



# Chrysalis

Volume 1    Fall 2004

Newsletter of  
*The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World*  
at  
*Timberlake Farm*

***Teach the children.*** *We don't matter so much, but the children do. Show them daisies and the pale hepatica. Teach them the taste of sassafras and wintergreen. The lives of the blue sailors, mallow, sunbursts, the moccasin flowers. And the frisky ones - inkberry, lamb's-quarters, blueberries. And the aromatic ones - rosemary, oregano. Give them peppermint to put in their pockets as they go to school. Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit. Stand them in the stream, head them upstream, rejoice as they learn to love this green space they live in, its sticks and leaves and then the silent, beautiful blossoms.*

***Attention*** *is the beginning of devotion.*

~ Mary Oliver<sup>1</sup>

Dear Reader,

Looking back over the past year, surely all our efforts have been in the service of the imagination given by Mary Oliver above. We have decided to devote our entire initiative to teaching the children. We have changed our name and announced our intentions to the world through *Chrysalis*, through a new website, [beholdnature.org](http://beholdnature.org), through mailings, and through word of mouth.

We've thought long and hard about what it will take to teach the children. It will take teachers who understand and are not afraid to stand children in the stream. And so we offer a year-long Seventh Generation Teachers' Program to nurture the teachers.

It will take a deep understanding of a whole new way of knowing in educational practice, and so we have launched "A First Conversation" dialogue to bring together people who are engaged in an educational practice where "attention is the beginning of devotion."

It will take model programs for children and adolescents to set an example of what might come from "giving children the fields and the woods." And so we continue our Earth Guides, Tiny Kingdoms, and Nature Camp programs.

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and the Natural World

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And it will take a whole new orientation for college students who, perhaps more than the children, need “the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit.” And so we continue our Earth Guides program for college students and develop new possibilities for in-depth internships at the Center.

We have raised many friends along the way to help us on the journey.

The Weaver Foundation gave us a grant that enabled us to work with Marty Goldstein as a financial consultant and Richard Lewis as a program consultant throughout the year.

The Emily Monk-Davidson Foundation awarded us a grant for the second consecutive year to help us strengthen and develop the Seventh Generation Teachers’ Program. The perspectives of Joseph Cornell, Anthony Weston, Richard Lewis and Thomas Berry are an essential part of this program and were captured by gifted filmmaker Linda DiLorenzo in a video entitled “Another Way of Knowing,” funded by the Toleo Foundation.

Many folks came together to help us create our first annual benefit concert in honor of Thomas Berry. Through the Celtic music, song and storytelling of Peter Berry and Sarah Chowning, we celebrated Thomas’ vision that “the child awakens to a universe.”

Scott Davis, Executive Producer at UNC-TV, has worked tirelessly to donate his considerable expertise toward the creation of a fundraising video that will be indispensable to introducing our work to potential donors. So many people have come forward to donate their time, presence, soul and spirit to this initiative.

We have received grants from the United Arts Council and the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro in support of “The Bird of Imagining” Project that will put us in a partnership with the Touchstone Center in New York City and the Greensboro Public Library during the month of April 2005. The project will bring Touchstone’s “Bird of Imagining” exhibit of children’s art to the new Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library and will enable us to bring Richard Lewis and Center staff together with parents, children, teachers and arts educators in the greater Greensboro area.

We have also received a grant from the Jelly Foundation that will allow us to bring renowned New England artist, naturalist, educator and author Clare Walker Leslie to the Center for a day long workshop in "Keeping a Nature Journal," scheduled for April 30, 2005.

We are also pleased to announce that B'Nai Shalom Day School has received a grant from the Toleo Foundation to partner with the Center in a special design program in "Judaism and the Natural World" for the 2004-2005 school year.

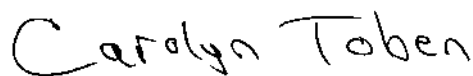
This issue of *Chrysalis* brings you the work of four middle school and high school teachers who have participated in our Seventh Generation Teachers Program. In "Honeysuckles Taste Best If You're With Friends," you will encounter the remarkable weaving of a one week intensive in imaginative understanding by Carolina Friends School teachers Emily Chamberlain and Annie Dwyer. In "Beyond Despair: Leading High School Students Back to Earth," you will follow Randolph Senzig's quest as a public high school science teacher for ways to bring his students back into a positive relationship with the earth. And, in "The Poetry of Nature" you will experience ninth graders' poetic response to Andrew Levitt's call to "Let the words enter from the natural world."

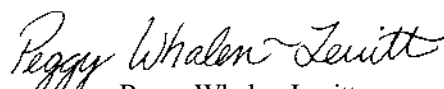
As you turn the pages, you will see how each of these teachers masterfully creates a situation within which students lend their attention to the natural world, translate a moment of attention into a creative remembering, and establish a deep sense of belonging to the natural world.

You will also find here an account by Jessica Towle of how her deepest questions went unanswered in high school and how, through her friendship with Thomas Berry, she discovered a way back to a sense of meaning. It is a piece that reminds us of the depth of questioning that resides in the hearts of young people today, if only they have the courage or are given the encouragement to speak the questions.

What is evident, as you read all these pieces, is that these teachers and students make visible a practice of heartfelt thinking, living thinking, imaginal thinking - a kind of knowing, and therefore knowledge, that comes from a participation with the world and leads to a sense of belonging to all of life. "Attention," truly, "is the beginning of devotion."

With warm regards,

  
Carolyn Toben

  
Peggy Whalen-Levitt

# Honeysuckles Taste Best If You're With Friends: "Imaginative Adventures Together"

About a decade ago, Carolina Friends School teachers Emily Chamberlain and Annie Dwyer attended a workshop at Timberlake Farm in "Imaginative Understanding" led by Richard Lewis, Founder of the Touchstone Center in New York City. Amidst the natural beauty of Timberlake Farm, Richard asked the teachers to explore together the following possibility: "The secret of my imagination is that the things in the universe are the things in me."

Reflecting on the experience with Richard, Emily said, "I really loved his notion that the imagination can take you deeper inside yourself - that the imagination enables you to make deep connections between inner and outer worlds." And Annie came away from the workshop with "the recognition that when you open up the imagination, you have to be willing to accept all that emerges - the dark as well as the light."

The workshop crystallized essential understandings for Annie and Emily in their lives as teachers at Carolina Friends School in Durham, NC. Emily, who teaches writing and personal growth classes in middle school, found a connecting thread for her Beginning Journal Writing class in Richard's idea that a symbolic "universe" exists within all of us. Annie, who teaches dance K-12, was reminded of the importance of being open to wherever her students' imagination takes them. "Rather than being fearful of what is there, I began to allow it to emerge - be shared." Annie and Emily, who had been teaching one term in the Middle School together each year, found that the experience with Richard enriched their collaborative journey. Writers and dancers became increasingly comfortable translating images from one mode of expression to another - from writing to movement and vice versa, as well as other forms of expression.

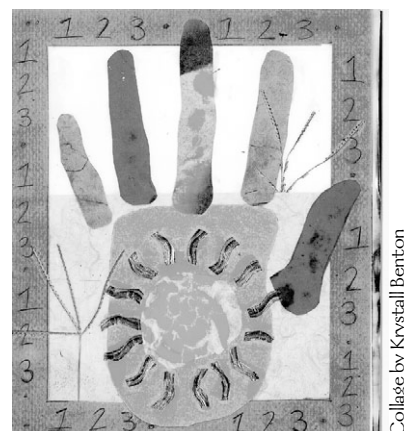
One of the most meaningful aspects of their collaboration is a one week intensive that Annie and Emily offer to middle school students, grades 5-8 at the end of the school year. Called "Imaginative Adventures Together," the intensive occurs during a special "Exploratorium" session at CFS and offers participants the opportunity "to explore the idea of weaving connections within ourselves, with other dancers and writers, and with the natural world." Two days of the intensive take place at Timberlake Farm Earth Sanctuary.

Students enter the world of the intensive before the first day of class. They are asked to select a journal to use for

the class and to mark it in some way that makes it their own. They are given a small open slide frame and asked to use it as a window to the natural world in order to find an image of things intertwining or woven together, an image of separateness, and an image of weight sharing. Then, they are asked to express each of these three images of separation/connection in either writing, drawing, or a combination of words and images.

In these ways, the students are invited into a practice of attention before they come together to form a learning community. This initial assignment brings them into a week where they will go deeper into the process of using writing, movement and art to deepen a sense of connection - a sense of how they can feel themselves in something outside themselves. As Emily said, "If you extend yourself in love to something outside yourself, it becomes part of you and you become part of it."

Each day of the intensive begins with Julia Cameron's practice of "morning pages" - a time to settle in and access inner creativity. Throughout the day, students write and dance in the context of the natural world, flowing easily between different forms of expression. For example, in one magical moment, the group choreographed a dance together down at the creek that crosses the Creeping Cedar Trail. They talked about gesture, using images from the earth sanctuary. These images from the natural world were then translated into intricate dance phrases. Later, they captured the experience in words and visual images in their journals. Each evening, the students are asked to let a moment from the day emerge and translate the specifics of that remembrance into a collage. This visual memory can be about a deepening connection with self, each other, dance, writing or the natural world.



Reading the students' own reflections on the week they shared together, one is struck by the transformations that occurred - by the ways in which they deepened their capacities for an attentive presence to the natural world, to themselves and to each other - and by their recognition that something meaningful had happened here, something lasting, both fun and profound:

*I have learned how to appreciate what is around me... how to think in different ways... to appreciate how things are... to look at things in different ways... that I have a creative mind and I should use it more.*

~ Emily Ashley

*I've relearned about finding the quiet beauty in things, about stretching my abilities and exploring different challenges, about appreciating people and the light they bring into the world, about looking, dancing, searching, and writing from inside of your true self and connecting with everything around you. Most of all, I relearned the beauty of simplicity and silence and connectedness. Walking through the woods in silence and feeling everything reach out and surround me in color and light and warmth was unforgettable. Everything seemed like an important part of me that I needed to see.*

~ Krystall Benton

*I feel as though we have accomplished so much as individuals and as a group, forming a family where everyone feels safe. Every walk, every sound, every person, every movement, every word, every laugh, every smile, I frame in my memory, preserving it forever.*

~ Betsy Bertram

*I have learned that catching baby frogs is harder than it looks... if you listen closely, you can hear more than what is there... nature decorates better than ornaments ever could... when you share with others it feels better than holding it in... how to do capoeira and what it was . . . what a breath phrase is and how to do one... to respect nature more... to let my pen flow across the page... to make collage about many things... to feel my dance.*

~ Miles Bonsignore

*...I learned its okay to be yourself because people will probably like you more... I never really knew how much I liked dance until I took this exploratorium... And when we did morning pages, it was so magical, as Emily said - so different from just writing in your journal anytime.*

~ Emma Boulding



Collage by Terra Swanson

*I've learned to be a better friend, to branch out. I have discovered that nature's beauty is so amazing that there is nothing anything or anyone can do about it. I have grown up a lot in this class and thought a lot about who I want to be because I have learned that there is more to me than I know right now. The natural world has made me so happy, there is not even a word for it.*

~ Ellie Dalsheimer

*I have learned so much over this week, but the way and what I have learned is so hard to explain. I have learned about nature, but you could say I already knew about it. But you taught it a different way. It wasn't really about nature and the science of it, more of the beauty... I loved nature before, but now I see it different... I think it is that I see it different when I'm writing about it!*

~ Kathryn Diamant



*I have had a wonderful time! I thank you both for an invitation to dance and journal and write in the outdoors as a class. The outdoors mean so much to me. Being able to take this class, I have learned how to see the usual nature through the eyes of someone who has just stepped onto this earth. I have also gotten to know myself better in this week than I have in years.*

~ Ali Evarts

*I have learned or relearned that a moment can be perfectly captured in art... that my love for the outside world continues to grow... that everything is connected in so many ways... that the world is so green it almost swallows you up... that to love a group you don't have to know them like your best friends... that community is made when a group of people all love what they're doing... I have discovered ever more my love to write and to write about the outside... how strong memories are... how much fun playing can be.*

~ Sara Gabrielson

*I have learned that community means a lot to me... I have found by doing morning pages that journals aren't just to get all the things going in your head on paper, but that if you have the right environment, journal writing can really calm the inner self. Dancing outside was a great experience because it puts another meaning to it. I have learned to appreciate nature and its great beauty in this class.*

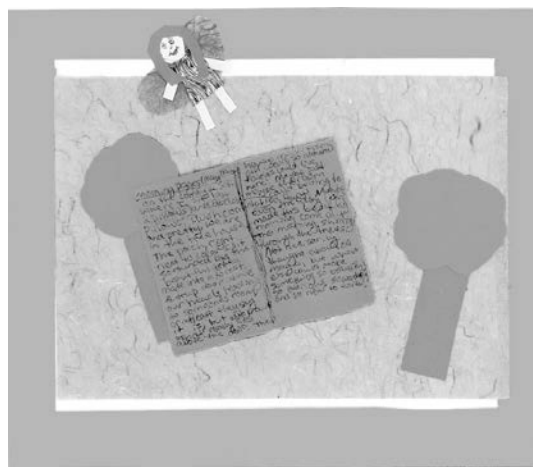
~ Hannah Kramer

*...A closer look at all of nature is what I have done, and I have realized the voice of nature. The low hum of a great tree, the whispering of the wind, the grass's quiet, subtle speaking. I have learned that all of nature has a voice, and speaks freely. Nature is truly a remarkable place, though many fail and have failed to realize it.*

*Nature's voice is a remarkable thing, but its beauty is entirely on another level. Just look at the ripples of the pond, the patterns on it exquisite, no two patterns are alike, however much you do see it. The bee and the flower, the honeysuckle or the butterfly, it is all tied with the beauty of nature...*

*I have discovered the ways I have, and will have, an everlasting bond with nature. I am part of nature, as is everybody else...*

~ Joe MacPhail



Collage by Kathryn Diamant

*Taking this exploratorium has really helped me. Now I look forward to writing in my journal everyday as much or as little as I want. It has opened up my eyes to every thing in nature. Now, when I hear a sound outside, I don't think, "Oh, how beautiful," but instead I wonder who it belongs to. And what could they be thinking? If I look at the leaves on a tree, I might take my mind deeper into a leaf, or take my Imagination further.*

*As I sit here writing this and I look around, I see so many things that wouldn't have been there if it weren't for this class. I take in so many more characteristics that it amazes me. Annie and Emily have helped me see the natural world through different eyes, to feel Nature and be able to reach out and touch it whenever, wherever. Finding myself in Nature has been a great experience for me.*

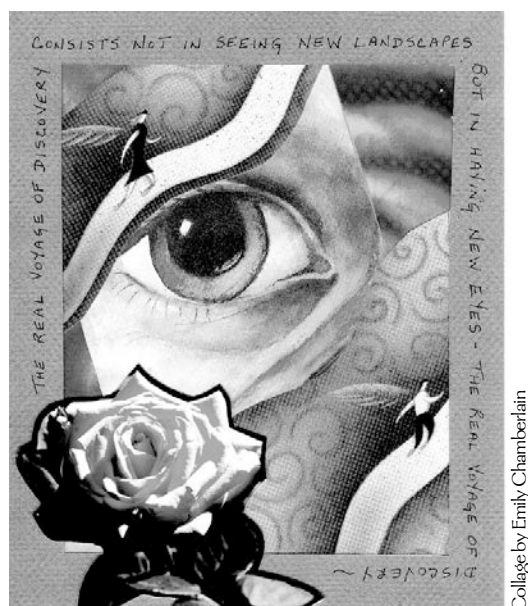
~ Terra Swanson



"morning pages"

*This class always teaches me new things each day from learning new collage techniques to finding my inner connection to the outdoors. The reason I think this class means so much to me is not only do we get to journal write and dance, but I learn to love and cherish simple things that have to do with nature even more than I thought was possible. This class is my inspiration to help protect what is really needed. The journal writing in this class gave me time to really find myself and express it, and the dancing helped me to show my feeling in movement. What I think was one of the most meaningful times during this exploratorium was the collages because it brought us all together and it really started showing a sign of how amazing our community really is!*

~ Marley Toben



Collage by Emily Chamberlain

*I've learned how to look at things and people in a different light... that it is near impossible to achieve total silence... that without nature, life would be dull and no one would be able to live in peace... that community and connecting to people is really, really, important... I've learned to appreciate all living things... that without the birds, life would sound mean... that all living things have to share this world... that the breeze whispers secrets of the earth. If you listen close enough, you can use them to bring peace to all the world and maybe that all shall live in harmony... and lastly, honeysuckles taste best if you're with your friends.*

~ Eric Whittier



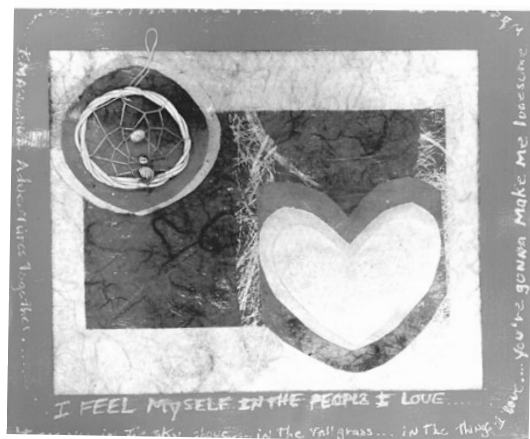
*Being in this class made me realize that nature is a part of me... You guys do not even know how special you are. Ya'll made this class feel so real, fun, and comfortable. You two have always understood me. Ya'll have helped me overcome my fears. I just want ya'll to know that it's been fun, and I really don't want this class to end.*

~ Jazmun Williams

*I relearned that Everything in Nature is perfect. Working together with others is a skill. If you look closely you will find something hidden. A simple stone is a gift within itself. Honeysuckle is a lovely aroma. And most of all, Nature is a privilege, not a freebie.*

*This has been good. One more thing. Friendships are woven together with time and fun. Like in this, there were plenty of both. Now I have more friends and I know myself better.*

~ Julia Zoltners



Collage by Annie Dwyer

Annie Dwyer and Emily Chamberlain think of this class as a weaving through which their students experience the joy of making connections - a joy that allows each student to say "What I do in my life make sense. I can feel the world around me and I have a place of my own within it."



