

John McConnell



The man who started
EARTH DAY

by Fred Burrous

FORWARD

This modest publication is dedicated to my saintly friend, John McConnell.

John created EARTH DAY in the hope that each of us would take on some responsibility for the care and welfare of our planet. He hopes we will support local environmental programs and do all we can to “brighten the corner where we are.” In short, “think globally while acting locally.” Please help. Listed below are some of John’s many accomplishments:

His idea of dedicating a holiday to our planet was first initiated in November, 1969 at a *UNESCO Conference on the Environment* held in San Francisco.

This first EARTH DAY was held in the City of San Francisco on the first day of Spring in 1970.

He persuaded the Secretary-General of the United Nations, on February 26, 1971, to sign an EARTH DAY proclamation for the celebration of EARTH DAY on the first day of Spring.

He got the President of the United States, on March 20, 1975 to proclaim EARTH DAY as falling on the first day of Spring.

He has led *EARTH DAY at the United Nations* celebrations on the day of the Spring Equinox every year since 1971.

He created The Earth Flag which now flies all around the world.



Youngsters, rather than global dignitaries, rang the UN Peace Bell on Earth Day in 1994. They were from Israel and Palestine.

“Peace begins in the mind,” McConnell told the UN Secretary-General, “We need a designated time for reflection on the beauty, and, well . . . the inherent fragility of our planet . . . a time for celebration.” He paused a moment searching for the right words. “And it needs to start right here at the UN!”

John McConnell, former publisher of a small newspaper in California, implored U Thant, renowned man of peace: “The time should be at the moment of the Spring Equinox, a holy day since antiquity.” He studied U Thant’s face.

The leader of the world organization was clearly very interested. An animated discussion followed.

The two agreed that EARTH DAY would be observed at the United Nations at the moment of each Spring Equinox, an event first celebrated in San Francisco in 1970. And, that the UN’s Peace Bell, made of coins donated by children around the world, should be rung to announce the time for all to pray, meditate or think deeply of their responsibility for our planet’s care.

John felt strongly that we all should have a common annual “Earth Holiday” to recognize we are one family united in the need to promote harmony with all humans as well as with nature.



DEVELOPMENT OF EARTH DAY

John, in 1957, attracted the attention of many world leaders with an idea for the launching of a visible satellite to be called *Star of Hope*. Eleanor Roosevelt asked to meet with him. He flew across country with Werner von Braun, perhaps the world's leading authority on space travel at the time. Braun was fascinated with John's ideas and stated that he would support the *Star of Hope* initiative.

In his meeting with Mrs. Roosevelt, John emphasized a *Star of Hope* could inspire a global good will crusade so the energies devoted to war could be diverted into more peaceful and productive purposes. Mrs. Roosevelt replied, "Yes, then we could eliminate hunger and poverty."

President Eisenhower shortly thereafter concurred and passed the idea on to the *National Science Foundation*.

