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REACHING FOR HIGHER GROUND
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**A NEWSLETTER DEDICATED TO THE AWAKENING AND UPLIFTMENT OF HUMANITY
AND PLANET EARTH WITH JOHN DENVER**

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"HEART TO HEART"

I haven't seen all there is to see, but I've seen quite a bit
Some things I'll always remember, some things I wish that I could forget
I haven't quite been around the world but I've been around the block
I know that distances are meaningless like the hands that move around the clock

And I know that love is everywhere, always safe and always true
And exactly where it comes from is where it's going to
Your heart to mine, my heart to yours
Talk about opening windows, Talk about opening doors

My heart to yours, your heart to mine
Love is a light that shines from heart to heart
Here I am sitting in old Hong Kong, The Harbor and the lights
They're like diamonds in the heavens, Enough to brighten the darkest of nights

There's another side to sorrow as there is to everything
Like the other side of lonely is falling in love again
And then you know that there's an answer to the suffering we see
And though it isn't easy, It's still as simple as you and me

And then you'll know that love is everywhere, Always safe, always true
And exactly where it comes from is where it's going to
Your heart to mine, my heart to yours
Talk about opening windows, Talk about opening doors

My heart to yours, your heart to mine
Love is a light that shines from heart to heart
True love is a light that shines from heart to heart
John Denver

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Hi Everybody, and Happy New Year!

Weird, but this issue is being published a year later from its intended date! It was that long ago I was working on it when my computer crashed. I was devastated at the time, but I felt John standing behind me, put his hand on my back, and say, "Don't worry...everything will be all right. You'll recover most of what you lost." And it was true—I did...although it took many months. From here on out the newsletter is just like it was in December of 2003.

First off, I have to say that I swear I didn't make all the Heart and Judgment connections before I put this newsletter together. It's just amazing to me how it all unfolded. The whole newsletter, actually, came together pretty much all at once at the beginning of December, when I wasn't even planning on working on another issue yet. But, ya know God and John had other plans!

Please enjoy the newsletter. And here's wishing you all the best for the year 2004--in love, in health, in prosperity, in friendship, in communion with God, and in peace....E&J

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CONTRIBUTIONS

Stories of the Spirit, Stories of the Heart – from Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield

The truths we have come to understand need to find their visible expression in our lives. Our every thought, word, or action holds the possibility of being a living expression of clarity and love. It is not enough to be a possessor of wisdom. To believe ourselves to be custodians of truth is to become its opposite, is a direct path to becoming stale, self-righteous, or rigid. Ideas and memories do not hold liberating or healing power.

There is no such state as enlightened retirement, where we can live on the bounty of past attainments. Wisdom is alive only as long as it is lived, understanding is liberating only as long as it is applied. A bulging portfolio of spiritual experiences matters little if it does not have the power to sustain us through the inevitable moments of grief, loss, and change. Knowledge and achievements matter little if we do not yet know how to touch the heart of another and be touched.

True spiritual freedom is obtained when we have become aware enough that we are able to rise above this cycle as said before, and liberate ourselves from the Wheel of Eighty-Four, or wheel of life, from karma (the balance of payments of each soul), from having to reincarnate, and from all ills of the mortal world. True spiritual freedom is the ability to come and go among all the worlds of the cosmic order as desired; to achieve what is called Jivan Mukti, or spiritual liberation in the here and now. This does NOT mean separating one's self from life and the goings on of the world but rather coming to a place of involved detachment from what is going on. This is the hardest lesson to get across in the healing room and in the workshop. Spirituality, as I've said before, is won on the battlefields of Creation, not in the silence of the calm peaceful meditation room. Service and surrender are the two fastest ways to true peace of mind and 'Oneness' with the Creator.

We are all born in balance. In innocence we see the harmony of all things. Life is a song and we are a part of its dance. Somewhere along our journey an event alters our dance and we are changed. Somehow we lose our balance, then fear, uncertainty, and loneliness become a part of us. We seek solace in activity and distraction and find that we are on a roller coaster of failure and success, happiness and sadness, elation and desperation. We become disillusioned and seek answers from within the web that imprisons us. We are lost and confused. This confusion is the first clue that we are out of step with our dance. It is time to examine our walk.

A Galactic Fairy Tale - by Michael Lightweaver (from Margit)

A long, long time ago in a galaxy far, far away there were all of these little light beings just hanging out enjoying life in that joyful & timeless dimension. And then one day a very large,

magnificent angel came to them. He had a very serious look on his face. He was looking for volunteers for a very important cosmic mission.

"We have this small - but very special - planet out at the edge of the Alcyon galaxy called Gaia. It is quite unique like a beautiful garden and it is teeming with hundreds of thousands of different life forms. It has been something of an experimental station in the galaxy and it has a most interesting humanoid life form that incorporates the very highest and lowest frequencies known in the cosmos. It is in fact the very epitome of dualism. On the one hand it is an incredibly beautiful life form and is capable of carrying the highest frequencies of love, light & joy known throughout the whole Universe. On the other hand it is capable of carrying the densest and darkest frequencies the cosmos has ever experienced--frequencies which the rest of creation evolved beyond eons ago.

Here is the current situation. Within the domain of time, this planet goes through periodic cosmic cycles. It is now coming to the end of two major cycles - a 2,000 year long age of Pisces and the 25,000 year long cosmic year in its journey around Alcyon, the central sun of the milky way galaxy.

With the completion of this cycle, many things are coming to an end and many things are about to begin. But most importantly, the planet is experiencing an infusion of light that is dramatically increasing its frequency. As during any major time of transition, there will be a certain amount of turbulence. Some of this will be geological, for Gaia herself is a living planet and is also evolving. But much of it also involves the hominoid species that dominates the planet.

This will not be a particularly easy time for the species--especially for those who are sleeping and those who are vibrating at the lowest frequencies. As the frequency changes it will create insecurity which in turn will create fear.

The first era of evolution on this planet was the physical era and the key word was survival. The second era, which is now ending, was the mental era and the key word was logic. The third era, which is now beginning, is the era of the heart and the key word is love. This is the highest frequency.

Those who currently hold the reign of power on the planet are of the old order of the physical & mental. To the extent that they can make a graceful transition to a heart centered and divinely guided life, it will be an easy transition. To the extent that they are unable to do this, they will experience much turmoil.

