



A Publication of
The Institute for Ecosophical Studies

Summer, 1989
Vol. V, No. 2

Review

Blueberry Spraying: A Chemical Horror Story. A leaflet produced by Green Web (Nova Scotia, Canada).

This leaflet was written primarily for the Green movement in Canada but should also be of interest to our readers in the State of Maine as well as to all advocates for a healthier planet. Five eastern provinces of Canada (Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island) as well as the State of Maine produce the bulk of wild blueberries sold commercially. In the case of Canada, "Blueberry spraying is considered an agricultural activity and is essentially unregulated." This means that sprayers, pickers and consumers must rely on the "good sense" of the growers as well as on the ethical sensitivity of chemical companies and governmental agencies. (Hardly sources that inspire great confidence.) The leaflet points out several areas of concern.

Pesticide residues on the blueberries pose a threat to pickers and consumers. Captan, a fungicide which has been banned in Sweden and linked to "cancers, birth defects and abortions," can be sprayed on the berries up to two days before harvesting.

Groundwater contamination has been documented in wells in several areas. The main concern is with the triazine herbicides, especially Velpar, and with 2, 4-D. The latter is mixed with fuel or diesel oil. Studies published by the American Medical Association link 2, 4-D to an increase in non-Hodgkins lymphoma among farmers using it.

Wildlife are endangered by spraying with "dimethoate, trichlorfon, azinphos-methyl, phosmet, and methidathion." These are toxic to fish, bees, and mammals as well as to their target, the blueberry maggot. In addition, some growers have called for the killing of bear, deer, and birds which encroach on their fields while a few have already engaged in such action.

Burning, which is meant to kill weeds and insects and to remove diseased plants, also "removes organic matter from fields." To compensate for the destruction of natural nitrogen fixers, growers buy and use nitrogen fertilizers. Burning also kills "non target" insects and small animals as well as releasing toxic contaminants into the air.

The leaflet concludes with a call to action. People near fields should push for the elimination of pesticides and lobby for more organic agricultural methods. Others should "spread the word" and bring attention to this danger. Lastly, people are urged to boycott pesticide-sprayed blueberries.

Other informative and well-written environmental information is available from Green Web, c/o Helga Hoffman or David Orton, R.R.#3, Saltsprings, Pictori County, Nova Scotia, CANADA, BOK 1 PO.

DONALD P. ST. JOHN
Bethlehem, PA

Review

A Brief History of Time. Stephen Hawking. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

It was fortunate, that last minute decision to pack this book in my suitcase on my way into the hospital for major surgery. Degenerative arthritis necessitated that I have my ankle fused. I decided to take Hawking's book along because it was such a total departure from the other books that I was devouring at the time. I was only a few minutes into the hospital admission process when I found myself absolutely clutching *A Brief History of Time*.

It seems somewhat anomalistic if not downright ironic to call any sort of a history of time, brief. But then Stephen Hawking is a man whose existence seems filled with contradictions. He is stricken with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis ("Lou Gehrig's Disease"), and as such, he can barely speak. Yet, his writing is probably the most fluid writing that I have ever had the pleasure of reading. I would recommend this book, therefore, to all writers or would-be-writers.

Since most of us write pretty with much the same cadence as with which we speak, it might seem paradoxical that such fluid writing can come from a man whose spoken words are all but unintelligible due to his advancing disease. That is until we consider the law of compensation, by which we force ourselves to compensate for our greatest weakness. To this end, Hawking's internal editor works overtime to make every thought as cogent as possible.

I disagree with Hawking when he contends that Newton's *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* is probably the most important work ever written in the physical sciences. I would have to say that Hawking's own book would probably have to take that honor.

Consider that it has taken three hundred years for Newton's principles to become accessible to the average person (and then, only marginally so). I often used to

wonder if Einstein's theories of Special and General Relativity, which are only about half a century old, will take as long to weave their way into the popular lexicon of thought. Hawking's book assures that the wait will not be so long. In fact, he goes beyond Einstein, bringing the reader up to date on black holes, background radiation, imaginary time, and string theory. It will only be a matter of time, I am sure, until personal copies of *A Brief History of Time* will be dusted off and actually read.

