

THE GAZETTE

"a news-sheet, a periodical publication giving an account of current events"

West Falmouth Religious Society of Friends

NOVEMBER 2023



Wild Geese

By Wendell Berry

Horseback on Sunday morning,
harvest over, we taste persimmon
and wild grape, sharp sweet
of summer's end. In time's maze
over the fall fields, we name names
that went west from here,
names that rest on graves. We open
a persimmon seed to find the tree
that stands in promise,
pale, in the seed's marrow.
Geese appear high over us,
pass, and the sky closes. Abandon,
as in love or sleep, holds
them to their way, clear,
in the ancient faith: what we need
is here. And we pray, not
for new earth or heaven, but to be
quiet in heart, and in eye
clear. What we need is here.

From *Collected Poems, 1957-1982*, North Point Press, 1987.

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Officers

Molly Cornell, clerk
Sally Fritz, recording clerk
Clyde Tyndale, treasurer

Regular Events

Peace and Social Order
2nd Sunday at 12:30 p.m.
Erica Adams, clerk

**Sunday Morning Gathering in
the Library Corner at 9:00 a.m.**

Ministry & Counsel
Cynthia Rankin, clerk
(508-360-7536)

**West Falmouth Meeting for
Worship with Attention to
Business**
Usually 4th Sunday
November 19; December 24

Upcoming Events

New England Yearly Meeting

Midweek meditations. Remaining fall sessions are November 15 and December 20 at 8:00 p.m. **Brian Drayton** (Souhegan Friends Meeting) is offering monthly mid-week opportunities for Zoom-based worship-sharing and conversation. Open to all, the opportunities are limited to 30 at a time. If we get full, a waiting list will be kept, in case a regular attendee can't make a particular session. One week before the event, Friends will receive the Zoom link and a short quotation from a Friend modern or ancient. This year's exercises will draw from writings by women Friends across four centuries. Attendees will be asked to read the selection beforehand and reflect in private on a few short questions. The themes this fall will be prayer, the role of scripture, and continuing revelation. Each gathering will open with quick greetings and a brief introduction to the quotation, followed by 15 minutes of conversation about the text. The rest of the time will be spent in worship-sharing. The aim is for the conversation to be slow, spacious, and centered. The final 5 minutes will be silent, before we depart from our miniature retreat. There will be a spring series January through May, which will be announced in December. Learn more and register at <https://neym.org/events-calendar/2023/09/midweek-meditations>

Sandwich Quarterly Meeting

New Bedford -- Work party after worship followed by lunch, Sunday, **November 12** (every second Sunday).

Smith Neck -- Meat Pie Supper, Saturday, **November 4**, 6:00 p.m. A home-cooked meal served by the members of Smith Neck Friends. Includes mashed potatoes, gravy, candied carrots, coffee, and homemade desserts. Pies can be pre ordered and purchased separately for \$20. Call Anne Lopoulos at 508-971-8008 or Carole Cannan at 508-991-0459.

Thanksgiving pies will be prepared on site to purchase on Tuesday **November 21**. Pies can be picked up between 1:00 and 4:30. 10" apple pie or 10" pumpkin pie \$15 each. Place your order with Anne Lopoulos at 508-971-8008 or Patty Gavin at 508-965-9569.

West Falmouth

Peace and Social Order -- Sunday, **November 12** at 12:30 p.m. *An Introduction to Reconciliation Leadership* with Virginia Swain. See next page for details. Note that videos of previous 2nd Sunday presentations can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/@westfalmouthquakers>.

Adult Discussion Group -- **Sundays** at 9:00 a.m. Gatherings are in the library corner of the meetinghouse. All are welcome.

Erica Adams was interviewed by Boston-based photographer Jerry Russo as part of a large project exploring the way artists internationally were responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. Erica's interview can be seen at the recently-archived **Jerry Russo Oral History Collection of Artists During Covid-19 (2020-2023)** at <https://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums1185-i115>.



Black Lives Matter: Falmouth Kneel at Noon

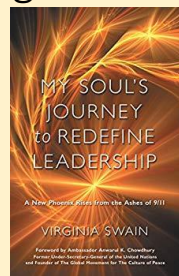
Silent vigil for 9 minutes 29 seconds in support of Black lives, weekly on **Sundays** at **noon** on the Falmouth Village Green.



Wampanoag Food Pantry Grocery Certificate Program

Donations for the Wampanoag Food Pantry Grocery Certificate Program must be received by the meeting's treasurer by Sunday, November 26. Checks should be made out to WFPM noting *SMM-Wampanoag Food Pantry* in the memo line.