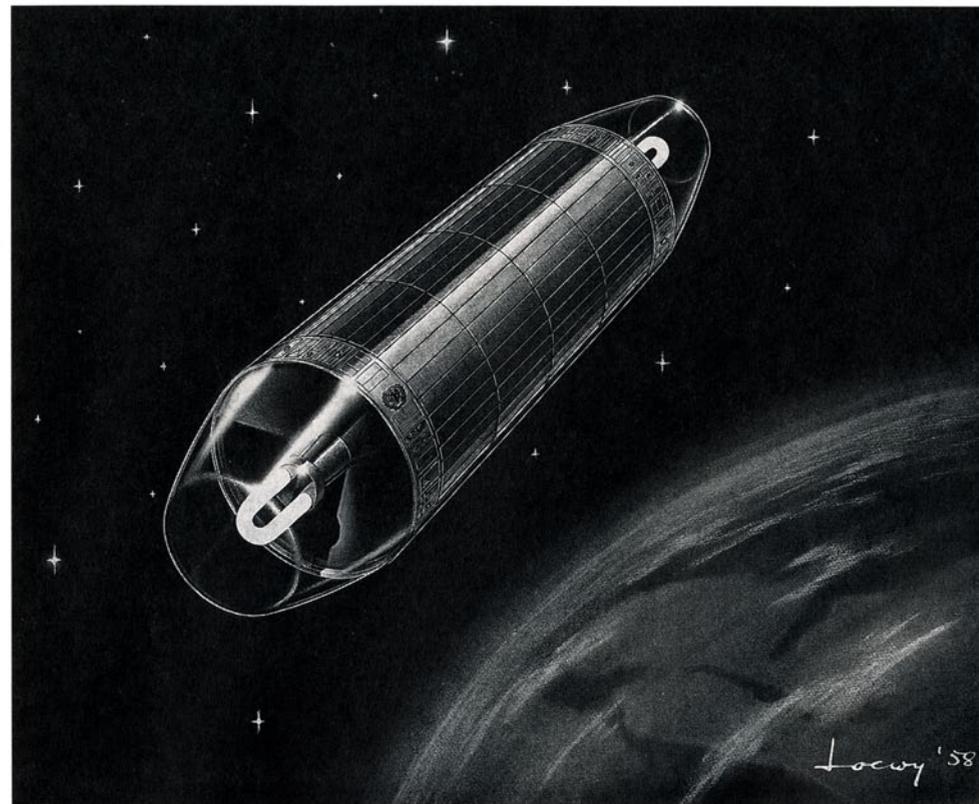
While John was attending the Atoms for Peace conference in Geneva, where many of our world's top scientists were wrestling with the problems of world peace, he succeeded in getting the chair and many other leading delegates to sign his *Star of Hope* document. His idea was now endorsed by many of our planet's most respected scientists.

John was thrilled to play a role in getting the leaders of the nations of the world to agree to no more atomic explosions in the atmosphere. It was a big step forward.

It was at this time the seed of *EARTH DAY* began to grow in his fertile mind. John had spoken to many delegates at the conference on how to get the people of the world to agree on something that would help heal, build, and unite all people as one single global family.

When President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, John urged that a *Minute for Peace* be aired on all radio stations to signify the official end of the world's mourning for the loss of the dynamic young leader. Best tribute, he believed, would be a new focus on world peace.

Eleven days before President Kennedy's death, John had discussed the idea of one minute Public Service announcements on radio and television that would increase efforts for peaceful progress at home and abroad. This discussion was with Jules



Proposed Star of Hope Satellite - 1958
Astrophysicist S. Fred Singer supported John McConnell's *Star of Hope* proposal, submitting a description of its function and operations, along with Raymond Loewy's design, to the National Science Foundation

Dundes, manager of KCBS radio in San Francisco. With the death of the young president, the Bay Area Broadcasters Association and the City of San Francisco joined in a *Minute for Peace Day* on December 22, 1963.

President Lyndon B. Johnson sent him a telegram of appreciation. In 1965, John obtained the interest of U Thant in his *Minute for Peace*. The Secretary-General recorded the first *Minute for Peace* from the United Nations.

The message, carried around the world, asked that we all "Set aside some time each day . . . to devote even one minute for thoughts of peace and goodwill." John made recordings of the

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*Proposal for an Orbiting Information
and Communications Satellite for
World Peace and Development*

STAR OF HOPE SATELLITE

ORBIT

The "Star of Hope" module would be "Piggybacked" on a satellite in low earth orbit (60-90 miles). It would come within range of any part of the world twice a day. Each year space nations launch dozens of such satellites for government and commercial applications. Arrangements should be made 2-3 years ahead of launch date for the inclusion of the additional square foot of space in an appropriate configuration weighing approximately 100 pounds.

FUNCTIONS

In addition to the solar-cell powered signal light - the beacon that would pulse at the rate of the heartbeat of a child - the satellite module should be a low-power, large memory (1 million characters or a thousand pages), high capability, multi-function orbiting interactive, information and communications center. It would be an electronic world post office, bulletin board, library, data-base and conference center devoted to global exchange of digital information - both audio and written word on peacekeeping, health and welfare, renewable energy, low-cost habitat, food production and literacy and the arts. It would contain an updatable micro-record of the signatures of all supporters. A replica would be on display in the UN and personalized copies would be available as a memento to individual supporters.

