

ISSUE 4 | WINTER 2021

# THE CHANGING TIMES

NATURE CONNECTION -- CLIMATE ACTIVISM  
CREATIVITY -- EDUCATION -- CULTURAL CHANGE  
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE -- LOCAL FOOD



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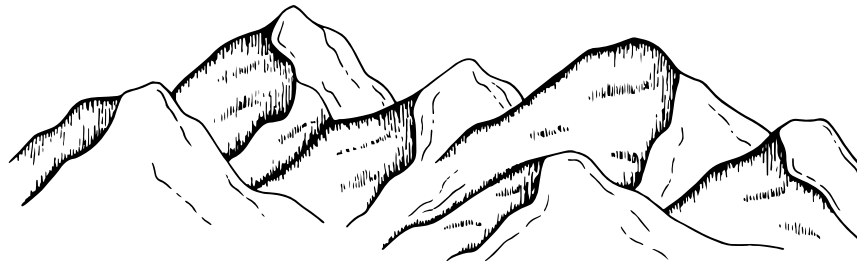
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# WHO WE ARE

**Meg Smith**      *Editor*  
**Megan Thornton**      *Editor*  
**Sydney Bollinger**      *Editor*

"The Changing Times" is a seasonal (quarterly) publication of "Families For A Livable Climate" that invites community-wide response to these turbulent and revolutionary times, seeking submissions from people of all ages and backgrounds. In this space, we share stories, express love for the world around us, and offer ways for everyone to get involved in answering the call to change - in ourselves, our families, our communities, and our country. We know this work happens by challenging our systems and leaders; conversing on resiliency, grief work, activism, youth empowerment, education, intergenerational support, local living, and traditional knowledge; and connecting with one another through our relationship with nature and the creative arts. While the magazine is based in Missoula, MT we consider "conversations with the peripheries," throughout Montana, and beyond to be vital, so anyone is welcome to subscribe and/ or submit.

# FROM THE EDITORS



In climate studies there is often talk of tipping points - mathematical, geological, biological, or planetary precipices - after which consequences could fissure out, unpredictably, in every direction. These are brought into conversation to highlight the necessity of action now, seen sharply against the radically incalculable futures of an earth with feedback loops knocked off course.

2020, as such, has begun to feel like a societal tipping point. Already on the metaphorical edge, the world was thrown into sharp relief, all its flaws and strengths, as a pandemic pushed systems past their thresholds.

We've seen the deadly eruption of disinformation; watched as public health measures became political talking points and populist leaders around the world disregarded the enormous toll of COVID-19, especially as it affects low-income and BIPOC bodies at disproportionate rates; and been present in body and mind for social justice protests around the world.

When a system isn't sustainable, it can't survive the upheaval of great change. And our social systems - those oppressing women, BIPOC voices, low-income individuals, and natural/geological/biological/more-than-human presences - weren't sustainable.

If 2020 was our tipping point, let 2021 be our fissures.

More than ever, the deeply unsustainable nature of social structures based upon capitalist ideas of production, consumption, and extraction is on a global stage - oppressed voices and bodies are refusing to be dictated, and dictated to. Let us find the stories and the voices and the power of the movements and marches that brought international attention to human-wide issues and bloom from this moment with change in every direction.

Because, at its core, a tipping point really just marks the moment at which nothing will ever be the same again.

And, don't we hope for that every New Year? That we'll find romance, find a new job, finally be who we wish we were?

Let's find the power of the New Year.

Let's find the opening in this social tipping point.

Let's hold the stories of change.