The more minds that are brought into the light, the greater the chances of finding that next brilliant mind to carry on scientific inquiry. I have long suspected that if science kept its current pace, scientists would eventually be able to confront God in a test tube. Hawking has revised my thinking slightly. Eventually, we shall have the mathematical formula for God and Hawking's own work in cosmic mathematics is the beginning of it! As Hawking himself states:

It was at the conference in the Vatican...that I first put forward the suggestion that maybe time and space together formed a surface that was finite in size but did not have any boundary or edge. My paper was rather mathematical, however, so its implications for the role of God in the creation of the universe were not generally recognized at the time (just as well for me).

Aside from what this book will mean for the advancement of popular thought, what all of us who write can cull from this remarkable writer, and what implications this book has for the broad body of philosophical thought, I have my personal affinity to Stephen Hawking as a disabled person. My struggle with degenerative arthritis pales by comparison to his struggle with ALS. But I will always cherish having this great mind, in effect, whispering in my ear as I underwent my ordeal.

As things turned out, my surgeon got lucky. He was able to get away with doing an overall less intrusive operation, but he had to use a more intrusive cast in order to stabilize things--a real beauty of a device with three steel pins going half way up my calf with steel rods running along the pins and all of the attendant nuts and bolts for adjusting the thing. I was grateful that I had *A Brief History of Time* with me on my own personal odyssey. After lying there looking down at my cast all day long, reading about anything other than the origins of time and space would have been painfully trivial.

Copyright 1989

MARE SHAFFER
Allentown, PA

Trees Never Play the Lottery

They put out their hands to gather
sunlight, letting the wind's soft
molecules toss green along their veins.
They do not ask for small change.
It's the oldest, unminable
gold they're out for. Ganglia of light
inhabit their sapwood's well-kept secret:
how the roots, clinging like heathens
to holy ground, feed on heaven.

Copyright, 1989

JEAN PEARSON
Bethlehem, PA

Review

Creating a Regenerative Economy. Ron Shegda. Emmaus: New Generation Press, Inc., 1988. 14pp. and *The Lehigh valley Repair Directory.* Emmaus: New Generation Press, Inc., 1988. 47 pp.

I met Ron Shegda in 1985. He was one of the first speakers at a meeting of the newly organized Institute for Ecosophical Studies, the parent of *Ecospirit*. Ron was working for Rodale Press at the time on one of Bob Rodale's innovative humanitarian projects. Soon afterwards, Ron set up his own press, calling it the New Generation Press. *Creating a Regenerative Economy* and *The Lehigh Valley Repair Directory* are the two most significant publications from this press to date.

Ron's topic that evening was "The Vision of a Regenerative Society." As he spoke, he described an all-encompassing vision of regeneration. Regeneration, for Ron, was not only recycling waste or building up the soil. Rather,

Regeneration presents a dynamic worldview of interrelated systems. Fundamentally it is a positive, hopeful vision for improved natural and human conditions...Regeneration is an expression of hope that unites the ever-creative energies of the earth-human enterprise.

For Shegda regeneration begins when we adopt "a regenerative vantage point." As we individually act out economic roles from this vantage point with others in "civic association", a "Regenerative Economy" is brought into being. Shegda proposed more than an economic philosophy in his talk. Probably the most moving aspect to his proposal was its cosmic dimension.

For some time I had thought that developing a mature consciousness of global civilization, based on the dignity of the person, integrity of the local community, and self-reliance of the region,

was a sufficient life-long goal. The fertility of regeneration has already spawned a broadening of what was seemingly a holistic worldview. The new widened viewpoint, one that proceeds both logically and mystically from the global, is the cosmic.

With this in mind it came as no surprise that "Prosper the work of our hands" from Psalm 90:17 opens the text of *The Lehigh Valley Directory*, or that Shegda wrote that "regenerative economic development allows us to transform the city and countryside in the image of Christ" in the conclusion of *Creating a Regenerative Economy*.

As Ron described the relationship he saw between vision and action as "work", he also provided the context for his yet-to-be founded press and its publications.

Regeneration is fundamentally a vision to project and not a program to receive. Development work that arises from this vision originates locally. It becomes manifest in the action of the person. It then weaves itself into the fabric of the community. A person of vision and action can never fully own the motivating idea. Once transmitted, the community interprets, adapts and molds it in an original way...Not only is regeneration suitable for every person's perspective; it will also be recast by the community upon enunciation by one of its members.

Simply a man of vision the night of his talk to the Institute, Ron then rapidly founded a press for the enunciation of this vision to the community "by one of its members." *The Lehigh Valley Repair Directory* appeared soon after, to foster the renewal of objects and persons through local work. Repair as a social act in and for a community is the subject of his next publication, *Creating a Regenerative Economy*.