# Beyond Despair: Leading High School Students Back to Earth

by: *Randolph J. Senzig*

In 1989 I was leading a group of high school students on a field trip to the Everglades. After getting off the bus and forming groups to hike the trail into Mahogany Hammock, I noticed two female students standing near the bus. When the groups with their chaperones began to move down the trail, I looked back and saw that the two girls were not following. I returned to get them. I found that the two students were reluctant to step off the sidewalk and onto the trail. In talking to them I was made aware that they were afraid to “go into the jungle”. They talked to me about living in an apartment complex all their lives. In this apartment complex there were signs that instructed all to keep off the grass and all their play was in a neighborhood playground with gravel and asphalt for groundcover. Such is the life of some children in major population centers. It took a lot of nature activities for these students to begin to feel comfortable in natural settings. I was seeing firsthand children deprived of time in the outdoors to experience the earth and their relationship to it.

I have taught Environmental Science in high school for 19 years. I have found three trends to emerge in the students that I have worked with during these years. Because of our culture, the first trend I see is that children are living further from the outdoors using AC, TV, video games and the computer to gain their experiences. They cannot understand their relationship with the earth, its forests, its animals, or its weather. The second trend is the ease with which people are getting their food. Young people find their food in a box from the freezer, a bag of lunch from the fast food restaurant, canned food from the supermarket and prepackaged foods to microwave. They have no concept of the farm, the soil, and the work it takes to produce food. The third trend will present unknown consequences in the future. That is young people are not learning basic information about the earth, plants, and animals to increase their Environmental awareness and appreciation.

These experiences have led me to develop and use many hands-on activities to help students build a positive relationship with the earth. I felt that young people needed more of these nature experiences so that they would learn more about environmental science. During some of those years, we planted hundreds of

trees on two different campuses, ate food from organic gardens that students planted, took many field trips and conducted experiments every week to teach ecological relationships. Students responded with increasing enrollments each year in the environmental sciences. I felt that these nature studies were important, but they were outside the curriculum and I wondered if I should be doing them. I felt really alone too as no one in my circle saw the same needs.

About four years ago I was propelled into the reality of the world of today’s teenagers. As I was teaching the various topics associated with Environmental Science such as water pollution and air pollution and all the terrible examples that we have always used to motivate others to correct the problems, I realized that this approach was actually having the reverse effect on my students. They were developing a sense of hopelessness and “oh, what’s the use.” The pictures of all the toxic materials in the water and the smoke in the air were not making them want to change things but were causing despair. This was, as Thomas Berry has stated, “a moment of grace” for me as I realized that I was missing the mark. I needed to find ways to help my students reconnect with nature.

Being a science teacher at Fuquay-Varina High School, I have had the responsibility of teaching Advanced Placement Environmental Science and Academic Environmental Science to 11th and 12th graders, Marine Ecology to 11th and 12th graders and Earth Science to 9th graders. I began searching for a person or a community to help me learn ways to expose my students to new ideas about the earth and their relationship to it. I found it through Thomas Berry and his teachings, which led me to The Center for Education, Imagination, and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. All of a sudden years of struggling with an alien concept alone in public schools became a joy in learning. I had found a community where I could share my thoughts in trust, grow in knowledge and experience and deepen my own understanding of the new human presence to the natural world. I realize that through the Center at Timberlake Farm and its programs, I have the avenue to give my students new hope and erase the despair that keeps them from being proactive in solving environmental problems.



I have just completed the Seventh Generation Teachers' program this year. I view this program as one of the most important workshops that I have taken in my teaching career. Sharing Nature with Joseph Cornell, learning Environmental Ethics with Anthony Weston and redeveloping imagination and creativity with Richard Lewis have given me many new ways to help my students find their way closer to nature through building a new relationship with it. My teaching style and content are slowly evolving.

This past spring I worked with an English teacher to develop an intercurricular unit on Transcendentalism. The English students taught my classes about Emerson, Thoreau and other writers' views on nature and its role in our lives. My Environmental Science students then took the English classes outside for some outdoor experiences. We used a variety of observation activities such as Joseph Cornell's Unnatural Trail to get students into the moment. My students taught the others how to observe and sample populations.

The most exciting activity happened when each of my students, who had been learning about birds all year, took two of the English students along Joseph Cornell's Trail of Beauty. At each of the stations my students directed the others to reflect on one of the quotations, to take notes on birding, to use field guides to identify birds and to observe birds. As I walked along the trail quietly observing the groups, true learning was taking place. My students were teaching what they had learned about birding and our place in the Earth and the English students were seriously learning from their peers. Later, reading the journal entries that all the students wrote as they interpreted the quotations from the Trail of Beauty and the other activities, I saw a hunger for a deeper understanding of their place in the Earth.

True nature education is not taught in public schools. Environmental Science has ceased teaching personal relationships with the earth. Public school teachers are not trained to teach nature education. The Center for Education, Imagination, and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm has the staff and programs to help many teachers develop their own special relationships with the natural world and then create ways to reach out to their students with activities to bring them to new experiences with the earth. The Center has the ability to help teachers and students alike develop new attitudes and relationships that will help move us forward into a new age which Thomas Berry calls the Ecozoic Era; a time when humans understand, as Thomas Berry states, "the earth is not a collection of objects but a communion of subjects." Understanding this will give our young people, our students, new hope and a new sense that they can make a difference in the struggle to renew the human presence in the earth and the universe.

**Randy Senzig** is a NCSU Kenan Fellow who teaches Environmental Science, Marine Ecology and Earth Science at Fuquay-Varina High School in Fuquay-Varina, NC. Growing up in Jacksonville, FL, Randy spent his youth planting gardens and exploring the woods near his home. A graduate of Valdosta State University with a degree in Secondary Education and Biology, Randy spent five years teaching in a residential treatment center for severely emotionally disturbed adolescents. During that time, he used organic gardening and forest trails to connect his students to the natural world and returned to school to earn a Masters in Special Education. In 2002, he was awarded a Kenan Fellowship through the Kenan Institute at North Carolina State University to develop teacher leadership and innovative curriculum by using the study of birds to teach across curricular lines.



# The Poetry of Nature

by

Andrew Levitt and the Class of 2007

*Andrew Levitt teaches humanities at the Emerson Waldorf High School in Chapel Hill, NC. He has participated in the Seventh Generation Teachers' Program for the past two years, bringing a special interest in the poetry of nature. We asked Andrew and his ninth grade students to share with us their work in nature observation and poetry. Andrew has a BA in English from Yale University and a PhD in Folklore from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a professional mime who has trained with Marcel Marceau and with the American Mime Theatre in New York City.*

## The Assignment

Why "the poetry of nature?" Why not "nature poetry?" None of the poets we have or will read would consider themselves nature poets because nature poetry has the unhappy connotation of referring to poets who ogle at the birds and bees in a kind of gleeful stupefaction. So to connote the deeper way of listening to nature these poets, whose poems are collected here, manifest in their poetry, I prefer to call this "the poetry of nature." I hope thereby to suggest a way of listening to what is all around us and a way we humans can participate and commune with all things.

This is not about overlaying words on nature; it is letting nature speak through the words. When you write your own poems, it should be that simple. Let the words enter from the natural world.

The first rule of writing poetry ought to be: Don't try to write a poem. Skip rhyme. Don't count meter or syllables or stresses if it hurts. Just sit or walk quietly, silently and wait and be. Don't be afraid to go silent first. Trust that the words will come. Just let yourself stay awake in your senses and be as present as you can be until the poem writes itself.

Okay, so you may have to prime yourself a little. To get started:

-Make a simple statement--Maybe just define a state of being (It is..., There is...),

OR

-Describe a moment of experience in close detail,

-Ask a question of yourself, another or the world,

-Speak words of guidance or instruction to yourself or others,

-Exclaim--perhaps at the beauty of things or at some horror,

-Imagine a similarity and make the comparison by noting what something is "like" or how something is "as,"

OR

-if all else fails, read the first line of any one of the poems collected here and begin where any one of these poets began.

A poem can be a prayer, a song, a reflection, a meditation, a question, a description, a laugh, a cry, a rant, a sigh. It is always a gesture to and of the world. It is never just a piece of writing on a page called a poem. So get on with it the way birds sing because they are birds.

Later you can redraft and hone the words with a dictionary and an eraser.

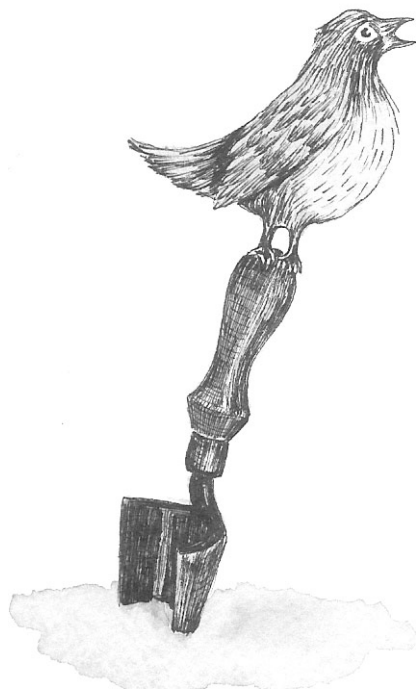
You may ask what if you find you can only write about the feelings inside yourself. Okay. If your heart has the loudest voice you hear in your silence, let it speak.

I am giving you permission and license to be extravagant and sing. So give yourself the freedom only you can give. WRITE: Two poems per day--or more--but no less. Each day you will start anew with two new poems to write.

## Gates

Step through the wrought iron gates, that  
Are painted white, with the spirals and curves.  
When you step through what do you see?  
Is it the red quince bush or the white?  
Is it the soft tendrils of periwinkle creeping  
along the ground?  
Or is it the rosebush that clings to the pillars of white  
iron?  
Or the iris leaves stretching up to the sun.  
Do you see the garden spade thrust into the soft dirt,  
With the robin perched on its handle?  
Can you smell the dirt?  
Does it smell like Spring?  
Just let that smell mixed with the smell of quince  
Wash over you in a gentle breeze,  
Feel the fingers of sun kissing your face.  
Listen to the sounds of the birds and the rustle of  
Leaves . . . .  
So much can happen just from stepping through the  
Wrought iron gates that are painted white.

~ Amelia Witkin



## Untitled

They call you Japanese Maple  
though you have never been to Japan  
from a nursery you came here  
where you shall ever stand  
and though you may long  
to see France and Rome  
such shall never be  
this is your place, your only home  
where you are an ever beautiful tree.

~ Kate Brady

## Untitled

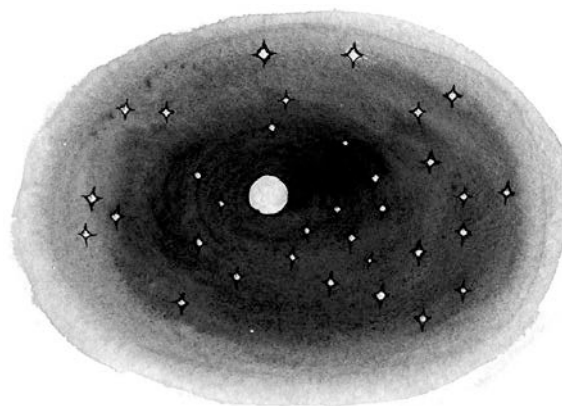
This Spring,  
Everything contrasts.  
The bright warm sun  
And the cold spring rain.  
The new green leaves  
And the old dead ones.  
The natural red of the tulip  
And the forced blue of the house.  
The feeling of freedom at last  
And of torturous confinement.  
The thinking that all was lost  
And all is yet to be gained.  
The peace  
And the chaos.  
The astonishingly beautiful  
And the astonishingly loathly.  
The earthly roots of the ground below me,  
And the immeasurable expanse of the sky above.  
This spring,  
Everything is inseparable.

~ Aliyah Sanders-Walberg

## Untitled

I walk off the road,  
and into the forest.  
I walk out of a life of stress,  
and into one of ease.  
I walk out of a tamed world  
and into a wilderness.  
I walk out of my own body  
and into a new one.

~ Michael Short



### Sky at Night

The sky has seemed rounder lately,  
A huge, overturned bowl.  
Like now -  
The faintly streaked  
White pin-pointed blue black.  
The trees pushing up,  
Black and rustling.  
Certain stars poke out,  
Paying more attention to us  
Down here.

~ Gabriel Graetz

### Black

black cat, black sky, black night,  
everything I see is black  
it is as if a bucket of paint was dumped on my head,  
i see nothing  
not the stars,  
not the moon,  
not even the lights of my house.  
so why can't I see?  
have I gone blind? Have I died?  
but wait, there's a tiny light up ahead  
now I see white all around me  
as if a bucket of white paint was dumped on me . . .

~ Alex Gabriel

### Reflections

The silver green trees sit shimmering  
The onion grass sways with wind's  
heavy sigh.  
the old dark wood bobs on the surface.  
Clouds drift softly across the sky.  
The moon glows brightly lighting the way.  
A featureless boy stares back at me.  
A leaf then falls and all is gone.  
Then piece by piece it all returns.  
It's amazing what can live in just  
a forgotten hub cap.

~ Aiden C. Dale

### Untitled

I cannot see the clear bright stars,  
It is because of the glaring porch light  
Which I regretfully, cannot force myself to turn off  
The night is welcoming and innocent  
Yet I cannot feel completely safe when annie  
stops and sniffs the air,  
Taking a few steps at a time towards the forest's edge  
As if some dreadful creature lurks there,  
And when carl, as well, lifts his head, turns towards  
that forest edge  
I am not alone by any means,  
But to see the stars clearly, with no house light  
I would have to put the dogs inside  
Leaving me alone with a cat who was sitting on  
a fallen tire swing.  
I now hear the traffic on some highway.  
I never knew it was so close  
I never really heard it before,  
I suppose I was distracted by the chirping of  
grasshoppers.  
What yesterday seemed to be nature,  
I can now see is full of metal structures  
And surrounded by the roaring sound of cars at  
very high speeds.  
This doesn't feel like home.  
Are there so many cars now that you can hear  
them cruising the streets from anywhere?  
How far will I have to go to be rid of this noise?  
I have always felt my backyard to be some kind of  
sanctuary  
Now I see the trash pile beyond the metal fence and  
the thinning trees leading to a house,  
I feel betrayed.

~Claire Newlon

### Different than other . . . .

Underneath the light blue  
And dark blue  
It is different than other.  
Cool fresh air,  
A few voices of birds,  
It is different than other.  
The moon is on the  
West,  
That is so big  
I think I can reach it  
That is different than other.  
The night wind  
Makes me feel cold  
It is telling  
It's time for another world  
That is different than other.

