

Save these dates! The **Annual Interhelp Gathering** will be held on Nov 13 - 15 at Woolman Hill in western Massachusetts.

Interhelp Newsletter, Spring 2009

Dear Interhelpers and Friends,

It seems a long time since I posted the January issue. A hard winter has finally made way for a luscious spring. And we have had three months to reflect on the loss of Fran Macy, who died on Inauguration Day. This photo of Fran and Joanna was taken in the fall of 2007. The photographer is Carolyn Treadway. She asks that the photo be credited to her, wherever and however it is used. Please go to www.francismacy.com to read the remarkable story of Fran's life.



Letters to the editor, news about local events, and other submissions by readers are always welcome. Deadline for the next issue is June 30. I'd love to hear from you!

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GATHERING AND COUNCIL NEWS

We'll be back at Woolman Hill in Deerfield, MA for our annual Gathering this fall. We hope to see you there, Nov 13 - 15. Watch for further announcements, or send a note to interhelpeditor@gmail.com if you'd like to know more now.

At the Interhelp Council's recent planning meeting at the home of Michael Rice and Sondra Sprinkling in Delmar, New York, we focused on the Council of All Beings, which will be the central ritual at this fall's Gathering.

Council members, in addition to Michael, Sondra and myself, include Rosalie Anders, Carol Harley, Eleanor Mathews, Kristina Orchard, Craig Richards and Karen Zeiders. Treasurer/registrar Rick Gottesman provides important support.

LOCAL EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Joyce Reeves and Diane Reiner led a successful one-day workshop in April in Woodstock, New York. A Boston-area get-together is in the works; watch for an announcement.

Newly posted on www.joannamacy.net is a worldwide Facilitators Network for the Work that Reconnects.

ANNOUNCING THE LAUNCH OF EARTH CIRCLES

By Rosalie Anders and Eleanor Mathews

In October 2007 we began meeting with several other Boston area folks to develop a process in which people who are concerned about climate change could meet in small groups, over several sessions. We did not want to reinvent the wheel. Discussion curricula around global warming and other issues are readily available, as is the Low Carbon Diet, which brings people together to work on reducing their households' carbon footprints. We wanted to combine attention to the psychic impacts of the climate crisis with exploring action on the personal and community levels. As a result, Earth Circles includes tools from Joanna Macy's work along with information about climate change in participants' own communities. The process encourages group members to support each other in taking collective action.

This turns out to be a lot to pack into seven sessions, with a total

of 22 hours, and of course we wanted to allow time for exploration and sharing. We drafted a curriculum/workbook, tried it out, then redrafted. Deciding what to leave out was one of the hardest parts of the process, but we have finally finished, and the result is now available at www.earth-circles.org

The Earth Circles process assumes that we need to take transformational actions to stem the catastrophe that climate change promises to bring, and that perfectly natural feelings of despair and helplessness are preventing people from confronting and acting on the crisis. We believe, based on our own experience, that sharing these feelings within a group of people is extremely helpful. We also assume that actions must include both personal lifestyle changes and efforts toward larger systemic changes.

We encourage Interhelpers to convene Earth Circles in your communities, and let us know how it goes!