An Introduction to Reconciliation Leadership: A Methodology to Reconcile Relationships and Building Trusting Communities



VIRGINIA SWAIN MA

Friends Meeting at Cambridge found Virginia clear to design and implement her Reconciliation Leadership program in the United Nations. After 30 years working there, in her 80th year, she is gratefully offering the program back to New England Yearly Meeting.

Virginia is the author of *My Soul's Journey to Redefine Leadership A Phoenix Rises from the Ashes of 9/11* (Xlibris 2017/Audible 2022).

ZOOM Talk: Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 12:30 – 2:30 pm EDT
Question + Answer period follows.

LINK to Register: <https://bit.ly/ReconciliationLeadership>

Participants will be introduced to the practice of Reconciliation Leadership and an overview of the program that will begin in early 2024 through NEYM.

Most of the workshop will be an experiential exercise in which participants engage in imaging/visioning (developed by Quaker Elder and Peacebuilder, Elise Boulding) - one of the key tools of Reconciliation Leadership.

Please have paper and colored markers for the exercise.

For more about Virginia Swain, go to <https://fmcquaker.org/welcome-virginia-swain-2/>, www.VirginiaSwain.com and www.global-leader.org. Virginia has worked on five continents and was a Peace Corps Volunteer in West Africa.



2nd Sunday Forum on ZOOM

HOST: Peace + Social Order Committee

Quakers: West Falmouth Preparative Meeting MA (USA)

Pendle Hill– See <https://pendlehill.org/>.

First Monday Lecture with **Matt Rosen** -- *Convincement and Belonging in Quaker Community*. **November 6, 2023, 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.** via Zoom. Register at <https://pendlehill.org/events/awakening-the-witness-convincement-and-belonging-in-quaker-community/>.



Reading Group -- In November, we will be reading the recent Pendle Hill pamphlet *Plain Talk about Dying: The Spiritual Effects of Taking My Father off Life Support* (PHP #479) in which Shulamith Clearbridge recounts the story of having to decide for another person whether they will live or die, and the spiritual repercussions and search for healing that followed. **November 15, 2023, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.** Register at <https://pendlehill.org/events/pendle-hills-reading-group-november-2023/>.

First Monday Lecture with **Valerie Brown** and **John Baird** -- *Clearness Committees: An Introduction to Spiritual Discernment in Community for Personal and Social Transformation*. **December 4, 2023, 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.** via Zoom. Register at <https://pendlehill.org/events/clearness-committees-an-introduction-to-spiritual-discernment-in-community-for-personal-and-social-transformation/>.

Reading Group -- In December, we will be reading our bestselling pamphlet *Radical Hospitality* (PHP #427) by Lloyd Lee Wilson. **December 15, 2023, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.** via Zoom. Register at <https://pendlehill.org/events/pendle-hills-reading-group-december-2/>.

News about some other Quaker organizations can be found at the following links:

Quaker United Nations Organization: <https://quano.org/>

Friends Committee on National Legislation: <https://fcnl.org/>

Friends World Committee on Consultation: <https://www.fwccamericas.org>

Friends General Conference: <https://www.fgcquaker.org>

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

Justice Calls Us. Love Unites Us. Annual Meeting & Quaker Public Policy Institute 2023. November 15 - 19, 2023, Washington, D.C. and online. Learn more and register at <https://www.fcnl.org/events/annual-meeting-quaker-public-policy-institute-2023>.

Come meet **Bridget Moix, General Secretary** of Friends Committee on National Legislation and learn more about FCNL's work. Tuesday, **November 7** at 2:00 p.m. at the home of Molly Cornell.

Dear Friends, I am again asking for donations for the Stop and Shop gift card initiative. As before, I can get donations matched. We have distributed over \$15,000 in gifts cards to the homeless over the past 2 years. Here's how you can help us in the coming year.

Send your donations to: The Peace Abbey Foundation, 16 Lavender Street, Millis, MA 02540. Please note *Stop & Shop gift card initiative* in the memo line of your check. For further information please contact Lewis Randa (508-259-8508 or lewismranda@gmail.com).

Blessings, Alan Burt



Alternative Gift Market

The 2023 **Alternative Gift Market** is coming! Saturday, **November 11** (10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.) and Sunday, **November 12**, (11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.) at Saint Barnabas Church in Falmouth. Browse at Fair Trade tables and learn about 20 local, national & global charitable organizations. Give the world a gift of hope . . . Shop for family and friends, Donate to a worthy cause! **Online shopping** from **November 13-19** at www.alternativegiftmarketcapecod.com. West Falmouth Friends Meeting is a Supporting Congregation.

