



BRIDGING THE GAP

The Quaker Intentional Village Project Newsletter

Summer 2015, Issue #36

LATEST NEWS

Since May, our community has added 4 Chinese weeder geese, two little pigs, chickens, and an expectant human mama to the joyful lambs who arrived in April. The geese were delivered by mail when one day old and they quickly bonded with Dee and Paul, running to them, necks outstretched and squawking, whenever they pass by. The piggies, Sugar and Cinnamon, quickly acclimated to affectionate touch, falling over in apparent ecstasy when scratched. The Coalters' hand-raised chickens, though still small, escape daily by flying over their 5-foot high enclosure. On the human side, two-year-old Lev will become a big brother when his parents, Hana and Noah, welcome a child in December.



We also recently celebrated the first weddings of grown children of member families since our community's beginning. Dee and Paul's son Keith married Luella in a small, outdoor ceremony in Luella's parents' beautiful, mountain-view yard in Vermont. Spee and Jens's daughter Natalie married Aaron in a large Quaker wedding in Old Chatham Quakers' new meetinghouse. These weddings are a blessing to family and community alike, as they manifest and increase the love we all have to share.



Keith & Luella



Natalie & Aaron

As a community, we seem to be entering a more reflective stage as we talk about how we communicate and as we sometimes find the courage to say difficult things to each other. We also recently had an experience of spontaneous, group conflict resolution. We were working on setting up a swing set and a sandbox near the Farmhouse and there was disagreement about the best place to put the swing set. Many of us hold and express strong opinions, so the atmosphere felt tense. Somehow, maybe someone suggested it, we gathered together, heard each other out, and came up with an acceptable solution. It seemed natural, after the fact, like a spontaneous, though un-clerked, business meeting. It is heartening to experience the ways we are growing, as we also seek to uncover aspects of our cultural conditioning that continue to need attention and change.

We welcome visitors, many of whom are interested in buying or building a home in our community. We would love to hear from you! Contact us at info@qivc.org.

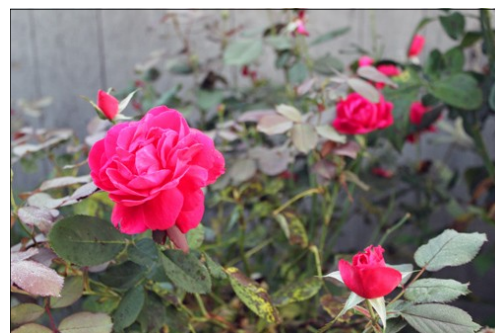
MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES! SEE PAGE 11

MY FIRST YEAR AT QIVC

Hana and I moved to QIVC with our son Lev one year ago, on July 7th, 2014. Living in community has been an eye-opening experience in so many ways. We have made many new friends, both human and animal, and experienced a new aspect of spirit—the daily encounter of friendly souls.

I have come to find, in such a short time nonetheless, that there is simply nothing quite like living in intentional community for offering the spiritual impact of communing with one's friends. The combination of physical proximity, sharing of our land, and the intention to interweave our lives leads to a sense of spirit that transcends one's singular, individual ego.

For Hana and me, the new sense of communion in our lives also includes communion with nature. Indeed, for us, moving to a community was very connected with our desire to escape the crusty confines of city life and surround ourselves with natural beauty. That the families of QIVC hold to the intention to live harmoniously with the natural environment, and to discern humanity's rightful place in the miracle of creation, greatly facilitates joining into that metaphorical feast.



As I sit here watching the rain pour down onto the lush green pasture, I find it difficult to imagine being part of a human family in the absence of any other natural wonders. How can people ever expect to join in love when they are constantly rejecting the abiding love of forests and streams? How can we treat each other with dignity when our abstracting distance from animals and plants prevents us from treating them with the dignity they deserve?

I lived in New York City for eight years. They were not years of suffering and misery by any means. I fell in love, learned much that will last with me, witnessed the miracle of the birth of my son, and experienced a slice of humanity extraordinary in its efforts to transcend its corporeal limitations. But we left New York haggard, stressed, and yearning for connection to something greater than our individual human selves.

