

Tales from the White Dog Cafe

A Tri-Annual Newsletter 3420 Sansom St. Philadelphia Fall/Winter, 1999

After You've Gone

I confess to a wild affair - I've fallen in love with nature. After many years of city summers, recent adventures in the woods have opened my eyes to the extraordinary beauty of the natural world. As though seeing for the first time, I marvel at the sunlight on green leaves, and notice the tiny blue flowers along the lake shore, the sweetness of the water, the scent of the pines - life is intoxicating! A shameless "tree-hugger," I wrap my arms around a huge old oak, declaring my devotion and promising to cherish and protect this precious earth.

The recent drought was a frightening experience in my new found paradise. The gurgling creek where I had splashed waist deep had shriveled to a silent path of dusty rocks. Withered blueberry bushes bore only tiny black pellets and a field of lush ferns once fanning in the breeze on my favorite hillside now lay flattened into shredded brown tissue. Nearly stripped of their foliage, young saplings stood bare limbed, while towering above, even the mighty oaks were scorched at the tops beneath the relentless sun. The forest was barren and eerily quiet. Only my footsteps snapping brittle twigs and crunching through endless brown leaves broke the silence. Even the birds stopped singing - all of us listening, alert to the danger that hung in the dry, still air. Will it be like this in the end, I thought, will we perish by fire, and others by flood?

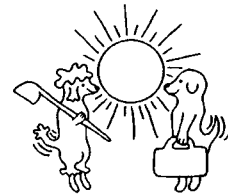
Driving home along back roads, I pass wasted fields of corn, where farms have lost most or all of their harvest. Local papers run stories of small farmers finally giving in to developers and TV broadcasts cover weather disasters from coast to coast and around the globe, yet discussion of what is causing such extreme, unstable conditions is missing. Though some industry leaders are beginning to admit that global warming caused by man is bringing about climate change, conditions continue to deteriorate. Recent years have brought record floods, droughts, rainfall, snows, fires and tropical storms. Sadly, hardest hit are those who care most for the earth - small farmers and indigenous communities.

Are we to simply wait for the inevitable like helpless birds in the wilderness? First, we can educate ourselves about the causes of global warming and organize to move government away from subsidizing the fossil fuel industry and toward developing renewable energy sources. We can build a sustainable global economy by producing and buying earth-friendly products. We can consume less. We can learn from indigenous people who live in harmony with nature and join their continuing struggles to oppose oil drilling and mining, deforestation, and the cultural decay of consumerism. We could do all these things, or we could do nothing, and lose what we love most - life on earth.

Judy Wicks

Highlights in this Issue:

- ☆ New Year's Eve Benefit for Greenpeace
- ☆ Talk with Pew Center on Global Climate Change
- ☆ Native American Dinner with Iroquois Corn
- ☆ Farmers' Sunday Supper and Beer Tasting
- ☆ Cooking with Kevin upstairs at Judy's house
- ☆ Fall Walk at Tinicum Marsh



New Visions for Business

A tri-annual forum on creating meaningful work
Monday, Oct. 4, 6pm

"Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How it Transformed Our World"

with Mark Pendergrast

An investigative journalist and scholar, Pendergrast is also the author of *For God, Country and Coca-Cola*. His new book, *Uncommon Grounds*, offers an entertaining saga of coffee's epic history and its relationship to the development of colonialism, mass production, international commerce, and modern-day media and marketing. He focuses on the influence of the American coffee trade on the world's economies and cultures, zeroing in on the political and economic history of Latin America.

Also included will be the story of the Mexican coffee served at the White Dog Cafe with proprietress Judy Wicks, who founded BETHRIC (*Businesses for Equitable Trade and Human Rights in Chiapas*) to support our indigenous trading partners in coffee and craft markets who are victims of repression and state sanctioned violence.

6pm Three-course dinner followed by discussion.
\$30, including tax & gratuity. Reservations (215) 386-9224.