So this is the current situation of Gaia. The reason I am here is to seek volunteers who would be willing to incarnate in humanoid form on the planet at this time to help make this an easy and smooth transition. We have sent prophets and teachers in the past. Very often they were brutally persecuted or killed. In other instances they were set up as "gods" to be worshiped and these humanoids built elaborate religions and rituals around them and used these religions to control each other. They did everything except follow the simple teachings that were offered.

So this time we are trying a different approach. No more prophets, saviors & avatars that they can use to create religions. This time we are sending in thousands--actually hundreds of thousands--of ordinary light beings with only two assignments:

- 1) Stay in your heart. Regardless of what happens, stay in your heart.
- 2) Remember who you are, why you are here and what this is all about.

Now that seems easy enough, right? Unfortunately, No! As I have said, duality has reached its peak on this planet. This species has perfected the illusion of good and evil. The greatest challenge you will experience is to remember Who You Really Are, Why You Are Here and What This Is Really All About. When you remember, you will be able to stay in your heart, regardless of external events.

So how will you know when you are forgetting? It is easy. Watch your judgments. The moment you notice that you are in a place of judgment you will know that you have forgotten Who You Really Are, Why You Are Here and What This Is Really All About. That will be your signal.

Now here is the challenge. Life on this planet will require a great deal of discernment --wise evaluation of what is true, what is appropriate and what is for the highest good, both for yourself and for the planet. In many ways discernment is similar to judgment. However, you will know when you are in judgment and when you have moved out of your heart when you are in a place of blame.

We know how challenging that this planet can be. We know how very real the illusions on this planet appear to be. We understand the incredible density of this dimension and the pressure you will face. But if you survive this mission--and it is a voluntary one--you will evolve at hyperspeed.

We also should say that we know that some of you who will go to this planet as starseeds, will never germinate - never awakened to the remembrance of who you really are. Some of you will awaken and begin to shine, only to be choked down by the opinions and prevailing thoughtforms around you. Others will awaken and remain awake and your light will become a source of inspiration and remembrance for many.

You will incarnate all over the planet; in every culture, every race, every country, every religion. But you will be different. You will never quite fit in. As you awaken you will realize that your true family isn't those of your own race, culture, religion, county or even your biological family. It is your cosmic family - those who have come as you have come - on assignment to assist in ways large and small in the current transition.

True brotherhood and globalization in its highest form will come only in remembering Who You Really Are, Why You Are Here and What This Is Really All About. It will come as you return to the true temple of Divine Presence, your heart, where this remembrance takes place and from which you are called to serve the world.

So, are you ready? Good! Oh, and by the way, there are a couple of other minor things I should mention.....

Because of the density, you can't operate in that dimension without a space suit. This is a biological suit that actually changes over time. There are many things we could tell you about this but our orientation time is short so I think you can just jump in and experience it. You should be forewarned, however. There will be a danger that if you forget who you really are, you may think you ARE your space suit instead of the fact that it is simply your vehicle in that dimension. Once there, you will notice that there is an infinite variety of space suits and a great deal of attention given to these. However, in spite of the infinite variety, because this a planet of duality, they all fall into two basic categories called 'genders.' Again, we really don't have time to go into this now. But you will find your relationship with your own space suit to be most instructive and interesting.

The other little thing is this. In order to operate in that dimension, you will also receive a microchip called a 'personality.' This is like an identity imprint that, along with your space suit, will essentially make you different from everyone else. This will allow you to participate in the hologram there - something they call 'consensus reality.' Once again, there will be a real danger that you will become so engrossed in the holographic personality dramas that you will forget who you really are and actually think that you ARE your personality. I know it sounds rather unbelievable right now, but once you get there.....

Again, there is so much more we could tell you by way of orientation, but we think you can learn the rest experientially 'on site.' The only thing that is important is to remember Who You Really Are, Why You Are Here and What This Is Really All About. If you can do that, everything

else will work out fine. But take note: So few really DO remember this they stand out as 'different' and others called them 'Enlightened' or 'Awakened' and similar terms. Strange isn't it?

Well, Good Luck & Bon Voyage!!!

Michael Lightweaver, PO Box 18909 Asheville, NC. 28814 (USA) E-mail: lightweave@aol.com

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#### IN JOHN'S MEMORY

The Spirituality of John Denver – by The Rev. Dr. Ellen Johnson-Fay, All Souls Unitarian Church, Colorado Springs – April 28, 2002

#### Opening Words

We are gathered this morning to celebrate the inspiring life and music of John Denver. May we hold in our hearts as we do this, the recent death of KRCC radio operations manager, Jocelyn Sandberg, murdered on the street outside our doors in the dark hours of Friday morning. We light a candle for her life, and for all the lives lost to violence near and far which we have seen and are seeing, and don't know how to stop.

If John Denver were living in Colorado Springs, he might write a song in Ms. Sandberg's memory in a way that would lift up hope and remind us of the joy that continues around us, and the way our own joy works to make this a better world. The words of his song titled "Anthem – Revelation" serve this purpose for us today:

*See the sunrise, open up your eyes*

*Today is the very first day*

*Watch the morning come, now the night is gone*

*Yesterday's so far away*

*Trouble, you get out of my sight*

*You know, I can't look at you when the sun is so bright*

*You know that everything's coming together now, can't you see?*

*And I live my life in celebration that I've got a life to live*

*And I sing my song in revelation that I've got a song that I can give . . .*

#### Remarks

"Poems and Prayers and Promises" touches the sentimental place in all of us knowing how it "turned him on to think of growing old," how he'd "hate to see it end." And how he expressed the hope in "Around and Around," "that you will think of me in moments when you're happy and you're smiling. That the thought will comfort you on cold days if you're crying. And that you'll love to see the sun go down and the world go around."

This was his gift. To put into music the common yearnings of humanity. To name the dreams of love and the sorrows and disappointments of life, the ways we let ourselves and others down, the joys of nature and the ways we harm creation, our hopes for the future and for all children to grow up in a healthy world.