~ Arnold Kim

### Untitled

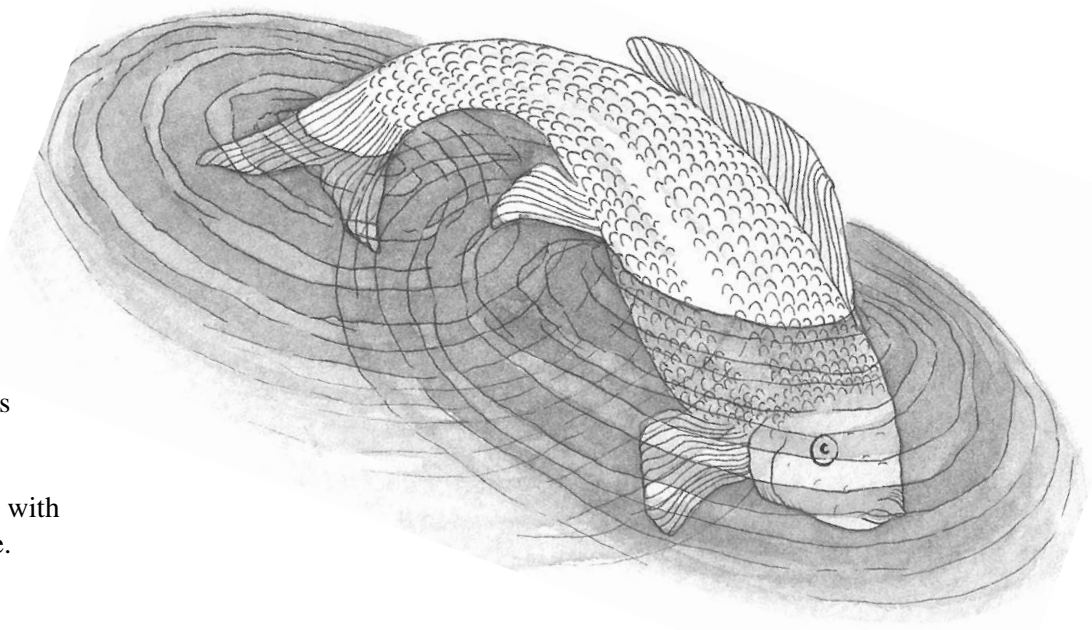
Pink-white petals float all around  
Soft as a baby's kiss  
They glow gently in this last light of day  
Or with the white shine of a ripe moon  
I cannot remember now what it was I did  
today.  
I'm sure it was important at the time.  
But for now it has drifted away, I'll  
snatch it back tomorrow.  
Today, tomorrow. It's a world away  
from now.  
When sweet-scented petals float all  
around.

~ Amanda Dahil-Moore

### April 4

Silently  
Its silvery body archs  
up and out  
Disturbing the lines,  
Distorting the image with  
its downward plunge.  
Small circles grow  
Outwards  
Filling the space.  
They move and move  
Until the rippling straight lines  
Dust them away.  
I think I see the spheres for longer  
than they exist.  
Is this small act reserved for a  
tiny fish,  
Or can I take one leap and change  
the world?

~ Amy Shmania



Drawings by Liz Levitt



# Conversations With Thomas Berry

by  
Jessica Towle

By the time I was seventeen and graduated from high school, I realized that humans had unintentionally split the world apart. I saw that the sacred had been taken out of the Earth, and the Earth had been taken out of the sacred. It was as if, for a period of time, my vision completely changed and all I could see was the pain of this reality. I liked to call it the great divorce, because I saw all splitting apart as coming from this source.

My intense need to reunite in myself that which was split apart led me to Genesis Farm, a Learning Center for Re-Inhabiting the Earth in Blairstown, New Jersey, not far from my home. What I encountered there was reconciliation - people working towards the union that I was desperately searching for. The more time I spent there, the more I heard the name "Thomas Berry." I became curious about him because everyone there held him in such high regard and could easily quote clarifying things that he said in response to my questions. I was given a copy of his book *The Dream of the Earth* and, after making my way through it, I declared to myself that I would meet Thomas one day.

Two years later I found myself at a tree house watching an old man drive up in a beat up Honda. I walked over, unsure who it was. He got out of the car and we looked at each other for the first time. We both started laughing right away, and then we hugged. I knew that it must be Thomas, and I knew at that moment that I had better do the listening instead of the talking. From the first moment I saw him I adored him. He had this graceful sparkle in his eyes, and his white hair was sticking up in the back of his head, like Einstein's did.

The day I met him was an Earth Guides training at Timberlake Farm in Whitsett, NC, not far from where Thomas grew up. There I was, a transplant from New Jersey, newly arrived in North Carolina at the invitation of Carolyn Toben, founder of Timberlake Farm. I had no idea that being at Timberlake Farm would actually mean entering a new life. The Earth Guides training was the beginning of a new way of seeing things for me. When Thomas started speaking, I became transfixed. I had never heard anyone talk like he did before. I was entranced by his use of the English language, astonished at his clear thinking, and captured by the ease and grace

through which he spoke his message. He was like a brilliant poet who had been given the task of elucidating a cosmological and historical understanding of reality.

Throughout my first year at Timberlake Farm I spent a lot of time with Thomas. He inspired me in a way that I had never known before. He inspired in me the love of learning and with that came the desire to think critically, to educate myself, to look at history very carefully in order to see how the Earth came to be as it is, and more importantly, how we came to think the way we do. For the first time in my life I felt curious about history, and I no longer had to ask "Why is this important?" or "How does this fit into the larger picture of things?" Throughout all my previous schooling, I constantly asked these questions of my teachers who, for whatever reason, never had an answer for me. Being with Thomas was like discovering a secret treasure over and over again. His interpretations of things allowed me to start to see the world I inhabited in the depth of its meaning. The unfolding of his thought was the first true sharing of relevant intelligence that I had ever experienced.

In between our visits, Thomas would send me packages of books in the mail with enchanting little notes signed "Hermit of the Hills," or "Hermit of the Wilderness." He became more and more delightful to me every time I met with him, and as time went on I actually began to understand what he was saying. Each visit became its own breakthrough in my mind.

I'm not sure how the idea of writing a book with him came up originally. At first it was to be a biography and that idea eventually evolved into the notion of writing an intergenerational question and answer dialogue with him. Of course, I was convinced that I did not have the skills or the ability to do this, so my plan was to sit with this whole idea for awhile and hope that divine inspiration would come running in and help me write something beautiful about this man whom I adored so much. After a year in North Carolina it became apparent to me that I wanted a College education, and so I journeyed to Prescott, Arizona where I enrolled in Prescott College. My conversations with Thomas would be long distance for a time and the idea of writing an intergenerational dialogue would be put on hold.





After two years of study and growing at Prescott, I knew it was time to return to North Carolina for an independent study semester at The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. In my absence, poor health had forced Thomas to leave his hermitage in the woods and move to an assisted living residence in a retirement community where his sister Margaret lived. When I returned, the time seemed right to take up my intergenerational dialogue with Thomas where we'd left off. I still didn't feel that I knew enough, but Thomas said "If you wait until you're ready - one is never necessarily ready- you'll be waiting for a long time." With this encouragement, Thomas and I agreed to have weekly conversations.

What follows is an account of one of our conversations. In this ongoing exchange between my questions and Thomas' reflections, the world has come back together again. My adolescent quest for a reuniting of the sacred and the Earth is fulfilled in a language of union and reconciliation offered to me by a wise and beloved elder.



Today is Friday, April 9, 2004; Good Friday. I picked up Thomas from his new residence at Wellspring Assisted Living Center. Wellspring is a well kept center that is probably a delightful place for most folks. Thomas says he doesn't mind it all that much. There are birds in big fish tanks and beautiful plants guarding each door. I have never heard him complain about it. I have never heard him complain about a thing in the four years that I have known him.

Before I knock at his door, I stand there and wonder what it will be like today with him. Sometimes he is tired. He has given a lot in this life. I knock and hear him call out for me to let myself in. When I open the door, he is walking towards me with his arms wide open, a smile on his face. "Well, it's good to see you," he says. He looks tired today- really, really tired. He says "I'm afraid I am a bit of a bore today."

It makes me laugh when he calls himself a bore. He is the most magnanimous person I know, yet I know he is serious when he says this. He looks at me as I am hysterically laughing, and he starts to laugh deeply and freely. I can see that this is turning into a wonderful

moment as he suddenly declares, "Well, let's go to our place." He disappears into another room and I look around while waiting for him. I see a lone copy of an early book written by Thomas called *Befriending the Earth*. Thomas comes back into the room while I am carefully inspecting it. He tells me that I should take it. I point out that it is his last and only copy, not to mention that it is one of the only things in this room that is reminiscent of his life at the hermitage. He doesn't seem to care and tells me to take it anyway. We start heading out to the Green Valley Grille, which has become the setting of our conversations.

When we walk in to "our place," the hostess immediately ushers us to our usual booth and comments on the fact that she doesn't see a tape recorder today. I don't really like to record him any more. Although I always wish I had recordings later, my attention seems to drift to making sure the recorder is copying well, and so forth. I would much rather be fully present to the experience of being with him without any distractions.

We sit down in the big, comfy booth. The waitress knows to give us some time to chat before we order. I stare at Thomas from across the table. I become fixated on his eyes. He is speaking to me about something Aristotle said: "Beauty is an aspect of everything," he says, his words floating effortlessly, reaching my ears, registering in my brain. I still can't look away from his eyes. He is looking at me too, intently looking, as he continues by saying, "Aristotle says there are three aspects to everything in the universe: One, True and Beautiful. Absolutely every living thing has this and knows this. Every tree has this identity, every river, every mouse. Each of us articulates something unique in the universe. The challenge of the evolution of consciousness is to locate ways of thinking about the universe and also to locate distinctive ways of thinking of oneself. Self-reflective consciousness is the awareness of our own unique reality, as well as of the common reality that we share through the beauty of inner attractions."

There is something precise about the tone and manner in which he speaks. There is thoughtfulness in how he pauses between words, remembering centuries of stories of people from every nation on the planet. He is someone who knows the stories of diverse peoples, how they came to be who they are. He not only knows their stories, but he can reflect the meaning of those stories within the larger picture. Thomas also knows





the story of the universe and how it came to be, and how we came to be within it. He is someone who reveals so much with his careful articulation. He has put so much into the words he chooses to speak, and the silence that he speaks from.

After awhile, our waitress brings us our usual soups and salads. Thomas starts to pick at his lettuce plate with his fingers. We both like to eat salad with our hands. There is something very natural about eating leaves that way. I say to him, in between heaping mouthfuls, "Thomas, it might take me a lifetime to live in the world that you live in." He laughs. I then ask him, "Why do you think humans have evolved to have these capacities that we have?" He considers my question momentarily before replying, "We can narrate the changes of development from earlier forms, and the sequence of events, but we can't say why. Our knowledge of the why is expressed through myths. Myths can explain why in terms of non-literal language. Children no longer get myths because they are considered unreal, but if they do not receive myths, they are missing the whole world of reality. Mythic reality can tell of wonderful and useful things. Science discounts myths because they cannot be proved or demonstrated.

Our waitress eyes us up closely as she walks past. She has learned to sense when to disrupt the conversation. Thomas continues by saying, "The sacred and the profound are best expressed through analogous language. Language creates reality. The idea is that we know more than we can explain. A mother cannot rationally explain her love for her child. Their mutual fulfillment lies in their capacity for intimacy with each other; there is no scientific explanation for this. The relationship is self-authenticated and self-explanatory. There is the science of it, but that is not what a mother is feeling or talking about."

I understand what he means, as I imagine a mother's love for her child. Our waitress brings us more coffee, and we both pause. I imagine him briefly, watching for almost a century, the effects of the rational-mechanistic worldview making its way into our relationship to the Earth, the economy, our ideas of love, and actually every other human venture. I imagine him watching so much of this go on in his own lifetime. I always wonder what makes a person stay awake internally. How did he do it? Why did he not get swept up in the reality of the

time? Usually, when I talk with him, my own thoughts disappear and every word he says creates an image in my mind.

I go on to tell him that he lives in a different world than most, a bigger world, a world I can only imagine through the stories he tells. He replies, "Young people need this kind of world. If they get into a computer world too soon, they are deprived of the world they should be experiencing. We are not going to recover our ecology until we understand this."

"Are you saying that our relationship to the Earth is directly connected to how we think?" I ask. He replies, "If we continue to build our world as scientific analysis and neglect the knowledge of imagination, art and the humanities, we will tend to see the purpose of life explained in scientific ideas of analysis and control. We need to keep myth because it is the only thing that makes life livable. Our children are learning to become mechanistic constructions, they are being taught to manipulate the area of human mechanical design and control. The children are saturated with mechanics, but end up with no poetry, no imagination, or depth of understanding."

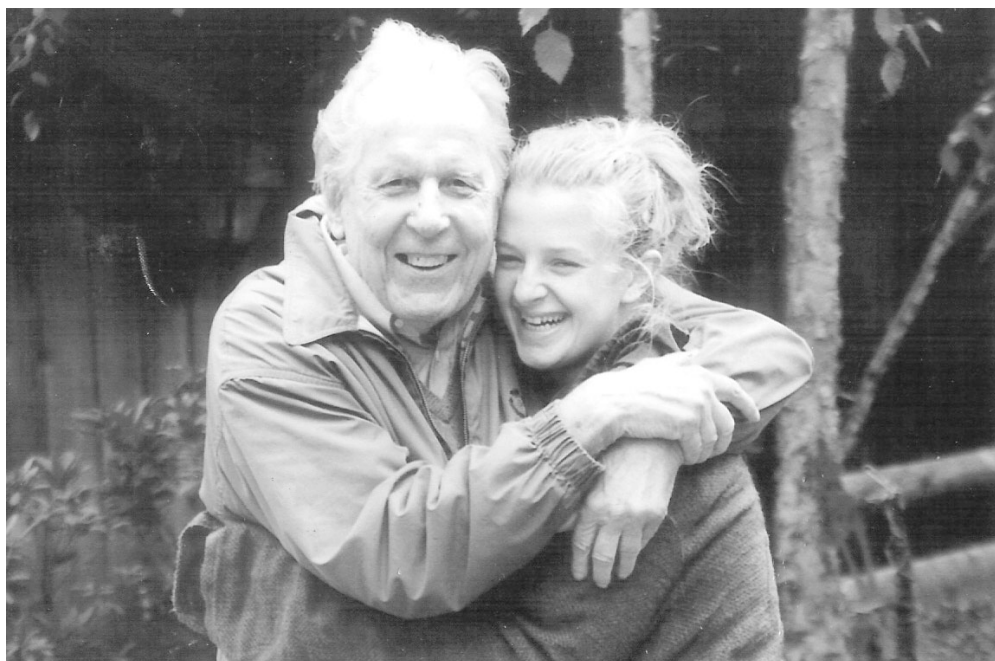
He pauses and looks at me and says, "Next week for homework write about how this is evident in society, and how thoughtful people are responding to it. Pay attention to what children are bombarded with, and pay attention to how they respond to places like the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. How is the need in children being met?"

I start to imagine a few of the millions of ways that a child's relationship to the Earth is marginalized. He continues by saying, "Humanity has undertaken three major shifts in thinking in terms of basic and primary referent. In the first age, the divine was the primary referent; in the second age, the human; in the third age, the Earth. Our fulfillment as human beings requires a threefold fulfillment."

The integration of this threefold fulfillment is something he has been talking about a lot lately. He seems insistent that I get that idea, that I have a sense of what he means, but it's not entirely clear to me yet. I make a note to ask him about this more carefully next time. I get the feeling it is important.

Our earnest and kind waitress returns to the table and sets out crème brûlée with two spoons. This has become a tradition with Thomas and me and most wait staff at The Green Valley Grille are wonderful to remember this. It always makes us feel special because they do. He removes the cookie and puts it on the side

of the plate. He picks up his spoon and removes the cooked sugar off the top, dipping right into the crème. He looks at me with regard and says "I have watched the last century, you will watch this one. What I saw begin, you will see end. Create a century, Jessie."



**Thomas Berry** has been honored by both the United Nations and Harvard University for his outstanding contributions to the development of ecological consciousness. His books include *The Dream of the Earth*, *The Universe Story* (with Brian Swimme), and *The Great Work*.

**Jessica Towle** is a student at Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona. She has been connected with the work of the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World for the past four years and has recently completed an internship where she served as our master gardener and nature awareness educator.

# The Bird of Imagining Project

The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World has received grants from the United Arts Council and the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro in support of a community outreach project for teachers, arts educators, parents and children entitled "The Bird of Imagining."

The Center, in partnership with the Greensboro Public Library, will bring "The Bird of Imagining," a traveling exhibit of the Touchstone Center in New York City, to the new Kathleen Clay Edwards Branch Library during the month of April 2005. The new branch library will have an environmental focus, and this exhibit affirms the important role the arts play in understanding the human relationship to the natural world.

Based on a poem by Richard Lewis and illustrated by twenty-two luminous cray-pas drawings by children from New York City Public Schools, this unique exhibit explores the nature of the imagination through the flight of a bird evolving into the flight of our human imagining. The children's art work comes from a series of arts and education residencies of The Touchstone Center at the Central Park East Public School # 1 and #2, The River East School, and the Children's Workshop School in 1989 and 1996. The Bird of Imagining was published in book form in 2002.

