



A R T . E A R T H . S P I R I T

Thomas Berry writes, “It’s all a matter of a story. We are in trouble now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories. The old story, the account of how the world came to be and how we fit in it, is no longer effective. Yet we have not learned a new story. We need a story that will educate us, a story that will heal, guide, and discipline us.” Perhaps we can shape together our new creation story of mystery and wonder, justice, relationship and sensing the deepest note in the universe, love. This feels rich with possibilities for engaging communities and offers us the capacity to transform our world.

Creating something together that we could not create alone is a natural part of our personal artistic process, and we seek to bring this into our community art. We believe it is intrinsically empowering to stir a person’s imagination with story and to create art in its many forms, together. That has been the inspiration for gathering artists, writers, theologians, and story tellers into our creative community.

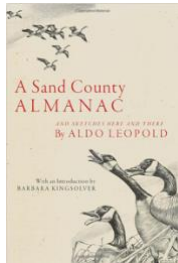


RECOMMENDED READING LIST

Books to share from our studio. May you find sustenance for your journey

The posture of fear that builds walls and prevents dialogue will need to give way to creativity in order to re-imagine our collective story.

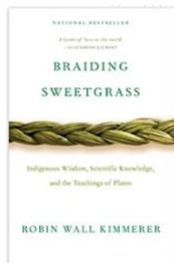
— CHUCK HOFFMAN + PEG CARLSON-HOFFMAN | GENESIS + ART



A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There

by Aldo Leopold

Few books have had a greater impact than *A Sand County Almanac*, which many credit with launching a revolution in land management. Written as a series of sketches based principally upon the flora and fauna in a rural part of Wisconsin, the book, originally published by Oxford in 1949, gathers informal pieces written by Leopold over a forty-year period as he traveled through the woodlands of Wisconsin, Iowa, Arizona, Sonora, Oregon, Manitoba, and elsewhere; a final section addresses the philosophical issues involved in wildlife conservation. Beloved for its description and evocation of the natural world, Leopold's book, which has sold well over 2 million copies, remains a foundational text in environmental science and a national treasure.



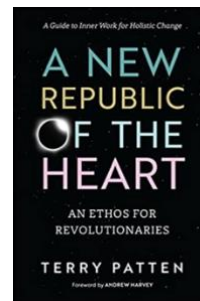
Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants

by Robin Wall Kimmerer

As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer brings these two lenses of knowledge together to take us on “a journey that is every bit as mythic as it is scientific, as sacred as it is historical, as clever as it is wise” (Elizabeth Gilbert).

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to

hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth and learn to give our own gifts in return.

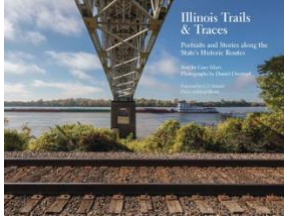


A New Republic of the Heart

by Terry Patten

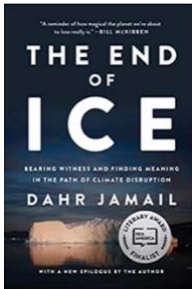
A vision to address our environment, economy, politics, culture, and to catalyze the radical whole-system change we need now. Recasting current problems as emergent

opportunities, Terry Patten offers creative responses, practices, and conscious conversations for tackling the profound inner and outer work we must do to build an integral future. In practical and personal terms, he discusses how we can all become active agents of a transformation of human civilization and why that is necessary to our continued survival. Patten's narrative focuses on two aspects of existence—our dynamic but fractured and threatened world, and our underlying wholeness and unity. Only by honoring both of these realities simultaneously can we make sustainable changes in ourselves, our communities, our body politic, and our planetary life-support system. *A New Republic of the Heart* provides a comprehensive understanding and inspiring vision for “being the change” in a way that can address the most intractable problems of our time. Patten shows how we can come together in our communities for conversations that matter and describes new communities, enterprises, and forms of dialogue that integrate both inner personal growth work with outer awareness, activism, and service.



Illinois Trails & Traces: Portraits and Stories along the State's Historic Routes by Gary Marx and Daniel Overturf.

Marx and Overturf bring history into the present by including over forty photographic portraits and written profiles of individuals who live along these routes today. Many of the people you will meet on these pages work to preserve and honor the history of these passages. Others profiled here embody the spirit of the old roads and provide a vivid link between past and present. Through this journey, we discover that we've all been traveling the same road all along.



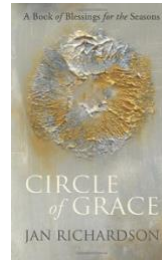
The End of Ice: Bearing Witness and Finding Meaning in the Path of Climate Disruption by Dahr Jamail

After nearly a decade overseas as a war reporter, the acclaimed journalist Dahr Jamail returned to

America to renew his passion for mountaineering, only to find that the slopes he had once climbed have been irrevocably changed by climate disruption. In response, Jamail embarks on a journey to the geographical front lines of this crisis—from Alaska to Australia's Great Barrier Reef, via the Amazon rainforest—in order to discover the consequences to nature and to humans of the loss of ice.