One of my favorites that put almost all of this in one song is "I Want To Live:" Here's what John Denver, himself, said about this song:

*"I Want to Live" resulted from my involvement with the Hunger Project and more expressly out of my interest in what's going on with hunger in the world. It also came out of my involvement with the Presidential Commission on World and Domestic Hunger, as well as from my feelings about the great whales, the dolphins, and other aspects of what I consider to be intelligent life on this planet. For all human beings, no matter who you are – the color of your skin, the philosophical, environmental, or religious heritage you evolve from – that birth cry of a newborn infant is the same. It is the absolute desire and demand to live. The chorus ("I want to live, I want to grow, I want to see, I want to know, I want to share what I can give . . .") you and I, each of us has something to give. It ought to be shared, it's what we in the world need from you. . . Having been born into this world, you have the right to live. Human rights are much more than just freedom of speech, freedom of press and religion. It is the right*

*to breathe clean air, it is the right to drink and fill yourself, to cleanse yourself with clean water. It is a right that is denied millions of people today from before their birth. To me, that is the one obscenity in the world, and this song is a positive \_expression, a humanistic \_expression, against that obscenity."*

There are those who considered John Denver a musical "lightweight" in his lifetime, and very few who saw him as a man with spiritual and philosophical depth.

Not so for Milt Okum, his discoverer and promoter who also worked with the Chad Mitchell Trio, Peter Paul and Mary, who observed, "A lot of hip critics thought John was kind of vanilla. I hope some day he will be accepted in the company of great American creators such as Stephen Foster, Charles Ives, Scott Joplin, Aaron Copeland and Leonard Bernstein."

One of the concerns that bothered him was the observation that every song John ever wrote or sung was in a major key, as if this was some terrible limitation. So Mr. Okum did some research:

*"I happen to be a very passionate fan of opera. On a hunch . . . I went through the score of one of my favorite operas, Wagner's Die Meistersinger. In this five-hour testament to the beauty of simple song, I found that every aria and chorus of Die Meistersinger was in a major key. Most were actually C major. I realized that if John is limited, he's in good company."*

One other experience he shared was of listening to a classical radio station during a trip to France. They played a lovely duet by Henry Purcell, "Oh Joy, Oh Joy," and when it was done, the host said, "Purcell makes me think of the finest quality of England and the English just as the folksinger John Denver makes me think of the warmest and most beautiful qualities of America."

For Milt Okum, John Denver represented the healthiest and most progressive side of our culture. Hal Thau, John Denver's friend and manager, responsible for the wondrous production about him, "Almost Heaven," which Janele and I both had the delight in seeing in Denver this month, not surprisingly, shared this view.

*"John wasn't a Pollyanna. He sang about his feelings and his hurt. The intelligentsia didn't like him. They would listen to him when they were in their car and no one knew."*

Though I never had any trouble appreciating John Denver for his music, I was especially impressed by the way he tried to put his values into practice. To use his wealth of talent, compassion, and money, to make the world a better place.

The first project I learned about was Windstar, a land conservancy he helped found on 957 acres in the exquisite Old Snowmass valley. I was serving as Extension Minister of a congregation in Madison, Connecticut and one of the elder couples in the church, hearing of my interest in Colorado, and the visits that Barry and I made to Snowmass, told me proudly of their son, John Katzenberger's connection to Windstar.

John Katzenberger was the architectural engineer who designed the geodesic dome used as a greenhouse and was overseeing the cultivation of a self-sustaining environment of plants and water and wildlife. Barry and I did take the time one summer to tour the place, kind of hoping we'd bump into John Denver.

The projects at Windstar were implementations of the values John Denver sang about. Crops were raised organically, meals were vegetarian, solar panels were used for energy, whatever could be recycled was, and they experimented with ways to extend the growing season in that high altitude climate.

It was more than a decade before I returned, wondering after John Denver's death what would

become of the place. I'm happy to see that it is now in the hands of the Rocky Mountain Institute whose mission is "to foster the efficient and restorative use of resources to create a more secure, prosperous and life-sustaining world." Very much in keeping with John Denver's vision.

Though I'm not aware that John Denver ever set foot in a Unitarian Universalist congregation, his life, values and spirit are a marvelous \_expression of the principles we cherish.

In the book which inspired me to do this service, *A Mountain in the Wind: An Exploration of the Spirituality of John Denver*, the author, Christine Smith, quotes a remarkable number of Unitarian Universalist sources as she tries to characterize his religious understandings. She mentions how Ralph Waldo Emerson seems to describe John in his essay "The Transcendentalist" in his perpetual openness to inspiration, and also names the Tao Te Ching, EST (Erhard Seminar Training), *A Course in Miracles*, Buddhist and American Indian wisdom as sources of inspiration to him. She included this quote from Unitarian Universalist minister, Robert Fulghum's book, *It Was On Fire When I Lay Down On It*:

*"The line between good and evil, hope and despair, does not divide the world between 'us' and 'them.' It runs down the middle of every one of us. I do not want to talk about what you understand about this world. I want to know what you will do about it. I do not want to know what you hope. I want to know what you will work for. I do not want your sympathy for the needs of humanity. I want your muscle."*

John Denver gave his muscle in ways most of us knew nothing of. He traveled the world with his music and lifted the hearts of people from China to Vietnam, Africa, the Soviet Union, and England (did you know there is a Friends of John Denver organization operating throughout the United Kingdom?).

But he did much more than lift hearts with song. In the chapter titled "Love in Action" there is page upon page of humanitarian awards he was given, and multiple organizations he either founded or supported. I didn't remember that "Rhymes and Reasons," always a favorite of mine, had been chosen as the theme song for UNICEF, and he donated all the proceeds from that song to UNICEF. But here are some of the other groups he cared about:

Aspen Camp School for the Deaf, Aspen Valley Hospital  
Challenger Center (he was almost the citizen who went up in the Challenger, but a lesser known teacher, Christa McAuliffe gave her life instead, he dedicated "Flying For Me, to her memory and the others who were killed in that disaster)  
Cousteau Society (receives proceeds from "Calypso")  
Experimental Aircraft Association |Friends of the Earth|  
Human/Dolphin Foundation  
The Hunger Project (proceeds from "I Want To Live" and "African Sunrise")|  
National Arbor Day Foundation  
National Space Institute  
Native American Assistance  
Nuclear Safeguards  
Preservation of Alaskan Wilderness  
Presidential Commission on World and Domestic Hunger  
Save the Children  
Wildlife Conservation Society  
Wilderness Society  
World Federalist Association  
World Wildlife Fund |Worldwide Nature Fund  
Wyoming Murie Center in Jackson Hole

Peace, John knew, is not only the absence of war. Peace is a world for everyone. . . No hunger. No injustice. No greed. Peace is a world without political or racial boundaries. Christine Smith suggests that there is no better way to honor John Denver than to approach every situation in life asking, "How can I help? What is the most loving action I can take?" His own words, from "Higher Ground," tell us:

*There are those who can live with the things they don't believe in  
They are giving up their lives for something that is less than it can be  
Maybe its just the dream in me, maybe it's just my style  
Maybe it's just the freedom that I've found  
Given the possibility of living up to the dream in me  
You know I'll be reaching for higher ground  
I will stand on my own, I will live up to this vision  
I will trust in what I feel and follow my heart until it brings me home  
Brings me home....*

We know that John Denver was not perfect and neither are we. May we always reach for "higher ground."