Greensboro author Thomas Berry gave the book a rave review as follows: *A stunningly beautiful book, this selection of drawings by children! Drawings in the form of a bird, the bird of imagining, with an amazing variety of color and form, all inspired by the verses of Richard Lewis. Putting together color and form with such depth of texture gives the sense of primordial immediacy to these drawings. They have an entrancing beauty that comes from some wonder world available only to children. Even for us older folk these children awaken us to our own singing bird within.*

In addition, the Center has received funding to host the following programs related to the exhibit:

- April 8      **Opening of "Bird of Imagining" Exhibit** (time TBA)  
Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library  
*Free*
- April 9      **Seventh Generation Teachers' Program, Part III** (9:00 am - 4:00 pm)  
The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm  
*fee: Three-part program, \$195 (organic lunch included)*  
Led by Richard Lewis, Director of the Touchstone Center in NYC, this teacher retreat will be an exploration of how the processes and expressiveness of the imagination can be found both in us as well as in the marvelous diversity of life forms of the natural world. Using drama, art and poetic thought, we will attempt to discover not only the ways the artistry of the imagination creates 'nature' itself, but fuels and inspires the very sources of our perceptions and learning. A day of becoming the wondrous bird of our imagining - and the tree of our knowing.
- April 10      **Bird of Imagining Workshop** (time TBA)  
Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library  
*Free*  
Led by Richard Lewis, this workshop for parents and their children will explore ways we use our imagination - and how we might create our own very special bird of imagining.
- April 11-12      **Arts Educators 2-Day Workshop** (9:30 am - 3:30 pm)  
Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm  
*Free*  
Richard Lewis will engage arts educators in the question: "How might our imagination be pivotal to experiencing and expressing our understanding of the natural world?" On the afternoon of the second day, Richard will introduce arts educators to the particular approaches taken to this question by the Touchstone Center in New York City over the last 35 years, particularly through Touchstone's arts and education projects in New York City schools. We will end by exploring together ways in which arts educators in Guilford County schools might use the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World as a resource for initiating programs in our area.

If you are interested in attending any of these programs, please contact the Center at (336) 449-0612.

# "Keeping a Nature Journal" with Clare Walker Leslie

April 30, 2005

*The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World*

*at*

*Timberlake Farm*

*9:30 am - 3:30 pm*

*fee: \$55 (organic lunch included)*

At the heart of our work at the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World is the practice of keeping a nature journal. Whether working with teachers or children, we introduce the art of nature journaling as an essential way of making a personal connection to the natural world. We are particularly pleased, therefore, to have received a grant from the Jelly Foundation to bring renowned New England artist, naturalist, educator and author Clare Walker Leslie to the Center for a day long workshop in "Keeping a Nature Journal."

Join Clare for a wonderful block of time to be outdoors setting up a Nature Journal - as a means for exploring and recording the land here. We will be using the methods of seeing/drawing/ writing/meditation that Clare teaches around the country. The focus of the workshop will be for each participant to find their own means for recording season and place. There will be plenty of individual time with Clare, for technique as well as for group discussion, on uses of Nature Journals for connecting us better with the processes and daily flows around us, especially when working with students (of all ages) in schools.

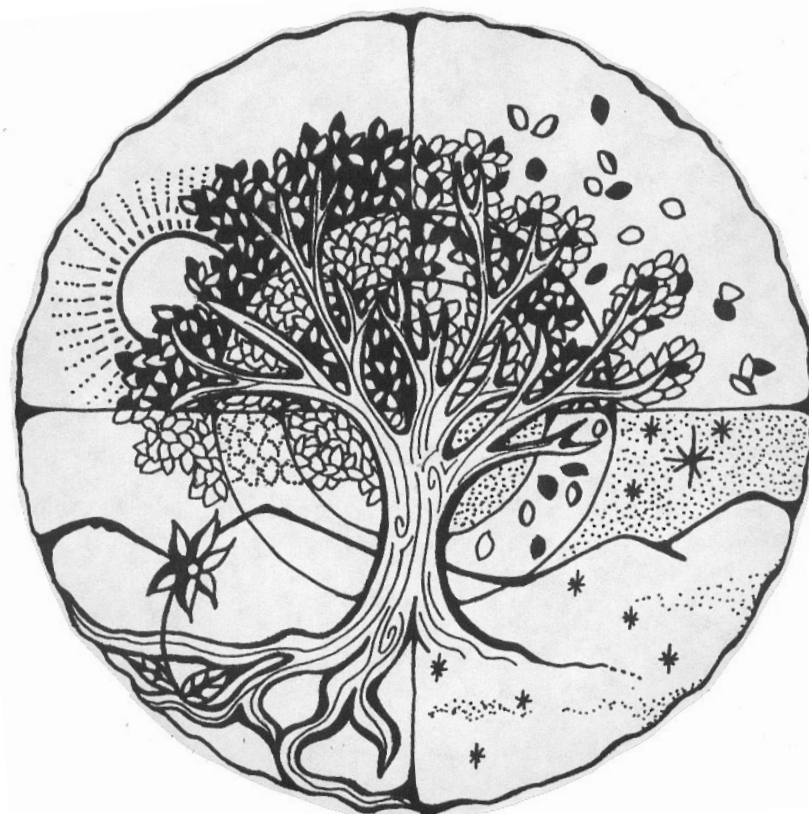
Participants 10 years and up are welcome, as well as self-learners, families, artists, writers, and exploring naturalists. With the words of Thomas Berry in our minds and May Day around us, we will pay attention to this land and give it a full day of honoring- with our hearts, our eyes, our curiosities, our journals.

Please bring: smooth white drawing paper, any pencils, pens, color tools you have already. Also useful could be a folding stool, field guides to the area, binoculars, magnifying glasses, water bottle, clothing suitable for the weather.



*If you are interested in attending this workshop, please call the Center for an application at (336) 449-0612 or download an application at our website at [www.beholdnature.org](http://www.beholdnature.org)*

# Seventh Generation Teacher's Program



artwork by Liz Levitt

A Three-Part Program: November 6, 2004, February 26 and April 9, 2005  
9:00 am - 4:00 pm, cost: \$195 (organic lunch included)  
(applications can be downloaded at [www.beholdnature.org](http://www.beholdnature.org))

*The Seventh Generation Teachers' Program provides a context for teachers to deepen their own personal connection to the natural world and to be co-creators of ways to bring nature awareness to all paths of teaching.*

*Part One is a nature awareness retreat with Center Staff.*

*Part Two explores the foundations of nature awareness in education with earth educator Valerie Vickers and ecophilosopher Anthony Weston.*

*Part Three explores how our imagination is pivotal to experiencing and expressing our understanding of the natural world with arts educator Richard Lewis.*

**Valerie Vickers** is a Middle School Science Specialist who has recently completed her doctoral dissertation on "An Exploration of Ecological Identity: Education to Restore the Human/Earth Relationship."

**Anthony Weston** is Professor of Philosophy at Elon University where his work centers on the ethical and cultural dimensions of the environmental crisis. Author of *Back to Earth: Tomorrow's Environmentalism* and editor of *An Invitation to Environmental Philosophy*, Anthony is a key spokesperson for a new Earth Etiquette.

**Richard Lewis** is the Founder of The Touchstone Center in NYC, devoted to developing the use of elemental themes and images in order to encourage both children and adults to express, through different mediums, their innate relationship to the natural world. His books include *Living By Wonder*, *In a Spring Garden*, *Each Sky Has Its Words*, *The Bird of Imagining*, and *Cave*.

# Next Generation Children's Programs

## ***Tiny Kingdoms for Tiny Folks***

**9:30 am - 12:00 noon**

**Ages 3-5, \$10 per child**

A magical morning at Timberlake will begin at the Treehouse and then await the children on the trails and footbridges where they will observe the enchantment of forest and stream. A hayride and stop at the organic garden are part of the morning's pleasures. Preschools welcome!

*Fall Dates: October - November 2004*

*Spring Dates: April - May 2005*

## ***Earth Guides Programs for Schoolchildren***

**9:30 am - 1:30 pm**

**Ages K-12, \$10 per child**

The Earth Guides program is an all-day program for schoolchildren focusing on nature awareness through sensory experiences, art, story, and a visit to our "Magical" organic garden.

*Fall Dates: October - November 2004*

*Spring Dates: April - May 2005*

## ***Summer Nature Camps***

**9:30 am - 3:00 pm**

**Session I: June 6 - 10, 2005 (8-10 year olds)**

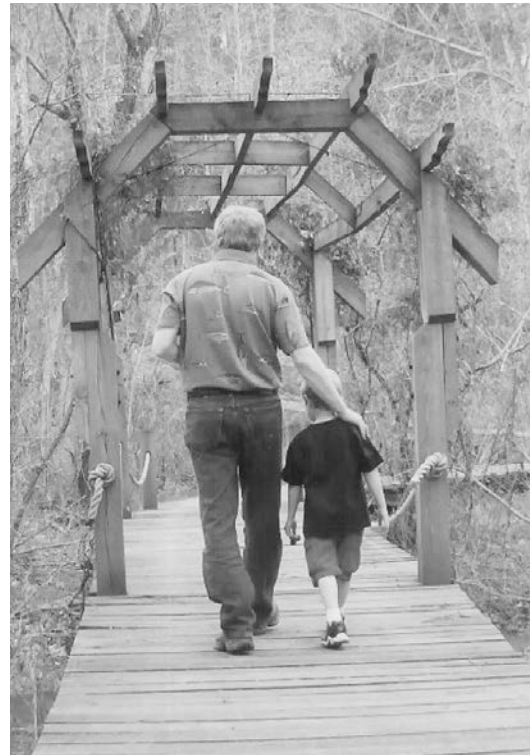
**Session II: June 20 - 24, 2005 (5-7 year olds)**

**\$150 per child, organic lunch included**

A week-long nature awareness program for twelve children that encourages a mutually enhancing relationship between the children and the Earth. Children will directly experience lush forest, lake, creek, and meadow ecosystems and explore their own sense of belonging to these places. The week includes Native American perspectives and creative expression through art and outdoor journaling. The "Magical" organic garden will provide fresh vegetables for lunches.

*If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder . . . he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.*

~ Rachel Carson



# Special Design Programs

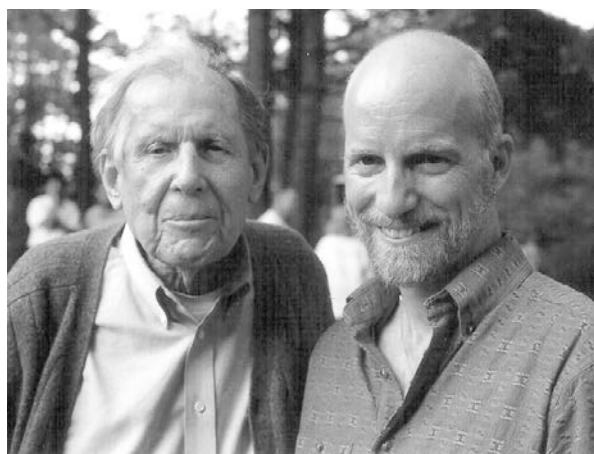
The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World is located at Timberlake Farm, a 165 acre earth sanctuary in Whitsett, NC. The earth sanctuary is a unique place of beauty with wildflower meadows, an organic garden, five miles of gentle woodland trails, small streams and twin lakes. It is a setting where time unwinds, wheels stop spinning, and the presence of the natural world can be fully experienced.

Since 2000, the Center has sponsored day programs for schoolchildren at the earth sanctuary. These programs offer a one-time nature awareness experience for children where they begin to make a personal connection to the natural world. It is our hope now to extend this experience into ongoing partnerships with schools. Beginning in 2004, the Center invites schools to consider entering into a partnership that will bring the rhythms of the natural world more pervasively into the school year. The Center welcomes inquiries from teachers and schools, pre-school through college. We offer many possibilities for educators to partner with the Center in order to weave a new way of knowing the natural world into the academic year. If you are interested in exploring a Special Design Program, please contact the Center at 449-0612 or e-mail us at [beholdnature@aol.com](mailto:beholdnature@aol.com).

# Thank You to all our Volunteers & Interns!

## ***Earth Guide Intern Program***

The Earth Guide Intern Program is an opportunity for college students to lead Earth Guide programs for schoolchildren at the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. Earth Guide Interns attend a full day training session and make a commitment to a weekly schedule of service during the Fall and/or Spring Semester. Earth Guide Interns must be able to devote one day a week from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm per semester. A small stipend of \$200 is available. If you are interested in becoming an Earth Guide, please call the Center at (336) 449-0612.



Thank you to Peter Berry and Sarah Chowning for an inspiring evening of Celtic harp music, gaelic song and storytelling at our Benefit Concert in honor of Thomas Berry.

*(Clockwise from above, Thomas Berry and Peter Berry; right, Peter Berry and Sarah Chowning; below, Margaret Berry and Thomas Berry)*



Photos by Jeff Lane

*A Special thank you to the following people who have given so freely and joyfully of their time to the Center:*

~ to all the college students who served as Earth Guides in the Spring and Fall of 2004.

~ to Gay Cheney, for bringing Native American perspectives to our Earth Guides Program for schoolchildren.

~ to Tyler Nance of Warren Wilson College and Spencer Ellis of Elon University for countless hours of community service in the garden over the summer.

~ to Susannah Lach, Dacia King and Lynne Jaffe for coordinating our Benefit Concert in Honor of Thomas Berry.

~ to all the folks who helped make the benefit concert a success, especially Donna and Jeff Lane for making refreshments and honor cards, and Joel Montgomery for making the stage.

~ to all the teachers, children and community supporters who volunteered to help with the production of our fundraising video, especially Scott Davis who directed the video pro bono, Fred and Becky Story who composed the music as a gift, and Mike Urben who volunteered his time as narrator.



# Friends of the Center, January - September 2004

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Bill Roy - In honor of Val Vickers' PhD Graduation  
Tommy & Anne Webb - In honor of the wedding of Val Vickers and Paul Mitchell  
Geraldine Whalen - In honor of Peggy Whalen-Levitt

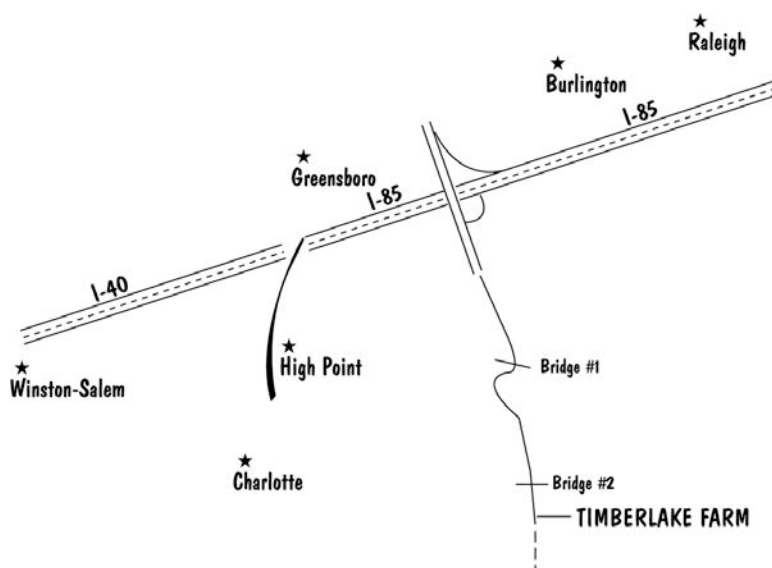


FROM WINSTON-SALEM/  
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Take I-40 East to I-85; continue about 13 miles beyond Greensboro towards Burlington. Exit at Rock Creek Dairy Road (Exit #135). You will go under the overpass and loop around. Turn left at the top of the exit and go just over two miles. The Timberlake Farm entrance is on the left at the top of the hill.

FROM RALEIGH/DURHAM/  
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Take I-85 South towards Greensboro. Continue on I-85 about 10 miles past Burlington. Exit on Rock Creek Dairy Road (Exit #135). Turn left at the top of the exit and go just over two miles. The Timberlake Farm entrance is on the left at the top of the hill.



*The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World is a non-profit organization that champions inclusiveness and actively discourages discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other factors that deny the essential humanity of all people. Furthermore, the Center encourages a love and respect for the diversity of the natural world.*

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And it will take a whole new orientation for college students who, perhaps more than the children, need “the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit.” And so we continue our Earth Guides program for college students and develop new possibilities for in-depth internships at the Center.

We have raised many friends along the way to help us on the journey.