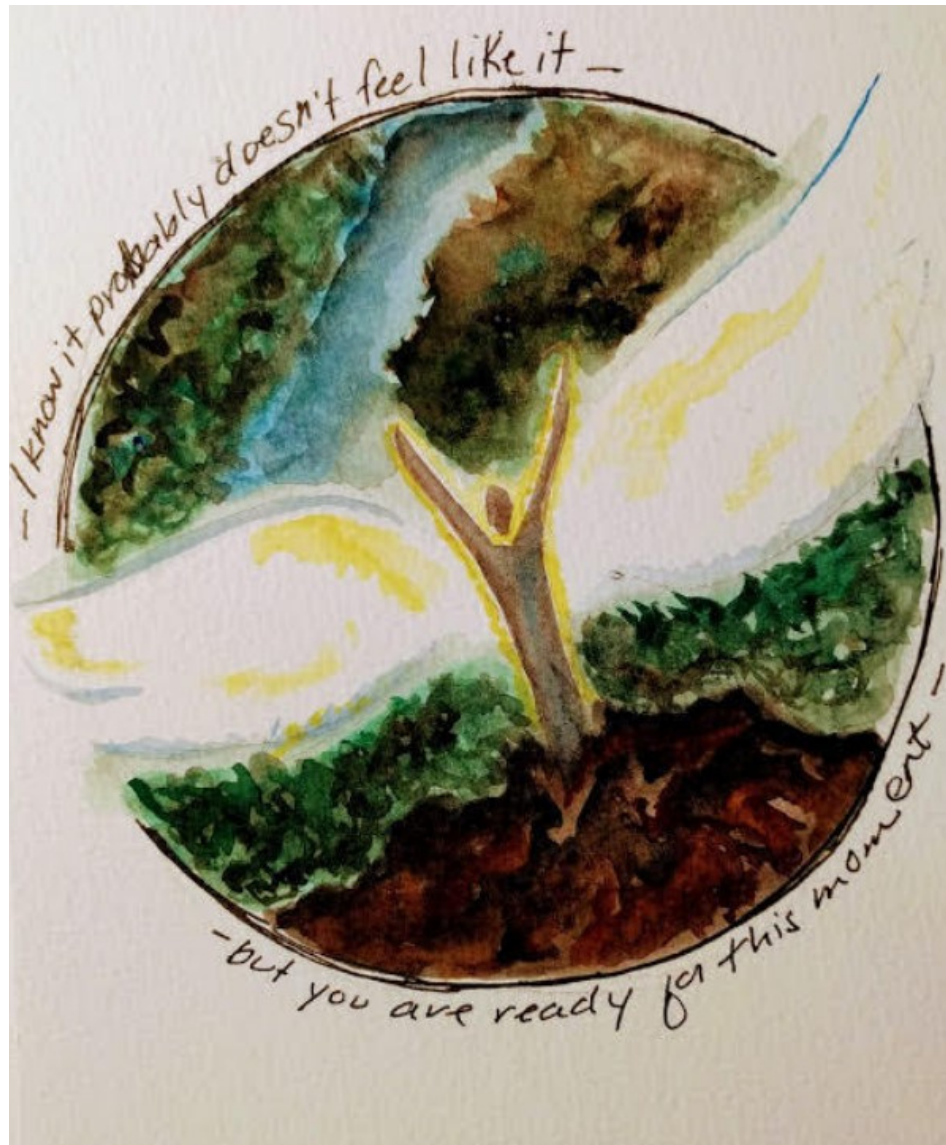
**Meg Smith, 26**

*Editor*

*Meg Smith is local Montanan with a deep wonder for the more-than-human world. She has a BA in English Literature and Teaching from the University of Montana and an MA in Environmental Humanities from Bath Spa University, Bath, England. When she isn't out finding new trails, she loves to write poetry, cook without recipes, and find new ways to use less*

# Oracle

Kate Fontana, 34



From your eyes, the earth crumbles away at your feet, cliff face pierces open sky, the valley swirls below. The quakes had shaken you from your quiet den and you ran. You love this body, this earth. And yet now your footing falters and you fall into the wind.

From god's eyes you are glowing ember, vast and tiny oh my sweet. She sees your wet wing buds widen, incandescent and not a moment too soon. Who can say if she's amused and drinking a coke or jaw-tight and wide-eyed...

In the end, the choice is still yours, while the earth shakes and breaks around you. Who will you be now? From your eyes: desperation, abandonment. From god's eyes: sublimation.

Do not be afraid to fall. Do not be afraid to fly.



# The Changing Kitchen

## Megan Thornton, 36

When I was wee-picky eater-of a lass, “sauerkraut” was lumped in there with icky foods to be avoided at all costs. Alongside squash, lima beans, canned beets, and vegetables in general. And so - while I went to great lengths to avoid eating cooked spinach (if the dog didn’t go for it, there was always the “flush it down the toilet” trick), I don’t recall ever eating the stuff until trying a Reuban sandwich in my 20s. The dressing and pastrami likely masked the actual taste of pure fermented salty cabbage...

And so, how delighted I was to discover not just a liking but a LOVE for kraut (alongside kimchi and other fermented delights) in my mid-30s. Joining the parade of “gut-health” enthusiasts, I assumed at first it would be a necessary if unpleasant culinary experience. How wrong I was. Its addicting, in a good way. But it didn’t happen overnight. Weird pregnancy cravings played a role. As did trying alternatives to a caffeine “pick me-up” (sips of brine).

I eat sauerkraut and/or kimchi every day. Ben loves it, even the homemade version (start em young! feed it to the babes!). Willa and Samuel do not. Considering how long it took me to appreciate vegetables, I have not despaired over this just yet. And they do like pickles.

While I have dabbled in making kraut, and plan to return to the effort, the reality is, I struggle to find time, and my “village” is not hosting seasonal kraut making parties just yet (but stay tuned). Pre-children I harbored

grand delusions of not only making my own sauerkraut, but kombuchas, yogurt, bone broth, sourdough bread, salsa, pickles, pureed beet from scratch...veggies all grown in my garden of course.

Currently, I can really only manage ONE of these...in a good month. I won’t care to admit how many “babies” or “pets” I have left abandoned in the fridge, feeling pings of guilt every time I glance their way: “Sorry little buddy. Not your time to shine.” Situations with an actively terrible stench get first priority in our household...This said, I DO plan to keep developing my sauerkraut expertise in the future, and trade with my sister, who is better at baking and yogurt making, and anyone else who likes to barter in good food...?

And so, here is my advice, from a, clearly, non-expert.

Before making your own - eat some delicious sauerkraut. This is what it is supposed to taste like. For Missoulians, **House of Ferments** is amazing, and my go to choice. Local canning, fermenting, and pickling operations are popping up all over the country, so do a bit of research. What a wonderful thing to support with our dollars and gratitude! **Wildkraut** is very good as well, and is available at Costco. **Bubbies** is pretty straightforward, but tasty enough.

Eat a little here and there. Try some brine. I enjoy brine so much I add water and salt to my jar if it gets low, then shake it up, and drink it. Ahhhh. If you are not loving it,

don't fret. You may enjoy mixing kimchi into a stir-fry, or add kraut to a sandwich or tacos or even pizza!

Second, make your own, even just once. It is so simple, and so easy, and I find it very rich to imagine how many, many kraut batches my ancestors likely made as newbies to this country, or in the old country, especially Eastern Europe. These were the veggies that sustained them through the winters.



#### WHAT IS SAUERKRAUT?

*Sauerkraut is a lacto-fermented vegetable, meaning lactic acid bacteria already present on the cabbage leaves ferments sugars in the cabbage when submerged in a brine (anaerobic environment). I think of it as a "living" food and super beneficial to my health. Basic sauerkraut is made with thinly sliced cabbage and salt. Kraut, and kimchi, can be made in a number of ways with a number of ingredients (chocolate kraut anyone?). It is worth experimenting to find what you like!*

**DIY Sauerkraut, The Bare Bones** easiest kind with nothing but a cabbage, salt, a jar and some rocks.



**CHOP** a cabbage, like as for a stir-fry. Put the cabbage in a bowl and add 1 TBL salt to start. Stir things up and taste .... Should taste like a salty potato chip. Now some magic. Squeeze, massage, "wring" that cabbage. After 5 minutes you will have a fair amount of water. Why is it wet if you didn't add water?... that salt is pulling out all the moisture from the veggies and that is the "brine.."



**PUSH** it down into a large mason jar, or 2 smaller jars, and get all the air bubbles down. Let it be fully submerged in its own juices..this is key with "lacto-fermentation." No air or air bubbles at all....and water at the top.

**WEIGH** down with stones OR a cup with stones that fits right into the jar mouth. Check on your set-up from time to time. There well may be "floaties" that can be skimmed off or pushed back down. They didn't seem to affect my kraut too much.



**WAIT 3 days:** Be brave. Possibly foolish. Try it. Keep trying every few days until it tastes interesting, or even good. Crunchy. Then put it in the fridge. I put a cloth napkin on top of mine (note, my last batch was grated very fine and did not ever get very crunchy....but happened to be Ben's favorite).