ACCESS

World-wide all non-profit and educational organizations involved in the above categories would be given a code to have access to the satellite through low-cost (\$1,000) KU band receiving dishes. Each receiver would serve an entire nation through a free access 800 telephone number. Anyone with a personal computer can then communicate with the satellite - to send or receive messages, get information, place inquiries and enter on-line conferences. It would be an orbiting "Switchboard" - not so much a repository for information but, rather, a point of meeting and exchange of information. It will come within range of any part of the world twice a day.



EARTH DAY



"EARTH DAY is the first holy day which transcends all national boundaries, yet preserves all geographical integrities, spans mountains and oceans and time belts and is devoted to the preservation of the harmony of nature and yet draws upon the triumphs of technology.

EARTH DAY draws upon an astronomical phenomenon in a new way - which is also the most ancient way - using the Vernal Equinox, when the sun crosses the equator, making night and day of equal length in all parts of the earth.

EARTH DAY begins with the striking of the Peace Bell at United Nations, joined by gongs and bells ringing around the world. The celebration offends no historical calendar, yet it transcends them all,"

Margaret Mead Earth Day 1977

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Peace Bell to be used as background for other versions of the *Minute For Peace*.

Among the many celebrities who sent John congratulations was author Eric Fromm: "If we could get a substantial number of people awakening each day and taking one minute to think what each could do to make our planet a safer, happier place, we would make civilization's greatest leap forward."

BIRTH OF THE FIRST EARTH DAY

John McConnell first proposed the Vernal Equinox as the day for the international community to join in celebration of Earth at the UNESCO conference on *Man and His Environment*

held in San Francisco in November, 1969. The conferees fully endorsed the proposal, and UNESCO became a co-sponsor of the event held at the United Nations for the past 25 years.

In October of that year, John, then living in Oakland, California, presented the concept to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors calling for:

A day to celebrate our global unity and destiny. The observance of EARTH DAY will alert concern and interest for our planet — with its precious treasure of living things, and remind each person of his/her right and the equal right of every other person to the use of this global home and at the same time the equal responsibility of each person to preserve and improve the Earth and the quality of life thereon.

He proposed that the day be the Vernal Equinox — the first day of Spring. A proclamation was issued by Mayor Joseph L. Alioto on February 11, 1970 declaring “Earth Day – a special day to remember Earth’s tender seedlings of life and people.” Many organizations and individuals joined in the celebrations:

KRON-TV, the San Francisco NBC affiliate, ran a half-hour special extolling the beauties of the world.

The local Red Cross raised the Earth Flag (designed by John McConnell) over Union Square. They, at the instigation of *Artists Embassy International*, distributed tree seedlings to the city’s schools, so the children could participate in EARTH DAY.

The Junior Chamber of Commerce urged activities and legislation that would diminish pollution and encourage preservation of the environment.

The California cities of Berkeley and Davis joined in celebrating the world’s first EARTH DAY.

A congressman presented a bill to the House of Representatives to declare EARTH DAY a national day of reflection and focus on the preservation of Earth.



United Nations Secretary General U Thant, Earth Day 1971
“May there only be peaceful and cheerful Earth Days to come for our beautiful spaceship earth as it continues to spin and circle in frigid space with its warm and fragile cargo of animate life”

THE FIRST "INTERNATIONAL" EARTH DAY

In 1971, John's conception of EARTH DAY was accepted at the United Nations, as it has been ever since with the ringing of the Peace Bell. U Thant, Secretary-General, officiated at the UN's first EARTH DAY celebration.

The New York Times *Quotation of the Day* was taken from his speech at the ceremony: "May there only be peaceful and cheerful Earth Days to come for our beautiful Spaceship Earth as it continues to spin and circle in frigid space with its warm and fragile cargo of animate life."