#### Closing Words

*"This is my autograph here in the songs that I sing  
Here in my cry and my laugh, here in the love that I bring."*  
May songs, tears, laughter, and love be our autograph as well as we go into the world with joy.

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IN JOHN'S WORDS

From the Summer 1987 Windstar Journal:

The following is excerpted from John Denver's opening presentation, "A Personal Perspective" at the 1987 Choices for the Future Symposium:

"There is beauty above me. There is beauty below me. There is beauty all around me. I walk in beauty."

This is an old Anasazi Indian saying, and from our spring Windstar Journal, in Dik Darnell's article, a quote from Sitting Bull:

"See brothers, spring is here. The Earth has taken the embrace of the sun and soon we shall see the children of that love. All seeds are awake and all animals. From this great power, we too have our lives. And therefore we concede to our fellow creatures even our animal fellows, even to every living thing, the same right as ourselves, to live on this Earth."

I wanted to read these poems because they demonstrate one of the things that I want to share with you. I would like to have you use this in your listening this weekend, and if it serves you in your life.

A poem is a work of art. Now, I'm sure there's probably as many definitions for art as there are people in the room. I would like to share with you my definition of art. Art is a window into yourself. In the experience of art you discover who you are. There's nothing you can do about it. It is magic in that way.

Let me explain. Perhaps you see a beautiful painting, a scene of the ocean, the sun setting, the palms waving in the breeze, and all of a sudden something might come to the surface. Something you can't restrain. What comes up may be your memory of a time when you were at peace. Your heart and your eyes were open to that beauty. It comes up in a flood. When you hear a song or see a dance and the emotion comes, that's art working. That's what art is for. It's a way for you to really begin to discover yourself, because what you're experiencing there is yourself. That's who you are. You are the truth. So the value of art is that it shows you where you come from, what you believe in and the truth about yourself.

I propose to you that this weekend will be for many and hopefully for all of you, a work of art. Perhaps out of listening to these speakers, getting to know each other and sharing your visions, something will come up for you that is like a flood. Something that is so clear that it cannot be denied. Something that is truly who you are. I ask you to listen to that when it comes up, both this weekend and in the days ahead. Be open to that happening. Don't shut it

away when you start to feel it. Whether it's an emotion, a laugh, a pain, a fear or the kind of thing that says, "You know, that makes sense to me. That's how I feel. I've never heard anybody say it like that before, but that's how it is."

That's what happens for me. Sometimes I notice people in the audience when I'm singing "My Sweet Lady" or another love song, and the guy has his arm around his lady and he turns to her and says "I was going to write that song. If he hadn't beat me to it, I would have. Because that's how I feel." That's what I get to accomplish when I'm working at my best as a songwriter and as a performer. I can put it out there so clearly that people say "Yeah, that's how I feel."

So you ask questions and you start looking for what you can do. You ask, "How can I demonstrate these things that I feel, these things that I believe? How can I do whatever is possible in me to live a sustainable life?" Part of the imbalance of everything that I see in the world is due to a lack of sustainability. I don't see how we can continue to sustain our lives and lifestyles. Fifty cents of every dollar we spend on food goes to transporting it to the consumer. It takes 80 gallons of gasoline to grow an acre of corn today. It's hard to believe they grew corn back before they discovered gasoline!

One of the things that I have endeavored to do is to expand that beyond things that I am able to write in my songs. Part of that has been my growing process, if you will, because I think I'm putting more depth, certainly a broader and more human experience in the songs that I'm writing today. I couldn't write "I Want To Live" 20 years ago. Twenty years ago I wrote "Poems, Prayers and Promises," ten years ago "I Want To Live," and a couple of years ago "It's About Time." Last year "Let Us Begin (What Are We Making Weapons For?)," which I'll tell you more about in a moment. That's a process in which you keep peeling away layers and getting deeper inside yourself and farther outside. In that process you become more and more aware of the levels and the subtleties of life around you.

The best thing that I think I've done in my career and perhaps in my life (in this instance they are totally connected), was a private initiative to go to the Soviet Union. I know that people everywhere are the same. Truly. Mothers and fathers everywhere. Lovers—everywhere. Children are like children everywhere! In the Soviet Union, I had an incredibly moving experience and out of it came a song. Quite often the completion of something moving in my life is giving it a form in words and music. But on this particular occasion that wasn't enough.

Last October I was again in the Soviet Union with Jerry Jampolsky and Diane Cirincione and their "Children as Teachers of Peace" program. I made arrangements to record with a friend of mine, Alexandre Gradsky, today's most popular male singer-songwriter in the Soviet Union. He is known as Sasha to close to a hundred million people.

With Sasha's help on the Soviet end, together with the help of other friends I made there on previous trips, I re-recorded the song "Let Us Begin (What Are We Making Weapons For?)" in a studio in Moscow. To my knowledge, it's the first time an American and a Soviet artist have recorded together. It's the first time that the same record was released simultaneously on Melodiya Records in the Soviet Union (which is the only record label they have) and on RCA Records in the United States. We made a video and again I think the combination of the video, the song itself and its being sung by people from two really different parts of the world, is the best thing that I've done in my career.

I wanted to share that as an aspect of individuals continually taking it another step further and asking, "What can I do now?" It was a very courageous thing for Sasha and the other people involved, and it was a very difficult thing for me to accomplish.

