

Quaker Education



Sandy Spring Friends School students harvest their sweet potato crop planted by the previous year's class.



Learning and Leading in Stewardship of the Earth

*For in the end, we will conserve only what we love,
We will love only what we understand.
We will understand only what we are taught.*

— Senegalese conservationist Baba Dioum

A significant teaching woven into the daily life at Friends schools is a reverence for the life and land that surrounds us, along with our interconnectedness to each other and to the environment. The Quaker testimony of stewardship embodies this connection and our responsibility to hold dear all life, providing the basis for a solid environmental ethic. Living the testimony of stewardship engages us in the health and preservation of all life, taking responsibility for the impact we have on our environment — and one another. Through practicing stewardship, we offer a sense of hope for the future and encourage students' capacity to bring about positive change in the world.

Friends schools are learning, leading and living the testimony of stewardship as illustrated in this issue of *Chronicles of Quaker Education*. From green building projects to rain gardens, from global conversations to neighborhood service projects, from multi-disciplinary all-school initiatives to each individual's connection to the earth — Friends educators are teaching our children and our communities that a connection to the earth benefits and enriches all of our lives, and we, as stewards, have a great responsibility for the care and well-being of the earth. Through Friends education we guide children into a life-long love affair with the natural world in all its expressions.

The **Woolman Semester** (Nevada City, CA) curriculum holds stewardship of the earth as an essential component with core classes in Environmental Science, Peace Studies, and Global Issues, taught using an integrated, experiential learning approach. Students learn to think of earth care as a political, social and peacekeeping endeavor. They come to understand that access to clean water and air are environmental issues enmeshed in issues of race, class and privilege. A week-long service-learning trip brings students in contact with small organic farms, larger conventional farms, a cattle feedlot and scientists who are researching genetically modified foods. Most importantly, students have the opportunity to consider their own food ethic and its impact on the environment, while fostering an appreciation for the natural world and developing their own sense of place. "On an emotional level, I came to embrace dirt, commune with my watershed and take pride in the land. In all the places we traveled during the semester, I found love, respect and admiration for the natural world, and will not soon let them go. Clearly, I've changed at Woolman." (Rachel Brazie, student)

It was during visioning for their most recent five-year plan in 2008, that a small group at **Carolina Friends School** (Durham, NC) discussed the future of their school and discovered that they shared a vision — to teach their students to grow food as part of their education at CFS. "We wanted the rhythm of gardening to be a part of the rhythm of their education. It had become clear to us that teaching our students to work the earth, plant, grow, harvest and eat what they grew was essential to the connectedness we wanted them to feel to the earth," says Michael Bonsignore, Lower School Teacher. Vision became a reality, as students, parents, faculty and staff worked together to create campus gardens. *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver was the community-read book. CFS's vision has grown into fall and spring harvests, salad bars, popping homegrown organic popcorn and making birdhouses and rattles from gourds they have grown. CFS also grows flowers and herbs and raises mason bees as pollinators. Students have created "sustainable bright spots" all over campus.

For the past three years, **William Penn Charter School's** campus (Philadelphia, PA) has been home to a hive of bees, which provides valuable lessons about sustainability and life. By their very nature bees are stewards of the earth and without them life would not continue as we know it. The hive yields wonderful hands-on learning opportunities. Upper school students use the hive in their field research class and have done population studies of the Varroa mite that afflicts bee colonies. Lower school students learn about the different types of bees and about the various jobs the bees have in and out of the hive. Middle school students look at how bees are used as metaphors in literature and visit the hive to watch them in action. Who knew education could be so sweet?

At **Plymouth Meeting Friends School** (Plymouth Meeting, PA) environmental stewardship has long been an integral part of school life and practice. Throughout the PMFS curriculum, students engage actively in food composting, land stewardship, fundraising to preserve rain forest acreage, implementing the school-wide recycling program and more. Recent efforts through the Environmental Stewardship Project, funded by a Friends Council grant, have greatly enhanced the school's curriculum and recycling program.