The Lehigh Valley Repair Directory is a soft-cover volume resembling the Yellow Pages. These are green pages, for "Green is the color of nature, so green is the color of regeneration." The directory lists more than twelve hundred repair shops, related businesses, and services organized under one hundred categories. The businesses are found in more than sixty-one municipalities located in the Lehigh Valley. This valley is defined by the Lehigh River. It is located about 80 miles north of Philadelphia along the eastern border of Pennsylvania.

The purpose of the directory is to help "regenerate the Lehigh Valley economy by emphasizing repair." Since repair and recycling both "descend from regeneration," there is a listing of recycling centers as well. The publication beautifully actualizes Shegda's philosophy of economic regeneration, which begins with the meeting of an individual needing something repaired with an individual who knows how to do the repair. The result is the establishment of an economic community based on regeneration. Even when transacted bioregionally, the economy remains personal, for "Many times you will talk directly with the service person or owner yourself." Such an economy sustains, encourages, and creates local jobs. Jobs, money and people remain in the bioregion to foster a prospering, responsible and responsive community. Beyond that, work contains the possibility of spiritual renewal both for the worker and the community.

Another possibility of renewal comes from the spirit by which everyone approaches repair work. Greater care for renewing appliances, cars and clothing is part of a spiritual approach that can renew all of life.

Shegda flips the most explicit symbol of consumption--the shopping mall--on its head, and proposes what might be seen as a twentieth century equivalent of the monastery. In *Creating a Regenerative Economy* he proposes creating repair malls, an idea he attributes to the publisher Bob Rodale. Shegda roots his vision of work

in both the practical and the spiritual dimensions. By practical, Shegda means fulfilling the need for sustenance and shelter as well as the passing on of skills. But on another level

...all human labor tends toward God. Work is an opportunity to be co-creator with God. No matter what our job -- blue collar, white collar, homemaker, or artist -- we have the ability to recognize God in our midst and then transform a small portion of the world according to Divine Will.

A discussion of the advantages of repair follows. Repair shops are usually small and require little startup capital. Extended education is not required and children can often be trained to do parts of the task. Since these businesses are frequently home-based a drastic separation of work and family life is avoided. Work becomes instead a "way to build up family relationships."

The central idea of the pamphlet is described in the section "The Vision of A Repair Mall." The vision is exciting for even the repair mall would be communal or familial.

A repair mall would be a place for people to interact. In this respect it wouldn't be too much different than a farmers market. There'd be plenty of conversation between people with broken things and shopowners. Friends would bump into each other. New acquaintances would be made. And all sorts of repair workers would eat lunch together, give each other parts, and dream up new ways of combining efforts...A number of teens would be seen there...after school...(or) on fulltime apprenticeships...

"Regenerables," a new word, refers to the "products" of the repair mall.

Conditions for such malls already exist. There are buildings vacated by industries that have either relocated or have "died." In addition some already share this positive experience. These stories are told in the section "Case Examples of Two Repair Shops."

In the final section of *Creating a Regenerative Economy*, Shegda returns to his spirituality of work. Regeneration work is a "spiritual journey" requiring missionaries who are disciples of Christ.

As Shegda stated in his speech to the Institute for Ecosophical Studies, referred to earlier: "Once transmitted, the community interprets, adapts and molds [an idea] in an organic way." Thanks to Ron Shegda, the regeneration idea has been given to the community. The question now is whether the community is capable of molding and adapting it to bring about its own physical and spiritual regeneration.

PAUL LARSON
Bethlehem, PA

Eco-Philosophy Symposium in Nairobi--1991

An extraordinary congress of philosophy will take place in Nairobi, Kenya in August, 1991.

The organizers have agreed to schedule a symposium on Eco-philosophy. the coordinators of this symposium are:

Henryk Skolimowski
Humanities, 130- West Enging. Bldg.
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI 48109
USA

and

Hwa Yol Jung
Moravian College
Bethlehem, PA 18018
USA

If you are interested in writing and presenting an original paper for the symposium, please send the proposed title with a short synopsis (and the paper itself at a later date) to Hwa Yol Jung at the above address.

Review

Friends who want to read articulate and timely articles on health and the environment will find *Solstice Magazine* essential. Founded and superbly edited by John Mann, *Solstice* profiles our Earth via inspiring macrocosm understandings, and links them to microcosmic data and guides for practical individual and collective action.