This leads me to something more in regard to my personal perspective, that is our ability to grow, our willingness to grow and our commitment to act out of that growth. You know there are things in each of our lives where we can look and say, "I know better now." I'm reminded of that old country song, "Oh, if I could just go back and know what I know now!" But that's not the way it works. Even if we do know better now. Part of what goes on in the world and

certainly in our relationship with the world is acting out of knowing better now, and it's more important now than ever before. It's one thing to see someone in the car up ahead throw litter out onto the street, and to forgive them by saying, "They don't know any better." It's quite another thing to allow neighborhood industries to continue polluting our air and water and say they don't know any better. It's not the case, nor is it the same. It's unforgivable. Nor can we forgive our country when we see it spend the majority of our resources, time and energy on weapons at the expense of our health and the education of our children and the future. The same is true when we look at the results of the Chernobyl accident last year. Irreversible damage is being done and yet we continue to act out of ignorance concerning our lives on this planet together.

People are always asking me, "What can I do?" I don't want to tell anybody what to do. I want them to do what they are inclined to do. I want you to do what comes up for you. Because what comes up for you is the truth, is real, and will be effectual. If you keep looking, if you keep asking the question, things will constantly come up. Then you need to have the courage to act on that.

Now I also don't want to tell you the "way that is." I ask you to hear what I'm about to say as *my perception* of the way that it is. I want you to listen to this openly, and see if any of it rings in your heart. That's all I want you to hear, if some little thing, a chord, like that feeling I mentioned earlier when I was talking about art, gets plucked right down here. It's not important whether one agrees or disagrees, what counts is one's ability to recognize that what you feel intuitively can be translated into words and actions.

Now what this has to do with is change. If you look at events like the accident at Chernobyl, the eruption of Mount St. Helens or AIDS, they are very real occurrences that represent incredible change that are right now effecting our entire planet. These things are happening very quickly. We are immediately confronted with these problems. That's one aspect of change and we have to deal with it according to our own ability. That's as simple as I can be about looking at change, seeing what's going on all around us.

There's a statement I wanted to quote, also from the spring *Windstar Journal*. In Payson R. Stevens article, it said, "We the people of the world face a new responsibility for our global future. Through our economic and technological activity we are now contributing to significant global changes on Earth within the span of a few human generations. We have become part of the Earth's system and one of the forces for Earth change," whether we want to or not.

Truly one of the things that Windstar emerged from was a vision that changes were going to happen to our planet. Changes that most people were not going to be able to handle. I wanted to create a facility, a place, that would be able to respond to these changes, to perhaps guide people through these changes. I look at them as planetary changes.

I have done a lot of thinking and research about changes. I found out several things in the process. I had a couple of ideas. Why is it that every aboriginal, indigenous society has legends of precivilizations? The Chinese have ten. The Hindus have four, the present one being the fifth. The Aztecs and the Mayans speak of past civilizations through their inscriptions and traditions. (I am indebted to Greta Woodrew's *On a Slide of Light*, New York, Macmillan, 1981, for this information.) Although they all have different names, every civilization has legends about times or places like Atlantis, Lemuria or Mu.

Now how could that happen? What could possibly happen that would destroy a civilization to the degree that it would start over again? I thought a lot about that. I didn't think nuclear war was possible because I've learned a little bit about plutonium and some of these things. And I don't see how the Earth, which as we understand is some 4.3 billion years old to get where we are today, could start over from that kind of a holocaust, if you will. So what is it that happens?

I asked Bucky Fuller about the possibility that the Earth is a magnet. And magnets, to my knowledge, shift poles on a given frequency and a given cycle, depending on the size, the

density, the purity of materials, that make up the magnet.

The Earth is a magnet. It has a North and South Pole. Maybe it switches poles, too. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* has information about the mid-Atlantic ridge where the Earth is actually being formed or born. As it's spreading apart and comes up from the interior of the planet, it forms layers. There are some 176 pieces of evidence in these layers that prove the shift in polarity from one age to another. It's proven that this occurs. I think that's very interesting.

If the Earth does switch poles, how long does that take? And what might human beings do to affect that change? It's a built-in cycle. So what do we do that either affects that or recognizes it? Can we live our lives accordingly to that possibility?

In my opinion, when the Earth was formed it stabilized itself. Now it's an unstable planet. We wobble in our orbit, we're not perfectly round, and our orbit around the sun is not a perfect circle. This is an unstable planet we live on. Now, it balanced itself once. And maybe more times is what I'm trying to tell you. It has to balance itself. I think it's getting ready for a rebalancing.

You know, if you look around you, you see 13 to 18 million people starving to death per year, on a planet that produces enough food to feed twice the population. That doesn't sound like balance to me. Look at over 800 million people living in abject poverty, illiteracy and without access to medicine and things we take for granted. That doesn't sound like balance. Look at nations spending 900 billion dollars a year in weaponry out of our fear and insecurity. We in the United States spend close to 300 billion dollars every year. If you don't count Saturdays and Sundays, that's a billion dollars a day. That doesn't sound like balance to me. We had 47,000 small family farms go out of business last year. Just about as many small family businesses go down the drain. It doesn't sound like balance. If you look at the weather and look at the droughts and things like that, it doesn't sound like balance. It occurs to me that what we have done affects this cycle shift. Who knows? Nobody knows.

I do believe that everything has a purpose, that everything that happens in our life is purposeful. So I look at this kind of a change and I wonder what the purpose of it is. Especially if it's something that's built in.

Then what is the purpose of this? We begin as "I am." Consciousness. That very first aspect of consciousness separates you from everybody else. I am. I am not you. I am me. I understand you're like me, but you're not me. I am. I think that we begin in separation. A part of our path is to find completion, if you will, and wholeness to learn that the "I am" includes you and every other aspect of life on this planet.

I look at this as something that is built in by the incredible intelligence that created all of this. Whether you call her God or not makes no difference to me. I think that there's something to keep us all from destroying ourselves and our potential for being here, which nuclear weapons are capable of doing.

What it's about is recognizing the change in consciousness and making the consciousness shift from "you or me" to "you and me." If we can't do that out of the fact of 13 to 18 million of our brothers and sisters starve to death every year, 35,000 people everyday, what does it take to learn? When an earthquake happens in Mexico and 10,000 people are killed, it's news all over the world. All kinds of things happen to help these people, and yet 35,000 people starve to death everyday and we do almost nothing about the ongoing persistence of hunger. We no longer see front page stories about this obscenity in our lives. Either we haven't learned or we don't know better. I don't believe either. We have learned and we do know better but we haven't committed ourselves the past two years since *We Are the World* and *Live-Aid*. Once again we have dealt with a crisis and been momentarily successful and yet the problems remain to be solved until there are no more hungry. We *can* do something about it.