**DAY 60, or 560:** Your kraut should still be good. Wow! This stuff is amazing. Though I suspect you are not too enthused, if it is still hiding in the back corner of your fridge, with nary a nibble to speak of. Or maybe you harbor suspicions of mold. I get it. Go buy a jar at the store my friend.

## POWER BOWL, COURTESY OF “HOUSE OF FERMENTS”

Find Out More at: <https://houseofferments.com/>

Leftover rice (sushi works well)  
Farm fresh egg\*  
House of Ferments Kimchi  
Rice Vinegar  
Fresh spinach or other greens (mustard, arugula, spicy salad mix)\*  
Pea shoots\*



Heat skillet over medium-high heat. Add butter to coat the pan. Place rice in skillet and smash down with a spatula so that a medium thin rice patty forms in half the pan. Drizzle kimchi brine on top of rice and let set till underside begins to brown and crisp up. Flip rice patty and repeat. Meanwhile, fry egg in same pan until desired doneness (alternatively you could poach or soft boil the egg). When rice patty is crispy, place in bowl and sprinkle with rice vinegar, add egg, kimchi, spinach, and peashoots (spinach can be sautéed or enjoyed raw).

\*These foods can all be found at the Missoula Farmer’s Markets, grocery store, Winter Market’s throughout MT, and grocery stores that stock local products

House of Ferments Kimchi includes Napa cabbage (of course!) as well as Pak Choi, Radish, Ginger, Garlic, Chili Pepper, Rice Flour, and Sea Salt

House of Ferments is committed to sourcing local and organic ingredients as much as possible.

*Megan Thornton, 36, is mother to 3 little humans (Samuel, Willa, Ben). Megan grew up in Butte, lived in Bozeman for a spell, and is now settled for the long haul in the Russell district of Missoula, where she and her husband Orion navigate the bumpy terrain of parenting alongside beloved family, friends, and neighbors (including the deer, squirrels, trees and birds of the block!).*



### **Check it out! Fall 2021: Bacteria Bazaar**

Angi & Erin’s Bacteria Bazaar is planned for November 2021.

COVID depending, the keynote speaker will be the highly regarded fermentation expert, author and speaker, Sandor Katz. The Bazaar will include hands-on workshops on a variety of fermentation topics. There will be a fermentation party and showcase as well. An exact date is yet to be decided. Follow Angi & Erin’s Bacteria Bazaar on Instagram: @bacteriabazaar and on Facebook: Angi & Erin’s Bacteria Bazaar.

# Children Collages

Naomi Thornton, 71

I am interested in the relationship of children to the natural world. I started this focus in my work with the onset on the Pandemic. I am a grandparent and not knowing what my grandchildren will face, it may be my way of dealing with anxieties not only about the virus but also about climate change and the future of the planet. In my works, I envision children comfortable, safe and immersed in their environments. They are connected physically and spiritually to the animals, plants, and landscapes. These are truly the hopes that I hold on to for all children around the world.

medium: mixed media, collage and acrylic



Show Your Appreciation



Shouldn't You Be Outside Playing??

Naomi Thornton is a local Missoula psychotherapist, grandmother, and mixed media artist. In her art and her life, she explores the juxtaposition of these roles. Naomi finds her passion close to the earth having lived off the grid and in community while raising her three children. She was a longtime director at Women's Opportunity and Resource Development, a feminist organization, working to address issues of poverty, discrimination, and injustice. As a therapist, she is interested in joining with others to recognize the issue of "eco-anxiety" and other stressors as we collectively face a changing environment.



# Anne Wager



When viewing this piece, I would like people to contemplate the triple bottom line—People Planet and Profit, a framework which aims to equally prioritize the environmental stewardship, social justice and financial success of a company.

Anne Wager is a 22 year-old creator, activist, and aspiring naturalist. Currently, she works in the ICU at a no-kill cat shelter in Missoula. Anne soon hopes to obtain a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology. She finds herself continually inspired by the wisdom and mystery within the forest, the feline, and the feminist.



Linoleum block print on cardstock.

Talk to the Trees

# Adventures in Foraging

## Therese "Trez" Robbins, 30

*Therese "Trez" Robbins is a certified herbalist and permaculture designer in Missoula, MT. She is passionate about growing her own food, making plant medicine under the name Heart Beet Herbal Remedies, and spending time outside. You can follow her on Instagram @heartbeetherbal or contact her via Heartbeetherbalremedies@gmail.com*

As the traumatic events of 2020 and early 2021 continue to reverberate through our lives, a lot of us are still feeling the effects of constant stress, anger, panic, and depression. These feelings are exacerbated by the cold, grey days of winter in Montana, making it a great season to focus on nourishing our bodies and building resilience within. Thankfully there are plant allies to help us in this endeavor of nourishment and resilience: namely, bitter foods. Remember that, as of now, humans know of six different types of taste receptors: sweet, sour, salty, fatty, umami, and bitter. It might seem contradictory to think that the taste of 'bitter' will build resilience in a change-filled time, but it is an important and powerful taste.

Looking back at our ancestry, humans needed these bitter taste receptors to protect themselves from plant defense mechanisms that were potentially toxic. Over time, the substances that were once toxic to us became less and less so, as our digestive systems evolved to process them more quickly, effectively becoming more resilient in response to the bitter taste.

Now, in a society inundated with sweet and fatty nutrient-poor foods (and many preventable diseases linked to them), reintroducing the taste of bitter into our diets can have numerous health benefits. Bitters provide a healthy challenge to our

body, which keeps our metabolism in shape, our digestion working smoothly, and our liver filtering out the bad stuff.



Starting with our tongues, the bitter taste receptors there send signals through hormones and nerves to the rest of our body to stimulate the release of digestive

juices, aid in liver detoxification, and help regulate blood sugar. Improving digestive processes with bitters can make you feel full quicker, reduce inflammation, and help your body absorb nutrients better. Instead of searching for the next best diet or supplement product, we could just add bitters back into our diets and eat closer to our ancestors.



Bringing wild foods back into our diet can have the effects enumerated above, and can also be fun, creative, and nutritive. Think of the dandelion, a classic example of a bitter food rich in nutrients and available for much of the year. Burdock root (or "gobo"), is another "weed" that has anti-inflammatory properties and feeds the good bacteria in your colon. It can be found in the veggie section of the Good Food Store in Missoula, MT, or wild around town. In the winter, when we might not be able to harvest wild foods, we can turn to locally grown mildly bitter greens, such as arugula, spicy mustards, kale, or radish greens. If you want to try slightly more bitter greens, Belgian endive or radicchio are good choices.