So here I sit, a year later, listening to the sound of the rain on my roof, looking out on the sheep pasture, and knowing that I am surrounded by loving friends. I know that Eric will stop by to lend a hand, and Bear will just stop by. I know that Dee will be waiting with kisses for my son, Ellen will be waiting to exercise with Hana, and the Coalters will give hugs to anyone who wants one. And I feel the spirit surrounding this place I call home.

~ Noah Palmer

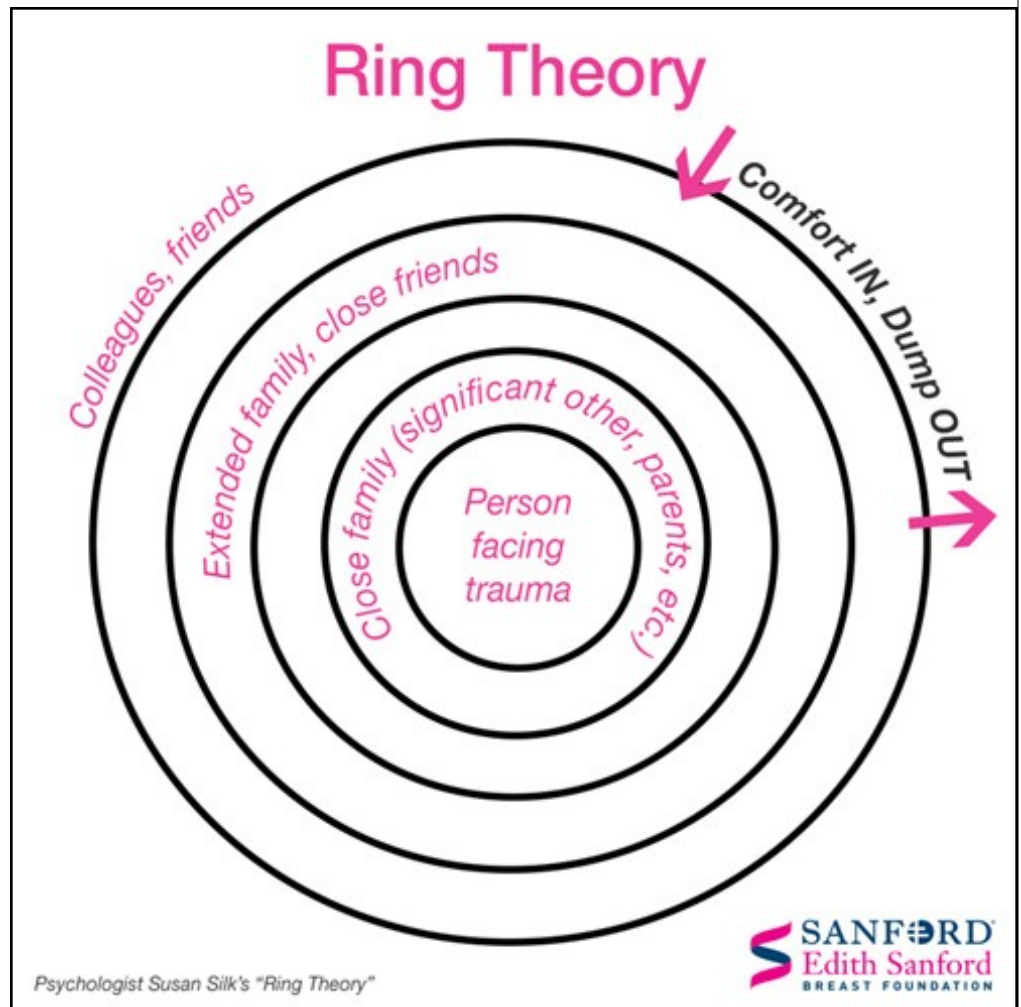
Resources

How Not to Say the Wrong Thing

by Susan Silk and Barry Goldman
from The Los Angeles Times, 4/7/2013

“It works in all kinds of crises—medical, legal, even existential. It’s the ‘Ring Theory’ of kvetching. The first rule is comfort in, dump out.”