There is an analogy about the nuclear arms race that is very interesting. It describes the arms

race as being like two people sitting in a puddle of gasoline, spending all of their time, energy and resources making matches. And of course we want to get rid of the matches as quickly as we can. But more importantly we want to get rid of that puddle of gasoline. For me, that puddle of gasoline represents the environment of fear, mistrust and insecurity that we live in. Yet we continue to invest heavily in weaponry, not as my friend Bucky Fuller suggested, investing in "livingry."

I look at all of this and ask "What does it take for us to learn to begin to work together?" It occurs to me that the changes that are going on now may be an effect of changes happening in the interior of the planet. Maybe it's getting ready to rebalance itself. If we could get past all the stuff that separates us from one another and begin to join truly as human beings, we can probably figure that out. We could find, not only some peace in it, but some furthering in it. Then we could recognize how, as this particular civilization on planet Earth, as human beings now, we can take the next step and not be forced back into beginning all over again, which is what I think has happened before.

I think that there are very real changes coming upon us as human beings on planet Earth. I believe that I have a role and we all have critical roles to play in affecting those changes and being responsive to those changes. Part of that is why I go around the world and sing of the environment and the state of the Earth and its people. Part of that is why I'm so committed to the end of hunger on our planet and the end of nuclear weapons, and encourage space exploration and alternative forms of "livingry." These are the opportunities for us to begin to work together and to dispel the environment of fear and mistrust in which we live.

This weekend we'll talk about these things and the choices that we can make as individuals. We have the opportunity not only to recognize the changes and respond to them but to begin, out of who and what we are and our conviction, to put ourselves on the line as an expression of our commitment. That is going to effect positive change all over the planet.

As I said last year, "We are the living place of incredible possibilities. As we discover ourselves, as we expand our knowledge, as we make conscious choices, we can create the world that we've dreamed about for ever and ever and ever." We can end hunger. We can eliminate AIDS. We can rid ourselves of nuclear weapons. We can begin to live in peace, in prosperity, in humanity, and in spirituality. It is my sincere hope that what goes on here for you this weekend will be a catalyst toward that kind of activity in your lives.

Editor's Note: I know that although John has left the planet physically he is still concerned about our plight and wishes to remain involved in the healing process. This in itself implies a continuum between this world and the next, and validates the importance, necessity, and rightness of staying connected.

Some connected links:

Emergency Preparedness (includes Greta Woodrew's books) - <http://www.baproducts.com/>
The Planetary Association for Clean Energy - <http://www.eskimo.com/~billb/freenrg/pace.html>
Transpersonal Psychology, Past Lives, etc. - <http://www.jonnioconnor.com/index.shtml>

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#### READERS' EXPERIENCES

4/12/04

I have been chosen by John to come together with his followers to carry on his work of healing--healing of both spirit and body as well as reaching out to the family of humanity to promote and teach caring for our Mother Earth. I was chosen long ago (before John's passing), but have just recently been urged to respond to his call.

Sherry Wunderlich  
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3/16/04

I have a friend, Claudette, whose father passed away seven years ago. Another mutual friend of ours, Arlene, characterized Claudette's parents as having the "perfect" marriage and how devastated Claudette's mum was when he died.

Last fall Claudette's mum met a lovely man who had lost his wife a few years ago also, and they started dating. He proposed at Christmas, they got engaged on Valentine's Day, and because both of them are in their 70's they decided to marry at the end of March--on the day of Claudette's dad's passing. The date synchronicity didn't occur to them at all until the church had been booked, and one of Claudette's sisters pointed out to her, "Ma Mere, you're marrying on the anniversary of Papa's death."

In the interim our mutual friend Arlene said to me that they needed a "first dance" song, and I replied, "Oh, I know two that would be perfect: "Love Again" or "For You." I wrote out the lyrics to "Love Again" and Arlene picked up a CD with it on it and took it over to Claudette's mum. Gordon, the gentleman who Claudette's mum is marrying, was reading the words and remarked to Arlene, "Oh, this is beautiful! This is perfect. And I'll consider it a privilege to have John sing it at our wedding, as I've met him and what a lovely man he was."

Arlene and Claudette yelled together, "YOU MET JOHN DENVER???"

He said, "Well, yeah. My first wife and I were camping in British Columbia about 20 years ago. We were all around a campfire...couples and singles...and this young guy came up and said, 'Hi, may I sit with you guys?' We all said, 'Sure!' He said his name was John and asked if we would mind if he played his guitar and we could sing with him. He played and sang for about two hours and this man beside me said, 'Geez, you sound like John Denver! You should go professional.' ...to which they heard this trademark laugh and sputtering, and John said, 'I AM John Denver.'" Gordon said he was the most incredibly nice man. He said John had been staying nearby and had seen the campfire, and that's why he had wandered out because he wanted to be with people. He said, "We got a free concert that night."

So, they are using "Love Again" for their first waltz, and I think I got a gentle nudge from John around that because it was the first thing that popped out of my mouth when Arlene told me about the engagement.

Liz Seger

*Editor's Note: Twenty years ago would've been 1983, right around the time John wrote "Love Again." Amazing!*

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"Nature is mythical and mystical always and works with the license and extravagance of genius."

Henry David Thoreau, U.S. philosopher, author, naturalist

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EARTH RHYTHMS

## THE DRUMS

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Come my brothers and sisters, come all the children of our land,  
come and sit by the village fire as the night closes around us.  
Watch the flames push the smoke upward toward Grandfather Sky.  
Our hope is deep as we send these, the most silent of prayers to ride  
the smoke to the Great Spirit.  
The drums beat softly.....

Sit quietly all my people and hear the sound, hear the crackling of the fire,  
the sound of family and friends, sharing their happiness. The warmth we  
feel comes from this sharing of love not the fire. Look closely into each  
other's eyes. What do we see? What is it, that is reflected back to us?  
We see ourselves in one another and all that which has made us who you are.  
The drums beat faster.....

Close your eyes my family, and listen to the wind as it stirs the flames higher.  
Listen to the songs of our ancestors. They offer so much, all we need do is

open your hearts to their words. Only when we listen and learn from their wisdom can we grow as a people.