In honor of the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, the international Earth Day Network selected 40 schools throughout the world that have demonstrated their commitment to environmental initiatives. **Sandy Spring Friends School** (Sandy Spring, MD) was chosen and recognized, in particular, for Education and Stewardship. SSFS has an organic community vegetable garden providing food for the dining hall, a comprehensive composting system and a wildflower field. Use of local building materials, biodegradable cleaning supplies, and recycling are core components of SSFS's sustainable practices. Last April, Sandy Spring held its eighth annual Earth Stewardship Day demonstrating gratitude to the earth through three practices: service, education and reflection. Community spirit is created as young and old participate together.

How does an environmentally aware Quaker high school evolve into something larger than itself? Board, teachers, students and administrators from **Olney Friends School** (Barnesville, OH) have embarked on a process to become more sustainable as a learning community by exploring the intersection of environmental and economic sustainability, both for the school and for the region. The nexus of change for OFS has been responding to two calls to service: (1) making independent schools affordable to more families, including Olney's own socioeconomically diverse base; and (2) helping to create a new green economy in Appalachia. In late October, the Olney community, together with many visitors, will explore these issues in a summit, *People, Planet, Place*, where a broader collective wisdom can emerge.

This school year marks **Friends Seminary's** (New York, NY) second year as a member of Green School Alliance, an international organization that unites schools in sustainability education. "In joining, we pledge to lower our energy footprint by 30% over five years. What a daring, courageous and responsible step Friends Seminary has taken toward participating in a greener future," states Toni Daly, Chair of the Friends Seminary Sustainability Committee.





Friends Council staff on vegetated roof of Friends Center with Race Street Meeting house in background.

Friends Council Goes Green

The office of the **Friends Council on Education**, housed at Friends Center (Philadelphia, PA), models environmental stewardship. The Friends Center campus, which includes the Race Street Meeting house, is LEED Platinum certified and is fossil fuel free and carbon neutral (no fossil fuels are burned to heat, cool or illuminate the building). Geothermal wells heat and cool the buildings and electricity is produced by solar panels on the roof. The remaining electricity needed is purchased from 100% low-impact non-carbon sources. The campus sits lightly on the watershed with a vegetated roof on one building and a storm water capture and reuse system on the other. Most importantly, the building is a living witness for Friends' concern for the environment. Tour groups regularly visit the building. Friends schools may phone the Friends Center office to schedule a tour (215-241-7000).



"What excites me about QUEST is that it is all about engagement with each other, with Quaker principles and with the world. It's about inspiring our students and community to act according to Quaker principles, making them their own, while empowering them with ideas and letting them grapple with the big and important issues of the world — both academically and spiritually." — Bryan Garman, Head of School

Eboo Patel, founder and executive director of the Interfaith Youth Core, launched the QUEST Big Ideas Speaker series at WFS in September 2009.

Stewardship is one of the five thematic areas comprising a new and exciting multi-disciplinary, all-school initiative — Quaker Center for Understanding, Engagement, and Stewardship (QUEST) — at **Wilmington Friends School** (Wilmington, DE). QUEST emerged from the school's most recent strategic planning process as a vehicle for strengthening the Quaker focus of curricular and co-curricular programs, serving as a new means to bring Quaker testimonies to life at WFS. With service learning as an organizing structure, QUEST focuses on themes of diversity, global engagement, service, spiritual life and stewardship. Learning, values and action are interwoven and mutually reinforced in the Quaker tradition.

Stewardship initiatives are the focus for QUEST this year. Dr. Eric Chivian, Nobel Peace Prize winner and founder of the Center for Health and the Global Environment, is speaking with students, faculty and community members about the potential human health consequences of global environmental change. Throughout the year WFS hosts lunchtime speakers involved in stewardship efforts, locally,

nationally and internationally. Lower and middle school teachers focus their service learning programs on the environment. Upper school student committees are focusing on environmental issues, including a school service-learning garden. All-school initiatives include a student managed paper-recycling program and participation in a local Farm Share program.