Living in intentional community with a long-term illness creates new challenges around privacy, asking for help, how to balance community participation and self-care, and how to share information in a way that meets everyone’s needs. For community members other than the one who is facing the illness firsthand, it brings up questions about how best to share one’s own feelings and experiences as a close community member goes through something scary and unknown. This article gives some simple guidance about who should share what with whom, based on a “ring theory” of closeness to the sick person.



Use this link to the article that explains the diagram: <http://lat.ms/1boNQ5y>

~ Ellen Harris-Braun

INSULATION AT QIVC

Wool, Straw, Bluejeans, and More

After the long winter, the number of inquiries we receive about living in community shoots up. We welcome those exploring the QIVC option with on-site visits that include tours of the land, gardens, orchards, and buildings, and inevitably those tours point out the unusual non-toxic and locally sourced materials with which we have insulated the Farmhouse and some of our homes at QIVC. Other visitors – friends and relatives of residents, and even strangers passing by – ask for what I call “the QIVC Alternative-Building Tour,” and they are surprised and delighted by the “truth windows” that show what’s inside the plaster-covered walls. Their enthusiasm reminds us of QIVC’s peculiar and fun aspects of living lightly on the earth.

Over the years, we have used the following materials for roof and wall insulation:

- Straw bales
- Wood chips mixed with a clay slip
- Insulation rolls made from factory scraps of bluejean material
- Dirt (green roof)
- Wool shorn from our sheep

The current project involves filling the walls of the Brauns’ house addition with straw that is coated with what’s called a “clay slip.” The slip is created in a cement mixer by combining just the right amount of water and Hudson Valley clay, the latter gladly given to us by a local farmer. The straw mixed with the muddy liquid is stuffed between the lathe, where the mixture dries and makes a very effective wall insulation.

QIVC residents and visitors have pitched in, enjoying the opportunity to learn something new and contribute to yet another initiative in support of our fourth intention, which is: *To consider the near and far environmental impact of our actions as we strive for thriving while living in unity and harmony with the earth.* Some also enjoyed playing in the mud!

-Spee Braun

*Willing to die,
you give up
your will. Keep still
until, moved
by what moves
All else, you move.
~Wendell Berry*

*Do you have the patience to wait
Til your mind settles and the
Water is still?
Can you remain unmoving
Till the right action arrives
By itself?
~Lao-Tzo*



Mixing clay slip



Adding more lathe



Mixing straw into clay slip



Breaking up clay



Stuffing walls

ON MEDITATION & MY FAVORITE SIT SPOT

Of all the things that I have yearned for in my 4.5 years of living at QIVC is to find that perfect sit spot, a place where I can feel grounded, to feel at peace with my day. I sometimes find that I wake up and feel as though the day had begun already, even before I've opened my eyes. That somehow, the chore list got longer, the requests have already piled up, the house was messier than it was when I went to bed. I haven't quite figured out how this all happens, and I blame the gnomes that live under our sofa. Either way, it happens and waking up feeling a sense of loss, a tumultuousness with the day, even before it has truly started, sets me up for an uphill climb. And who wants that as the start of a new day?

My favorite sit spot outside my home is a hidden cove beneath a massive Evergreen that nobody visits. It used to be a hideaway for my eldest daughter and her friends but adolescence has distracted them from the imaginary play that happened there, and so now, I have adopted it as a sanctuary. I don't have too many opportunities to visit it alone, but when I do, I am able to give myself, and Mama Earth, some much needed love and attention. It is a place where I can sink in, meditate, breath deeply, and practice grounding: a deep connection to the Earth by engaging my first chakra and letting it ripple through my body, creating an electric pulse that allows me to connect, release, and accept.

Grounding is a very simple rhythm. It takes a little time or as much time as I'd like. The space that I set up for myself begins like this: I create an image of myself connecting to the Earth, extending down from my first chakra, my root chakra, from my tailbone, into the center of the Earth. This connection allows me to form a tether of acceptance and release. A wonderful teacher of mine has always encouraged me to transmute my energy. In with the good. Out with the good. So whatever I have that feels it needs to be released I release with as much love and care as I can muster.