Death of Leonard Kreidermacher

Friends were greatly saddened by the death of longtime Friend Len Kreidermacher. Len died on September 20 at Falmouth Hospital surrounded by family and friends. Len's many contributions over the years, to the meeting and to the community, will be missed. A memorial meeting for worship was held at the meetinghouse on October 21.



Len and Sunny on her birthday, April 2023.
Photo: S. Gates.

Death of Gina Lyman

Friends were greatly saddened by the death of longtime Friend Gina Lyman on the morning of Saturday, October 21. Gina was a gardening and puzzle enthusiast and, in her younger years, an avid traveler. Several Quaker women worshiped regularly with Gina at Atria. A memorial meeting for worship will be held Saturday December 2 at 2:00 p.m. in the meetinghouse.



Steve and John Gates join Gina Lyman for some bulb planting (October 2021). Gina's spring garden May 2023 ((right).
Photos: R. O'Donnell.



Ralph Gentile, New Member

John Davidson

John Davidson recently interviewed Ralph Gentile, who has **transferred** his membership to West Falmouth Friends Meeting. This is a condensed version of their conversation.

JD: So Ralph, now that you have officially joined Sandwich Monthly Meeting and West Falmouth Meeting, what is your background as a Quaker, how did you come to Friends?

RG: I grew up in Friends. My mother was a Quaker, a tenth generation West Falmouth Bowerman, who met my father while she was working at Rutgers University. I was born in New Jersey and raised in Summit Friends Meeting. My twin sister and I attended both First Day School and Meeting for Worship there. Dad was an apostate Catholic and had no objection.

JD: What was your relationship to the draft and to the Quaker tradition of pacifism?

RG: When I was 17, in 1968, I had to make decisions about selective service and it was a little complicated. My grandfather had served as a volunteer in an ambulance unit on the Italian Front in the First World War. My father was not enthusiastic about Conscientious Objector status, and for better or worse, we compromised. I was to join as an I-A-O (not C.O.), which meant service as a medic or something along those lines, but the draft lottery had just come in, and I had a number in the low 300s, so the draft board did not have to decide. (Objecting to military service based on moral, ethical or religious beliefs fell under four distinct classifications in the sixties: 1-A-O was one of these, which categorized a man who was a conscientious objector who could be drafted for noncombat military service.)

JD: Tell me about your college and academic years.

RG: I started college at Rutgers and then transferred to Haverford, and had wonderful years there. I worked for a year, then began a program at Penn on conflict resolution that emphasized economics. I completed a Ph.D. and taught economics for five years in Massachusetts at the University in Lowell, now part of the University of Massachusetts system. I left academia after five years and took a job at McGraw Hill in their statistics group.

JD: Tell me more about your career after that.

RG: This work with McGraw Hill was collecting information on construction starts in order to make economic predictions. I did that for twenty-five years, and I did a few innovative things along the way. Construction starts are critical to economic forecasting, and local statistics often have major implications if they are properly interpreted.

JD: Tell me about your retirement.

RG: After twenty-five years, McGraw-Hill decided to “rationalize”, creating two companies from their finance and textbook divisions. (McGraw-Hill owned Standard and Poor’s.) I was 64 years old and was offered a generous long-term severance package, so I decided to retire.

Since then, I have continued working in the same field for a small labor consulting firm, focusing on the skilled construction trades, and using some of the tools I have developed. Much of our focus is on the Gulf Coast where huge multi-year industrial projects put significant pressure on local and state workforces. Will there be enough high-skill construction trades workers to build the project?

One of the most interesting aspects of this work has been the emergence of offshore wind, utility scale solar, renewable fuels, and carbon capture and sequestration projects, particularly in Texas and Louisiana. Houston's business leadership is intense about remaining an energy center and that means being part of the energy transition. Of course, they also want their existing oil and gas assets to be utilized as the transition to renewables occurs.

JD: Tell me about your family and your relationship to Quakerism.

RG: My wife Jo-Dee and I have two children. Jo-Dee is a Unitarian-Universalist. When we moved to Massachusetts, I joined Andover Worship Group, which eventually merged with Lawrence Monthly Meeting. I have been part of the Lawrence Meeting for more than twenty-five years and am trying to remain active there. (Lawrence is very small.). I have been Clerk at Lawrence and currently serve as Clerk at Obadiah Brown's Benevolent Fund.