Many of our planet's top dignitaries have rung the Peace Bell at the exact moment of the equinox in the years that followed.

BIRTH OF THE SECOND EARTH DAY

Barely a month after the first Earth Day, a second "EARTH DAY" emerged. Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, created an *Environmental Teach-In* to protest the destruction of life on our planet. It was not meant to be a holiday but a month-long series of events and demonstrations. Unlike the original EARTH DAY, it was not focused on solutions, but on problems.

At the UNESCO Conference, John was approached by two of Nelson's volunteers to merge his "holiday" with their month of teach-ins. John pointed out that having an EARTH DAY that transcended national borders without violating any geographic markers was the ideal holy day for our planet. Using the vernal equinox, the time when the sun crosses the equator making night and day of equal length everywhere on our planet, he said, was in harmony with many other holy days dating back to antiquity.

He later pointed out that the date they selected, April 22, 1970 was celebrated by millions as the 100th birthday of Vladimir Lenin, founder of Bolshevism.

EARTH DAY TODAY

For the past 25 years John has been concentrating on working with the United Nations to promote peace and prosperity through-out all the world. He first called his event *International Earth Day* in the 1970 proclamation which was released worldwide by Secretary-General U Thant.

John has suggested that it should be explained the April 22 EARTH DAY is really *Environment Day* or *Ecology Day* (as said before, it was originally called the *Environmental Teach-In*, a month-long event). In the future, a different name would avoid confusion.

Never-the-less, John is pleased the April 22 event has also created so much attention to the needs of our ailing planet.

EARTH DAY IN THE FUTURE

Margaret Mead, who together with John, created *The Earth Society Foundation*, observed: "Earth Day celebrates the interdependence within the natural world of all living things, humanity's utter dependence upon - our only home - and in turn the vulnerability of this earth of ours to the ravages of irresponsible technological exploitation. It celebrates our long past in which we have learned so much of the ways of the universe, and of our long future, if only we apply what we know responsibly and wisely."

John adds to this: "Let us all work toward the goal of making our precious planet safer and better for all living things." John believes the key to a better future is a new identity so "each of us can think and act as trustees of our common planet. All of us can confirm this identity by our silent dedication when the Peace Bell rings on Earth Day."

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June 24, 1970

by the people of Earth
for the people of Earth

EARTH DAY PROCLAMATION

Whereas; A new world view is emerging; through the eyes of our Astronauts and Cosmonauts we now see our beautiful blue planet as a home for all people, and

Whereas; Planet Earth is facing a grave crisis which only the people of Earth can resolve, and the delicate balances of nature, essential for our survival, can only be saved through a global effort, involving all of us, and

Whereas; In our shortsightedness we have failed to make provisions for the poor, as well as the rich, to inherit the Earth, and our new enlightenment requires that the disinherited be given a just stake in the Earth and its future -- their enthusiastic cooperation is essential if we are to succeed in the great task of Earth renewal, and

Whereas; World equality in economics as well as politics would remove a basic cause of war, and neither Socialism, Communism nor Capitalism in their present forms have realized the potentials of Man for a just society; nor educated Man in the ways of peace and creative love, and

Whereas; Through voluntary action individuals can join with one another in building the Earth in harmony with nature, and promote support thereof by private and government agencies, and

Whereas; Individuals and groups may follow different methods and programs in Earthkeeping and Earthbuilding, nevertheless by constant friendly communication with other groups and daily meditation on the meaning of peace and good will they will tend more and more to be creative, sensitive, experimental, and flexible in resolving differences with others, and

Whereas; An international EARTH DAY each year can provide a special time to draw people together in appreciation of their mutual home, Planet Earth, and bring a global feeling of community through realization of our deepening desire for life, freedom and love, and our mutual dependence on each other,

Be it Therefore Resolved; That each signer of this People Proclamation will seek to help change Man's terrible course toward catastrophe by searching for activities and projects which in the best judgement of the individual signer will:

peacefully end the scourge of war

provide an opportunity for the children of the disinherited poor to obtain their rightful inheritance in the Earth

redirect the energies of industry and society from progress through products... to progress through harmony with Earth's natural systems for improving the quality of life

That each signer will (his own conscience being his judge) measure his commitment by how much time and money he gives to these purposes, and realizing the great urgency of the task, he will give freely of his time and money to activities and programs he believes will best further these Earth renewal purposes. (At least nine percent of the world's present income is going to activities that support war and spread pollution. Ten percent can tip the balance for healthy peaceful progress.)

