This booklet, published bi-monthly by the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, embraces many members of our peace community. The booklet is intended to build spiritual community. It is available for no charge to those who request it. Those who are using the book are asked to participate by contributing readings to it.‡

The common thread in these reflections is the struggle of human beings to improve the world. In OREPA, our struggle to end bomb production in Oak Ridge is part of that struggle. In these reflections, we join ourselves with the larger community that works to heal the world.

From the outset, the reflection booklet has been provided free of charge. If you are able to make a donation to cover the cost of your booklet, it would be greatly appreciated. A gift of $20 would cover the cost of paper, printing and mailing for one year. If you are unable to make a donation, please continue to accept the reflection booklet and use it.

Each Thursday, in addition to our reflection, you will find the name of a member of our community who is using this reflection booklet. This is an opportunity to think a little about that person and all those who work for peace on her/his day.

‡ contributions, suggestions, requests can be sent to OREPA, P O Box 5743, Oak Ridge, TN 37831 or by e-mail to orep@earthlink.net

Sources
Readings for the reflection booklet this month were contributed by Mary Dennis Lentsch. Thursday readings are from *Of Poetry and Protest*, edited by Philip Cushway and Michael Warr, W W Norton & Company, 2016.
Sunday, October 1

The way of the miracle worker is to see all human behavior as one of two things: either love or a call for love. There is no single effort more radical in its potential for saving the world than a transformation of the way we raise our children.

~ Marianne Williamson

Monday, October 2

2Hi’s BIRTHDAY

It’s the action, not the fruit of the action, that’s important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there’ll be any fruit. But that doesn’t mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result.

~ Gandhi

Tuesday, October 3

The Zen master would say if you want to change government, you have to aim at changing corporations, and if you want to change corporations, you first have to change the consumer. Whoa, wait a minute! The consumer? You mean I’m the one who has to change?

~ Yvon Chouinard

Wednesday, October 4

“Normal” is getting dressed in clothes that you buy for work, driving through traffic in a car that you are still paying for, in order to get to the job that you need so you can pay for the clothes, car, and the house that you leave empty all day in order to afford to live in it.

~ Ellen Goodman
There is a riot I fit into
a place I fled called the Motor City
It owns a story old and forsaken
as the furnaces of the Packard Plant,
as creased as the palm of my hand
in a summer I was too young to remember—
1967. My father ran into the streets
to claim a small part of my people’s anger
in his Kodak, a portrait of the flame
that became our flag long enough
to tell us there was no turning back,
that we’d burned ourselves clean
of all doubt. That’s the proof I’ve witnessed
I’ve seen it up close and in headlines, a felony
sentence spelling out the reasons
my mother’s house is now worth less
than my sister’s Honda, how my father’s worthy
rage is worth nothing at all. In the scheme
of it all, though, my kin came out lucky.
We survived, mostly by fleeing
the flames while sealing their heat
in our minds the way a bank holds
a mortgage—the way a father holds his son’s hand
while his city burns around him… I almost forgot
to mention: the canary in Detroit’s proverbial coal
mine who sang for my parents when they fled
the inferno of the South, its song
sweaty sweet with promise. I’m singing
myself right now. I’m singing the best way
I know about the way I’ve run
from one fire to another. I’ve got a headfiull
of song, boiling away. I carry a portrait
of my father.

~ Tyehimba Jess
Friday, October 6
1917: FANNIE LOU HAMER BORN
1987: OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ WINS NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

How ironic for peacemaking efforts to discover that hatred is stronger for many than love; that the longing to achieve power through military victories makes so many men lose their reason, forget all shame, and betray history.

~ Oscar Arias Sanchez

Saturday, October 7
1879: JOE HILL BORN
1931: DESMOND TUTU BORN
2001: US BEGINS BOMBING AFGHANISTAN

My father always used to say, “Don’t raise your voice, improve your argument.” Good sense does not always lie with the loudest shouters, nor can we say that a large, unruly crowd is always the best arbiter of what is right.