Investigative journalism into our climate crisis has been part of most issues. Articles document both the Greenhouse Theory and the ignored Glaciation-in-5-to-20-years Theory. Further, *Solstice* is the only significant periodical which considers the effects of nuclear-power-plant radiation on climate change and the ozone holes.

John has been visionary enough to include in *Solstice*, many writings of macrobiotic ecologist David Yarrow. David reconnects readers with earth energies, climate, Native American Ways with nature, personal healings of body, mind, and spirit, and also with practical regional agriculture. His awareness fifteen years ago of climate changes and energetics, inspired tireless work to establish regional agriculture so as to ensure the survival of more populations. His founding of several organic certification organizations has benefited many people, and certainly makes my spirit soar.

David Yarrow's forthcoming book, *The Dragon and The Ice Castle* is a true adventure story of earth energies, Native American forces in the Finger Lakes, spiritual paths, toxic wastes, a shopping mall, and much more. This book moves my understandings deeper into the beautiful energetics of our Earth, and the direct connections of our Earth with each cell of our bodies, even in ways we can experience.

Request *Solstice* in a healthfood store, or from 1110 East Market St., Charlottesville, VA 22901.

MIM NOORDAM
Emmaus, PA

My Search

I am searching
A safe place to live till my natural death,
Beyond the target of I.C.B.M.s.

I am searching
Cleaner air to breathe,
And safe, potable waters,
Not these where chemicals guile.

I am searching
The soft looks of a loving smile
Not the inviting gestures of voluptuous,
vile.

How I like the natural aroma
Of hair, soft and silken like Indian jute!
Not this fragrance from South of France,
Nor the dyed and the done.

DILIP BOSE
Calcutta, INDIA

Beg Your Pardon

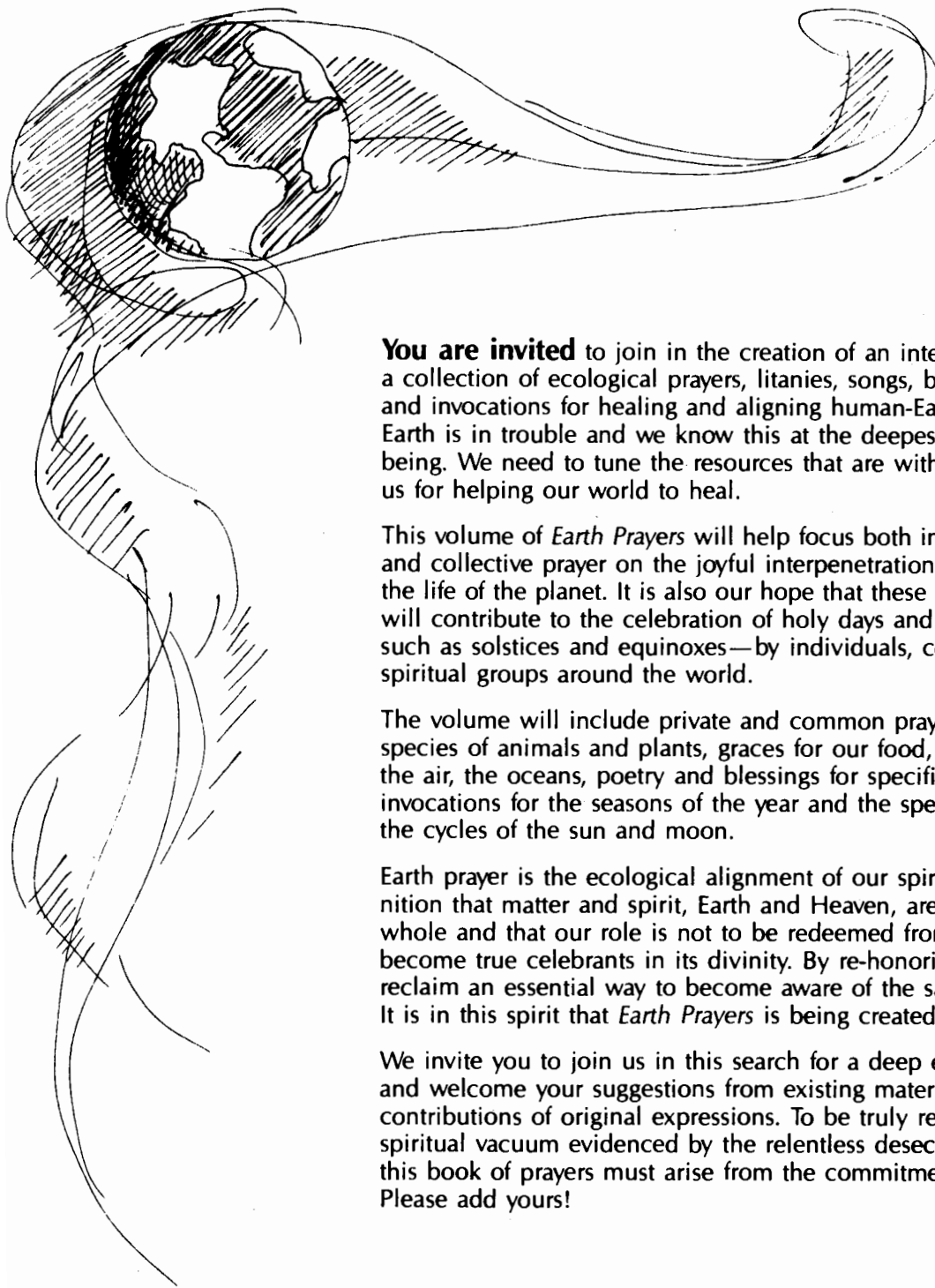
Pardon me, new-born babe,
Forgive me, ancestors of cave,
Pardon, thee, who will come,
As I couldn't save some.