Furthermore, each signer will support and observe EARTH DAY on March 21st, 1974 (Vernal Equinox -- when night and day are equal throughout the Earth) with reflection and actions that will encourage a new respect for Earth, with its great potentials for fulfilling Man's highest dreams; and on this day will join at 1900 Universal Time in a global EARTH HOUR-- a silent hour for peace...

*Time changed to moment of the Equinox 1973.

<i>Richard B. ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>	<i>Paul ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>
<i>Robert ...</i>	<i>Hugh ...</i>	<i>Robert ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>
<i>Luther ...</i>	<i>James ...</i>	<i>Robert ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>
<i>George ...</i>	<i>Wade ...</i>	<i>Robert ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>
<i>David ...</i>	<i>Donald ...</i>	<i>Isaac ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>
<i>...</i>	<i>...</i>	<i>Edward ...</i>	<i>John ...</i>
<i>...</i>	<i>...</i>	<i>Al ...</i>	<i>...</i>
<i>Eugene ...</i>	<i>Rose ...</i>	<i>Cynthia ...</i>	<i>...</i>
<i>...</i>	<i>...</i>		

PEOPLE WHO HAVE SIGNED EARTH DAY PROCLAMATION

ISSUED JUNE 21, 1970 TO FURTHER GLOBAL OBSERVANCE OF MARCH 20-21 (EARTH DAY) AS A DAY FOR THE CARE OF EARTH. UNITED NATIONS RELEASE (FEBRUARY 26, 1971) FOR EARTH DAY, 1971.

Alexander B. Grannis	<i>New York Assemblyman</i>
Judith Hollister	<i>The Temple of Understanding</i>
Luther Evans	<i>Former Director General of UNESCO</i>
Estelle Feldman	<i>Chair (from Ireland)</i>
	<i>Commission on Man and the Environment of</i>
	<i>1970 World Youth Assembly</i>
David R. Brower	<i>Founder, Friends of the Earth</i>
Arvid Pardo	<i>Ambassador, UN Mission to Malta</i>
Margaret Mead	<i>Anthropologist</i>
Eugene McCarthy	<i>U.S. Senator from Minnesota</i>
John Gardner	<i>President, Common Cause</i>
Mike Gravel	<i>U.S. Senator from Alaska</i>
Hugh Scott	<i>U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania</i>
Buzz Aldrin	<i>American Astronaut</i>
S.O. Adebo	<i>President of UN Assembly (Nigeria)</i>
U Thant	<i>United Nations Secretary General (Ceylon)</i>
Maurice Strong	<i>UN Environmental Programme (Canada)</i>
Y. Fukusima	<i>Environmental Scientist (Japan)</i>
Rene J. Dubos	<i>Environmental Scientist</i>
Lubos Kohoutek	<i>Astronomer (Czechoslovakia)</i>
Buckminster Fuller	<i>Inventor, Scientist, Scholar</i>
Mark Hatfield	<i>U.S. Senator from Oregon</i>

NAMES ADDED FOR 20th ANNIVERSARY

John Denver	<i>Singer</i>
Robert Muller	<i>Former Assistant Secretary General United Nations</i>
	<i>(from France)</i>
Edward Abramson	<i>Chairman, Earth Day 1990</i>
Isaac Asimov	<i>Writer</i>
Aly Teymour	<i>United Nations Chief of Protocol (Egypt)</i>
Cynthia Lennon	<i>Artist (United Kingdom)</i>
Stan Lundine	<i>Lieutenant Governor, New York State</i>
David Dinkins	<i>Mayor of New York City</i>
Oscar Arias	<i>President of Costa Rica</i>
Audrey McLaughlin	<i>Leader, NDP, House of Commons, Canada</i>
George Fernandes	<i>Minister of Transportation, Government of India</i>
Carlos Salinas	<i>President of Mexico</i>



United Nations Earth Day Ceremony, 1993

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The Earth Flag

There it was. So tiny. So blue. So beautiful. So alone. Floating in pitch black space. Our precious planet. Our one, our only home.