The Weaver Foundation gave us a grant that enabled us to work with Marty Goldstein as a financial consultant and Richard Lewis as a program consultant throughout the year.

The Emily Monk-Davidson Foundation awarded us a grant for the second consecutive year to help us strengthen and develop the Seventh Generation Teachers’ Program. The perspectives of Joseph Cornell, Anthony Weston, Richard Lewis and Thomas Berry are an essential part of this program and were captured by gifted filmmaker Linda DiLorenzo in a video entitled “Another Way of Knowing,” funded by the Toleo Foundation.

Many folks came together to help us create our first annual benefit concert in honor of Thomas Berry. Through the Celtic music, song and storytelling of Peter Berry and Sarah Chowning, we celebrated Thomas’ vision that “the child awakens to a universe.”

Scott Davis, Executive Producer at UNC-TV, has worked tirelessly to donate his considerable expertise toward the creation of a fundraising video that will be indispensable to introducing our work to potential donors. So many people have come forward to donate their time, presence, soul and spirit to this initiative.

We have received grants from the United Arts Council and the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro in support of “The Bird of Imagining” Project that will put us in a partnership with the Touchstone Center in New York City and the Greensboro Public Library during the month of April 2005. The project will bring Touchstone’s “Bird of Imagining” exhibit of children’s art to the new Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library and will enable us to bring Richard Lewis and Center staff together with parents, children, teachers and arts educators in the greater Greensboro area.

We have also received a grant from the Jelly Foundation that will allow us to bring renowned New England artist, naturalist, educator and author Clare Walker Leslie to the Center for a day long workshop in "Keeping a Nature Journal," scheduled for April 30, 2005.

We are also pleased to announce that B'Nai Shalom Day School has received a grant from the Toleo Foundation to partner with the Center in a special design program in "Judaism and the Natural World" for the 2004-2005 school year.

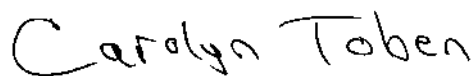
This issue of *Chrysalis* brings you the work of four middle school and high school teachers who have participated in our Seventh Generation Teachers Program. In "Honeysuckles Taste Best If You're With Friends," you will encounter the remarkable weaving of a one week intensive in imaginative understanding by Carolina Friends School teachers Emily Chamberlain and Annie Dwyer. In "Beyond Despair: Leading High School Students Back to Earth," you will follow Randolph Senzig's quest as a public high school science teacher for ways to bring his students back into a positive relationship with the earth. And, in "The Poetry of Nature" you will experience ninth graders' poetic response to Andrew Levitt's call to "Let the words enter from the natural world."

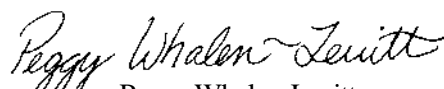
As you turn the pages, you will see how each of these teachers masterfully creates a situation within which students lend their attention to the natural world, translate a moment of attention into a creative remembering, and establish a deep sense of belonging to the natural world.

You will also find here an account by Jessica Towle of how her deepest questions went unanswered in high school and how, through her friendship with Thomas Berry, she discovered a way back to a sense of meaning. It is a piece that reminds us of the depth of questioning that resides in the hearts of young people today, if only they have the courage or are given the encouragement to speak the questions.

What is evident, as you read all these pieces, is that these teachers and students make visible a practice of heartfelt thinking, living thinking, imaginal thinking - a kind of knowing, and therefore knowledge, that comes from a participation with the world and leads to a sense of belonging to all of life. "Attention," truly, "is the beginning of devotion."

With warm regards,

  
Carolyn Toben

  
Peggy Whalen-Levitt

# Honeysuckles Taste Best If You're With Friends: "Imaginative Adventures Together"

About a decade ago, Carolina Friends School teachers Emily Chamberlain and Annie Dwyer attended a workshop at Timberlake Farm in "Imaginative Understanding" led by Richard Lewis, Founder of the Touchstone Center in New York City. Amidst the natural beauty of Timberlake Farm, Richard asked the teachers to explore together the following possibility: "The secret of my imagination is that the things in the universe are the things in me."

Reflecting on the experience with Richard, Emily said, "I really loved his notion that the imagination can take you deeper inside yourself - that the imagination enables you to make deep connections between inner and outer worlds." And Annie came away from the workshop with "the recognition that when you open up the imagination, you have to be willing to accept all that emerges - the dark as well as the light."

The workshop crystallized essential understandings for Annie and Emily in their lives as teachers at Carolina Friends School in Durham, NC. Emily, who teaches writing and personal growth classes in middle school, found a connecting thread for her Beginning Journal Writing class in Richard's idea that a symbolic "universe" exists within all of us. Annie, who teaches dance K-12, was reminded of the importance of being open to wherever her students' imagination takes them. "Rather than being fearful of what is there, I began to allow it to emerge - be shared." Annie and Emily, who had been teaching one term in the Middle School together each year, found that the experience with Richard enriched their collaborative journey. Writers and dancers became increasingly comfortable translating images from one mode of expression to another - from writing to movement and vice versa, as well as other forms of expression.

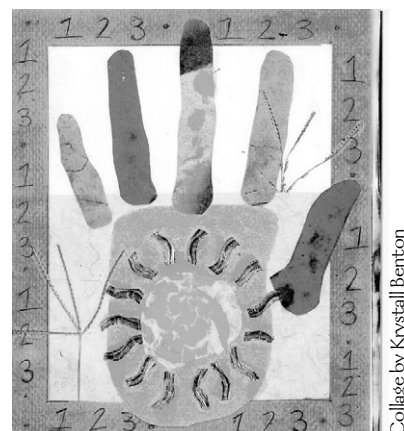
One of the most meaningful aspects of their collaboration is a one week intensive that Annie and Emily offer to middle school students, grades 5-8 at the end of the school year. Called "Imaginative Adventures Together," the intensive occurs during a special "Exploratorium" session at CFS and offers participants the opportunity "to explore the idea of weaving connections within ourselves, with other dancers and writers, and with the natural world." Two days of the intensive take place at Timberlake Farm Earth Sanctuary.

Students enter the world of the intensive before the first day of class. They are asked to select a journal to use for

the class and to mark it in some way that makes it their own. They are given a small open slide frame and asked to use it as a window to the natural world in order to find an image of things intertwining or woven together, an image of separateness, and an image of weight sharing. Then, they are asked to express each of these three images of separation/connection in either writing, drawing, or a combination of words and images.

In these ways, the students are invited into a practice of attention before they come together to form a learning community. This initial assignment brings them into a week where they will go deeper into the process of using writing, movement and art to deepen a sense of connection - a sense of how they can feel themselves in something outside themselves. As Emily said, "If you extend yourself in love to something outside yourself, it becomes part of you and you become part of it."

Each day of the intensive begins with Julia Cameron's practice of "morning pages" - a time to settle in and access inner creativity. Throughout the day, students write and dance in the context of the natural world, flowing easily between different forms of expression. For example, in one magical moment, the group choreographed a dance together down at the creek that crosses the Creeping Cedar Trail. They talked about gesture, using images from the earth sanctuary. These images from the natural world were then translated into intricate dance phrases. Later, they captured the experience in words and visual images in their journals. Each evening, the students are asked to let a moment from the day emerge and translate the specifics of that remembrance into a collage. This visual memory can be about a deepening connection with self, each other, dance, writing or the natural world.



Collage by Krystall Benton

Reading the students' own reflections on the week they shared together, one is struck by the transformations that occurred - by the ways in which they deepened their capacities for an attentive presence to the natural world, to themselves and to each other - and by their recognition that something meaningful had happened here, something lasting, both fun and profound:

*I have learned how to appreciate what is around me... how to think in different ways... to appreciate how things are... to look at things in different ways... that I have a creative mind and I should use it more.*

~ Emily Ashley

*I've relearned about finding the quiet beauty in things, about stretching my abilities and exploring different challenges, about appreciating people and the light they bring into the world, about looking, dancing, searching, and writing from inside of your true self and connecting with everything around you. Most of all, I relearned the beauty of simplicity and silence and connectedness. Walking through the woods in silence and feeling everything reach out and surround me in color and light and warmth was unforgettable. Everything seemed like an important part of me that I needed to see.*

~ Krystall Benton

*I feel as though we have accomplished so much as individuals and as a group, forming a family where everyone feels safe. Every walk, every sound, every person, every movement, every word, every laugh, every smile, I frame in my memory, preserving it forever.*

~ Betsy Bertram

*I have learned that catching baby frogs is harder than it looks... if you listen closely, you can hear more than what is there... nature decorates better than ornaments ever could... when you share with others it feels better than holding it in... how to do capoeira and what it was . . . what a breath phrase is and how to do one... to respect nature more... to let my pen flow across the page... to make collage about many things... to feel my dance.*

~ Miles Bonsignore

*...I learned its okay to be yourself because people will probably like you more... I never really knew how much I liked dance until I took this exploratorium... And when we did morning pages, it was so magical, as Emily said - so different from just writing in your journal anytime.*

~ Emma Boulding



Collage by Terra Swanson

*I've learned to be a better friend, to branch out. I have discovered that nature's beauty is so amazing that there is nothing anything or anyone can do about it. I have grown up a lot in this class and thought a lot about who I want to be because I have learned that there is more to me than I know right now. The natural world has made me so happy, there is not even a word for it.*

~ Ellie Dalsheimer

*I have learned so much over this week, but the way and what I have learned is so hard to explain. I have learned about nature, but you could say I already knew about it. But you taught it a different way. It wasn't really about nature and the science of it, more of the beauty... I loved nature before, but now I see it different... I think it is that I see it different when I'm writing about it!*

~ Kathryn Diamant



*I have had a wonderful time! I thank you both for an invitation to dance and journal and write in the outdoors as a class. The outdoors mean so much to me. Being able to take this class, I have learned how to see the usual nature through the eyes of someone who has just stepped onto this earth. I have also gotten to know myself better in this week than I have in years.*

~ Ali Evarts

*I have learned or relearned that a moment can be perfectly captured in art... that my love for the outside world continues to grow... that everything is connected in so many ways... that the world is so green it almost swallows you up... that to love a group you don't have to know them like your best friends... that community is made when a group of people all love what they're doing... I have discovered ever more my love to write and to write about the outside... how strong memories are... how much fun playing can be.*

~ Sara Gabrielson

*I have learned that community means a lot to me... I have found by doing morning pages that journals aren't just to get all the things going in your head on paper, but that if you have the right environment, journal writing can really calm the inner self. Dancing outside was a great experience because it puts another meaning to it. I have learned to appreciate nature and its great beauty in this class.*

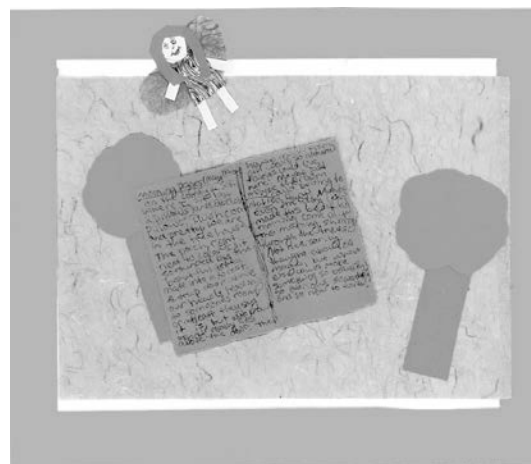
~ Hannah Kramer

*...A closer look at all of nature is what I have done, and I have realized the voice of nature. The low hum of a great tree, the whispering of the wind, the grass's quiet, subtle speaking. I have learned that all of nature has a voice, and speaks freely. Nature is truly a remarkable place, though many fail and have failed to realize it.*

*Nature's voice is a remarkable thing, but its beauty is entirely on another level. Just look at the ripples of the pond, the patterns on it exquisite, no two patterns are alike, however much you do see it. The bee and the flower, the honeysuckle or the butterfly, it is all tied with the beauty of nature...*

*I have discovered the ways I have, and will have, an everlasting bond with nature. I am part of nature, as is everybody else...*

~ Joe MacPhail



Collage by Kathryn Diamant

*Taking this exploratorium has really helped me. Now I look forward to writing in my journal everyday as much or as little as I want. It has opened up my eyes to every thing in nature. Now, when I hear a sound outside, I don't think, "Oh, how beautiful," but instead I wonder who it belongs to. And what could they be thinking? If I look at the leaves on a tree, I might take my mind deeper into a leaf, or take my Imagination further.*

*As I sit here writing this and I look around, I see so many things that wouldn't have been there if it weren't for this class. I take in so many more characteristics that it amazes me. Annie and Emily have helped me see the natural world through different eyes, to feel Nature and be able to reach out and touch it whenever, wherever. Finding myself in Nature has been a great experience for me.*

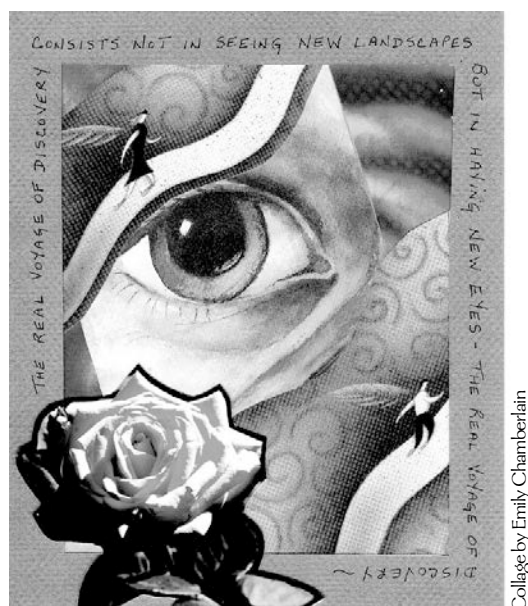
~ Terra Swanson



"morning pages"

*This class always teaches me new things each day from learning new collage techniques to finding my inner connection to the outdoors. The reason I think this class means so much to me is not only do we get to journal write and dance, but I learn to love and cherish simple things that have to do with nature even more than I thought was possible. This class is my inspiration to help protect what is really needed. The journal writing in this class gave me time to really find myself and express it, and the dancing helped me to show my feeling in movement. What I think was one of the most meaningful times during this exploratorium was the collages because it brought us all together and it really started showing a sign of how amazing our community really is!*

~ Marley Toben



Collage by Emily Chamberlain

*I've learned how to look at things and people in a different light... that it is near impossible to achieve total silence... that without nature, life would be dull and no one would be able to live in peace... that community and connecting to people is really, really, important... I've learned to appreciate all living things... that without the birds, life would sound mean... that all living things have to share this world... that the breeze whispers secrets of the earth. If you listen close enough, you can use them to bring peace to all the world and maybe that all shall live in harmony... and lastly, honeysuckles taste best if you're with your friends.*

~ Eric Whittier



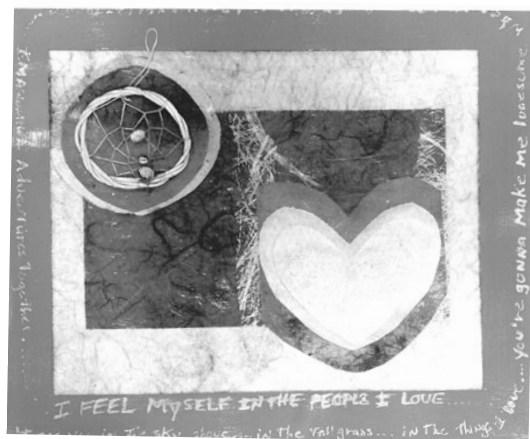
*Being in this class made me realize that nature is a part of me... You guys do not even know how special you are. Ya'll made this class feel so real, fun, and comfortable. You two have always understood me. Ya'll have helped me overcome my fears. I just want ya'll to know that it's been fun, and I really don't want this class to end.*

~ Jazmun Williams

*I relearned that Everything in Nature is perfect. Working together with others is a skill. If you look closely you will find something hidden. A simple stone is a gift within itself. Honeysuckle is a lovely aroma. And most of all, Nature is a privilege, not a freebie.*

*This has been good. One more thing. Friendships are woven together with time and fun. Like in this, there were plenty of both. Now I have more friends and I know myself better.*

~ Julia Zoltners



Collage by Annie Dwyer

Annie Dwyer and Emily Chamberlain think of this class as a weaving through which their students experience the joy of making connections - a joy that allows each student to say "What I do in my life make sense. I can feel the world around me and I have a place of my own within it."