~ Desmond Tutu

Sunday, October 8

Our life is a faint tracing on the surface of mystery, like the idle, curved tunnels of leaf miners on the face of a leaf. We must somehow take a wider view, look at the whole landscape, really see it, and describe what’s going on here. Then we can at least wail the right question into the swaddling band of darkness, or, if it comes to that, choir the proper praise.

~ Annie Dillard

Monday, October 9
1919: FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION FOUNDED

I think white America has to be jolted into reality: if we do not devote the resources necessary to avert the tragedy, we will become a police state. Will there have to be some sort of explosion, some sort of civil disorder, before we realize the gravity of the situation? Think of the money we instantly manufactured for Desert Storm. The crisis in this county is much more grave than that. But we don’t have the same kind of will to tackle it. We have to. We simply have no choice.

~ Salim Mulwakkil
Tuesday, October 10

The Bible belt and the death belt are the same belt. What do you do with your grief, what do you do when you find out that things are so wrong and people are being executed who are poor and have no redress? You take outrage, you take that sorrow and sadness, and you work for justice, so that other human beings don’t have to experience the same thing.

~ Helen Prejean

Wednesday, October 11

1884 : ELEANOR ROOSEVELT’S BIRTHDAY

Courage is more exhilarating than fear, and in the long run it is easier. We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just one step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

The USA is torn between its better nature and the powerful forces of the military/industrial/corporate complex during the August 5 skit at Bissell Park in Oak Ridge.
Thursday, October 12
John Nolt and Annette Mendola

Make    No sudden movements
        Like from your neighborhood
        To someplace you don’t belong.
Keep    Your hands visible at all times
        Above your head  In these
        Brand new handcuffs
Speak   Only when spoken to
        Or not at all     You have the right to
        Silence
Have proper ID on you at   All times
        There is no right
        To travel
Reply only to  The questions asked
        You have nothing to say
        We want to hear
Give the officer   Only the materials requested
        You have nothing to show us
        We want to see
Do not leave the vehicle   Unless told to
        You have
        Nothing
Go quietly    When arrested
        You are
        Nothing
Do not    Resist
        You are a
        Thing
Do not    Run
        You have
        No rights
Do not say you    Do not fit The Profile
        This is America
        You are the profile

~ Reginald Harris
Friday, October 13

1999: US SENATE REJECTS COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

A good deed done to an animal is as meritorious as a good deed done to a human being, while an act of cruelty to an animal is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being.

~ Mohammed

Saturday, October 14

There is immense power in stillness... You may not see or feel the operations of this silent force but be assured it is always working mightily, and will work for you, if you only get your spirit still enough to be carried along by the currents of its power.

~ Hannah Whitall Smith

Sunday, October 15

1969: 2,000,000 PARTICIPATE IN MORATORIUM AGAINST VIETNAM WAR

In an essay on the origin of civilization in traditional cultures, A.K. Coomaraswamy wrote that “the principle of justice is the same throughout: that each member of the community should perform the task for which he or she is fitted by nature.” The two ideas, justice and vocation, are inseparable. It is by way of the principle and practice of vocation that sanctity and reverence enter into human economy. It was thus possible for traditional culture to conceive that “to work is to pray.”

~ Wendell Berry

Monday, October 16

1988: UNITED STATES INVADES GRENADA
1998: FORMER CHILEAN DICTATOR AUGUSTO PINOCHET ARRESTED IN LONDON

Every one of us has a “good work” to do in life, which accomplishes something needed in the world while completing something in us. When it is finished a new work emerges which will help us to make green a desert place, as well as to scale another mountain in ourselves. The work we do in the world, when it is a true vocation, always corresponds in some mysterious way to the work that goes on within us.

