

# Your Turn

A Journal Uniting the Grassroots

*“If there is no struggle, there is no progress” - Frederick Douglass*

**January 2008.** This issue’s focus is The Earth Community Prosperity Story. Our lead article, contributed by Neva Welton, bears witness to her commitment to, and understanding of, The Great Turning.

February’s focus is externalizing costs.

Of course, corporations do it. But, what does it mean? And, what is the connection to the Great Turning? And, do we do it in our daily lives? If you have ideas or references, email [your-turn-editor@lycos.com](mailto:your-turn-editor@lycos.com).

March’s focus will be consciousness. Please refer to Chapter 2: The Possibility in David Korten’s book *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*.

News and Views - pages 3 to 6

Man, 62, Discovers Winter; The China Study; The Network of Spiritual Progressives; In Service To the Whole.

Appendix

Excerpt from, “The Significance of Emancipation in the West Indies”,  
1857, Frederick Douglass

Source: [http://www.buildingequality.us/Quotes/Frederick\\_Douglass.htm](http://www.buildingequality.us/Quotes/Frederick_Douglass.htm)

# Go Forth and Prosper

## By Neva Welton

*What is the measure of prosperity? Is it defined by money and the acquisition of things? Is it based on the square footage of your house or how many cars you own?*

*Prosperity is defined in the dictionary as “having success, flourishing, favorable,” but the cultural story of our time limits that definition by telling us money is the only measure of wealth and economic growth the best indicator of a prosperous society.*

In *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, David Korten articulates how Empire (the hierarchal ordering of human systems through domination) perpetuates this story in order to maintain a ruling, elite class. According to Korten, Empire says we must consume more and more and regulate less and less in order to make it easy for the very wealthy to amass great sums of money (i.e. grow the economy) and therefore end poverty. I’m sure you’ve heard the story many times.

Well I don’t know about you, but I’m not buying the Empire story or much of anything else these days. I recently resigned from my job so I can fully explore how to hone my skills and knowledge in order to be most effective when the fabric of Empire’s belief systems are swept away with the rising tides of global climate change, resource depletion, and economic instability (the “perfect economic storm”).

I couldn’t take that risk if I didn’t know in my heart that prosperity isn’t about how much I consume; it’s about how much I contribute. It isn’t about the power of the dollar, it’s about the currency of caring. To be prosperous is to love and be loved and to have the privilege of living an authentic, creative life in service to the whole.

Korten says, true wealth should be defined by the well-being of individuals and community life and the health of the living systems we depend on. I couldn’t agree more. This is the way I define prosperity for a species living on a finite planet—the macro view. But there’s also the deep, personal experience of prosperity, the micro view. I know I feel rich when I trust in the universe, contribute to the well-being of my community, respect Earth, and feel grateful for my life’s experiences.

Seems to me, to prosper is to break the cultural trance of Empire and to live a new story (Earth Community) based on one’s authentic values. So, in this, the dawn of 2008, I say, go forth and prosper.

# News

## Man, 62, Discovers Winter

[Editor's note: We are considering a monthly interview. This article is a sample. The facts are true, but the interviewer was the interviewee.]

Bo Chagnon, of Raleigh, NC, changed his frame when the winter heating season arrived. He contacted Your Turn to share his experience. The interview was conducted in late January at his home.

Your Turn: Would you share with our readers what you meant when you said you had "changed your frame"?

Bo Chagnon: Sure. Do you remember that fairy tale about the king who wanted to walk on carpet wherever he went, but all the King's men couldn't place down carpet as fast as the King could move about?

YT: The one where the child solves the King's problem by suggesting that he wear the carpet on his feet?

BC: Yes. When the heating season arrived I took the boy's advice and, instead of heating everywhere in my house I might go, I just heated me.

YT: What does that have to do with the Great Turning?

BC: I was getting to that. The year 2006 was my first in this house. My December energy bill came in at \$210, and I figured, well, I put my thermostat at 68. When I turn it lower my hands get cold. No sense being uncomfortable.

Still, that was a lot of money. When THIS winter arrived I had realized that if the King could put something on his feet, I could put something on my hands. Then, as the house cooled I learned by trial and error how to balance the number of layers on my legs and the number of layers on my upper body. By the time I learned how to stay warm when the house was 55 degrees I had received my December 2007 energy bill, and it was \$31. But that wasn't the best part. I'll tell you that later.

The next to the best part was that I could walk outside when the temperature was 55, and be comfortable. Days that used to be "too cold" to go outside became pleasant afternoons without mosquitos. That's what I meant when I said I had discovered winter.

YT: But the question is, "What does that have to do with the Great Turning?"