The drums beat louder.....

Inhale the aromas around you, smell the sage burning, the food cooking in the pits, the deer hide that we wear the rain in the air and Mother Earth under our feet. The drums beat shakes the ground like buffalo running across the prairie.....

Taste what has come to our lips. Taste the tears of joy that come from our eyes. They are the tears of the past, present and the future. Grandfather Eagle has given us a view of the future, and it is good. Then we realize it is not the drums that beat so loudly, but our own hearts coming together as one people under the Great Spirit, in Peace, Love and Harmony.....Finally.

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HEAVENLY CONNECTIONS

THE MESSAGES FROM GOD - Through Yaël and Doug Powell (www.circleoflight.net)

Celebrating the Life of Every Being. Moving Beyond the Illusion of Death

Let Me bathe you in life. Let Me wash you in the living river, fresh and real and luminous. Let Me pour it into you until truly the light within you, the light of your life in this world, becomes equal to the light that is the Real life. Only so can you become the Christed being you are while living a life here on Earth. Only so will you be able to serve the perfect life for My children. For only then will the illusion of duality be gone. Only then can you see that the one light illuminates All, and death will fade away.

Oh, let Me hold you in this life I Am until your very atoms sing in praise. Let Me fill you with its beauty until at last you know you are with Me, ever safely held in perfect Love, no matter what miasma dances before you as this world of Love and anti-Love, life and anti-life, or death.

The only way to do this, to face death in all its grim specter and the dark weavings of its web, is to come close to Me. Close and closer, until everything you are knows the truth because you can feel the truth of life.

Take off the cloak of anti-life. Move right into death's presence and let Me sustain you in Love. Choose and choose and choose again the truth of life and of only Love. It is easy to hold the heart against the tide of reversal when it is somewhat outside of your daily experience. It has grown you well in trust and the working with your Soul Mate heart to have extended before you every day the symbols of the lie of anti-Love, such as in movies and the stories of people's lives. But the work must spiral upward as, step by step, each of you gains the confidence to stand as Jesus did before the tomb of a dear friend and deny the power of death completely.

"He is not dead, but only sleeping," Jesus said, for standing there before the tomb he saw only the truth of a child of Mine! He saw Lazarus as sparkling life, as a glorious stream of golden light, alive completely in consciousness. And he knew that the body comes forth from the consciousness. His celebration of the life of Lazarus simply brought him forth to him--and the particles of "matter" rose and gathered round--gathered round like metal filings to a magnet, beloved ones. That is the truth of the living heart. And it is the truth that life is ever present, and death is the illusion. Death is the illusion, and nothing more.

Dear ones, all of you, when the illusion of death rises up, you must rush it to your Soul Mate heart. This is exactly what you must do. But the other thing I ask is that you reach for the life

that waits for you behind the mask of illness or death. Focus on the life of your beloved one. Focus on it with everything you are. Use your Soul Mate heart to reveal to you exactly that which Jesus saw in Lazarus-- the life that cannot end. Rejoice in who the person really is and feel his stream of living light, his essence. Stand in the river of life and bring him in with you. Stake your claim. Repeat My Will-- there is only life and only Love and nothing else is in Me, and celebrate this person. The special twinkle in his eye, the truth of his sweet service. His place within your heart. Not to make his current situation bittersweet by comparing it to the perfection it could be, but rather to stake your claim on life, and to refuse the rest of the illusion.

Not only must the stories of death not fool you, beloved ones. I ask you to actively relate to life. Look for it. Feel it. Use your Soul Mate heart to see it hidden right behind the illusions of anti-life. Life is the movement of Love! It is the great gift of the moment of Creation. Life IS – from the moment, ever happening, where My Will to give created it, life exists in Me. It is the greatest gift that anyone can have. As I have said before, regardless of what anyone believes about this life on Earth, the fact that you are here means you have eternal life. You will never un-exist. Every stream that springs to life within Me is now in relationship with the other streams forever. And no matter what silly mask is held up by the creative human mind, behind it is the life I have given.

Honoring life is the most basic and fundamental experience of consciousness. Oh, dear ones, this great mind-created weaving of the many "proofs" of anti-life is the greatest dishonoring of the gift I gave. Thus will you find that it is not possible for any person to truly find their ecstasy, their joy, until they return all focus to only Love and the deep reverence for every life, no matter how it is covered by the illusion of the world.

Life is the movement of Love. Life is Love in relationship. The heart always resonates with life. even when the ego has thrown up great scenes of anti-Love. You have often wondered at all the people who seem to have a death wish, filling their lives and bodies with a magnitude of things that destroy the life they have. Dear ones, they are deeply in the grip of anti-life. If I were to show you how such choices affect their spirit, you would see a backward vortex so powerful that all life that comes near it is sucked away. Teach them about life. If they honor the life within them even a little bit, it will quickly change the timbre of their days and the expression of the symbols that are the expression of their consciousness--their bodies and their personal world and all that is in it.

I have no judgment. I only long for those who are absent to Me. Come close to Me. Come close, pulling the chains of duality, memory and experience, walking them back to Me. Be strong. Claim life. Refuse the specter of death. Don't succumb to your experience. But be gentle, as if you are leading a frightened child back home to her parents - parents who will hold her and tell her everything is ok. This is what I do for you.

A message and recommendation from the Psychic Cafe
(<http://www.namastecafe.com/psychictalk/psychic/0000006d.htm>)

Expect more visits Dawn! Visits are phenomenal experiences. They can be comforting, however, because it is communication from the other side, it can be overwhelming too. Grab yourself a copy of *The Beginner's Guide to Mediumship* by Larry Dreller. I think you can find it on Amazon.com for approximately \$8. The only thing wrong with the book...I wouldn't limit the use to only beginners. I still reflect back on the book when I need extra guidance or just a boost of energy to continue to do this work. I think because you have Mike by your side, this will make your path so much smoother.

Bunches of Love and Thanks,

Vicki

From a James Van Praagh message board:

Did you know...that Peter pan, written by J.M. Barrie was written about himself and his brother, Peter, who tragically died at the age of thirteen? While Barrie had to grow up his

brother stayed 13 forever in another world just like Peter Pan....Isn't that just so beautiful, he immortalized his brother and his life in a story....