My greed and that of my creed,
Silently ate away the health -
Had no love, got no peace,
Never the real wealth.

Forgive, thou, who arrived late,
Forgive, thee, unborn great,
I have made it unsafe all,
For you to live and to stroll.

DILIP BOSE
Calcutta, INDIA

a call for earth prayers



You are invited to join in the creation of an interfaith Earth Liturgy, a collection of ecological prayers, litanies, songs, blessings, graces and invocations for healing and aligning human-Earth relations. Our Earth is in trouble and we know this at the deepest levels of our being. We need to tune the resources that are within us and between us for helping our world to heal.

This volume of *Earth Prayers* will help focus both individual meditations and collective prayer on the joyful interpenetration of human life with the life of the planet. It is also our hope that these prayers and blessings will contribute to the celebration of holy days and Earth Festivals—such as solstices and equinoxes—by individuals, communities and spiritual groups around the world.

The volume will include private and common prayers for the wild, for species of animals and plants, graces for our food, prayers for the land, the air, the oceans, poetry and blessings for specific places, and invocations for the seasons of the year and the special days that mark the cycles of the sun and moon.

Earth prayer is the ecological alignment of our spirits. It is the recognition that matter and spirit, Earth and Heaven, are an inseparable whole and that our role is not to be redeemed from the Earth but to become true celebrants in its divinity. By re-honoring prayer we reclaim an essential way to become aware of the sacredness of life. It is in this spirit that *Earth Prayers* is being created.

We invite you to join us in this search for a deep ecological liturgy, and welcome your suggestions from existing material and your contributions of original expressions. To be truly responsive to the spiritual vacuum evidenced by the relentless desecration of the planet, this book of prayers must arise from the commitment of many hearts. Please add yours!

Earth Prayers is a non-profit publication. Proceeds from its sale will be contributed to the development of an interfaith institute and faculty known as the Earth Guild, under the auspices of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York.

Authors will receive free copies of the book and will maintain their rights to publish their material in other forms. Contributions and suggestions for this volume can be of any length and in any language, and can be in the form of prayers, rituals, invocations, litanies, blessings, songs or psalms.

Please address correspondence to:

Earth Prayers, Elias Amidon/Elizabeth Roberts, 130 Sherman Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

The Institute for Ecosophical Studies

Board of Directors

Paul Larson, Treasurer
Scott Madden
Mim Noordam
Jean Pearson
Annie Prince
Don St. John, Exec. Director
Harry Newman, ex-officio

Editors: Paul Larson
Don St. John

Logo: Rudy Hilt

Typing: Carol Newell

The Institute for Ecosophical Studies is an educational non-profit organization located at but independent from Moravian College.

Ecospirit was aided by a grant from the Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges.

INSTITUTE FOR ECOSOPHICAL STUDIES
c/o Donald P. St. John, Ph.D.
Moravian College
Bethlehem, PA 18018

Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage P A I D Bethlehem PA Permit # 267