QUEST serves as a sponsor of events and initiatives, while supporting faculty and staff in coordinating mission-based components of the school program. "Approximately half the school's faculty serve QUEST in areas of real interest to them and bring great ideas to the discussions and planning," states Peter Wenigmann, Assistant Head for Academics who oversees QUEST.

For more information about QUEST, contact Peter Wenigmann, pwenigmann@wilmingtonfriends.org

It's Great Being Green!

Looking at Green Building Practices in Quaker Schools

A tangible and concrete way to understand sustainable living is to actually inhabit an environment that can sustain itself. Across the country, Friends schools are living the testimony of stewardship and leading by example in building, renovating and retrofitting to create sustainable school environments.

The trustees of **Sidwell Friends School** (Washington, DC), through reflection on Friends values, particularly stewardship, initiated a middle school renovation that reduced the SFS footprint, inspired students and set an example for others. Four years after its opening, the LEED Platinum middle school building has attracted 9,000 visitors and has changed SFS. "We think it is important to not only talk about environmental solutions, but also to demonstrate them. This gives students a sense of hope for the future and for their own ability to bring about change to the world in which they live," says Michael Saxenian, Assistant Head of School. The building has shifted SFS's culture and operations, playing a part in the establishment of a sustainable food service program, green cleaning, enhanced recycling and improved transportation policies.

San Francisco Friends School (San Francisco, CA) is housed in the 104-year-old former Levi Strauss jeans factory. The renovation concentrated on a clear and simple aesthetic — the movement of natural light and fresh air through the building, and the use of original materials. Four thermal towers draw air through the building with radiant floor heating under the original floorboards, while windows and skylights bathe the building in bright natural light. Wood from the original building was used to construct the Meeting room benches, honoring the hard work of Levi factory workers over the last century. SFFS has created a transport friendly environment with parking spaces reserved for carpools and space designated for a bike storage room and future faculty shower room.

The design and construction of **Germantown Friends School's** (Philadelphia, PA) new Sustainable Urban Science Center was guided by Quaker values. "At GFS we seek a synergy of the Quaker principle of stewardship and environmental science and pedagogy. From the first moment the new upper-school science center was mentioned, it was conceived of as a building that would not only *walk softly on the earth*, but one that would teach water conservation, principles of green-building design, photovoltaic technology and its applications, geothermal heating and sustainable material selection, while creating an oasis in the midst of the city," says Genevieve Nelson, Upper School Science Teacher. A touch screen dashboard located in the lobby provides an interactive video-monitoring system that tracks the building's energy and resource use, assisting the school community in conserving resources and stewarding their environment. The science center was selected as a finalist in the Education category for the 2010 Environmental Design + Construction Excellence Award. Another new GFS stewardship initiative is Project Flow, bringing together rising 9th graders from across the Philadelphia area to participate in a six-week summer program focused on water. The E.E. Ford Foundation and GFS fund the three-year Project Flow program, supporting the mission

Students tend the vegetated roof of Germantown Friends School green science building, with rainwater cistern in foreground.

to "invite students to explore water as artists, scientists, historians and social activists."

At **Westtown School** (West Chester, PA) the Friends testimony of stewardship, inspiring the school's collective endeavors for over 200 years, has manifested in a formal Board approved institutional commitment to caring for the earth. *The school's decisions and actions will be guided by their environmental and educational impact now and in the future. We will pay particular attention in our operations to sustainable land use and management, construction and renovation of facilities, and energy and resource consumption, giving priority to practices that can teach sustainability.* The Board adopted a Green Buildings Policy stating that all new construction and major building renovations on campus will be LEED certified and will meet the requirements of CHPS (Collaboration for High Performance Schools) design. Westtown's Sustainability Committee is composed of students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents and trustees, and since January 2008, conservation efforts have kept 1.5 million pounds of CO2 out of the atmosphere. "More kids are joining gardening than baseball," John Baird, Head of School, states. Westtown also hosted two annual Friends School Days of the Earth, "empowering young adults to recreate our world."