~ Elizabeth O’Connor
OREPA Board member Carmella Cole, flanked by Heike, our translator, tells the gathered crowd outside the Büchel Air Base in Germany about OREPA’s determination to stop the Uranium Processing Facility bomb plant from being built.

Tuesday, October 17
1991: NATO CUTS NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARSENAL BY 80%

The human heart has been so made by Love that, like a flint, it contains a hidden fire which is evolved by music and harmony, and renders us beside ourselves with ecstasy. The harmonics are echoes of that higher world of reality which we call the world of spirits; they fan into a flame whatever love is already dormant in the heart.

~ Al-Ghazali

Wednesday, October 18

You must give birth to your images. They are the future waiting to be born. Fear not the strangeness you feel. The future must enter you long before it happens. Just wait for the birth, for the hour of new clarity.

~ Meg Wheatley
Can’t use no teenager, especially  
No poor black trash,  
No matter what her parents do  
To keep up a living. Can’t use  
Anyone without sense enough  
To bite their tongue.

It’s gotta be a woman.  
Someone of standing:  
Preferably shy, preferably married.  
And she’s got to know  
When the moment’s right.  
Stay polite, though her shoulder’s  
Aching, bus driver  
The same one threw her off  
Twelve years before.

Then all she’s got to do is  
Sit there quiet, till  
The next moment finds her—and only then  
Can she open her mouth to ask  
“Why do you push us around?”  
and his answer: “I don’t know but  
the law is the law and you are under arrest.”  
She must sit there, and not smile  
As they enter to carry her off;  
she must know who to call  
Who will know whom else to call  
To bail her out… and only then

Can she stand up and exhale,  
Can she walk out the cell  
And down the jail steps  
Into flashbulbs and  
Her employer’s white  
Arms—and go home.  
And sit down in the seat  
We have prepared for her.

~ Rita Dove
Friday, October 20

Work is love made visible.

~ Kahlil Gibran

Saturday, October 21

1971: PABLO NERUDA WINS NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE

To feel the love of people whom we love is the fire that feeds our lives.

~ Pablo Neruda

Sunday, October 22

1962: CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

Remember always that you have not only the right to be an individual; you have an obligation to be one.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Monday, October 23

Faith is not about how we feel; it’s about how we live.

~ Anne Lamott

Tuesday, October 24

UNITED NATIONS DAY COMMEMORATES FOUNDING OF UN

Even if you have a lot of work to do, if you think of it as wonderful, and if you feel it as wonderful, it will transform into the energy of joy and fire, instead of becoming a burden.

~ Tulku Thondup Rinpoche

Wednesday, October 25

1955: SADAKÔ SASAKI DIES
1983: UNITED STATES INVADES GRENAADA

We don’t set out to save the world; we set out to wonder how other people are doing and to reflect on how our actions affect other people’s hearts.

~ Pema Chödrön
A picture in a book, 
a lynching. 
The bland faces of men who watch 
a Christ go up in flames, smiling, 
as if he were a hooked 
fish, a felled antelope, some 
wild thing tied to boards and burned 
His charring body 
gives off light—a halo 
burns out of him. 
His face scorched featureless; 
the hair matted to the scalp 
like feathers. 
One man stands with his hand on his hip, 
another with his arm 
slung over the shoulder of a friend, 
as if this moment were large enough 
to hold affection.

~ Toi Derricotte
Friday, October 27

To say in one breath that the dead are not here, in the earth, this place of burial, may be to suggest in the very next breath that they are here: we simply need to know where to look and how to listen. Close your eyes, lean in to the silence, and listen: the Earth itself remembers, the ancient woods reverberate with their songs, touching our highest joy, revealing our deepest sadness. Behold, the trees whisper, the circle will be unbroken: the sorrow songs do sing true.

~ Christopher Pramuk

Saturday, October 28

What we need are guardians-guardians committed to the middle path of mindfulness and dedicated to the enormous task of restoring and healing our ravaged planet. Guardians who have penetrated the anthropocentric notions of our civilization and who, as Aldo Leopold said, can begin to “think like a mountain” and acknowledge that we are only “plain embers of the biotic community.”