## **Man, 62, Discovers Winter, Continued**

BC: I'm getting to that. You see, I live in the South, and most of our electricity (which is my house's only energy source) is made by burning coal, which puts mercury into the air, and it's causing an epidemic of children's asthma. When I was tempted to turn on the HVAC I could think about how inconvenient it would be to add a layer versus how inconvenient it must be to have asthma. So that was special about my place.

Plus, I live alone, and so I can try whatever I want and I don't have to compromise with someone else. Plus, the alternatives were either to replace the electrical resistance heating strips again or to spend thousands on a new HVAC system. So that was special about my situation.

And, I've always been serially obsessive, and it was time for me to start doing another something obsessively. Besides, maybe I could find something out. So, that's why I did it.

YT: OK. That's why. But, what does that have to do with the Great Turning?

BC: Oh, yeah. I've been trying to remember. I think you guys said something about reducing your carbon footprint.

YT: Yes. Reducing our carbon footprint is one of the things we must do. We expect that creating the Great Turning will occur at the grassroots. Here at Your Turn we are hoping to contribute to the Great Turning by providing a place where people can share their stories.

BC: I guess that's why I contacted you.

YT: One more thing. What was the best part?

BC: Doing what I believe is best for everyone.

## **The China Study**

My wife and I have just finished reading a remarkable book that has caused us to change the way we eat and the ways we think about food, illness and environmental sustainability. The book is called *The China Study*, T. Colin Campbell, PhD. Dr. Campbell is professor emeritus of nutritional biochemistry at Cornell University. This book is the product of his 40 years of research and it is billed as "startling implications for diet, weight loss and long term health."

Get this book and read it. You will be startled and powerfully motivated to make some major changes for the better in your life and the life of the planet.

- Ken Knight, Garner, NC

## **The Network of Spiritual Progressives**

Many of the great social movements have tended to underplay or even deny a very important dimension of human life--the spiritual dimension. This deficit has limited the potential impact that all these movements could have. We have a movement promoting a very different kind of idea--one giving central focus to a spiritual vision--to create a positive alternative to our society's ethos of selfishness, materialism, and cynicism. The Network of Spiritual Progressives is a movement of people from many faiths and traditions, including those who do not consider themselves religious, coming together by a vision of healing and transforming our world.

Here is our new Earth Community spiritual story: Love is a powerful force in the world. People are turning to a way of life that places love, kindness, generosity, peace, non-violence, social justice, awe and wonder at the grandeur of creation, thanksgiving, humility and joy at the center of our lives. All life is interdependent, so that our individual and societal wellbeing depends upon the wellbeing of everyone else on the planet. Security will come when the world's economically prosperous countries are perceived to be leading forces championing an ethos of global generosity and sharing of resources, ecological responsibility, and spiritual and ethical sensitivity.

Since its founding in 2005 by Rabbi Michael Lerner with co-founders Cornel West and Sister Joan Chittister, the Network of Spiritual Progressives has grown to roughly 100 local chapters. It has been involved in lobbying efforts with Congress, staged major national conferences, and is currently sponsoring a "Generosity Sunday" campaign to promote a Global Marshall plan as an alternative to the current policy of dominating the world through military force and intimidation. More information is available at [www.spiritualprogressives.org](http://www.spiritualprogressives.org)

- Mike Ignatowski

# Views

## **In Service To the Whole**

Neva Welton said, "To be prosperous is to love and be loved and to have the privilege of living an authentic, creative life in service to the whole." David Korten said, "To the Spiritual Consciousness, the satisfaction of living in creative service to the whole is its own reward." Bo Chagnon said the best part of his experience was "doing what I believe is best for everyone."

## **In Service To the Whole, Continued**

We are hoping to explore the connection between service to the whole, spiritual consciousness, and the Great Turning in our March issue, when the focus will be consciousness.

Do you agree that service to the whole is the best part of an authentic, creative life?

Will service to the whole create the Great Turning?

Send your thoughts to [your-turn-editor@lycos.com](mailto:your-turn-editor@lycos.com), and on Valentine's Day we will send back a compilation of your ideas and an invitation to join a conference call.

Let me give you a word of the philosophy of reform.

The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims, have been born of earnest struggle.

The conflict has been exciting, agitating, all-absorbing, and for the time being, putting all other tumults to silence. It must do this or it does nothing.

If there is no struggle there is no progress.

Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightening.

They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.

This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle.

Power concedes nothing without a demand.

It never did and it never will.

Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both.

The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress. In the light of these ideas, Negroes will be hunted at the North, and held and flogged at the South so long as they submit to those devilish outrages, and make no resistance, either moral or physical.

Men may not get all they pay for in this world; but they must certainly pay for all they get.

If we ever get free from the oppressions and wrongs heaped upon us, we must pay for their removal. We must do this by labor, by suffering, by sacrifice, and if needs be, by our lives and the lives of others."

Frederick Douglass, 1857