The construction of **Frankford Friends School's** (Philadelphia, PA) new middle school and multipurpose building on its historic campus realizes a long-time dream. With the lowest tuition of any Friends school in the region and no endowment to sustain it, FFS is working to raise \$1.6 million necessary for a critically needed structure to serve its growing enrollment. FFS has applied for a state Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant, with support through a letter-writing campaign by FFS families, staff and community neighbors. The building design reflects core Quaker values through simple form and use of natural materials and will serve as a teaching tool for students and community members. The principal architect, a lifelong member of Philadelphia's Arch Street Meeting, says, "The Friends' testimony of 'walking gently on the earth' is easily connected to sustainable design practices. However, to us, the idea of stewardship extends further toward testimonies of simplicity, equality, and peace, all of which should find form in the design of a Quaker building." In keeping within the school's budget, inexpensive "green" features will be added to reduce energy use.

Plans are underway for a new, 4,500 square foot building, including a host of green building design features, illustrating **Plymouth Meeting Friends School's** (Plymouth Meeting, PA) firm commitment to build responsibly and plan consciously for the future. Green design principles — including passive solar, a storm water run-off system, rain chains, a cistern and water pump, indoor-outdoor classroom spaces, native plants and a rain garden — will be incorporated into the new building which will house much needed classrooms and administrative spaces.



Photo credit: ©2010 Halkin Photography LLC



Olney Friends School students assist in construction of a solar-powered electric fence to protect chickens from predators.



Installer makes a final inspection before putting solar panels online at State College Friends School.

Minding the Light with Solar Panels

In 2009 **State College Friends School** (State College, PA) received the Pennsylvania Waste Watchers Achievement Award for their efforts to reduce the school's carbon footprint and educate students about sustainable systems. In 2003, SCFS received a grant from West Penn Power's Sustainable Energy Fund to install solar panels and to develop a renewable energy curriculum for the school. Twenty-two panels produce enough electricity to power the lights in the school's community room and kitchen. "We feel very fortunate to have our solar energy system. It helps to turn on the lights and isn't that what Friends education is all about?" says Dan Hendey, Head of School.

Sidwell Friends School (Washington, DC), in a creative partnership with a local community-based organization that facilitates solar energy projects, plans to install 120 solar panels on the roof of the Lower School Gym. Members of the SFS community are supporting this project by purchasing "solar bonds" to help offset the cost. SFS will purchase the solar-generated electricity at fixed rates, protecting it against rising energy costs. Once investors are repaid, SFS will continue to enjoy solar energy at no cost for the expected 30-year life of the system. Reinforcing Sidwell's commitment to a reduced carbon footprint, these solar panels will offset approximately one million tons of greenhouse gases. Lower School students will learn about sustainability by monitoring energy production from computers linked to the system.

The collective power of community was realized in **Delaware Valley Friends School's** (Paoli, PA) effort to save energy and money. DVFS partnered with four other local independent schools to pursue grants through the Philadelphia Area Independent School Business Officer Association for solar panels. The grant money will be used to buy and install a rooftop solar photovoltaic system at DVFS.

Scattergood Friends School (West Branch, IA), recipient of a grant from the National Center for Appropriate Technology, installed solar panels on their gym roof in July. These panels will bring up to 2 kilowatts of photovoltaic energy and a pilot educational program to the campus, as well as offsetting electrical usage and lowering their utility bill. SFS was selected because of its history of actively pursuing energy conservation saving measures. "We're the perfect campus for green ideas," said Christine Ashley, Head of School. "We're demystifying renewable resources for students."

Sustain the Spirit of Friends Education

We take care of the things we value. Stewardship is not only about our relationship with the earth and its natural resources; it is also about upholding a commitment to the long-term viability of a project or an institution. From the very beginning, the work of the **Friends Council on Education** has been about sustaining the Quaker nature of Friends schools through professional development, consultations, workshops and publications. A gift to Friends Council supports the work of all Friends schools.

Here are three ways you can help to sustain the spirit in Quaker education:

- ♥ **Make a Gift to the 2010-11 Annual Fund**
Annual giving provides an unrestricted resource for general operating expenses sustaining seminars and programs. Become a "Sustainer" through monthly automatic deductions, which allows you to be a wise steward of your financial resources.