Another bitter source is citrus fruit, a common purchase in the winter as it adds a burst of sweet, sour, and bitter to a starchy diet. The bitterness is in the peel, and some citrus, such as grapefruit, has more of it. The sour taste in citrus and apple cider vinegar can often act like bitters for your digestive system, making blends like Fire Cider (a traditional blend of immune-



boosting herbs in apple cider vinegar and honey) a good addition as a sauce or dressing in a meal. If you would rather have local herbalists provide a readily accessible option, "digestive bitters" are unique formulations that combine bitter and aromatic herbs with a touch of sweetness. These can be used by the dropper before a meal to wake up the digestive system, or added to sparkly drinks for a refreshing beverage. Both fire cider and digestive bitters can be found at places like local herb shop Meadowsweet, the Missoula Valley Winter Farmer's Market, or through the Heart Beet Herbal Remedies mailing list. There are many ways to incorporate bitters into your diet, and they just might be the boost your body has been looking for.

**Sources:**

"The Wild Medicine Solution" Masé, Guido. 2013. Rochester, Va: Healing Arts Press

# Book Review

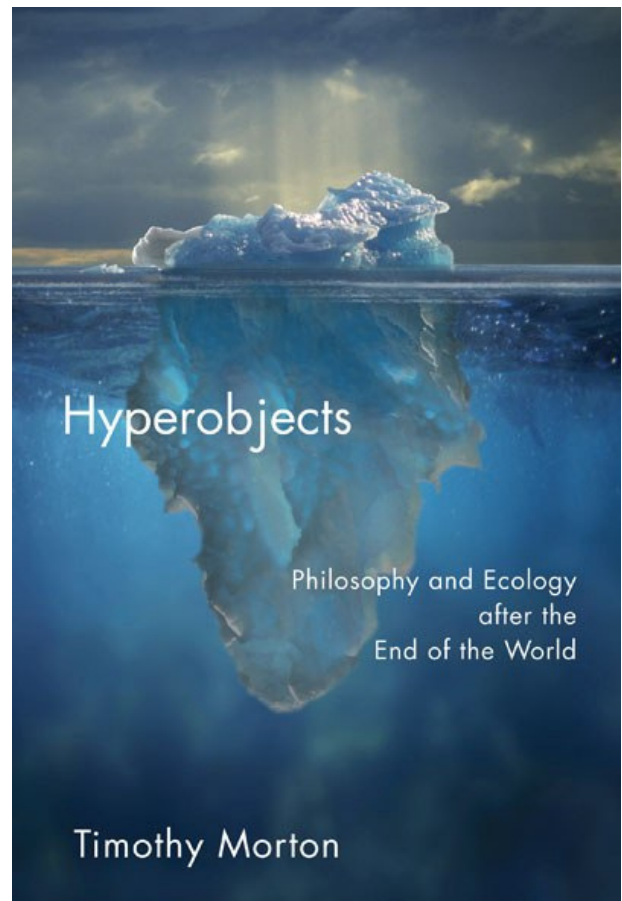
## *Hyperobjects: Philosophy after the End of the World* by Timothy Morton

University of Minnesota Press, 2013

Reviewed by Sydney Bollinger, 25

There are few books I have read that have impacted my philosophy and thought around climate change as much as Timothy Morton's *Hyperobjects*. Like many people, I've always found it hard to conceptualize climate change—it's so large, so all-encompassing, that at times it remains a mystery. In *Hyperobjects*, Morton explains the concept of the hyperobject, defined as an object occupying "a high-dimensional phase space that results in their being invisible to humans for stretches of time" (1). These objects escape our human-sized frame of reference, existing outside what we know. His approach to climate change (he uses the phrase "global warming" throughout the book) gives us a better frame of reference for talking about and understanding the current crisis. When we understand the "hyperobjectivity" of the climate crisis, we're better equipped to see how the pieces — local sustainable agriculture projects and water quality issues — relate to the global "whole" of climate change — high emissions from widespread factory farming and racism inherent in water and food access for many. Connecting the hyperlocal to the global remains one of the biggest challenges in communicating the climate crisis, especially to those who have trouble seeing the forest from the trees, so to speak.

Though not an easy read by any means, Morton makes this theory incredibly palatable to anyone willing to take the leap and dive in. Over the course of 202 pages,



he explains to the reader the properties of the hyperobject — viscosity, nonlocality, phasing, and interobjectivity — as well as what it means to live in the time of the hyperobject.

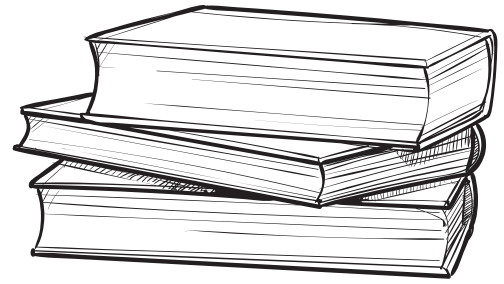
This is a book that I come back to, over and over. My copy is filled with annotations and sticky notes, markings of places where I needed to understand something a little better, where I was trying to find the best way to talk about a climate crisis-related problem. We live in an age where we need to be talking about the crisis, no matter how difficult it is and Morton's work is a great place to start.

[Read a condensed version of Morton's theory on High Country News.](#)

# Book Review

*Life List:*

*Poems by Marc Beaudin*



Riverfeet Press, 2020

The short blurb I wrote for this book says, “It has always been the poet’s job to name what’s at stake in this moment, but now, it is their sacred calling. Beaudin delivers beautifully.”

Since then, what it means to meet this moment has transfigured – and what’s at stake has been cast sharply into relief as political violence emerges once again in the U.S. Our moment, our world, has been left reeling after an attempt to subvert democracy and, effectively, the people’s vote for a future on a livable planet. The poet’s job has amplified, as we saw on Jan. 20 with the words of Amanda Gorman – now, more than ever, words will calm us, will invigorate us, and will strengthen us.