In *The End of Ice*, we follow Jamail as he scales Denali, the highest peak in North America, dives in the warm crystal waters of the Pacific only to find ghostly coral reefs, and explores the tundra of St. Paul Island where he meets the last subsistence seal hunters of the Bering Sea and witnesses its melting glaciers. Accompanied by climate scientists and people whose families have fished, farmed, and lived in the areas he visits for centuries, Jamail begins to accept the fact that Earth, most likely, is in a hospice situation. Ironically, this allows him to renew his passion for the planet's wild places, cherishing Earth in a way he has never been able to before.

Like no other book, *The End of Ice* offers a firsthand chronicle—including photographs throughout of Jamail on his journey across the world—of the catastrophic reality of our situation and the incalculable necessity of relishing this vulnerable, fragile planet while we still can.

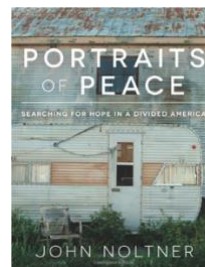


Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons by Jan Richardson

"Within the struggle, joy, pain, and delight that attend our life, there is an invisible circle of grace that enfolds and encompasses us in

every moment. Blessings help us to perceive this circle of grace, to find our place of belonging within it, and to receive the strength the circle holds for us." - from the Introduction.

Beginning in Advent and moving through the sacred seasons of the Christian year, *Circle of Grace* offers Jan's distinctive and poetic blessings that illuminate the treasures each season offers to us.



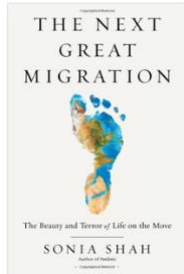
Portraits of Peace: Searching for Hope in a Divided America by John Noltner

Frustrated with an increasingly polarized social landscape, award-winning photographer

John Noltner set out on a 40,000-mile road trip across the United States to rediscover the common humanity that connects us. He did so by asking people one simple question: "What does peace mean to you?" Through difficult conversations, gentle humor, and a keen eye for beauty, Noltner's *Portraits of Peace* captures a rich collage of who we are as a nation. Beautiful storytelling and captivating photography converge to offer a uniquely human and accessible examination of the social issues that most challenge us today, such as racial equality, immigration reform, LGBTQ+ rights, women's rights, freedom of religion, and tolerance. Through the real-world stories of ordinary citizens who choose, in the midst of difficult circumstances, to pursue healing,

reconciliation, and community building, we discover a glimmer of hope that something better is possible.

Portraits of Peace offers a promising road map to a peaceful future as a pluralistic society.



The Next Great Migration: The Beauty and Terror of Life on the Move

by Sonia Shah

The news today is full of stories of dislocated people on the move. Wild species, too, are escaping warming seas and desiccated lands, creeping, swimming, and flying in a mass exodus from their past habitats. News media presents this scrambling of the planet's migration patterns as unprecedented, provoking fears of the spread of disease and conflict and waves of anxiety across the Western world. On both sides of the Atlantic, experts issue alarmed predictions of millions of invading aliens, unstoppable as an advancing tsunami, and countries respond by electing anti-immigration leaders who slam closed borders that were historically porous.

The science and history of migration in animals, plants, and humans tell a different story. Far from being a disruptive behavior to be quelled at any cost, migration is an ancient and lifesaving response to environmental change, a biological imperative as necessary as breathing. Climate changes triggered the first human migrations out of Africa. Falling sea levels allowed our passage across the Bering Sea. Unhampered by barbed wire, migration allowed our ancestors to people the planet, catapulting us into the highest reaches of the Himalayan mountains and the most remote islands of the Pacific, creating and disseminating the biological, cultural, and social diversity that ecosystems and societies depend upon. In other words, migration is not the crisis--it is the solution.

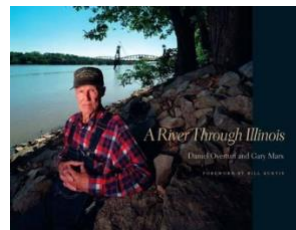
Conclusively tracking the history of misinformation from the 18th century through today's anti-immigration policies, *The Next Great Migration* makes the case for a future in which migration is not a source of fear, but of hope.



The Man Who Planted Trees by Jean Giono

Twenty years ago Chelsea Green published the first trade edition of *The Man Who Planted Trees*, a timeless eco-fable about what one person can do to restore the earth. The hero of the story, Elzéard Bouffier, spent his life planting

one hundred acorns a day in a desolate, barren section of Provence in the south of France. The result a total transformation of the landscape--from one devoid of life, with miserable, contentious inhabitants, to one filled with the scent of flowers, the songs of birds, and fresh, flowing water. Since its first publication, the book has sold over a quarter of a million copies and inspired countless numbers of people around the world to take action and plant trees.



A River Through Illinois by Gary Marx and Daniel Overturf.

A River Through Illinois, an innovative collaboration by

journalist Gary Marx and award-winning photographer Daniel Overturf, carries readers down the 330-mile Illinois Waterway, from the urban landscape of Chicago to the state's most rural areas.

From Mud Creek to Peoria Lakes, a biologist, an ecologist, and a hydrologist consider the edge of the watershed Meredosia, Chandlerville, Henry, the Kankakee River and its tributaries and discuss the changing nature of the river, including new threats such as sedimentation, and the loss of habitat. Hunters, commercial fishermen, and bridge tenders share their stories that demonstrate resiliency in the face of great change.

If you have books or writings to share that would help us reform our relationship to the earth, each other and with the divine please share them with us: Together we can make positive change. With good courage, Chuck + Peg studio@genesistart.org