- ♥ **Become a Member of the Evergreen Circle of Friends**
Thoughtful planned giving is the ultimate in sustainability, providing support for Friends Council resources and services far into the future.
- ♥ **Support our Special Funds**
The *Leadership Endowment Fund* sustains the Institute for Engaging Leadership in Friends Schools in perpetuity, free of charge for participants. The *Ravdin Fund* helps defray the cost of the long-range financial consulting services essential to small Friends schools.

Quaker schools are a treasure, and Friends Council supports the heart of Friends education. We invite you to consider making an investment in the future of Quaker education. To find out more, please go to www.friendscouncil.org and click on "Make a Gift," or contact Amy Ward Brimmer at 215-241-7245; amy@friendscouncil.org.



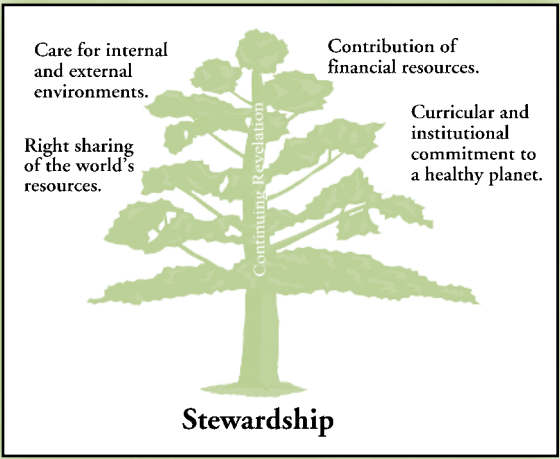
Friends Farm Schools

The circle of life can be an exciting and engaging lesson plan!

100% of the meat and half of all produce consumed at **The Meeting School** (Rindge, NH) are raised with the help of students on its 135-acre campus in southern New Hampshire. Conservation is a particular focus of **Olney Friends School's** environmental science program, which uses its 350-acre campus, working farm and garden to enhance the school's college preparatory curriculum. At **Scattergood Friends School**, students experience first-hand how great fresh food can taste as they plant the gardens, care for the livestock and recycle food items for livestock feed and composting.



Student at The Meeting School feeds pigs as part of his work-study assignment.



Resources from the Friends Council on Education

Learn more about **Stewardship**

The Friends Council website is a wealth of information, including programs, job listings and resources, with a special section on Stewardship. Please visit us at: www.friendscouncil.org

Friendscouncil.net is our forum for informational discourse among Friends schools. Join the Friends Environmental Educators Network (FEEN) group to share ideas and resources for environmental education in Friends schools. Join the conversation! www.friendscouncil.net

Coming soon from FEEN! An online book of articles on environmental education and stewardship in Friends schools. Submit articles NOW for consideration to Dave Wood: woodd@sidwell.edu

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New Heads: Welcome!

Congratulations to the following school leaders, newly named as Heads of Friends schools.

Heads of School:

- Larry Weiss, **Brooklyn Friends School**
- Daniel Kahn, **Delaware Valley Friends School**
- Russel J. MacMullen, **Buckingham Friends School**
- Sharon Fichthorn, **Fairville Friends School, Inc.**
- Michael Zimmerman, **Friends School Haverford**
- Bruce Haines, **Friends School Mullica Hill**
- Dana Harrison, **Newtown Friends School**
- Tom Gibian, **Sandy Spring Friends School**
- Christine Ashley, **Scattergood Friends School**
- Tom Farquhar, **Sidwell Friends School**

Best wishes and gratitude to these Heads, embarking on new adventures: Stephen Barker, Scott Baytosh, Wendy Bertsche, Pritchard Garrett, Herbert (Pete) Jaques, Jr., Steven Nierenberg, Michael Nill, Drew Smith, Kenneth Smith and Ginny Winsor.