To ground myself, I have a strong, sturdy tree that calls to me and exists in my sit spot. I sit at the base of this tree and close my eyes. There is so much energy in the Earth, I feel the vibrations as I become aware of my existence while I share space with this tree. I breathe in slowly, and breathe out slowly. A technique that I learned that I find to be quite powerful is to inhale through my nose and exhale out of my mouth. Connecting and creating a circle of inhale and exhale is quite meditative. This is the space I want to create. After breathing this way for a few minutes, I begin to imagine roots emerging downward from my tailbone. I imagine now that my connection is flooded with healing white light. From my root chakra down into the Earth, my cord is glowing. I feel deeply what comes up for me here: release, sadness, frustration, happiness, elation, safety. Whatever it is, at the moment of release, I send a pulse of Love energy from my heart to it. If it's fear, I acknowledge the release but stabilize it with Love.

MEDITATION, CONTINUED

I acknowledge my release by sending healing Love into it and transmuting my release with Love. For example, I may say to myself, "I acknowledge my release of intense sadness. I am sending healing Love into this sadness and transmuting my intense sadness with Love."

Transmuting these emotions begins the healing process for Mother Earth, who so lovingly embraces us and all of our releasing. She holds so much energy, good and bad, that this practice can be one not only of self healing but also of healing for our Mother.

As I begin to feel my connection deepen, where my body and mind are still, I get the sensation that I am floating or are barely there, so this is the perfect time to pull in all of the Love energy, from my own healing Light and from what Mother Earth has to send me in return. I imagine the floodgates being thrust wide open and all of this golden Light is sent straight up through the roots I sent down. This Light will travel the whole of my body, into my head, and I imagine now that I'm opening up my crown chakra, the top of my head, and pull down Universal Love and Light energy all the way through from my head to my root. I set the intention for these Light energies to meet at my Heart and balance each other, meeting and mingling and creating warmth and safety and balance and connection.

I imagine now that my whole body is radiating out with this powerful Love energy. I become aware of my body and how it is feeling which is the appropriate time to set my intention for the rest of my day:

I will act only in Love.

I will seek out more fun and joy.

I intend to deepen my connection with my family.

I intend to learn something new.

After I have set the intention that is right for me, I detach myself from any outcome. **I let go of any rigid attachment to a particular result and live in the wisdom of uncertainty.** I live in my intention and believe that everything will be as it should be, then I let go and allow the opportunities and grace to wash over me. I trust that the Universe has heard my intention and has met me where I am. **The outcome I try so hard to force may not be as good as the one that comes naturally, so I release my intentions into the fertile ground of pure potentiality, and they will bloom when the season is right.**

~ Marcy Coalter

INSPIRATION

It's "rainbow season" over here at QIVC. When we have a late afternoon rain shower, the late spring, late afternoon sunlight hits all those water molecules in the most magical way. On one particular evening in May, we chased a rainbow all over QIVC. We never found the pot of gold, but we did find this gorgeous sunset.

~ Anne Undeland



My grandpa Irv Sarnoff was a great inspiration to me, and a large part of what brought my family to QIVC. As a child, my family would travel to the Berkshires to visit my grandparents in their country home. My memories of those days spent playing in the lake nearby, looking for wild berries, and enjoying the country air kindled my adult desire to live in the Berkshires. Irv was an intellectual, a lover of nature, and a poet, and at the end of his life he wrote many a couplet about nature, spirituality, and aging.

In memory of Irv Sarnoff

Silence is the key
To close the gap of you and me

God is in those moments
Where not a word is spoken

Defying our desire
To have debates transpire

A spaciousness emerges
Where secret love bursts open

And in that well of beauty
We will find our unit

"We cannot stop the winter or the summer from coming. We cannot stop the spring or the fall or make them other than they are. They are gifts from the universe that we cannot refuse. But we can choose what we will contribute to life when each arrives. "

~ Gary Zukav

SPIRITUAL HUSBANDRY

I thought recently, as I split and stacked firewood, that I had bucked up for two days prior, that the homesteading idea is actually rarely anything like glamorous, or maybe more on point, less glamorous than I've seen it depicted now and again. Dealing with the coming season's firewood can be tedious and monotonous, especially going it alone. Drive and motivation are provided by recognizing the warmth and security of a hearty fire in the wood stove, our sole source of heat. The gleaning and processing of food is not too far off the same calculus, acutely when considering the long arc involving the preparation and maintenance of fruit and vegetable acreage: it's a season's-long process, and it takes an approach that requires labor along the lines of months, not hours. There's so much uncertainty, so much Grace, so much understanding. And no small factor of humility: if you think you know some absolutes, you don't.