Beaudin’s poems in particular are a soothing tonic for this moment, an opportunity to inhabit our beautifully complex affinity for birds, reflected in our human expressions of flight, nesting, or ritual migration. In “Mythology Timeline (Cygnus buccinator)” Beaudin writes:

Cygnus doesn’t fly here across a dark sky rather he swims through the luminous river of the Milky Way & I drink in the night like a merlot forgetting

the cheap can of beer in my moon-painted hand  
I listen to the longing conversations of  
Crickets & coyotes  
Trying to make out the sound of someone’s name

*Winona Bateman is a climate organizer, and director of Families for a Livable Climate. She loves spending time with her family, growing food, writing poetry, and playing outside with friends.*

Reviewed by Winona Bateman, 50

Beaudin’s poems, too, capture this moment’s agonizing truth: life on Earth teeters on a precipice of immense social and environmental change; how we will come through it is unknown.

In his poem, “25 Bears (Empidonax occidentalis)” he sets the stage with the poem’s beginning: “The promise of flycatchers/hidden in the deep wood/tease a song from the shadows,” and then whirls us skillfully into that song, this time mostly about bears, and what its loss would mean:

The taste of this coffee  
on the cabin’s deck high above  
the voicings of the Yaak River

& all the rest of it  
made richer by the fact of those  
remaining 25 grizzlies

Somewhere  
out there living  
their perfect ursine lives

Without them, colors fade to sepia  
sounds to a distant tin & we lose  
some of ourselves impossible

to describe to future generations  
who will grow old believing  
that the natural shape of their soul

is to have a cold dark nothing  
lodged at its center – a hole the size  
of a bear track in the spring mud.

This last image haunts me, and does the other critical work of a poet: calling us to action by igniting our souls.



# Kids Connection

## Winter Scavenger Hunt

Sydney Bollinger, 25

Often in the winter, I find myself cooped up indoors longing for summer's days of sunshine. Sometimes it's hard to remember — especially when the days are short — that the outdoors still offer the same wonder and excitement. Though it may be quieter, save for the sound of snow crunching underfoot, these winter months heading into spring are the perfect time to bundle up and find a local trail or even walk around the neighborhood, paying attention to the small things.

Over the summer I taught at the Montana Natural History Center; I loved taking intentional walks with my campers — our pace slow and purposeful, our eyes taking in each sight. Together, we'd come up with a list of things we wanted to see. With a group of kiddos, I find it best to give each child something special they are looking for. Only one or two kids? Brainstorm your list on a sheet of paper before heading out the door.

When making your scavenger hunt list, be creative! I always first model some things to add to the list to give kids a better idea. Since my favorite color is purple, I'll often just add "something purple" to the list. Though purple may not be a color that we often see in our snow-laden landscape, it invites kids to look critically at their environment. Everyone likes a challenge!

The scavenger hunts I make with kids often have a hodgepodge of things — colors, shapes, animals, specific plants, and outdoor curios. This gives every kid a chance to add something they want to find and builds community around the list. While on the hike, I'll often refer back to our list, sometimes stopping for a moment when I see something the children have yet to notice. It's fun for me and them when they finally see the bird hidden amongst the branches or the rock sparkling with mica. Cheers of joy erupt and our laughter fills the woods.

If you are stuck indoors for any reason, you don't have to forgo the scavenger hunt. Build a lookout point in your house, where kids can practice their observation in their neighborhood or backyard. With my middle school Environmental Club, we've done this same activity with great success using virtual "hikes" on YouTube. These virtual hikes are great springboards into talking about different ecosystems and locales.

Once the weather warms up, this is just as fun. So, make sure those hats are on and coats are zipped up, then enjoy some time breathing in the fresh air!

*Sydney Bollinger is an Atlanta-based writer and middle school reading teacher. She has a BA in English Literature from the University of West Georgia and a MS in Environmental Studies (Environmental Writing) from the University of Montana. While studying for her MS, she served as Editor for Camas Magazine. Sydney is interested in the connection between spirituality and environmentalism. Read her work in This Present Former Glory, Dunes Review, and other places. Find her online @sydboll.*



# Second Chance New Years: Imbolc Tidings And Tidy-Ings

Kate Fontana, 34

There's this thing my friend and business coach Emily Ann Peterson would say: "If it takes two minutes, let's just do it now."

That was a startling idea for me at the time, and for the kind of brain that I have, which always needs one of those minutes just to transition to the new task at hand. I am a chronic "piler" (a family trait) and am the classic kapha-dominant person (that's high earth element) who needs my room in order before I can start on anything else (which means a lot just doesn't ever get started...) But I began applying it, not always, not perfectly, but periodically, and it brought my attention to how much more thought energy goes into a thing when I put it off. I think about it — I write it down, even — I think about the most optimal time to do it — how it's going to feel once I'm done — and then think about it every time I remember that it isn't done until it is (or until it's no longer relevant).

Overall, I am aware that way more energy goes into that procrastination sink-hole than I'd expend if I just took the two or ten or whatever minutes to "Let's just do it now" in the first place! (True enough for writing this essay, anyway!)

Don't misread this as a push for over-work or perfectionism — there are many times when "Let's just let it go" is the healthier path, and one I've also needed to practice (probably a fitting theme for autumnal times of life). Also, I had to learn that 2-

minute things can quickly add up and may never end...so be discerning (Marie Kondo-noviciates, of which I am one, this means you).

Still, there is something that stirs at this time of year for me — what my ancient Celtic ancestors called Imbolc, or St/Goddess Brigid's Day, February 1st—that I think this simple adage helps me attune to: there is a quickening, a lightness, a restlessness from earth-bound hibernation, the darkness and cold of winter just starting to hint of lifting. I have needed the rest, the hibernation, very, very much. And now, just yesterday I saw my first crocuses and today my first snowdrops, peering up from the damp earth as if to say in high-pitched sing-song, "Let's just do it now!" Rather than the culturally-charged (but meaningless to the Earth) New Year, this is the time of year I like to start things. That's why I go on personal retreat for Imbolc (I try to spend at least half a day in the woods somewhere) and why I choose this time of year to clarify and hone my dreams and intentions that have been brewing since Solstice.

Aiming to live in greater alignment with the seasons of the earthen calendar has been one way of working to heal my relationship with the earth. It has been one of the most anchoring touchstones of ritual, rest and creativity, intuitive listening, access to ancestral and feminine divine wisdom, and just good ol' nervous system settling — not to mention a kind of decolonization of the

white industrial world's idolatry of productivity and linear, progressive time.