~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Sunday, October 29

1966: National Organization for Women founded
1962: Cuban Missile Crisis ends

Forgiveness is twice blessed. It frees the one forgiven from guilt and you from bitterness. Forgiveness sheds light on the subject. It lets love, instead of judgment, shine in. Judgment curdles the soul; forgiveness invites your spirit to burst into bloom.

~ Daphne Rose Kingma

Monday, October 30

1961: USSR detonates 58-megaton atmospheric test, largest ever

The mind thinks of the self as separate, the heart knows better. As one great Indian master, Sri Nisargatta, put it, “The mind creates the abyss, and the heart crosses it.”

~ Jack Kornfield
Tuesday, October 31

1952 : US DETONATES FIRST HYDROGEN BOMB, ENIWETOK ATOLL, MARSHALL ISLANDS

Sustainability is every action destined to maintain the energy, information, and physical-chemical conditions that make all being sustainable, especially the living Earth, the community of life and human life, seeking their continuity, and also to attend the needs of present and future generations in such a way that the natural capital is maintained and its capacity of regeneration, reproduction and eco-evolution is enriched.

~ Leonardo Boff

Wednesday, November 1

1989 : DIANNA ORTIZ TORTURED IN GUATEMALA
1995 : SOUTH AFRICA HOLDS FIRST ELECTION FOR ALL RACES

Nobody will protect you from your suffering. You can’t cry it away or eat it away or starve it away or walk it away or punch it away or even therapy it away. It’s just there, and you have to survive it. You have to endure it. You have to live through it and love it and move on and be better for it and run as far as you can...across the bridge that was built by your own desire to heal.

~ Cheryl Strayed

It was a hastily called rally, but Knoxville turned out in force on Sunday afternoon to answer Donald Trump’s support for white supremacists after the conflicts in Charlottesville, Virginia.
He will not be a buffoon and clown; he’s too cool for that. His cool is the art of ease, the way we drain out tension; the way we make the hard seem easy, seem like it ought. Cool is not seeing the burn in the fluid grace of execution. Cool is knowing how to lean back and let it come, but always ready for it to come. He will be no minstrel show fool, but a man who shows, in the midst of chaos, unruffled calm. Like, what-does-he-know-that-we-don’t-know? Like, I-can-be-brighter-than-you-and-still-be-down, cool. Like some presidential cool, a cool that maybe hasn’t been seen in the White House before. You see, he is nobody’s fool, kind of cool, the one that makes a gangsta lean look so clean kind of cool. That’s what we have now, and to be honest you can call this cool what you want, me, I call it blessed.

~ Kwame Dawes
Friday, November 3

1883 : US SUPREME COURT DESIGNATES NATIVE AMERICANS AS ALIENS

We are beginning to understand that the world is always being made and never finished; that activism can be the journey rather than the arrival; that struggle doesn't always have to be confrontational but can take the form of reaching out to find common ground.

~ Grace Lee Boggs

Saturday, November 4

1992 : RUSSIA RATIFIES START TREATY

As democracy is perfected, the office of president represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be adorned by downright moron.

~ H. L. Mencken

Sunday, November 5

Voluntary simplicity involves both inner and outer condition. It means singleness of purpose, sincerity and honesty within, as well as avoidance of exterior clutter, of many possessions irrelevant to the chief purpose of life. It means an ordering and guiding of our energy and our desires, a partial restraint in some directions in order to secure greater abundance of life in other directions. It involves a deliberate organization of life for a purpose.

~ Richard Gregg

Monday, November 6

A soul flare is what happens when someone shines his or her light, no matter what it is. In a song, a smile, or a well-made soup, they send out a flare of light that inspires others to shine their own. Soul flares make this world better.