Emily, the elder child, lives in Rockland, ME, and works remotely for a large life-science company. She and her husband have two children. Ian does childcare and has an artisan sea salt business called "Two Daughters". Our younger child, Nathaniel, is recently married, living in San Diego. He is employed as a software engineer for one of the bigger cryptocurrency firms.



Special Section on Gaza

Quaker organizations call for a ceasefire and humanitarian protections in Gaza*

*We are a people that follow after those things that make for peace, love, and unity;
it is our desire that others' feet may walk in the same,
and do deny and bear our testimony against all strife, and wars.*

Margaret Fell, Founding member of the Religious Society of Friends

The denial of our duty to act is a bold denial of our right to act.

Lucretia Mott, Quaker Women's Rights Advocate and Abolitionist

October 17, 2023

Quakers believe in the sacred worth of each person and stand against violence in all its forms. As Quaker organizations, we mourn all lives lost and lament with everyone who is suffering. We grieve for those in Israel and Palestine who have lost precious lives. We pray with those waiting for the return of loved ones and those living under siege and bombardment.

The Hamas attack on Israel on October 7 killed over 1,300 Israelis, and civilian hostages were taken by Hamas into Gaza. As of October 16, the subsequent Israeli military attack on Gaza had killed at least 2,950 Palestinians, including over 1,030 children. It had displaced more than one million Palestinians in Gaza, with over 7,500 homes destroyed. Today, on October 17, we are deeply saddened at additional losses, especially the bombing of the Al-Ahli Hospital, with reports of at least 500 casualties. These numbers will continue to rise if attacks do not end.

Violence such as this is never justifiable, and we insist that a ceasefire must be realized along with the return of all hostages.

Following the start of Israel's attack, Israel also intensified its siege of Gaza, blocking access to water, food, fuel, electricity, and medicine in an act of collective punishment. It directly impacts all people in Gaza. People are going hungry and thirsty, and thousands are injured. Medicine is running out, hospitals do not have power and are operating on generators with limited fuel supplies, and overwhelmed medical facilities cannot help those in need. People are dying as a preventable humanitarian crisis deepens.

The many faith traditions represented in the region share a religious obligation to feed the hungry, care for the sick and wounded, and protect the most vulnerable from violence. The moral authority of the international community will be evaluated based on its response to the needs of communities in peril. The time for action is now.

Quakers have a long history of carrying out humanitarian assistance and leading efforts to build peace in situations of conflict. We hold that principles under International Humanitarian Law, including the 4th Geneva Convention, must be respected. The Israeli government must grant access and safety to the U.N. and humanitarian agencies to fulfill their duties. Instead of further bloodshed, we need immediate humanitarian access for Gaza and adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law. We demand that national leaders, faith leaders, and journalists use their power and influence to bring a bold voice for humanitarian protection and to end ongoing war crimes. Wherever there have been war crimes and violations of International Humanitarian Law, there must be accountability.

We also call on Israeli and international leaders to firmly disavow dehumanizing anti-Palestinian rhetoric and approaches that deepen painful divisions and politicize the current crisis. All efforts must focus on moving us away from an irreparable calamity. Strong leadership for peace – peace that addresses legitimate rights and needs and enables all parties to recognize each other’s humanity – is required.

Further military action will not bring peace. We know this as Quakers who are committed to peace and as students of history. That is why we are calling for an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian access, and action to address the underlying injustice of occupation and inequalities underlying this situation in the long term.

Our conviction that peace will prevail on earth, as the scriptures of the great religions of the world have promised, struggles to find its footing amid such incredible violence and suffering. This is a time for strong moral resolve, spiritual fortitude, and immediate action.

We call on international leaders of all countries to bear witness to this message and show the way of peace.



American Friends Service Committee



Canadian Friends Service Committee



Friends Committee on National Legislation



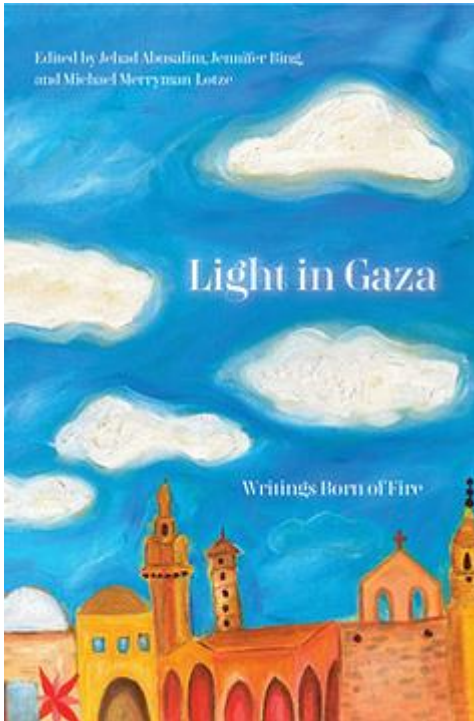
Quakers in Britain



Quaker United Nations Office

*Letter issued on October 17, 2023 by five Quaker organizations in the U.S., Canada and Britain.

*Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire** reviewed by Max L. Carter**



A plaque in a classroom at Earlham School of Religion where courses on the Bible are taught states, “Context is everything.”

In his poem “Harlem,” Langston Hughes asks, “What happens to a dream deferred? // Does it dry up / like a raisin in the sun? . . . // Maybe it just sags / like a heavy load. // Or does it explode?”

I was reminded of these quotes when I learned of the assault by Hamas on Israeli targets earlier this month and Israel’s retaliation. Quaker peacemaking asks the question, what are the seeds of war, and how may they be removed before they sprout and grow? In other words, what is the context out of which the current cycle of violence emerged?

And what might those deferred dreams be that led to the result of an explosion? Certainly for Israel it was the shattered dream of a military and intelligence operation that afforded a sense of security and safety. What was it for Gaza?

Light in Gaza is an antidote to many misconceptions about Gaza as it helps explain the context out of which the current explosion has occurred. Along the way, it describes what chef Anthony Bourdain, himself, found during the filming of his *Parts Unknown* cable show in Gaza in 2012: “Regular people doing everyday things . . . but robbed of their basic humanity” (paraphrased from Bourdain’s acceptance speech for an award from the Muslim Public Affairs Council).

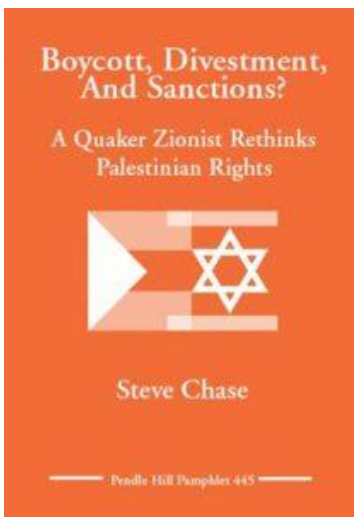
Three American Friends Service Committee staff members who have worked on issues of Palestine and Israel for a combined total of more than 50 years have skillfully gathered and edited essays by 11 Gazans that explore far more details about life in the Strip than media sound bites provide. The purpose of the anthology is to show how Gaza is typically described through an oppressive occupier’s lens as it attempts to erase the history of the occupied. As the contributors reveal the reality of an ongoing Nakba (“Catastrophe”), they seek to break the intellectual blockade of Gaza, just as activists continue to seek an end to the physical blockade imposed on it. . . .

Gazans living like anyone else. It is what Anthony Bourdain found in 2012 that the people of Gaza could be—if not robbed of their humanity. Context is, indeed, everything. And, yes, if dreams, hopes, and aspirations are deferred, they explode.

For a limited time, *Light in Gaza* is available as a free ebook at <https://www.haymarketbooks.org/blogs/495-free-ebooks-for-a-free-palestine>.

