverend Brian led the service which included fond memories of Joel and tributes from colleagues about his singular talent as an engineer. He will be missed. Joel's wife Kathy and his daughter Risa let us know that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Earth Justice or to the Sierra Club Foundation.

All Ages Active Activity (A4), Kayaking and Trash

Collection: March 19th over thirty UUFRCers of all ages met Saturday, for an activity that featured kayaking, community building, learning about the Redwood City Creek and Port, and trash clean-up.

The group met at BIAC (Bair Island Aquatic Center) on Maple Street where 21 participants launched in kayaks into the bay and paddled up Redwood Creek -- under Highway 101 and Veterans Blvd to end up near Kaiser Hospital where the creek goes into a culvert under the city. A parallel group of walkers crisscrossed the creek, waved at the kayakers, and picked up trash along the shore. Between the boaters and the walkers, 10 huge bags of trash were removed plus some bonus, barnacle-covered chunks of styrofoam. Finally, the outing was baptized by a steady rain for the final 30 minutes --that accelerated our scampering home for bowls of soup and hot showers.



All Ages Active Activity (A4), Train Ride: April 21st UUFRC'ers joined the Relay for Life fundraiser on the Niles Canyon train. This event was inspired by the combination of tribute to Susan Kibre and her death to cancer recently and a number of our members' passion for all-things-



trains. The Niles Canyon is gorgeous with steep California grassy, oak-tree-studded canyon walls. The historical trains, the Sunol Depot and the tracks winding over and back across the Alameda Creek

made it a memorable trip. The outing finished with a stop at Nathan and Nick's favorite ice cream parlor in Niles, another historic town nestled in the northeast corner of Fremont.



CIRCLE OF LIFE (CONTINUED) INSTALLATION OF REVEREND BRIAN FERGUSON

On May 1st over 100 guests in the Sanctuary and 35 virtual guests attended the joyous celebration of the installation of Reverend Brian Ferguson as the settled minister of UUFRC was witnessed by over 100 guests in the Sanctuary and 35 people virtually. Though Brian has been serving us since August of 2020, this service was deferred because of COVID restrictions. The service included beautiful music by our choir and some special music pieces by members of our fellowship.

Reverend Erin Walter, Executive Director, Executive Director, Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry & Community Minister, Wildflower Church, Austin, Texas, gave an inspiring sermon. She spoke of how Reverend Brian mentored her and encouraged her to weave music into her ministry. She reminded us that his favorite questions are: "What do you love and

what breaks your heart?" and that he encourages treating mistakes as learning experiences.

The Charge to the Minister was by another of Brian's Texas colleagues, Reverend Joanna Fontaine-Crawford, Minister of Live Oak Unitarian Universalist Church, Cedar Park, Texas. She gave him a 3 point charge:

1. Be in Beta, experiment, and don't be afraid of failure
2. Make leaders - you will need them in your shared ministry
3. Fight for freedom and justice and always have fun in the process.

Reverend Ellie Kilpatrick, former member UUFRC and now the minister at the Unitarian Church in Livermore, gave the Charge to the Congregation: trust Brian's goals and intentions even when we disagree with him as we build together a collaborative ministry. Our past interim minister, Dr. Rev. Gretchen Woods also participated.

To commemorate the occasion Brian was presented a unique quilted prayer stole by Cyndi Williamson.

Following the service a reception was held at the nearby Red Morton Park. Picnic tables were decorated with fresh flowers in mason jars. Beverages, homemade cookies and bars were donated by fellowship members and were complemented with a plentiful selection of catered hors d'oeuvres.

A special thank you to Jessica Stoutamire for the reception, to Jen Gill for handmade decorations in the sanctuary, to Chris DeCardy for organizing the service, and to John Anning for organizing the ensemble music pieces, as well as all the fellowship members who donated food, drink, music, and other services to make this a memorable occasion.



We know that some of you are struggling with something which concerns you and we hold you in our hearts as we send you light. Please know you are welcome to reach out to our pastoral care team members who offer emotional and spiritual support at: pastoralcare@uufrc.org. Or you may contact Rev. Brian at ministeratuufrc@gmail.com.



Our Blue Boat Home issue would not be complete without acknowledging the wonders of where we live. Our hiking groups, formal and informal, allow us to explore and enjoy the beauty of nature. My wife Leslie and I have participated in many of them and I asked others for their impressions:



Sometimes, after a few steps along the trail, I feel peaceful and alive. Other times, I cannot stop the insistent chatter about the chores I should be doing or release my unease about the latest crisis in the news. So then I deliberately try to engage my senses.

I ask, "What do I feel?" The warm sun on my shoulders, a cool breeze on my arms. "What do I smell?" Damp earth, musty undergrowth, pungent sage. "What do I hear?" Crunch of dry leaves under foot, wind sighing in the fir branches, the caw of a



crow. "What do I see?" Purple Blue-Eyed Grass, dappled sunlight and shadow on the worn path, a turkey vulture tipping back and forth riding an updraft.

At last, I can move out of my head and down into my body and my legs swing forward and back. Now I can be here in this moment. Present. *–Kaye Bonney*

Once a month UUFRC hikers, led by Kaye Bonney, set off to the east bay, south bay, coastside or Marin. With water bottles, lunches, sun hats and hiking shoes we spend a day marveling at the forests, the views and the flowers. Some go fast, some go slow and we all have a great time in the fresh air, engaging in conversations and sharing fellowship in nature. *–DeeDee Stovel*



I moved to Redwood City sixteen years ago and found UUFRC and Kaye Bonney's monthly Saturday hikes. It was a fantastic way to explore the Bay Area. How I wish I had taken a picture of every group and dated every trail map I saved. What a rich compendium it would be. *–Ellen Hill*

Hiking with other UUFRC'ers has provided me opportunities to get to know folks on a different level. The most memorable was the 13-miler through the SF Water District lands above the Crystal Springs reservoir. A long hike, but our group of 20 all completed the hike, thanks to the many diverse conversations along the way. *–Chris Fuller*



Throughout the pandemic and now many in our community are still out on the trails. Marina Rose leads hikes in Edgewood Park on weekday afternoons and lets people know where and when by posting to uufrc@groups.io, our UUFRC email group.