~ Annie O’Saughnessy
Tuesday, November 7

The universe is composed of subjects to be communed with, not objects to be exploited. Everything has its own voice. Thunder and lightning and stars and planets, flower, birds, animals, trees—all these have voices, and they constitute a community of existence that is profoundly related.

~ Thomas Berry

Wednesday, November 8

1897: Dorothy Day's birthday!
1972: Trail of Broken Treaties March occupies Bureau of Indian Affairs in DC

We can never know what strengths and revelations might be on the other side of our fears until we face them and feel them all the way through. True positive thinking is the mental stance of surrender, simply trusting the process. We learn to accept what is.

~ Jacqueline Small

Jim Sessions reads names at the annual Hiroshima Day Names and Remembrance Ceremony at the main entrance to the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Complex, August 6, 2017, Oak Ridge, TN.
I believe that deep within our being as a nation there is a longing for a moral movement that plows deep into our souls—a movement that recognizes that we can’t be, as the scriptures say, “at ease in Zion”—a longing that recognizes that the attacks we face today on fundamental civil rights, including attacks on the great hallmark of equal protection under the law and the promise to establish justice, which are supposed to be at the heart of who we are as a nation, are not a sign of our weakness but rather the sign of a worrisome fear by those who hold extremist views and do not welcome a truly united society.

It is this longing that explains why today, despite the attacks, we are seeing a merging of the tributaries that run toward the great stream of justice: people regardless of race, creed, color, gender, sexuality, or class—no matter what movement—we are flowing together.

I believe if we do not become at ease in Zion, and if we continue pushing forward together, this will be the birth of what will be a Third Reconstruction movement in America, a movement that will push us toward our truest hope of a “more perfect union” where peace is established through justice, not fear, and in the prescient words of Langston Hughes, “Opportunity is real, and life is free.”

~ William Barber
Friday, November 10
1938: KRISTALLNACHT

That which sings and contemplates in you is still dwelling within the bounds of that first moment which scattered the stars into space.

~ Kahlil Gibran

Saturday, November 11

Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths.

~ Etty Hillesum

Sunday, November 12
1815: ELIZABETH CADY STANTON BORN
1991: INDONESIAN TROOPS MASSACRE 150 NONVIOLENT ACTIVISTS IN EAST TIMOR
1993: UN VOTES 183-3 FOR END TO US BLOCKADE OF CUBA

Not knowing when the dawn will come I open every door.

~ Emily Dickinson

Monday, November 13

Do not say, “It is morning,” and dismiss it with a name of yesterday. See it for the first time as a newborn child that has no name.

~ Rabindranath Tagore

Tuesday, November 14

I cannot cause light. The most I can do is to put myself in the path of its beam.

~ Annie Dillard

Wednesday, November 15
1887: GEORGIÁ O’KEEFFE BORN

Who knows what is beyond the known? And if you think that any day the secret of light might come, would you not sweep the house of your mind ready? Would you not cleanse your study of all that is cheap, or trivial?

~ Mary Oliver
Thursday, November 16
Shelley Wascom

1989: Salvadorean death squad (trained in US at School of the Americas) murders six Jesuit priests, housekeeper and daughter in San Salvador

Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college she attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

~ Eleanor Roosevelt
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1999: US SENATE REJECTS COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

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~ Mohammed

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~ Elizabeth O’Connor
Resistance to the deployment of US B61 nuclear bombs in Germany is alive and well, as this Saturday afternoon gathering at the entrance to the Büchel Air Base, where the bombs are deployed, shows. Speakers from the United States connected the crowd to the source of the bombs.

~ Woodrow Wilson

Tuesday, November 21

When someone steals a man’s clothes we call him a thief. Should we not give the same name to one who could clothe the naked and does not? The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry man; the coat hanging unused in your closet belong to the man who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belong to the man who has no shoes; the money which you hoard up belongs to the poor.