I like tomatoes, and I pick 'em and eat 'em. I really do like kale generally, too. Our ladies in the chicken yard are laying so steadily and in such profusion that they almost make me feel something akin to proud, and I thoroughly enjoy eating the eggs. I thank them every day and try to give them the best that I can. I also gently handle and spend time with the roosters that are next in line to be processed. ('Process' being that agrarian euphemism that so gently and subtly covers so much ground.) I tell them that they're doing great, eating well and growing into beautiful birds. I also tell them that we are soon going to kill them and eat them. Sometimes this makes me feel like I'm mildly psychotic, but it's the only way I know right now to have an authentic relationship with them. I don't want it to be a secret; it's important that we are very clear in the presence of whatever God we claim to know. (Still...it may be a bit weird.) It's more fair warning than I've ever given any tomato, at any rate.

We have these sheep, too. I can hardly express the joy I get from spending time with them, and I thrive on being in rhythm with them throughout the seasons. They help ground me, they share so readily their open hearts, and can even bolster my esteem (typically when my grain bag is full), to say nothing of all they do to nourish and tend the land here. They're remarkable creatures in my eyes. Some I have come to know over four years now, which is to say, some of the sheep and I have really gotten to know each other. And so it doesn't necessarily shock me so much as it sends odd tectonic tremors through me when we lose one.

SPIRITUAL HUSBANDRY, CONTINUED

Jens (the shepherd) and I spent a couple hours with the flock today, and I surprised myself at being somewhat taken aback when he asked if I felt like one of the elders' time was coming before the next breeding season. I'd noticed her bag has remained distended beyond the weaning, and that she'd slowed appreciably, she'd suffered mastitis at last lambing. I'd also been enjoying how she's become so much more 'friendly,' slower to leave our impromptu morning meetings. I cognitively know what all these things point to, for the health of the flock, her lambs, her self. I also affix emotional value to her. As an individual involved in animal husbandry (again), this is to my detriment.

We have a pig that will be ready to harvest in a month or so. The last harvest experience I had was with our dearest friends, folks whom I love and trust and admire very much, and to my chagrin, the act raised so many questions for me. Questions that I'd not asked myself in decades. Questions of dominion, of place in the world. I ate pork as I ate tomatoes or eggs...chicken, too. How had I allowed my spirit to slumber, sleeping unfeeling, unfazed, through the high holy act of consumption? How had I forgotten that for that being, I was witness and complicit in the earthly ultimate sacrifice? I can blame media or marketing or just about any anesthetic I can conjure, but none of it is the Truth, and the Truth has little to do with 'how' or 'why': Truth, in my opinion, is about the present and exists without questions. Contemporary truth is that I've held in solemn regard the sheep that I've consumed in the past years, and it's because they have had names to me. But so did that pig. So do those roosters.

I expressed to Marcy, coming out of that post-harvest funk, that I needed to speak with some holy people, to contact some shamans, to ask worldly natives about what their relationship is with husbandry, with dominion, with consumption. I needed some answers. Marcy, as only she can, called me out...lovingly. No one on this planet was going to 'give me answers,' and I knew it. She's right, of course.

In the time since, I've noticed the wisest people don't offer any words. They listen, authentically, kindly, with real empathy. Some offer how they feel, asking if I think it'll help. And without fail, they ask what I'm feeling.

I say I need more time walking the land, in prayer. In reverie. In gratitude. I'll leave glamour to the media.

~ *Lee Coalter*

Seeking New Members

Buy or build a house in our community!

QIVC, established in 2000, is a community of 30 people of all ages living close to the land on 135 acres of forest and pasture in the upper Hudson Valley. We strive to live spirit-focused lives that are simple, sustainable, and joyful, benefitting from and enjoy our close connections with each other and the land. We welcome diversity of all sorts, and don't all need to identify as Quaker.