# Beyond Despair: Leading High School Students Back to Earth

by: *Randolph J. Senzig*

In 1989 I was leading a group of high school students on a field trip to the Everglades. After getting off the bus and forming groups to hike the trail into Mahogany Hammock, I noticed two female students standing near the bus. When the groups with their chaperones began to move down the trail, I looked back and saw that the two girls were not following. I returned to get them. I found that the two students were reluctant to step off the sidewalk and onto the trail. In talking to them I was made aware that they were afraid to “go into the jungle”. They talked to me about living in an apartment complex all their lives. In this apartment complex there were signs that instructed all to keep off the grass and all their play was in a neighborhood playground with gravel and asphalt for groundcover. Such is the life of some children in major population centers. It took a lot of nature activities for these students to begin to feel comfortable in natural settings. I was seeing firsthand children deprived of time in the outdoors to experience the earth and their relationship to it.

I have taught Environmental Science in high school for 19 years. I have found three trends to emerge in the students that I have worked with during these years. Because of our culture, the first trend I see is that children are living further from the outdoors using AC, TV, video games and the computer to gain their experiences. They cannot understand their relationship with the earth, its forests, its animals, or its weather. The second trend is the ease with which people are getting their food. Young people find their food in a box from the freezer, a bag of lunch from the fast food restaurant, canned food from the supermarket and prepackaged foods to microwave. They have no concept of the farm, the soil, and the work it takes to produce food. The third trend will present unknown consequences in the future. That is young people are not learning basic information about the earth, plants, and animals to increase their Environmental awareness and appreciation.

These experiences have led me to develop and use many hands-on activities to help students build a positive relationship with the earth. I felt that young people needed more of these nature experiences so that they would learn more about environmental science. During some of those years, we planted hundreds of

trees on two different campuses, ate food from organic gardens that students planted, took many field trips and conducted experiments every week to teach ecological relationships. Students responded with increasing enrollments each year in the environmental sciences. I felt that these nature studies were important, but they were outside the curriculum and I wondered if I should be doing them. I felt really alone too as no one in my circle saw the same needs.

About four years ago I was propelled into the reality of the world of today’s teenagers. As I was teaching the various topics associated with Environmental Science such as water pollution and air pollution and all the terrible examples that we have always used to motivate others to correct the problems, I realized that this approach was actually having the reverse effect on my students. They were developing a sense of hopelessness and “oh, what’s the use.” The pictures of all the toxic materials in the water and the smoke in the air were not making them want to change things but were causing despair. This was, as Thomas Berry has stated, “a moment of grace” for me as I realized that I was missing the mark. I needed to find ways to help my students reconnect with nature.

Being a science teacher at Fuquay-Varina High School, I have had the responsibility of teaching Advanced Placement Environmental Science and Academic Environmental Science to 11th and 12th graders, Marine Ecology to 11th and 12th graders and Earth Science to 9th graders. I began searching for a person or a community to help me learn ways to expose my students to new ideas about the earth and their relationship to it. I found it through Thomas Berry and his teachings, which led me to The Center for Education, Imagination, and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. All of a sudden years of struggling with an alien concept alone in public schools became a joy in learning. I had found a community where I could share my thoughts in trust, grow in knowledge and experience and deepen my own understanding of the new human presence to the natural world. I realize that through the Center at Timberlake Farm and its programs, I have the avenue to give my students new hope and erase the despair that keeps them from being proactive in solving environmental problems.





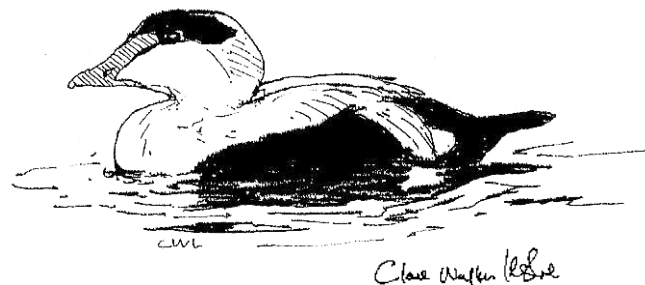
I have just completed the Seventh Generation Teachers' program this year. I view this program as one of the most important workshops that I have taken in my teaching career. Sharing Nature with Joseph Cornell, learning Environmental Ethics with Anthony Weston and redeveloping imagination and creativity with Richard Lewis have given me many new ways to help my students find their way closer to nature through building a new relationship with it. My teaching style and content are slowly evolving.

This past spring I worked with an English teacher to develop an intercurricular unit on Transcendentalism. The English students taught my classes about Emerson, Thoreau and other writers' views on nature and its role in our lives. My Environmental Science students then took the English classes outside for some outdoor experiences. We used a variety of observation activities such as Joseph Cornell's Unnatural Trail to get students into the moment. My students taught the others how to observe and sample populations.

The most exciting activity happened when each of my students, who had been learning about birds all year, took two of the English students along Joseph Cornell's Trail of Beauty. At each of the stations my students directed the others to reflect on one of the quotations, to take notes on birding, to use field guides to identify birds and to observe birds. As I walked along the trail quietly observing the groups, true learning was taking place. My students were teaching what they had learned about birding and our place in the Earth and the English students were seriously learning from their peers. Later, reading the journal entries that all the students wrote as they interpreted the quotations from the Trail of Beauty and the other activities, I saw a hunger for a deeper understanding of their place in the Earth.

True nature education is not taught in public schools. Environmental Science has ceased teaching personal relationships with the earth. Public school teachers are not trained to teach nature education. The Center for Education, Imagination, and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm has the staff and programs to help many teachers develop their own special relationships with the natural world and then create ways to reach out to their students with activities to bring them to new experiences with the earth. The Center has the ability to help teachers and students alike develop new attitudes and relationships that will help move us forward into a new age which Thomas Berry calls the Ecozoic Era; a time when humans understand, as Thomas Berry states, "the earth is not a collection of objects but a communion of subjects." Understanding this will give our young people, our students, new hope and a new sense that they can make a difference in the struggle to renew the human presence in the earth and the universe.

**Randy Senzig** is a NCSU Kenan Fellow who teaches Environmental Science, Marine Ecology and Earth Science at Fuquay-Varina High School in Fuquay-Varina, NC. Growing up in Jacksonville, FL, Randy spent his youth planting gardens and exploring the woods near his home. A graduate of Valdosta State University with a degree in Secondary Education and Biology, Randy spent five years teaching in a residential treatment center for severely emotionally disturbed adolescents. During that time, he used organic gardening and forest trails to connect his students to the natural world and returned to school to earn a Masters in Special Education. In 2002, he was awarded a Kenan Fellowship through the Kenan Institute at North Carolina State University to develop teacher leadership and innovative curriculum by using the study of birds to teach across curricular lines.



# The Poetry of Nature

by

Andrew Levitt and the Class of 2007

*Andrew Levitt teaches humanities at the Emerson Waldorf High School in Chapel Hill, NC. He has participated in the Seventh Generation Teachers' Program for the past two years, bringing a special interest in the poetry of nature. We asked Andrew and his ninth grade students to share with us their work in nature observation and poetry. Andrew has a BA in English from Yale University and a PhD in Folklore from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a professional mime who has trained with Marcel Marceau and with the American Mime Theatre in New York City.*

## The Assignment

Why "the poetry of nature?" Why not "nature poetry?" None of the poets we have or will read would consider themselves nature poets because nature poetry has the unhappy connotation of referring to poets who ogle at the birds and bees in a kind of gleeful stupefaction. So to connote the deeper way of listening to nature these poets, whose poems are collected here, manifest in their poetry, I prefer to call this "the poetry of nature." I hope thereby to suggest a way of listening to what is all around us and a way we humans can participate and commune with all things.

This is not about overlaying words on nature; it is letting nature speak through the words. When you write your own poems, it should be that simple. Let the words enter from the natural world.

The first rule of writing poetry ought to be: Don't try to write a poem. Skip rhyme. Don't count meter or syllables or stresses if it hurts. Just sit or walk quietly, silently and wait and be. Don't be afraid to go silent first. Trust that the words will come. Just let yourself stay awake in your senses and be as present as you can be until the poem writes itself.

Okay, so you may have to prime yourself a little. To get started:

-Make a simple statement--Maybe just define a state of being (It is..., There is...),

OR

-Describe a moment of experience in close detail,

-Ask a question of yourself, another or the world,

-Speak words of guidance or instruction to yourself or others,

-Exclaim--perhaps at the beauty of things or at some horror,

-Imagine a similarity and make the comparison by noting what something is "like" or how something is "as,"

OR

-if all else fails, read the first line of any one of the poems collected here and begin where any one of these poets began.

A poem can be a prayer, a song, a reflection, a meditation, a question, a description, a laugh, a cry, a rant, a sigh. It is always a gesture to and of the world. It is never just a piece of writing on a page called a poem. So get on with it the way birds sing because they are birds.

Later you can redraft and hone the words with a dictionary and an eraser.

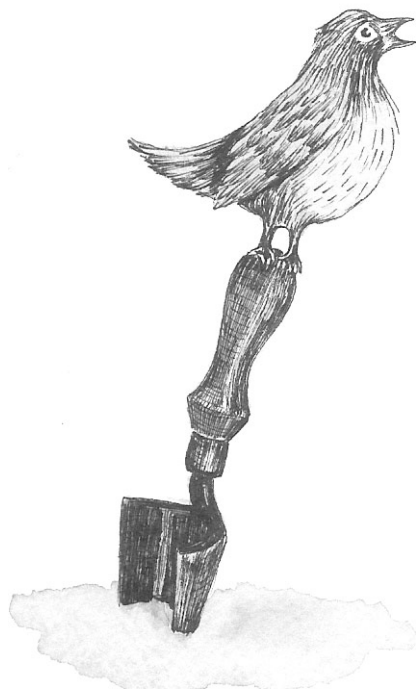
You may ask what if you find you can only write about the feelings inside yourself. Okay. If your heart has the loudest voice you hear in your silence, let it speak.

I am giving you permission and license to be extravagant and sing. So give yourself the freedom only you can give. WRITE: Two poems per day--or more--but no less. Each day you will start anew with two new poems to write.

## Gates

Step through the wrought iron gates, that  
Are painted white, with the spirals and curves.  
When you step through what do you see?  
Is it the red quince bush or the white?  
Is it the soft tendrils of periwinkle creeping  
along the ground?  
Or is it the rosebush that clings to the pillars of white  
iron?  
Or the iris leaves stretching up to the sun.  
Do you see the garden spade thrust into the soft dirt,  
With the robin perched on its handle?  
Can you smell the dirt?  
Does it smell like Spring?  
Just let that smell mixed with the smell of quince  
Wash over you in a gentle breeze,  
Feel the fingers of sun kissing your face.  
Listen to the sounds of the birds and the rustle of  
Leaves . . . .  
So much can happen just from stepping through the  
Wrought iron gates that are painted white.

~ Amelia Witkin



## Untitled

They call you Japanese Maple  
though you have never been to Japan  
from a nursery you came here  
where you shall ever stand  
and though you may long  
to see France and Rome  
such shall never be  
this is your place, your only home  
where you are an ever beautiful tree.

~ Kate Brady

## Untitled

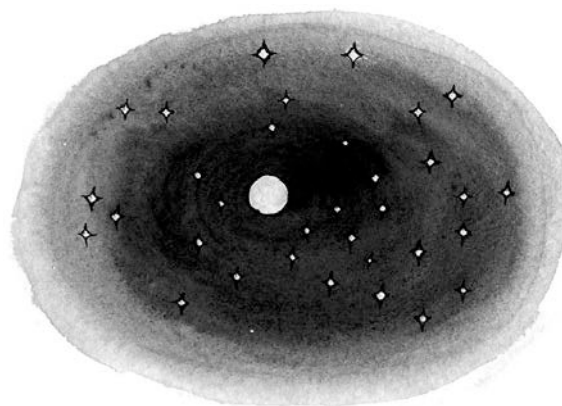
This Spring,  
Everything contrasts.  
The bright warm sun  
And the cold spring rain.  
The new green leaves  
And the old dead ones.  
The natural red of the tulip  
And the forced blue of the house.  
The feeling of freedom at last  
And of torturous confinement.  
The thinking that all was lost  
And all is yet to be gained.  
The peace  
And the chaos.  
The astonishingly beautiful  
And the astonishingly loathly.  
The earthly roots of the ground below me,  
And the immeasurable expanse of the sky above.  
This spring,  
Everything is inseparable.

~ Aliyah Sanders-Walberg

## Untitled

I walk off the road,  
and into the forest.  
I walk out of a life of stress,  
and into one of ease.  
I walk out of a tamed world  
and into a wilderness.  
I walk out of my own body  
and into a new one.

~ Michael Short



### Sky at Night

The sky has seemed rounder lately,  
A huge, overturned bowl.  
Like now -  
The faintly streaked  
White pin-pointed blue black.  
The trees pushing up,  
Black and rustling.  
Certain stars poke out,  
Paying more attention to us  
Down here.

~ Gabriel Graetz

### Black

black cat, black sky, black night,  
everything I see is black  
it is as if a bucket of paint was dumped on my head,  
i see nothing  
not the stars,  
not the moon,  
not even the lights of my house.  
so why can't I see?  
have I gone blind? Have I died?  
but wait, there's a tiny light up ahead  
now I see white all around me  
as if a bucket of white paint was dumped on me . . .

~ Alex Gabriel

### Reflections

The silver green trees sit shimmering  
The onion grass sways with wind's  
heavy sigh.  
the old dark wood bobs on the surface.  
Clouds drift softly across the sky.  
The moon glows brightly lighting the way.  
A featureless boy stares back at me.  
A leaf then falls and all is gone.  
Then piece by piece it all returns.  
It's amazing what can live in just  
a forgotten hub cap.

~ Aiden C. Dale

### Untitled

I cannot see the clear bright stars,  
It is because of the glaring porch light  
Which I regretfully, cannot force myself to turn off  
The night is welcoming and innocent  
Yet I cannot feel completely safe when annie  
stops and sniffs the air,  
Taking a few steps at a time towards the forest's edge  
As if some dreadful creature lurks there,  
And when carl, as well, lifts his head, turns towards  
that forest edge  
I am not alone by any means,  
But to see the stars clearly, with no house light  
I would have to put the dogs inside  
Leaving me alone with a cat who was sitting on  
a fallen tire swing.  
I now hear the traffic on some highway.  
I never knew it was so close  
I never really heard it before,  
I suppose I was distracted by the chirping of  
grasshoppers.  
What yesterday seemed to be nature,  
I can now see is full of metal structures  
And surrounded by the roaring sound of cars at  
very high speeds.  
This doesn't feel like home.  
Are there so many cars now that you can hear  
them cruising the streets from anywhere?  
How far will I have to go to be rid of this noise?  
I have always felt my backyard to be some kind of  
sanctuary  
Now I see the trash pile beyond the metal fence and  
the thinning trees leading to a house,  
I feel betrayed.

~Claire Newlon

### Different than other . . . .

Underneath the light blue  
And dark blue  
It is different than other.  
Cool fresh air,  
A few voices of birds,  
It is different than other.  
The moon is on the  
West,  
That is so big  
I think I can reach it  
That is different than other.  
The night wind  
Makes me feel cold  
It is telling  
It's time for another world  
That is different than other.

~ Arnold Kim

### Untitled

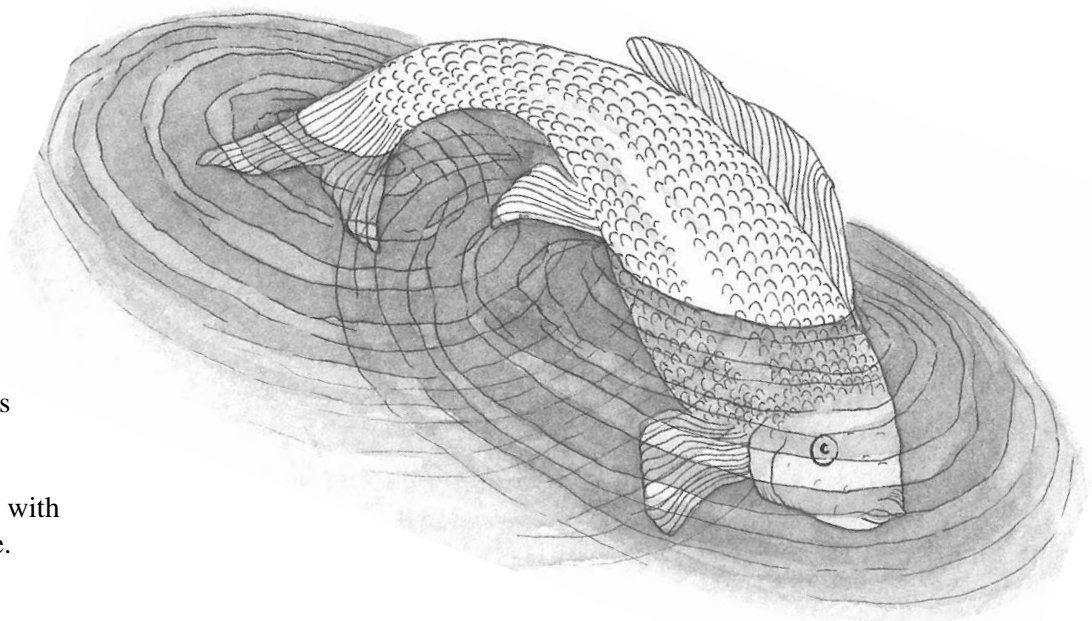
Pink-white petals float all around  
Soft as a baby's kiss  
They glow gently in this last light of day  
Or with the white shine of a ripe moon  
I cannot remember now what it was I did  
today.  
I'm sure it was important at the time.  
But for now it has drifted away, I'll  
snatch it back tomorrow.  
Today, tomorrow. It's a world away  
from now.  
When sweet-scented petals float all  
around.