Healing our connection to the body of the Earth re-sensitizes our bodies as organisms within a larger ecosystem. It might be correlated to the kind of parental — perhaps, specifically, maternal — bodily attunement any child needs to be well and thrive. Particularly as a white person, inculcated in the neurological and cultural patterns of whiteness, this re-orienting to the sensations of Earth's shifting seasons feels particularly important. I have found the better I am equipped to access the Earth as a source of nourishment and grounding, to flow with the Earth's longer, stretchier, cyclical time-scape, to feel and know this connection and nourishment in my body, the less fragile I am in my whiteness, making me less defensive, co-dependent and (I hope) a better ally. I bow to my many teachers in this subject area, specifically Dare Sohei, Tada Hozumi, Najeea Leslie, Sharon Blackie, and Brenda Salgado; as well as the many known and unknown indigenous leaders and communities who have preserved their own versions of this wisdom, even against the annihilating colonial forces of many of my own ancestors.

This might feel like a complex or heavy reality to sit with, but I invite you to just breath into your belly and notice where you feel the firmness of the earth beneath you, and read that last paragraph again, observing how it lands in your body. Then, perhaps, go outside over these several weeks and observe the sights, smells, sounds, tastes and sensation through your skin. Observe, if you can, any subtleties in your inner sensing.

What is this season speaking or sparking in you? What does the earth say? What might your ancestors have been doing at this time? It might just be the perfect time for you to say to yourself: that thing we've been putting off — let's just do it now. Let's get the support we need. Let's explore the questions worth asking. Let's risk new friendships, or risk losing ones that have completed their journey. Let's do something that's a little bit of a stretch (or a lot!) Let's be willing to hear what Spirit has to say. Let's try out our voice. What do I save in putting this off? Let's just do it now.



*Kate Fontana is Co-Founder and Steward of the Sanctuary Northwest, a center for trauma resilience, spiritual wellness, and cultural restoration. Our mission is to transform the lives of trauma survivors for the better, and nurture strong resilient families, communities and ecosystems where all life thrives. Visit us at [www.thesanctuarynorthwest.com](http://www.thesanctuarynorthwest.com).*



# Zero Waste

## Working Toward a Zero Waste New Year

Sarah Lundquist, 26

I am an optimist. Despite my field of study being filled with deeply somber stories and reports of environmental degradation, injustice, dismal projections of the future, and overall bad news, I have managed to hold on to a spirit of hopefulness through my life and career. I don't know if there's some "secret sauce" to remaining optimistic in such tumultuous times; in fact, for me, the positivity ebbs and flows. Some days I grieve, some I'm lethargic, and some I rejoice. But there are undertones of hope through it all.

Because of my tendency toward optimism, the New Year is an energizing time for me. During this time of year, feelings of enthusiasm, hope, and motivation abound. These themes appear particularly abundant this year — people seem ready and eager for change, and to embrace the possibilities and opportunities of 2021 and beyond. I'm sensing a revitalized energy amongst everyday people to come together and build the kind of world in which we want to live. What an exciting time to be alive!

The kind of world I, along with my colleagues at Home ReSource, envision and work toward is one that recognizes the value and potential of people, community, and materials. To me, this is what a Zero Waste World is all about — protecting the health and wellbeing of individuals, building cohesive and thriving communities, and enriching rather than polluting.

Zero Waste is a BIG concept and vision. It is not going to happen overnight, and there will be many roadblocks and pitfalls along the way. A particularly challenging barrier is the thought that this is impossible, that we can't have a world that produces zero waste, where everything and everyone has value. Even among the most optimistic of us, this feeling of defeat is familiar and can be debilitating.

During those times when I don't jive with such a huge goal and a Zero Waste World seems impossible, I remind myself: a healthier, more just, less wasteful world IS always possible. Victory doesn't always have to mean crossing the finish line and be all-or-nothing — it can mean incremental action and change. While it is important not to lose sight of the larger vision, I have found incredible empowerment and motivation in small scale actions. In fact, I credit much of my optimism to this very concept: small actions, coupled with connection to resources and a supportive community, lead to empowerment, hope, and the desire and skill to work toward larger scale and systemic change. This is the way I see us moving forward. This is how I imagine the transformation to a Zero Waste World.

Given that, for many of us, the New Year is a time of reflection, resolution, and goals, now is the perfect time to remind ourselves of that larger vision, and perhaps commit to taking a step or two toward it.

Here are some steps I've found beneficial on my zero waste journey:

1. Taking time to understand what zero waste is all about. There are many definitions and conceptualizations of “zero waste.” If you Google zero waste, you'll find lots of pictures of reusable products, picture-perfect minimalist homes, and teeny tiny trash cans (some people tout their “trash jars” — a small mason jar filled with all the trash they have produced over several years). When I first learned about zero waste, I thought I had to literally produce that little waste in order to be a part of this movement. I've since come to expand my understanding of zero waste through the following points:

- What: Zero Waste is a systemic approach to prevent waste from being generated in the first place, and to manage residual materials sustainably.
- Why: Waste harms people and planet at every stage of its existence (from extraction to disposal).
- How: Waste is not inevitable - it can be designed out of our economic and political system through individual action, social organizing, proper infrastructure, industry accountability, and policy changes.

The Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA) is a great organization to check out, in order to learn more about zero waste on this big picture level.

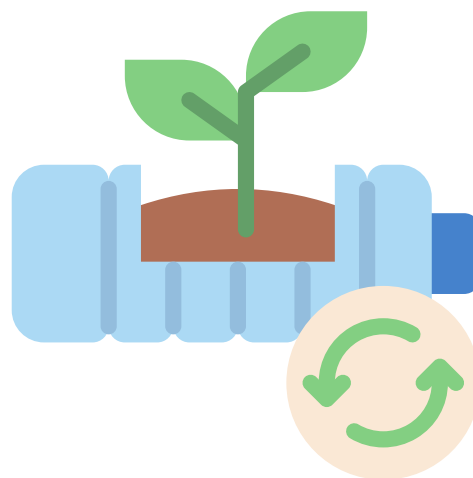
2. Connecting with the zero waste community — both locally and globally. Nearly everything I know about zero waste, I learned from people around me. There are so many individuals, organizations, and groups - both in and outside Missoula — to learn from, be inspired and empowered by, to share resources with, and to serve as tangible examples of zero waste in action.