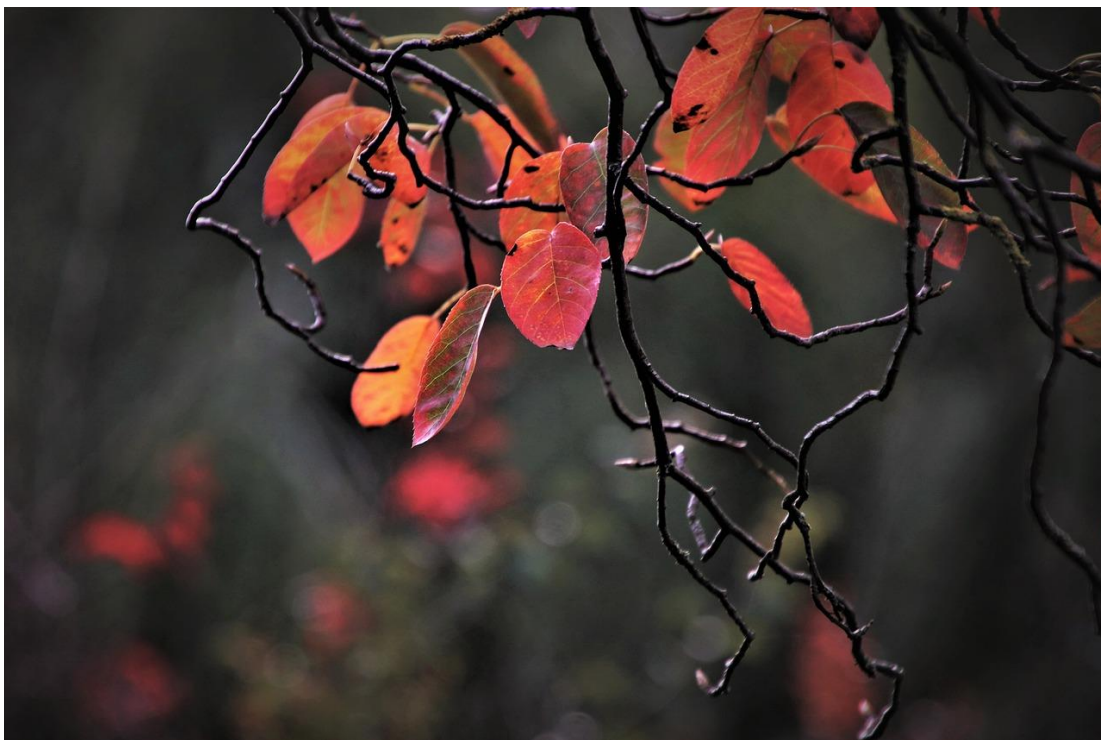
*Abusalim, J., Bing, J. and Merryman-Lotze, M. (eds.). *Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire*. Chicago, Ill: Haymarket Books, 2022.

**This is an excerpt from Max L. Carter’s review of *Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire* in the October 17, 2023 issue of *Friends Journal*. For the full review see <https://www.friendsjournal.org/book/light-in-gaza-writings-born-of-fire/>.



On **November 12**, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., **Steve Chase** (formerly of Putney Meeting) will present his reflections and observations from his summer trip to **Israel and Palestine** with Max Carter. Steve is the author of *Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions? A Quaker Zionist Rethinks Palestinian Rights*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #445. A review of his pamphlet can be found at <https://www.friendsjournal.org/book/boycott-divestment-sanctions-quaker-zionist-rethinks-palestinian-rights/>. All are welcome. Register at <https://lu.ma/wl2whc5y>.

Mounting violence in Gaza and Israel has created a humanitarian crisis. **Ruth Zwirner** draws our attention to the work **AFSC** is doing to provide relief to Gaza and advocate for peace. <https://afsc.org/topics/gaza-israel>. In particular, see <https://afsc.org/news/5-things-you-need-know-about-whats-happening-israel-and-gaza>. AFSC asks for urgently needed donations to bring humanitarian relief, support ongoing efforts to stop the violence, address its root causes, and build conditions for peace. To learn more and to donate see <https://afsc.org/newsroom/end-violence-palestine-and-israel-we-must-address-root-causes>.



Readers Write

Report on Yarmouth Meeting Pie Sale

Barbie Gale

On September 9th Yarmouth Friends held a pie sale for the benefit of two local food pantries. This has been an annual event for many years, however due to the Pandemic, it had been put on hold for three years. The sale was organized by two members of the Meeting. As our goal was to have a minimum of forty pies, we had to make sure we had enough pie makers to support the sale. We felt that this number would make a worthwhile donation to benefit each of the selected food pantries.

The project was embraced by all our member/attender folks, who stepped up and committed to making pies. Many of the crusts were made and frozen weeks prior to the sale. On Friday, September 1st, there was a lot of pie making happening in many houses, in numerous towns, on the Cape.

A 10' by 20' tent was erected on the grounds of the Meetinghouse; the tent was on loan from the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth. On the morning of the sale four more long tables were put into place. Our bakers, men and women came thru; we had a total of the forty-eight pies and 6 small ones. All of the pies were baked in reclaimed glass, tin or ceramic pie plates gathered by a former member of the Meeting. Visitors really appreciated our thoughtful approach to the Reuse, Recycle and Reclaim efforts; they were invited to return the pie plates, if they were in the area and chose to do so.

It was a wonderful collaborative event that brought friends together for a great cause. Yarmouth Friends raised \$1,400 from the event and donations of \$700 have been sent to the Council of Churches – Hands of Hope Food Pantry in Harwich and the Yarmouth Food Pantry.



Beyond the Inflation Reduction Act

Opinion by Steve Gates

It's been just over a year since the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 became law. This landmark law, you may recall, was passed when the Democrats still had majorities in both houses of Congress (but remember Joe Manchin's holding out for his pet projects?). No Republicans voted for it. But President Biden signed it on October 16, 2022. It's a massive law, with lots of parts, including a number having absolutely nothing to do with addressing the climate crisis. And of course, it has little or nothing to do with reducing inflation. After a year, most parts of the law are now in effect; some parts were left to the states to implement, so the status is a bit different in each state.