Reflections

Friends Testimony on Stewardship

"It is as if the Divine Presence said to us, 'Ever seek balance . . . You are to love and appreciate yourself, other persons, plants and creatures around you, stars, earth, snow, rocks. Do not fall in love with any of these to be possessed by them and swallowed up; neither turn away from them, nor renounce them.' " — Francis Hole, 1913-2002, Quaker educator

For Quakers, often known as practical mystics, worship provides the inner source of inspiration, which we call a "leading," for outward action in the community and the world. For 320 years, Friends have acted upon shared concerns throughout the world. *Working as directly in the Light as possible, Friends have kept the beds of Quaker tradition rich with the humus of experience, nurturing various seeds of understanding into testimony and action. The testimonies are like sturdy plants taken out into the garden of the world and planted, hopefully to yield a good crop* (Helmuth, *Friends Journal*, December 2007).

Given the faith in continuing revelation, Friends do not have an official list of Quaker testimonies, yet Friends today continue to take action in the world based on the faith and values of past generations. The Friends' testimonies of integrity, equality, simplicity, peace and stewardship are central in the ethos of all Friends school communities. These testimonies are "played out daily through interactions among students, teachers and parents," and guide choices and decisions in all aspects of school life from the curriculum to the investment policy (Fremton, *Readings on Quaker Pedagogy*, 2004).

Stewardship, a key Quaker testimony over the centuries, can be considered in various contexts: stewardship of economic resources, right sharing of the world's resources, walking gently on the earth and living in harmony with nature. The Friends Environmental Educators

How do we cultivate a sense of stewardship and service to the greater whole — the whole school community, the local community and the world?

How do we understand the Quaker convictions from the past and make them tangibly relevant to present life in our schools?

In our work, our lives, our teaching and learning, how can we build a mutually enhancing relationship between the earth and human endeavors, so that all can thrive?

How are you, as an inheritor of the Quaker tradition in education, visibly carrying it forward?

How do we practice our responsibility as stewards of our schools' mission and future, and speak from the heart about the schools we love?

Irene McHenry
Irene McHenry, Executive Director

Learning and Leading in Stewardship of the Earth

Quaker Education

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Heads Gatherings

Educators New to Quakerism, Pendle Hill. *Three separate offerings:*
January 27-28, 2011, February 17-18, 2011, May 5-6, 2011
Facilitating Quaker-Based Decision Making in a Friends School, a Clerking Workshop with Arthur Larrabee, Friends Center, Philadelphia, November 1, 2010
Mindfulness in Teaching & Learning: CORE Skills and Habits of Mind with Irene McHenry, Abington Friends School, Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm: January 12-February 16, 2011
New! Engaging the Heart, June 21-24, 2011, Westtown School
Annual Fall Heads Gathering, October 7-8, 2010, Pendle Hill
Heads of Schools with Secondary Divisions, April 7-8, 2011, Lincoln School and Moses Brown School
Heads of Friends Elementary, Nursery, & K-8 Schools, May 1-3, 2011, Chestnut Hill Meetinghouse

Peer Network Events

Admissions Peer Network, May 9-10, 2011, Pendle Hill
Assistant Heads & Division Directors, May 2-3, 2011, Chestnut Hill Meetinghouse
Development & Public Relations Peer Network, January 10, 2011, Friends Center
Diversity Peer Network, February 28-March 1, 2011, Pendle Hill
Early Childhood Educators, May 16-17, 2011, Friends School of Baltimore
Friends Environmental Educators Network (FEEN), April 27-29, 2011, Brooklyn Friends School
Heads' Assistants Peer Network, December 2-3, 2010, Friends School of Baltimore
Librarians Peer Network, February 25, 2011, Friends Center
Public Relations & Development Peer Network, January 10, 2011, Friends Center

Quaker Life in Lower & Middle Schools

November 8, 2010, Friends Center
Quaker Youth Leadership Conference, February 3-5, 2011, Friends' Central School
Service Learning Peer Network, November 15, 2010, Abington Friends School
Technology Peer Network, November 12, 2010, Friends Center
Upper School Deans & Counselors Peer Network, Winter 2011, Location & Date TBD
Upper School Religion Teachers, December 10, 2010, Abington Friends School
Visual Arts Peer Network, October 21-22, 2010, Pendle Hill

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