- [www.zerobyfiftymissoula.com](http://www.zerobyfiftymissoula.com) is a great way to tap in!

3. Making space for reducing waste in my life. This one comes with a major learning curve, and some healthy doses of grace. I've made many mistakes and am not perfect by any means, but through implementing zero waste swaps, learning zero waste skills, and building zero waste habits, I've managed to reduce a significant amount of waste. One of my favorite changes has been experimenting with making my own products, like deodorant, household cleaners, moisturizer, etc.

To dig deeper on each of the three steps above, follow the link below. This link provides lots of ideas for zero waste New Years' goals and intentions. Feel free to add one (or multiple!) of the suggested actions to your 2021 New Years' intentions, share with others, hold on to these ideas for a later date, and/or go “off-list” by finding other ways to foster hope and work toward a sustainable, just, and vibrant future - in 2021 and beyond.

**View the zero waste New Years' ideas here:**  
[www.zerobyfiftymissoula.com/zw-new-years](http://www.zerobyfiftymissoula.com/zw-new-years)



*Sarah Lundquist is the Zero Waste Education Manager at Home ReSource. Originally from the Seattle area, the 26-year-old moved to Missoula in 2018, receiving an M.S. in Environmental Studies from the University of Montana in the spring of 2020. She currently lives in Missoula with her partner, Josh, and dog, River. When not at work, she can be found baking, knitting, listening to podcasts, or learning new zero waste skills!*

# Oracle

Kate Fontana, 34



The autumn twilight is neither dusk nor dawn  
not an ending nor a beginning, neither night nor day  
how long, o lord  
or has she forgotten us?  
Oak and Cypress hold the perimeter of our homes and burial grounds  
within their weathered roots  
let us take sanctuary, one breath's respite.  
Remember: This is not the end. And this is not the beginning.  
So amidst your tears, your relief, your exhaustion, your uncertainty  
allow these quiet pleasures  
the soft furs and friends that comfort, comfort,  
comfort my people  
You are safe in this moment.  
The work carries on in ways you cannot see nor possibly control  
The mushrooms relish such middle spaces as these  
Take shelter but do not hide.  
Weep a rainstorm but do not despair.  
Rest--oh stars oh earth, yes rest--  
but do not go back to sleep.

# Loxw

the sound of rushing water

Claire Charlo, 46

sčńłtu spqni?

Shaking hands month.

January is the month we call shaking hands month. We don't exactly follow the Gregorian New Year; however, January is a very important month for the Salish. It is the time where you put your differences to the side. We go to social ceremonies and shake hands with everyone and sincerely wish everyone a good New Year. It's a happy occasion — we are grateful for each other, and Creator's gifts of food and warmth. We gather together as a community to celebrate making another year together.

During this time of a pandemic, our social ceremonies have been canceled. We are asked to individually have our own

ceremonies at our homes. It's so surreal to not shake everyone's hands. It's protocol as you enter a ceremony space to go and shake everyone's hands. Even at work, or in the store, you shake hands and say happy new year. It feels so strange to not be at the social ceremonies, shaking hands, wishing everyone a good year, letting go of past grudges. At this particular political time, there is a national call for unity. If ever there were a time to set differences aside to address the 400,000 deaths (*at the time this piece was written*) from Covid, climate catastrophe, stopping all pipelines, especially Line 3 — we need to work together.

I believe in healing and reconciliation. May we shake hands and wish each a good year and work together to save our Mother Earth.

*Claire Charlo was born and raised on the Flathead Reservation. A direct descendent of Chief Charlo, Claire Charlo attended law school and graduated with a Juris Doctorate. Claire works as a Civil Advocate for the Salish & Kootenai Tribal Defenders. In her spare time, Claire is a Water and Land Defender. Claire also writes, beads regalia/jewelry and sews star quilts. In the summer Claire is in the mountains picking huckleberries and digging roots.*





# First Trip Home

non-fiction | Gray O'Reilly, 25

We usually walked the Long Loop, my mom and I. It's a path that snakes between ours and the next neighborhood over, converging at the local pool. Across the street from the pool is Sunset Highway, an oddly open, west-facing stretch of the Long Loop that I find particularly beautiful as the sun goes down. I used to ride my bike home under the late sun on summer days, a damp towel draped across my neck and the warm sunset flicking the last droplets of water off my skinny calves as I raced cars along the road. March past the pool and you'll find a small footbridge, just as the path enters the woods, where we were lectured for smoking cigars by an army sniper with over one hundred confirmed kills: "What do you boys think you're doin' chewin' on tree branches like that?" The path bends up and around to the middle school where yellow buses coast by just slow enough for us to see where a small boy fogged up the window, crying about something a girl had said. I believe the words were, "I think we're better as friends."

After I left, I suppose my mom began exploring new paths. So now we walk a New Loop through an unfamiliar neighborhood, cupping warm mugs of coffee—mine black, hers brown with gingerbread creamer. She recounts stories from her past: Tony Balducci, a boy who dropped a fake turd in Overlee pool and blamed it on his sister, or the time she kissed Jimmy Stiltz under the big maple tree in Tuckahoe park. At least, that's what it sounds like to listen to her talk about the good ol' days. I can never

keep the names and stories straight. But I listen and laugh on all the right beats, and think how her stories tie her to the land we walk on.

We both grew up more familiar with pine scent than pine trees, the only difference being that suburban D.C. has pulsed outward since the seventies, grinding out an almost unrecognizable landscape. But she loves it here, strip malls and all. She sees the wild spaces seeping in through the cracks in the asphalt; summer after summer the HOA petitions to fill them, but try as they might, my mom still seems to find them. I think it's because after almost sixty years of experiences on these sidewalks, it doesn't matter if their shape changes. She peers through time and feels the sting of embarrassment from the stage of her flute recital, softened by years of laughter. She seethes from the porch of her father's home: "If the dog wanted to borrow the car, you would have been home on time!" Her adrenaline punches her chest as she feels her cleats dig into the damp, muddy soil of a softball diamond, much of which ended up on her jersey. The streaks of mud give way to the present state of the sweater she wears on our walk. Though it is faded and holed-through by moths and love, you can make out the green and white lettering of her championship softball team name: "Shamrocks."