~ Amanda Dahil-Moore

### April 4

Silently  
Its silvery body archs  
up and out  
Disturbing the lines,  
Distorting the image with  
its downward plunge.  
Small circles grow  
Outwards  
Filling the space.  
They move and move  
Until the rippling straight lines  
Dust them away.  
I think I see the spheres for longer  
than they exist.  
Is this small act reserved for a  
tiny fish,  
Or can I take one leap and change  
the world?

~ Amy Shmania



Drawings by Liz Levitt



# Conversations With Thomas Berry

by  
Jessica Towle

By the time I was seventeen and graduated from high school, I realized that humans had unintentionally split the world apart. I saw that the sacred had been taken out of the Earth, and the Earth had been taken out of the sacred. It was as if, for a period of time, my vision completely changed and all I could see was the pain of this reality. I liked to call it the great divorce, because I saw all splitting apart as coming from this source.

My intense need to reunite in myself that which was split apart led me to Genesis Farm, a Learning Center for Re-Inhabiting the Earth in Blairstown, New Jersey, not far from my home. What I encountered there was reconciliation - people working towards the union that I was desperately searching for. The more time I spent there, the more I heard the name "Thomas Berry." I became curious about him because everyone there held him in such high regard and could easily quote clarifying things that he said in response to my questions. I was given a copy of his book *The Dream of the Earth* and, after making my way through it, I declared to myself that I would meet Thomas one day.

Two years later I found myself at a tree house watching an old man drive up in a beat up Honda. I walked over, unsure who it was. He got out of the car and we looked at each other for the first time. We both started laughing right away, and then we hugged. I knew that it must be Thomas, and I knew at that moment that I had better do the listening instead of the talking. From the first moment I saw him I adored him. He had this graceful sparkle in his eyes, and his white hair was sticking up in the back of his head, like Einstein's did.

The day I met him was an Earth Guides training at Timberlake Farm in Whitsett, NC, not far from where Thomas grew up. There I was, a transplant from New Jersey, newly arrived in North Carolina at the invitation of Carolyn Toben, founder of Timberlake Farm. I had no idea that being at Timberlake Farm would actually mean entering a new life. The Earth Guides training was the beginning of a new way of seeing things for me. When Thomas started speaking, I became transfixed. I had never heard anyone talk like he did before. I was entranced by his use of the English language, astonished at his clear thinking, and captured by the ease and grace

through which he spoke his message. He was like a brilliant poet who had been given the task of elucidating a cosmological and historical understanding of reality.

Throughout my first year at Timberlake Farm I spent a lot of time with Thomas. He inspired me in a way that I had never known before. He inspired in me the love of learning and with that came the desire to think critically, to educate myself, to look at history very carefully in order to see how the Earth came to be as it is, and more importantly, how we came to think the way we do. For the first time in my life I felt curious about history, and I no longer had to ask "Why is this important?" or "How does this fit into the larger picture of things?" Throughout all my previous schooling, I constantly asked these questions of my teachers who, for whatever reason, never had an answer for me. Being with Thomas was like discovering a secret treasure over and over again. His interpretations of things allowed me to start to see the world I inhabited in the depth of its meaning. The unfolding of his thought was the first true sharing of relevant intelligence that I had ever experienced.

In between our visits, Thomas would send me packages of books in the mail with enchanting little notes signed "Hermit of the Hills," or "Hermit of the Wilderness." He became more and more delightful to me every time I met with him, and as time went on I actually began to understand what he was saying. Each visit became its own breakthrough in my mind.

I'm not sure how the idea of writing a book with him came up originally. At first it was to be a biography and that idea eventually evolved into the notion of writing an intergenerational question and answer dialogue with him. Of course, I was convinced that I did not have the skills or the ability to do this, so my plan was to sit with this whole idea for awhile and hope that divine inspiration would come running in and help me write something beautiful about this man whom I adored so much. After a year in North Carolina it became apparent to me that I wanted a College education, and so I journeyed to Prescott, Arizona where I enrolled in Prescott College. My conversations with Thomas would be long distance for a time and the idea of writing an intergenerational dialogue would be put on hold.





After two years of study and growing at Prescott, I knew it was time to return to North Carolina for an independent study semester at The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. In my absence, poor health had forced Thomas to leave his hermitage in the woods and move to an assisted living residence in a retirement community where his sister Margaret lived. When I returned, the time seemed right to take up my intergenerational dialogue with Thomas where we'd left off. I still didn't feel that I knew enough, but Thomas said "If you wait until you're ready - one is never necessarily ready- you'll be waiting for a long time." With this encouragement, Thomas and I agreed to have weekly conversations.

What follows is an account of one of our conversations. In this ongoing exchange between my questions and Thomas' reflections, the world has come back together again. My adolescent quest for a reuniting of the sacred and the Earth is fulfilled in a language of union and reconciliation offered to me by a wise and beloved elder.



Today is Friday, April 9, 2004; Good Friday. I picked up Thomas from his new residence at Wellspring Assisted Living Center. Wellspring is a well kept center that is probably a delightful place for most folks. Thomas says he doesn't mind it all that much. There are birds in big fish tanks and beautiful plants guarding each door. I have never heard him complain about it. I have never heard him complain about a thing in the four years that I have known him.

Before I knock at his door, I stand there and wonder what it will be like today with him. Sometimes he is tired. He has given a lot in this life. I knock and hear him call out for me to let myself in. When I open the door, he is walking towards me with his arms wide open, a smile on his face. "Well, it's good to see you," he says. He looks tired today- really, really tired. He says "I'm afraid I am a bit of a bore today."

It makes me laugh when he calls himself a bore. He is the most magnanimous person I know, yet I know he is serious when he says this. He looks at me as I am hysterically laughing, and he starts to laugh deeply and freely. I can see that this is turning into a wonderful

moment as he suddenly declares, "Well, let's go to our place." He disappears into another room and I look around while waiting for him. I see a lone copy of an early book written by Thomas called *Befriending the Earth*. Thomas comes back into the room while I am carefully inspecting it. He tells me that I should take it. I point out that it is his last and only copy, not to mention that it is one of the only things in this room that is reminiscent of his life at the hermitage. He doesn't seem to care and tells me to take it anyway. We start heading out to the Green Valley Grille, which has become the setting of our conversations.

When we walk in to "our place," the hostess immediately ushers us to our usual booth and comments on the fact that she doesn't see a tape recorder today. I don't really like to record him any more. Although I always wish I had recordings later, my attention seems to drift to making sure the recorder is copying well, and so forth. I would much rather be fully present to the experience of being with him without any distractions.

We sit down in the big, comfy booth. The waitress knows to give us some time to chat before we order. I stare at Thomas from across the table. I become fixated on his eyes. He is speaking to me about something Aristotle said: "Beauty is an aspect of everything," he says, his words floating effortlessly, reaching my ears, registering in my brain. I still can't look away from his eyes. He is looking at me too, intently looking, as he continues by saying, "Aristotle says there are three aspects to everything in the universe: One, True and Beautiful. Absolutely every living thing has this and knows this. Every tree has this identity, every river, every mouse. Each of us articulates something unique in the universe. The challenge of the evolution of consciousness is to locate ways of thinking about the universe and also to locate distinctive ways of thinking of oneself. Self-reflective consciousness is the awareness of our own unique reality, as well as of the common reality that we share through the beauty of inner attractions."

There is something precise about the tone and manner in which he speaks. There is thoughtfulness in how he pauses between words, remembering centuries of stories of people from every nation on the planet. He is someone who knows the stories of diverse peoples, how they came to be who they are. He not only knows their stories, but he can reflect the meaning of those stories within the larger picture. Thomas also knows



the story of the universe and how it came to be, and how we came to be within it. He is someone who reveals so much with his careful articulation. He has put so much into the words he chooses to speak, and the silence that he speaks from.

After awhile, our waitress brings us our usual soups and salads. Thomas starts to pick at his lettuce plate with his fingers. We both like to eat salad with our hands. There is something very natural about eating leaves that way. I say to him, in between heaping mouthfuls, "Thomas, it might take me a lifetime to live in the world that you live in." He laughs. I then ask him, "Why do you think humans have evolved to have these capacities that we have?" He considers my question momentarily before replying, "We can narrate the changes of development from earlier forms, and the sequence of events, but we can't say why. Our knowledge of the why is expressed through myths. Myths can explain why in terms of non-literal language. Children no longer get myths because they are considered unreal, but if they do not receive myths, they are missing the whole world of reality. Mythic reality can tell of wonderful and useful things. Science discounts myths because they cannot be proved or demonstrated.

Our waitress eyes us up closely as she walks past. She has learned to sense when to disrupt the conversation. Thomas continues by saying, "The sacred and the profound are best expressed through analogous language. Language creates reality. The idea is that we know more than we can explain. A mother cannot rationally explain her love for her child. Their mutual fulfillment lies in their capacity for intimacy with each other; there is no scientific explanation for this. The relationship is self-authenticated and self-explanatory. There is the science of it, but that is not what a mother is feeling or talking about."

I understand what he means, as I imagine a mother's love for her child. Our waitress brings us more coffee, and we both pause. I imagine him briefly, watching for almost a century, the effects of the rational-mechanistic worldview making its way into our relationship to the Earth, the economy, our ideas of love, and actually every other human venture. I imagine him watching so much of this go on in his own lifetime. I always wonder what makes a person stay awake internally. How did he do it? Why did he not get swept up in the reality of the

time? Usually, when I talk with him, my own thoughts disappear and every word he says creates an image in my mind.

I go on to tell him that he lives in a different world than most, a bigger world, a world I can only imagine through the stories he tells. He replies, "Young people need this kind of world. If they get into a computer world too soon, they are deprived of the world they should be experiencing. We are not going to recover our ecology until we understand this."

"Are you saying that our relationship to the Earth is directly connected to how we think?" I ask. He replies, "If we continue to build our world as scientific analysis and neglect the knowledge of imagination, art and the humanities, we will tend to see the purpose of life explained in scientific ideas of analysis and control. We need to keep myth because it is the only thing that makes life livable. Our children are learning to become mechanistic constructions, they are being taught to manipulate the area of human mechanical design and control. The children are saturated with mechanics, but end up with no poetry, no imagination, or depth of understanding."

He pauses and looks at me and says, "Next week for homework write about how this is evident in society, and how thoughtful people are responding to it. Pay attention to what children are bombarded with, and pay attention to how they respond to places like the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. How is the need in children being met?"

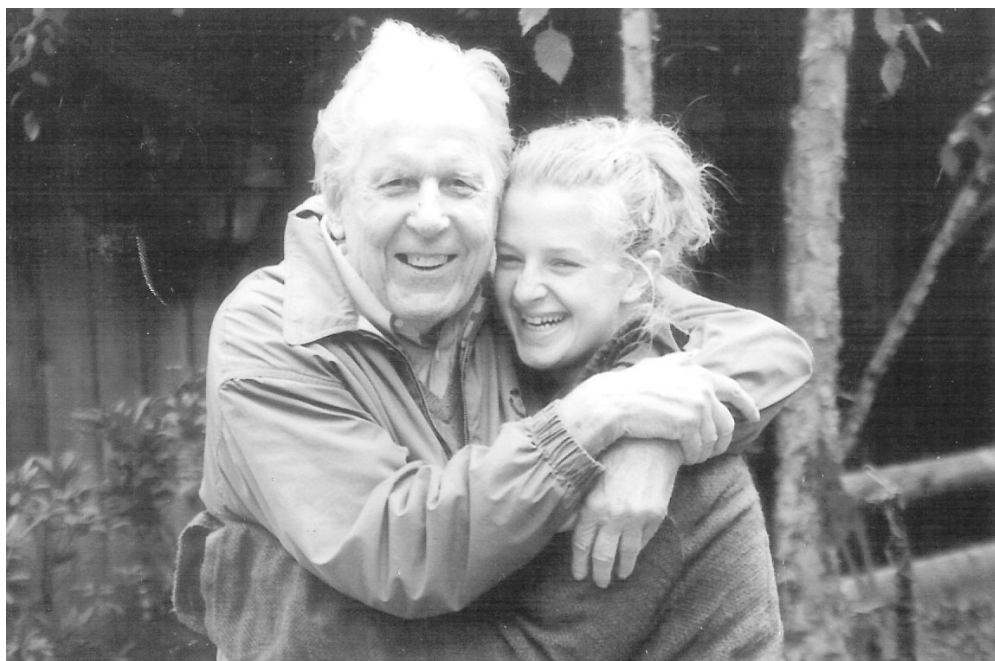
I start to imagine a few of the millions of ways that a child's relationship to the Earth is marginalized. He continues by saying, "Humanity has undertaken three major shifts in thinking in terms of basic and primary referent. In the first age, the divine was the primary referent; in the second age, the human; in the third age, the Earth. Our fulfillment as human beings requires a threefold fulfillment."

The integration of this threefold fulfillment is something he has been talking about a lot lately. He seems insistent that I get that idea, that I have a sense of what he means, but it's not entirely clear to me yet. I make a note to ask him about this more carefully next time. I get the feeling it is important.



Our earnest and kind waitress returns to the table and sets out crème brûlée with two spoons. This has become a tradition with Thomas and me and most wait staff at The Green Valley Grille are wonderful to remember this. It always makes us feel special because they do. He removes the cookie and puts it on the side

of the plate. He picks up his spoon and removes the cooked sugar off the top, dipping right into the crème. He looks at me with regard and says “I have watched the last century, you will watch this one. What I saw begin, you will see end. Create a century, Jessie.”



**Thomas Berry** has been honored by both the United Nations and Harvard University for his outstanding contributions to the development of ecological consciousness. His books include *The Dream of the Earth*, *The Universe Story* (with Brian Swimme), and *The Great Work*.

**Jessica Towle** is a student at Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona. She has been connected with the work of the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World for the past four years and has recently completed an internship where she served as our master gardener and nature awareness educator.

# The Bird of Imagining Project

The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World has received grants from the United Arts Council and the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro in support of a community outreach project for teachers, arts educators, parents and children entitled "The Bird of Imagining."

The Center, in partnership with the Greensboro Public Library, will bring "The Bird of Imagining," a traveling exhibit of the Touchstone Center in New York City, to the new Kathleen Clay Edwards Branch Library during the month of April 2005. The new branch library will have an environmental focus, and this exhibit affirms the important role the arts play in understanding the human relationship to the natural world.

Based on a poem by Richard Lewis and illustrated by twenty-two luminous cray-pas drawings by children from New York City Public Schools, this unique exhibit explores the nature of the imagination through the flight of a bird evolving into the flight of our human imagining. The children's art work comes from a series of arts and education residencies of The Touchstone Center at the Central Park East Public School # 1 and #2, The River East School, and the Children's Workshop School in 1989 and 1996. The Bird of Imagining was published in book form in 2002.

Greensboro author Thomas Berry gave the book a rave review as follows: *A stunningly beautiful book, this selection of drawings by children! Drawings in the form of a bird, the bird of imagining, with an amazing variety of color and form, all inspired by the verses of Richard Lewis. Putting together color and form with such depth of texture gives the sense of primordial immediacy to these drawings. They have an entrancing beauty that comes from some wonder world available only to children. Even for us older folk these children awaken us to our own singing bird within.*

In addition, the Center has received funding to host the following programs related to the exhibit:

- April 8      **Opening of "Bird of Imagining" Exhibit** (time TBA)  
Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library  
*Free*
- April 9      **Seventh Generation Teachers' Program, Part III** (9:00 am - 4:00 pm)  
The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm  
*fee: Three-part program, \$195 (organic lunch included)*  
Led by Richard Lewis, Director of the Touchstone Center in NYC, this teacher retreat will be an exploration of how the processes and expressiveness of the imagination can be found both in us as well as in the marvelous diversity of life forms of the natural world. Using drama, art and poetic thought, we will attempt to discover not only the ways the artistry of the imagination creates 'nature' itself, but fuels and inspires the very sources of our perceptions and learning. A day of becoming the wondrous bird of our imagining - and the tree of our knowing.
- April 10      **Bird of Imagining Workshop** (time TBA)  
Kathleen Clay Edwards Family Branch Library  
*Free*  
Led by Richard Lewis, this workshop for parents and their children will explore ways we use our imagination - and how we might create our own very special bird of imagining.
- April 11-12      **Arts Educators 2-Day Workshop** (9:30 am - 3:30 pm)  
Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm  
*Free*  
Richard Lewis will engage arts educators in the question: "How might our imagination be pivotal to experiencing and expressing our understanding of the natural world?" On the afternoon of the second day, Richard will introduce arts educators to the particular approaches taken to this question by the Touchstone Center in New York City over the last 35 years, particularly through Touchstone's arts and education projects in New York City schools. We will end by exploring together ways in which arts educators in Guilford County schools might use the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World as a resource for initiating programs in our area.