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FROM HE WHO SEES THE EAGLE

12/10/03 - through Eileen

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You notice how there is some preaching going on out there amongst my listeners and others about "the proof being in the pudding" and "actions speaking louder than words." Well, I have something to say about this, actually.

Be careful about judging folks by *what* they do, necessarily. Many people can fit others' actions into their own agendas—make them right or wrong according to their own biases and subjections. And many people with the most decent of intentions aren't able to do all the things they would do if their circumstances were different. So yes, words *can* be cheap if they are not backed up by actions; HOWEVER—*not necessarily* those actions that are noticeable by those who may be watching in order to form judgments!

What matters isn't the grandest, most beautiful website (although I do appreciate the sincere, honest, creative efforts that go into many of these). Nor is it the number of CDs produced, nor books written, nor the lavishness of the events held in my name, either, that count. It isn't who has the best or most pictures of me, or taken with me. Believe it or not, it isn't even the most outward altruistic display of actions that allow one's soul to evolve and progress while still in the flesh. (Although please do not misinterpret that as undermining the importance of caring for others less fortunate; that's not the point I'm trying to make here. That's why I use the word "display," because it should be done as unobtrusively as possible.) So...now you are probably wondering, well...what *is* it then? What *can* I do that will make a difference to my personal spiritual growth? Is there any one thing?

Well, yes. And no. One key word is HEART. Not what is *said* by someone about how important the heart is, and compassion, and all that. But maybe it's how someone *responds* to others in a loving, non-judgmental manner...and whether or not they are grammatically correct or eloquent in their speech is not the point...but do they actually EMIT the compassion they profess to uphold? Yes, they can feel pride about being a Good Samaritan for giving somebody a ride on the way home, but if when they arrive home they yell at their wife for something they are displeased about, they have missed the point completely. Okay, so that was one of my own lessons to learn. But I observe it over and over again amongst so many people who deny they are on any ego-trips. If the truth be known, *every* human is on an ego-trip, whether they acknowledge it or not. Because that is what keeps you able to accomplish what you need to in your body. In a rare moment of possibly being released from that—as some have—there is a sense of oneness so complete that true bliss is quite known; however, it is so overcoming and overwhelming that nothing else can be as deserving of our attention during that time! So the ego must be allowed to serve its purpose, but yet not be acknowledged one bit beyond that. And that is where most people fall short—of finding and living that balance of Right Place for Ego. Because there is the other side of it, where you might feel why bother, I'm just a loser, with nothing to offer anybody...so you don't even try. And that, my friends, will set you back as well, for that is an ego trip of a different sort—one that refuses to accept any connection with others at all.

So please, be gentle with each other out there, and before you judge another I ask that you take a look inside your own heart. Have you responded in kind? Although you have fed the hungry and clothed the needy, have you honored your friend who had to leave your party early? Or did you show just a little bit of resentment there so they left with some guilt or sadness around their own heart? I would like to emphasize once more that it IS the *little* (perhaps mostly unnoticed) things that do so much to make a house a home...and the heart a palace of love.

God bless you all, today and always.  
Peace,



JOHN.

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"I am still determined to be cheerful and happy, in whatever situation I may be; for I have also learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions, and not upon our circumstances."

Martha Washington

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CHOICES IN ACTION/EVENTS/FOR SALE

"One thing that stirs me when I look back at my youthful days is the fact that so many people gave me something or were something to me without knowing it. Such people with whom I have, perhaps, never exchanged a word, yes, and others about whom I have merely heard things by report, have had a decisive influence upon me; they entered into my life and became powers within me.... Hence I always think that we all live, spiritually, by what others have given us in the significant hours of our life."

Albert Schweitzer

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It is more than appropriate that John received the Albert Schweitzer award (in 1993). To hear some wonderful testimonies of continuing John's legacy, you can access the "Colorado Matters" radio show at <http://www.cpr.org/> that features the 2003 John Denver memorial events in Aspen.

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BFC [Buffalo Field Campaign] Hosts Denver School Group ([www.wildrockies.org/buffalo](http://www.wildrockies.org/buffalo))

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The BFC recently had the privilege to introduce twelve students and five teachers from Denver's PSI school to the Yellowstone buffalo. The students, ranging in ages from eleven to eighteen, came to Montana for an educational field trip. For all of these kids, coming to the wilderness of Montana was a first that they will remember for years to come. Their teacher had heard about the buffalo issue and decided it would be a great learning experience for the kids and adults. In August, the BFC road show visited PS1 in Denver where we gave them an introduction to the buffalo issue and were their guests on a field trip through downtown Denver.

The students arrived Monday evening. They checked out the Montana stars and tried to prepare themselves for their three days at the Buffalo Field Campaign. The kids woke up early Tuesday morning and got ready for patrol. BFC volunteers accompanied PS1 on Fir Ridge patrol. We hiked along the park boundary looking for buffalo and viewed the Duck Creek capture facility. Upon returning to camp they watched some video footage of hazing operations and bison in the capture facility. The morning patrol and the video filled them all with questions and concerns.

The PS1 crew and BFC volunteers traveled to Gardiner, MT on Wednesday morning. There we met with our friends, Dave and George. On our drive into the Park, two wolves crossed the road in front of us. Bighorn sheep were rutting high up on the ridge and herds of buffalo and elk were plentiful on our drive out to the Lamar Valley. We ended our amazing day in the Park with a soak in the Boiling River.

Thursday was the students' last day in Montana. They had prepared questions for Park and Forest Service officials after going on patrol and viewing the video footage. They met with officials from both agencies and experienced some of the frustration that we all feel when asking, "Why is this happening?" The kids had some great questions and more than once the left the rangers speechless. That evening we all gathered around a campfire to share stories and eat s'mores.

PS1's visit was a positive experience for everyone involved. It was wonderful to empower these kids to do something about the things they feel are unjust. They left with a new understanding of how their actions, even in far away Denver, can have a positive impact. PS1's visit marks the second year in a row that BFC has hosted public school kids at camp. Last February, the Sojourner school from Boulder, Colorado, arrived just in time to witness the

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Volumes w

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Quote from Marianne Williamson, used by Nelson Mandela in his Inaugural Speech, South Africa, 1994

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***Laughing children, growing old  
And in the heart and in the spirit  
And in the truth when it is told."***  
*John Denver*