House for sale to member/member family: The Red House is ~1,500 square feet with two bedrooms on the lower (walkout) level plus one bedroom on the main level. It is a passive-solar First Day Cottage, self-built in 2009, heated primarily by a woodstove with additional radiant-floor heating. Electricity is primarily solar though the house is on the grid. It has lots of windows and nice views, and a side porch. \$205,600



Build your own house in the QIVC community: QIVC has one house site now available where new members can build a house or have one built. The building lot is set back

from the road on a gentle south-facing slope currently



inhabited by aspens and sometimes sheep, near the gardens and our ravine and stream. Estimated costs of lot development and house construction are \$175,000-\$275,000.

Sales are to members only, following a successful (for you and the community) trial period of about a year while you rent or live nearby. QIVC membership is determined by mutual agreement, using a clearness process in the manner of Quakers.

QIVC membership gives you use of the community's land and shared buildings, as well as sharing of equipment, meals, social life and members' passions and expertise. Members pay an annual fee to cover property taxes and other communal expenses. (More about membership at qivc.org/membership-qivc) **Come join us!**

Interested? Want more information? Contact us at info@qivc.org

MINUTES MAY 2014 TO JUNE 2015

2014-07-01: We approve the revised 2014 QIVC operating budget as presented.

2014-08-01: We approve setting the sale price for the Hanley/Scheible house, 229 Bradley's Crossing Road, Stop 13, at \$160,000.

2014-08-02: It seems likely that QIVC will not have a member-owner on board and ready to buy the Hanley/Scheible house by March 2015 (our deadline). Given this situation and the request from Pat and Kristin to come to a quick resolution, we approve the community buying the Hanley/Scheible house as soon as we can make the arrangements, with the intention of reselling the house in the future to a new member-owner.

2014-08-03: The community wishes to exercise its first option to purchase and, as represented by Eric and Ellen Harris-Braun (co-owners of Lot 3), will declare in writing by Sept. 7, 2014 that it wishes to buy the Hanley/Scheible house.

2014-08-04: We approve that a payment plan for purchasing the Hanley/Scheible house will include QIVC's assuming the remainder of their third-party house loan. (The payment to the Hanley/Scheibles will thus be reduced by the amount of the outstanding loan.)

2014-12-01: We approve the 2015 QIVC Committee Roster with a few small corrections.

2014-12-02: We approve the 2015 QIVC Annual Operating Budget as presented.

2014-12-03: We approve Eric Bear's proposal for a third Short-Term Intentional Residency, welcoming his presence and energy through July 31, 2015.

2014-12-04: We approve the Brauns hosting Haverford College students at QIVC for eight days in early March.

MINUTES, CONTINUED

2015-01-01: We approve removing the following person as a signatory on the accounts held by the Quaker Intentional Village-Canaan at the First Niagara Bank: Ellen Harris-Braun.

2015-01-02: We approve adding the following person as a signatory on the accounts held by the Quaker Intentional Village-Canaan at the First Niagara Bank: Sandra Beer.

2015-01-03: We are willing to proceed with financing the purchase of the Red House outright, financed primarily by a new loan to QIVC. We authorize the Finance & Legal Committee to conclude the arrangements for sale of the house without further approvals from the meeting.

2015-01-04: We approved the revised role of the new combined Buildings and Land Committee as above.

2015-01-05: The intention of Rhythm Days is to provide a time for the full community (members and residents) to seasonally share in some meaningful activity that strengthens our bonds, recognizes the cadences of this planet, and allows for member sharing in ways we might not normally engage. Though we ask that community members not specifically invite others to Rhythm Days, we recognize that the expansive nature of our village and of our personal friendships means there may be people with us who are part of our personal and community rhythms and flows. They are welcome to join us and participate fully in these events. Situational reasons may also arise for Community Life to invite someone. In such cases we will welcome them in a spirit of openness and sharing.

2015-02-01: We approve the 2015 QIVC officers as follows: Eric Harris-Braun (Clerk), Spee Braun (Financial Clerk), Ellen Harris-Braun (Recording Clerk)

2015-02-02: We approve Chuck Savoy joining us as a short-term intentional resident from late March to early July.