So how does the Inflation Reduction Act stack up? We can answer that in a couple of ways.

Compared to what climate scientists suggested -- Climate scientists have been working for decades now on trying to understand how bad the impacts of rising greenhouse gas emissions will be, and what could be done to reduce both the emissions and the impact of rising temperatures on our infrastructure. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), published this year, laid out a rather detailed set of ideas the world's climate scientists think will be needed, along with approximate costs. Compared to their recommendations, the IRA addresses almost all the key areas outlined in the IPCC report, especially those solutions that have the lowest cost. As a first step by the U.S. to address the climate crisis, I would rate the IRA an A for its science-based approach.

Compared to what the U.S. promised -- Shortly after President Biden had the U.S. rejoin the Paris Agreement (which President Trump had insisted the U.S. leave), he had the U.S. commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50 to 52% by 2030 (compared to 2005), as part of getting to Net Zero by 2050. According to the Rhodium Group, the IRA and other existing laws are expected to achieve a 32% to 42% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030.¹ So it rates a C for putting us on a better path than we were on, but not yet making a big enough difference to achieve the U.S. commitment for 2030.

So what will it take for the U.S. to achieve the 50-52% goal it has set for itself for 2030 (and which is crucial to keeping the planet from warming more than 1.5°C)?

The first, and in my opinion the most important, thing that is needed is to convince the general public (especially Republicans) that this law benefits them, and do this before the 2024 elections. As the Rhodium Group points out,

"If the 2024 election results in White House leadership that doesn't treat climate change as the serious threat that it is, then many of the actions we include in our analysis are at risk of delay or abandonment, putting the target out of reach. The same holds for states. Consistent leadership and prioritization of climate action in state governments will be critical to the fate of US GHG emissions."

¹ <https://rhg.com/research/ira-us-climate-policy-2030/>

It is ironic that the parts of the U.S. most affected by the changing climate are likely to be the “red” states in the South and Southwest. We need to talk more about how the new law will make those states more resilient to the hurricanes, flooding, droughts, and other disasters they are experiencing, and less about “climate change.” We need to talk more about how fun the new electric cars are (and less expensive over their lifetime than gasoline-powered cars), how solar panels can cut our electric bills, and the other advantages of the newer technologies. In short, we need to convince everyone that we are actually moving in a better direction, independent of what they believe about climate change.

But second, there are things we need to do beyond what the IRA provides.