If you are interested in attending any of these programs, please contact the Center at (336) 449-0612.

# "Keeping a Nature Journal" with Clare Walker Leslie

April 30, 2005

*The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World*

*at*

*Timberlake Farm*

*9:30 am - 3:30 pm*

*fee: \$55 (organic lunch included)*

At the heart of our work at the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World is the practice of keeping a nature journal. Whether working with teachers or children, we introduce the art of nature journaling as an essential way of making a personal connection to the natural world. We are particularly pleased, therefore, to have received a grant from the Jelly Foundation to bring renowned New England artist, naturalist, educator and author Clare Walker Leslie to the Center for a day long workshop in "Keeping a Nature Journal."

Join Clare for a wonderful block of time to be outdoors setting up a Nature Journal - as a means for exploring and recording the land here. We will be using the methods of seeing/drawing/ writing/meditation that Clare teaches around the country. The focus of the workshop will be for each participant to find their own means for recording season and place. There will be plenty of individual time with Clare, for technique as well as for group discussion, on uses of Nature Journals for connecting us better with the processes and daily flows around us, especially when working with students (of all ages) in schools.

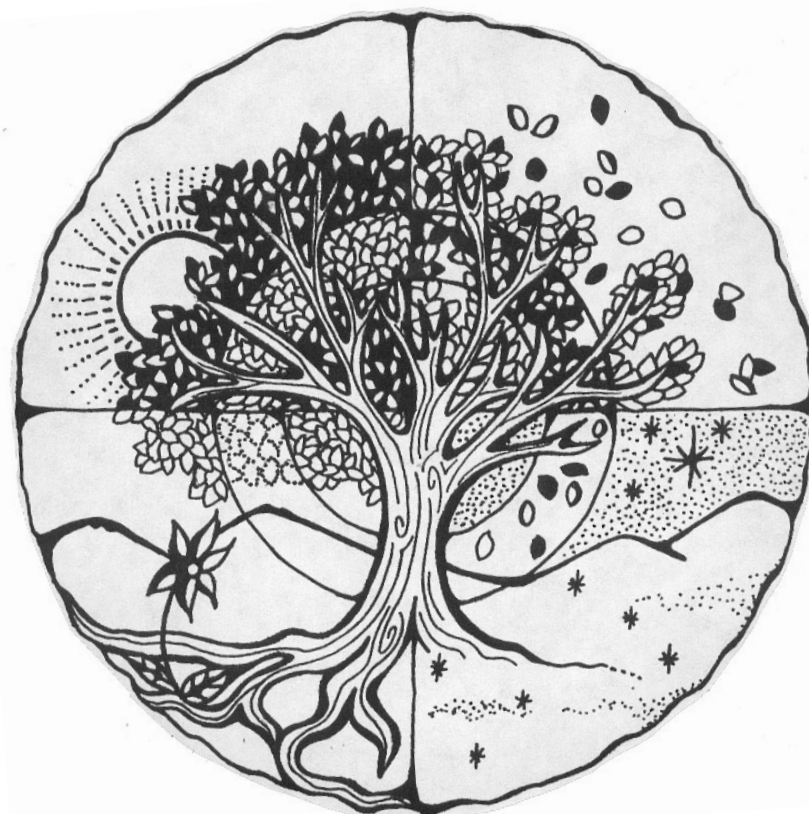
Participants 10 years and up are welcome, as well as self-learners, families, artists, writers, and exploring naturalists. With the words of Thomas Berry in our minds and May Day around us, we will pay attention to this land and give it a full day of honoring- with our hearts, our eyes, our curiosities, our journals.

Please bring: smooth white drawing paper, any pencils, pens, color tools you have already. Also useful could be a folding stool, field guides to the area, binoculars, magnifying glasses, water bottle, clothing suitable for the weather.



*If you are interested in attending this workshop, please call the Center for an application at (336) 449-0612 or download an application at our website at [www.beholdnature.org](http://www.beholdnature.org)*

# Seventh Generation Teacher's Program



artwork by Liz Levitt

A Three-Part Program: November 6, 2004, February 26 and April 9, 2005  
9:00 am - 4:00 pm, cost: \$195 (organic lunch included)  
(applications can be downloaded at [www.beholdnature.org](http://www.beholdnature.org))

*The Seventh Generation Teachers' Program provides a context for teachers to deepen their own personal connection to the natural world and to be co-creators of ways to bring nature awareness to all paths of teaching.*

*Part One is a nature awareness retreat with Center Staff.*

*Part Two explores the foundations of nature awareness in education with earth educator Valerie Vickers and ecophilosopher Anthony Weston.*

*Part Three explores how our imagination is pivotal to experiencing and expressing our understanding of the natural world with arts educator Richard Lewis.*

**Valerie Vickers** is a Middle School Science Specialist who has recently completed her doctoral dissertation on "An Exploration of Ecological Identity: Education to Restore the Human/Earth Relationship."

**Anthony Weston** is Professor of Philosophy at Elon University where his work centers on the ethical and cultural dimensions of the environmental crisis. Author of *Back to Earth: Tomorrow's Environmentalism* and editor of *An Invitation to Environmental Philosophy*, Anthony is a key spokesperson for a new Earth Etiquette.

**Richard Lewis** is the Founder of The Touchstone Center in NYC, devoted to developing the use of elemental themes and images in order to encourage both children and adults to express, through different mediums, their innate relationship to the natural world. His books include *Living By Wonder*, *In a Spring Garden*, *Each Sky Has Its Words*, *The Bird of Imagining*, and *Cave*.

## Next Generation Children's Programs

### ***Tiny Kingdoms for Tiny Folks***

**9:30 am - 12:00 noon**

**Ages 3-5, \$10 per child**

A magical morning at Timberlake will begin at the Treehouse and then await the children on the trails and footbridges where they will observe the enchantment of forest and stream. A hayride and stop at the organic garden are part of the morning's pleasures. Preschools welcome!

*Fall Dates: October - November 2004*

*Spring Dates: April - May 2005*

### ***Earth Guides Programs for Schoolchildren***

**9:30 am - 1:30 pm**

**Ages K-12, \$10 per child**

The Earth Guides program is an all-day program for schoolchildren focusing on nature awareness through sensory experiences, art, story, and a visit to our "Magical" organic garden.

*Fall Dates: October - November 2004*

*Spring Dates: April - May 2005*

### ***Summer Nature Camps***

**9:30 am - 3:00 pm**

**Session I: June 6 - 10, 2005 (8-10 year olds)**

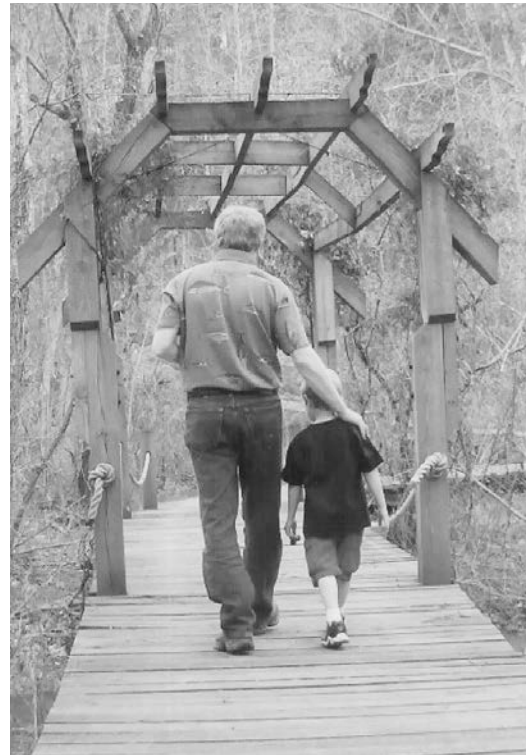
**Session II: June 20 - 24, 2005 (5-7 year olds)**

**\$150 per child, organic lunch included**

A week-long nature awareness program for twelve children that encourages a mutually enhancing relationship between the children and the Earth. Children will directly experience lush forest, lake, creek, and meadow ecosystems and explore their own sense of belonging to these places. The week includes Native American perspectives and creative expression through art and outdoor journaling. The "Magical" organic garden will provide fresh vegetables for lunches.

*If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder . . . he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.*

~ Rachel Carson



## Special Design Programs

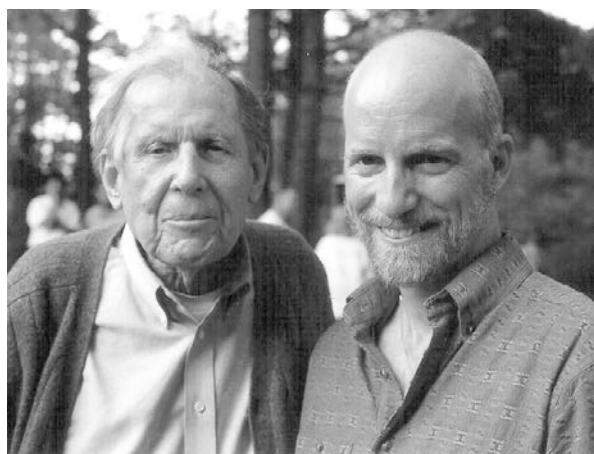
The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World is located at Timberlake Farm, a 165 acre earth sanctuary in Whitsett, NC. The earth sanctuary is a unique place of beauty with wildflower meadows, an organic garden, five miles of gentle woodland trails, small streams and twin lakes. It is a setting where time unwinds, wheels stop spinning, and the presence of the natural world can be fully experienced.

Since 2000, the Center has sponsored day programs for schoolchildren at the earth sanctuary. These programs offer a one-time nature awareness experience for children where they begin to make a personal connection to the natural world. It is our hope now to extend this experience into ongoing partnerships with schools. Beginning in 2004, the Center invites schools to consider entering into a partnership that will bring the rhythms of the natural world more pervasively into the school year. The Center welcomes inquiries from teachers and schools, pre-school through college. We offer many possibilities for educators to partner with the Center in order to weave a new way of knowing the natural world into the academic year. If you are interested in exploring a Special Design Program, please contact the Center at 449-0612 or e-mail us at [beholdnature@aol.com](mailto:beholdnature@aol.com).

# Thank You to all our Volunteers & Interns!

## ***Earth Guide Intern Program***

The Earth Guide Intern Program is an opportunity for college students to lead Earth Guide programs for schoolchildren at the Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World at Timberlake Farm. Earth Guide Interns attend a full day training session and make a commitment to a weekly schedule of service during the Fall and/or Spring Semester. Earth Guide Interns must be able to devote one day a week from 9:00 am to 1:30 pm per semester. A small stipend of \$200 is available. If you are interested in becoming an Earth Guide, please call the Center at (336) 449-0612.



Thank you to Peter Berry and Sarah Chowning for an inspiring evening of Celtic harp music, gaelic song and storytelling at our Benefit Concert in honor of Thomas Berry.

*(Clockwise from above, Thomas Berry and Peter Berry; right, Peter Berry and Sarah Chowning; below, Margaret Berry and Thomas Berry)*



Photos by Jeff Lane

*A Special thank you to the following people who have given so freely and joyfully of their time to the Center:*

~ to all the college students who served as Earth Guides in the Spring and Fall of 2004.

~ to Gay Cheney, for bringing Native American perspectives to our Earth Guides Program for schoolchildren.

~ to Tyler Nance of Warren Wilson College and Spencer Ellis of Elon University for countless hours of community service in the garden over the summer.

~ to Susannah Lach, Dacia King and Lynne Jaffe for coordinating our Benefit Concert in Honor of Thomas Berry.

~ to all the folks who helped make the benefit concert a success, especially Donna and Jeff Lane for making refreshments and honor cards, and Joel Montgomery for making the stage.

~ to all the teachers, children and community supporters who volunteered to help with the production of our fundraising video, especially Scott Davis who directed the video pro bono, Fred and Becky Story who composed the music as a gift, and Mike Urben who volunteered his time as narrator.





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# Friends of the Center, January - September 2004

## *Donors*

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Tom Berry	Donna Kenton	Lovey Russ
Joanne K. Bluethenthal	Malcolm Kenton	Randy Senzig
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Molly Brown	Dacia King	Andy Stewart
Carole Chase	David & Linda Kinne	Anne Taylor
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Scott Davis	Kristin Klein	Janice Toben
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Carole Drexel	Timothy Lambeth	Scott & Stacey Toben
Earth Fare's Friend of the Month	Jeff & Donna Lane	Steven Toben
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## *Foundations*

Bluebell Foundation  
Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro  
Flora Family Foundation  
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Gate City Kiwanis Foundation  
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United Arts Council

## *Honor Gifts*

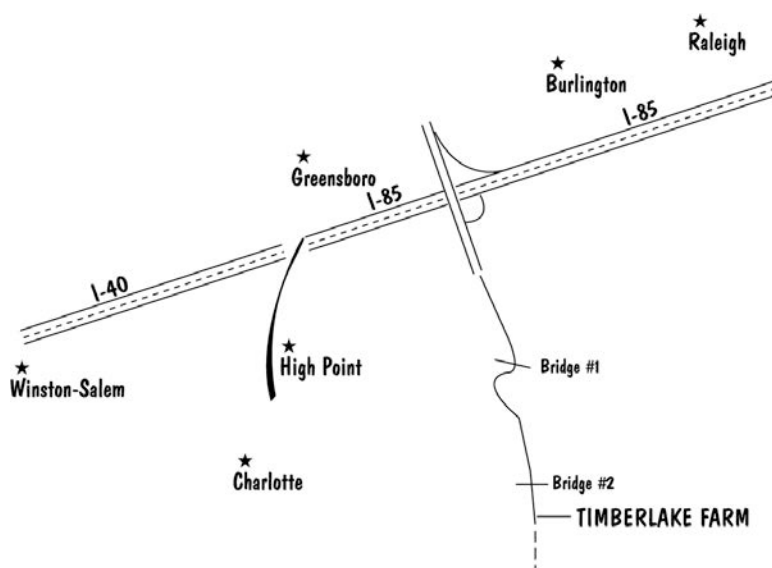
Chris Canfield - In honor of Kate Finlayson  
John & Lynda Cock - In honor of the wedding of Val Vickers and Paul Mitchell  
Amanda Easoz & Ashley White - In honor of Vanessa Kitchen  
Greensboro Day School - In honor of Gay Cheney  
Joan Hanson - In honor of the wedding of Val Vickers and Paul Mitchell  
Barb Leland - In honor of the wedding of Val Vickers and Paul Mitchell  
Andrew, Mia, & Liz Levitt and Peggy Whalen-Levitt - In honor of the wedding of Val Vickers and Paul Mitchell  
Bill Roy - In honor of Val Vickers' PhD Graduation  
Tommy & Anne Webb - In honor of the wedding of Val Vickers and Paul Mitchell  
Geraldine Whalen - In honor of Peggy Whalen-Levitt

FROM WINSTON-SALEM/  
GREENSBORO

Take I-40 East to I-85; continue about 13 miles beyond Greensboro towards Burlington. Exit at Rock Creek Dairy Road (Exit #135). You will go under the overpass and loop around. Turn left at the top of the exit and go just over two miles. The Timberlake Farm entrance is on the left at the top of the hill.

FROM RALEIGH/DURHAM/  
CHAPEL HILL

Take I-85 South towards Greensboro. Continue on I-85 about 10 miles past Burlington. Exit on Rock Creek Dairy Road (Exit #135). Turn left at the top of the exit and go just over two miles. The Timberlake Farm entrance is on the left at the top of the hill.



*The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World is a non-profit organization that champions inclusiveness and actively discourages discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or any other factors that deny the essential humanity of all people. Furthermore, the Center encourages a love and respect for the diversity of the natural world.*

Center for Education, Imagination and The Natural World  
at Timberlake Farm  
1501 Rock Creek Dairy Road  
Whitsett, North Carolina 27377

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