~ Basil the Great

Wednesday, November 22

To sit patiently with a yearning that has not yet been fulfilled, and to trust that fulfillment will come, is quite possibly one of the most powerful “magic skills” that human beings are capable of. It has been noted by almost every ancient wisdom tradition.

~ Elizabeth Gilbert
When Jennifer and I near the Ross Island Bridge pass the two young men in matching black combat boots & white t-shirts beneath suspenders that blaze an X on their backs,
I see them first as partners taking a late evening walk like us, locked arm
to arm, charmed by park lamps & floral pathways, then well up with pride,
glorying in the picture our generation makes, & think what passes
between us, lust holier than war & lovelooks tinged
with righteousness, could fertilize a new & supreme race,
but then, one says Wassup sister? White Power & I snap out of my reverie & remember the sound of History & blood,
& look over my shoulder & sneer my long, teasing dark smile & say, Right
On! Black Power to which they spill out of each other’s arms & stomp Nazi-like, cursing, Aryan heads bald as trophies in gold
streetlight, & we set off to crossing the avenue, a soft job of hand-holding that breaks in a sprint, back to our segregated lives.

~ Major Jackson
Friday, November 24

We should give as we would receive: cheerfully, quickly, and without hesitation; for there is no grace in a benefit that sticks to the fingers.

~ Seneca

Saturday, November 25

Forgiveness is tremendous strength. It is the action of someone who refuses to be consumed by hatred and revenge.

~ Helen Prejean

Sunday, November 26

1792 : SARAH GRIMKE BORN

Fear is such a powerful emotion for humans that when we allow it to take us over, it drives compassion right out of our hearts.

~ Thomas Aquinas

Monday, November 27

Wealth, success, fame: none of these matter if your heart is not dancing and celebrating each moment of your life.

~ Paulette Honeygosky

Tuesday, November 28

We are part of the Earth and it is part of us. We love this Earth as a newborn its mother’s heartbeat.

~ Chief Seattle

Wednesday, November 29

1908 : THURGOOD MARSHALL’S BIRTHDAY!

We deal here with the right of all our children, whatever their race, to an equal start in life and to an equal opportunity to reach their full potential as citizens. Those children who have been denied that right in the past deserve better than to see fences thrown up to deny them that right in the future.

~ Thurgood Marshall
Lincoln, January 1st, 1863

I think now of that other Illinois man, pacing the creaking boards of the musty mansion, cradling a nation’s future in his head, the concussion of guns continuing, the bloody hordes of rebels like ghouls in his dreams; he, too, avoids the bed; tomorrow the hundred days will be over, a million souls will be free, a million pieces of property pilfered from citizens, a million laborers worth their weight in bullion promised a new day across the border, a million scared owners, a million calamities, all with the flow of ink from that pen. This is the path of the pragmatists who would be savior, the genius act of simple war, the act to sink an enemy, and yet hallelujahs will break out like loud ululations of freedom. Uneasy lies the head...he knows—

this is how our leaders are born, how we find our heroes.

~ Kwame Dawes
Scenes from Oak Ridge, TN, August 5, 2017. Top: the audience at the Concert for Disarmament at Bissell Park; Center: marching to the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Complex; Bottom: presenting a plaque of appreciation to the walkers who completed a Peace Pilgrimage from Asheville, NC to Oak Ridge, TN.
Many things are necessary to have peace—including making peace lanterns. It was an intergenerational peace lantern party at the Riverside Catholic Worker house in south Knoxville.

The August 9 Peace Lantern ceremony, commemorating the destruction of Nagasaki, Japan by a US atomic bomb, has become such a popular local event that kids are allowed to stay up late on a school night!
Scenes from the August Ancestor Ceremony at the Great Smoky Mountains Peace Pagoda. Below: Ron Dale inters Sigrid's ashes in the Spirit Garden; Kim Bergier and Jesse Williams offering incense; gathered in the Spirit Garden.