MINUTES, continued

2015-02-04: We approve the language below for insertion into members' wills as specified in our QIVC Member Agreement, section B 11:

The following wording will be added to a sentence in a will or codicil regarding house inheritance, directing the executor/executrix in handling the member's house at QIVC:

"...subject to all of the covenants, conditions and restrictions established by Quaker Intentional Village-Canaan, including all restrictions applicable for the transfer of my residence and real property."

Any member can also choose to add the following:

"My Executor/Executrix, Alternate Executor/Executrix, or Trustee may transfer such real property at a price equal to or less than fair market value or replacement cost."

2015-03-01: We approve Claire Wolf's proposal for a short-term intentional residency at QIVC from April 1 through August 31.

2015-05-01: We approve the Disability/Accessibility Working Group's "Proposal Related to Accessibility at QIVC" as presented.

QIVP, Inc. Annual Meeting

QIVP-2015-01-Inc: We approve the new members of the Board of Directors as follows: Ellen Harris-Braun, Dee Duckworth, Sandra Beer, and Spee Braun for three-year terms (2015-2017).

QIVP-2015-02-Inc: We approve the 2015 officers as follows: Eric Harris-Braun (Clerk), Spee Braun (Financial Clerk), Ellen Harris-Braun (Recording Clerk).



CONSCIOUS CULTURE CREATION

The preamble to our 5 Intentions (see back page) is:
We believe conscious culture creation in community can be a means to advance our intentions: (emphasis added)

Our first intention is:
To live in worship, increasing our mindfulness, spiritual focus, and God-centeredness by intertwining our daily lives with others who share these intentions

Mindfulness has been defined as "paying attention, on purpose, non-judgmentally." In other words, we seek to bring awareness to the evaluations and judgments that constantly and automatically arise in our minds about our observations, thoughts, and experiences.

For example, I might notice someone at our community potluck get up from a table and leave their dirty plate on the table. Possibly my next, automatic thought is, "They should clean-up after themselves. Why do they always leave a mess for someone else to clean up?" If I am consciously creating a culture in which I intend to increase mindfulness, I will seek to observe this automatic reaction of my judging mind, recognize it for what it is, and with gentle friendliness, let it go.

Letting go means just what it says. It's an invitation to cease clinging to anything...be it an idea, a thing, an event, a particular time or view or desire.... To let go means to give up coercing, resisting, or struggling in exchange for something more powerful and wholesome which comes out of allowing things to be the way they are without getting caught up in your attraction to or rejection of them, in the intrinsic stickiness of wanting, of liking and disliking. It's akin to letting your palm open to unhand something you've been holding on to.

~Jon Kabat-Zinn

I also seek to remember, when I am able, that this material, human embodiment is Illusory Form. In our True Form, we are One, no disconnection or separation from others or from our own hearts. In this way, I am more able to joyously pick up the plate, rinse it off, and put it in the dishwasher, knowing I am serving God.

Lest I sound more enlightened than I am on a day-to-day basis, this writing represents what is possible when I am able to act inline with our first intention. I am much more likely to act with compassion for another when I also bring gentle, friendly awareness to my judgments of myself. We can only be as compassionate with others as we are with ourselves. *~ Dee Duckworth*



QIVC
235 Bradley's Crossing Road
East Chatham, NY 12060

We believe conscious culture creation in community can be a means to advance our intentions:

1. To live in worship, increasing our mindfulness, spiritual focus, and God-centeredness by intertwining our daily lives with others who share these intentions
2. To create a village setting that values and engages participation by people of all ages, expands our experience of family, and supports our expression in the world
3. To create wealth that embodies integrity and Truth by carefully examining our engagement in the current economic order and stepping away from its destructive elements
4. To live in unity & harmony with the earth by considering the near and far environmental impact of our actions while striving for thriving.
5. To include a good measure of joy, fun, creativity, and service in our lives

We believe that our communities' success in achieving these five intentions will be aided by membership diverse in race, age, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, and economic situations, and therefore it is our aim to gather a community whose members are diverse in these ways as well as others.