We continue to walk. I nurse my coffee, wrestling between wanting to drain the last few sips while they are still warm and

fending off chilly hands with the remaining heat. My mom smiles, squinting into the dim fall sun shining through D.C.'s famously gloomy skies and whistles loudly with two fingers in her mouth. We watch together as our golden-doodle, Phred, fights the urge to continue her chase of God-knows-what critter and reluctantly returns to us. As she galivants back in our general direction, I say

that the small sky and distant horizon of home are starting to choke me. That I miss the mountains. She says she understands. She also reminds me, without saying so, that my new relationship with the mountains isn't the only way people draw close to the land, and that I would do well to remember the Long Loop as well as the New Loop.

*Gray is an Environmental Philosophy Master's student at the University of Montana. When he is not bothering his cat, Panfur, he is off rock climbing, mountain biking, or skiing. Gray has a passion for the outdoors and hopes to inspire others to think about their relationships to the environment in whatever way works for them; no wrong answers!*

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## Pipeline Report: Keystone XL and Line 3

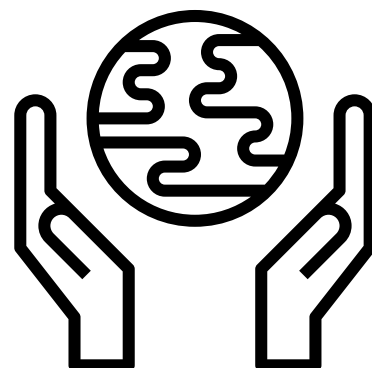
Last year, we were in the midst of collecting signatures from Montanans who opposed the **Keystone XL pipeline** when Covid hit. We finally delivered those 500+ signatures to Montana's DEQ in November when it was considering the project's Montana water permit. Unfortunately, after many people testified in opposition, the DEQ granted the permit. Thankfully, the Biden administration cancelled the project.

Now, in Minnesota, organizers, community members and supporters remain strong in their opposition to Line 3, yet another dangerous tar-sands pipeline expansion. According to [stopline3.org](http://stopline3.org), the existing Line 3 pipeline "was built with defective steel in 1961, has had numerous ruptures and spills, and is running at half pressure because of severe corrosion. Instead of cleaning up this liability, Enbridge wants to simply abandon it in the ground forever, and cut a brand new energy corridor through our best lakes, wetlands, and wild rice beds, and the heart of Ojibwe treaty territory...First Nations,

tribal governments, landowners, environmental groups, and communities across the Great Lakes have been fighting for 5 years now to stop this new corridor and #StopLine3."

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

We urge you to learn more about Line 3 and support the water protectors standing up for our shared future. Visit [www.stopline3.org](http://www.stopline3.org) to read more, and watch a powerful documentary about the issue, and, while you're there, please sign the petition calling on President Biden to intervene and end Line 3 for good: [www.stopline3.org/take-action](http://www.stopline3.org/take-action).



# FLC Happenings

Join Families for a Livable Climate for these free virtual events!  
Full event listings and registration at [livableclimate.org/events](https://livableclimate.org/events).



FAMILIES FOR  
A LIVABLE CLIMATE

## How to talk to your kids about climate change

**Thursday, March 4, 2021, 4:00 PM 5:30 PM**

How can we maintain hope and make a difference in the face of overwhelming evidence of the climate crisis? And, how do we even begin to talk with our kids about it? Help is at hand. Join [Families for a Livable Climate](#), [Moms Clean Air Force Montana](#), and [Mountain Mamas](#) for a discussion with [Harriet Shugarman](#), aka "Climate Mama", and author of *How to Talk to Your Kids About Climate Change*. Read the book beforehand, or simply join us to hear a brief overview of the book, and dive into questions and discussion.

## Let's Talk Climate

**Friday, March 12, 2021, 12:00 PM 1:30 PM**

This presentation/workshop will engage participants in the basic science and impacts of the climate crisis on Montana, and help them build confidence in sharing their climate concerns, inspiring personal and public action. This workshop is for people who are worried about the climate crisis, and would like to have conversations and get involved, but aren't sure where to start. All are welcome. Capped at 10 participants.

## Decarbonize Your Money: Investments & More

**Thursday, March 25, 2021, 5:00 PM 6:00 PM**

This "happy hour" Zoom panel discussion will focus on how to decarbonize your money from personal investments and more. Join us to learn about putting your privilege and money in the service of creating real change on a system-wide level.

## SAVE THE DATE! April 6th event with Katharine Hayhoe

Join us on April 6th for a presentation and conversation with Katharine Hayhoe! Details TBA! Katharine Hayhoe is an atmospheric scientist whose research focuses on understanding what climate change means for people and the places where we live. She is an endowed professor of public policy and law in the Dept. of Political Science at Texas Tech University, she hosts the PBS digital series *Global Weirding*, and she has been named one of TIME's 100 Most Influential People, the United Nations Champion of the Environment, and the World Evangelical Alliance's Climate Ambassador.

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## GET INVOLVED IN MONTANA CLIMATE ACTION

We need everyone and we hope you'll get involved. For information about climate impacts, Montana resiliency efforts, and a list of statewide and local climate groups, visit [livableclimate.org/montanaclimate](https://livableclimate.org/montanaclimate).

To learn more and get involved with Families for a Livable Climate, check out [livableclimate.org/joinus](https://livableclimate.org/joinus).

Also, currently we need volunteer interns for these positions:

### Communications intern (4 hours per week)

*Ideal dates: March 1 - April 30*

Plan and design social media posts and assist with blog posts on FLC's site and partner websites. Assist in posting events to websites, social media, and online calendars. The ideal candidate will have social media experience, graphic design experience, and a commitment to climate action and community building.

### Community events intern (2.5 hours per week)

*Ideal dates: March 31 - May 31*

Research community event contacts in greater Montana, and assist with outreach to set up events. The ideal candidate will have a strong commitment to climate action and community building, with the ability to communicate effectively with a broad range of people.

### How to Apply

We encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to contact us to receive our short application form. Once complete, we will do a Zoom interview to select the person best suited for each position. If interested, please email us at [livableclimate@gmail.com](mailto:livableclimate@gmail.com) with the name of the position in the subject line.

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*Thank you to our sponsors!*



Consider submitting your work: [livableclimate.org/changingtimes](https://livableclimate.org/changingtimes)