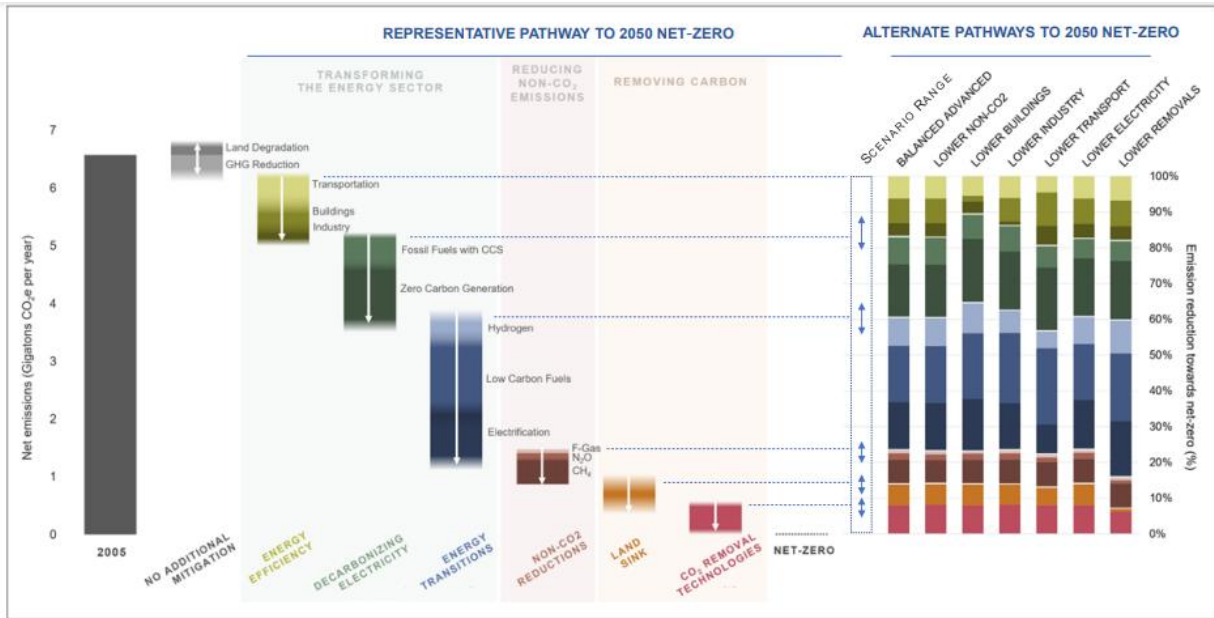


Figure ES-2: Emissions Reductions Pathways to Achieve 2050 Net-Zero Emissions in the United States. Achieving net-zero across the entire U.S. economy requires contributions from all sectors, including: efficiency, clean power, and electrification; reducing methane and other non-CO₂ gases; and enhancing natural and technological CO₂ removal. The left side of the figure shows a representative pathway with high levels of action across all sectors to achieve net-zero by 2050. The right side shows a set of alternative pathways depending on variations in uncertain factors such as trends in relative technology costs and the strength of the land sector carbon sink.

Figure 1. The U.S. long-term strategy lays out multiple pathways for a zero-emission 2050.²

We can, for example, look at the U.S. long-term strategy,² published in 2021 while the IRA was still being developed, which gives us the big picture of how the U.S. might get to the Net Zero by 2050. As shown in Figure 1, the U.S. has laid out a strategy with a key set of components, but has not specified which of the “alternate pathways” it will follow, in part because the strategy will need to evolve based on how successful our early efforts are, and in part because of uncertainties about how the various technologies will evolve. The strategy also depends on a number of factors, such as market prices for fuels, which are very difficult to predict. What is clear, however, is that substantial portions of this strategy depend on technologies which are not yet commercially viable (fossil fuels with carbon capture and sequestration, hydrogen, using lands to absorb additional carbon, and CO₂ removal technologies), so the IRA is necessarily investing only in the further development of these technologies, not the widespread deployment that will eventually be necessary.

² <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/US-LongTermStrategy-2021.pdf>

Some additional opportunities for action which have been suggested by people involved with the IRA include tax credits for transmission, mandates (including standards for power plant and tailpipe emissions), ensuring everyone uses the available credits and rebates, and direct pay of tax credits (for low-income people who may otherwise not benefit from tax credits).³

The Rhodium Group has also weighed in with a detailed analysis of what remains to be done beyond the IRA that gives us further hints about what is needed.¹ They believe that even without further federal laws (which they deem unlikely), it is nonetheless still possible we can achieve the U.S. commitment of 50-52% by a combination of further federal actions (such as new Clean Air Act regulations and appliance standards) and actions by “climate-leading” states. They do point out, however, that this will require very aggressive actions, and that their estimates are imprecise “because of uncertainty around future fossil fuel prices, economic growth, and clean-energy technology costs.”

Getting to Net Zero by 2050 will absolutely be challenging, requiring a great deal of work and political pressure. But there is reason for optimism. As Danielle Deiseroth has predicted,

“And now, so many of the projects spurred by the Inflation Reduction Act are happening in states represented by members who didn’t vote for the bill. This could play a significant role in the 2024 campaigns. I foresee the climate action and IRA drawing parallels with the victories of the Affordable Care Act. Like with Obamacare, which faced calls for repeal but eventually gained public support, clean energy companies establishing roots in polarized regions could lead to a shift in attitudes toward climate action. Once these companies become integrated into the community, infrastructure and tax base, it will be a lot harder to get rid of the provisions in this law.”³

In any case, we each need to do our part by reducing our own carbon footprints and by making sure that we cast our ballots in local, state and federal elections to elect politicians who support the Net Zero goal.



³ <https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/clean-energy/a-behind-the-scenes-look-at-how-the-inflation-reduction-act-came-together>

Special Section on Gourds



Gourds discuss the imperative to “walk cheerfully over the world answering that of gourd in every one.”
Attributed to George Faux, 1656.



We are all gourd's children.



Early Quaker meeting.



Gourds meet via Zoom.



Gourds discuss the pros and cons of a hybridized meeting.



Gourds differ on whether there should be a mat mandate.

The Gazette is a publication of
West Falmouth Preparative Meeting
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Alta Mae Stevens, Founding Editor
Stephen Gates, Photographer
Brenda Nolan, Transmitter

Gourd photos: S. Gates, October
2021-2023.

The next Gazette will be the
January 2024 issue. Deadline
is Thursday, December 28.