John was overcome with emotion. . . "If a photograph affects me like this, think how the actual sight must have hit our astronauts."

John was referring to the first photo of our planet taken from space. It appeared in *Life Magazine* in 1969.

"With this photo, millions of us became aware of both the beauty and the inherent fragility of our tiny, tiny planet," John has asserted. "It gave us a new and reverent feeling of awe and wonder."

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our creed

We will do all we can to
brighten the corner where
we are - to make our planet
nicer and prettier.

RAM

EARTH DAY, 1975 - THE WHITE HOUSE

A PROCLAMATION

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The earth will continue to regenerate its life sources only as long as we and all the peoples of the world do our part to conserve its natural resources. It is a responsibility which every human being shares.

Energy problems have heightened our growing awareness of the interdependence of our natural resources. We must work together to solve the environmental issues associated with the proper use and preservation of these resources.

Through voluntary action, each of us can join in building a productive land in harmony with nature.

By a joint resolution, the Congress has pointed out the need to continue our environmental education and to promote a greater understanding of the environmental problems facing America.

NOW, THEREFORE, I GERALD FORD, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, March 21, 1975, as Earth Day. I call upon all concerned citizens and government officials to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I ask that special attention be given to personal voluntary activities and educational efforts directed toward protecting and enhancing our life-giving environment.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-five, and of independence of The United States of America the one hundred ninety-ninth.

GERALD FORD



This moment - this conceptional revolutionary moment - must be preserved, he thought. Suddenly he saw in his mind's eye the flag of the United Nations flying proudly in the wind. "It reminds us of all the nations of our planet and all the people," he thought. "This Life photo - on a flag - wouldn't it remind us of our responsibility to our beautiful but fragile planet?"

His special interest was the result of years of effort to promote international cooperation in space. This went back to 1957, to the "Star of Hope" editorial in his weekly newspaper in North Carolina that attracted national attention.

"As I looked at the *Life* photo," John asserts, "it occurred to me that an Earth Flag could symbolize and encourage our new perspective. The Earth as seen from space was the best possible symbol for this purpose."

He called the *National Aeronautics and Space Administration* and spoke to the head of public relations.

"When I told him I would like a transparency of the photo used in *Life* for an Earth Flag, he commented, "What a wonderful idea."

John got his transparency. In discussing his idea for an Earth Flag with others, he received many suggestions. Yet he felt that simplicity offered the best solution. "Just show Planet Earth as seen from space," his intuition told him.

The flag was copyrighted in 1969. A year later a registered trademark was obtained.

Initially he stated: "The Earth Flag was created to remind us that each person has a basic right to use the Earth and an equal responsibility to build the Earth. All nations have flags. The UN has a flag, states have flags and businesses have flags. There ought to be a flag that's just for people."

In Geneva, in 1973, he showed the flag to historian Denis de Rougemont. His comment: "You sure have the right one!" He confirmed that John's earth photo was considered the first taken from space.

"We had 500 12" x 18" (31.5 x 47 cm.) Earth Flags produced by the American Flag Company in New Jersey. Our first 500 flags were produced in a hurry in order to use

EARTH FLAG PLEDGE



*I pledge allegiance to the flag of Earth
and to the planet for which it stands.*

*I will seek in my own way to be a Trustee
of the Planet Earth,*

*Seeking protection and nurture of Earth's natural
resources and its creatures great and small.*

*With fair benefits to all people of Earth,
diverse in cultures and creeds, but indivisible
in their dependence on Earth's natural bounty
and balance.*

them at the 'Moon Watch' at Central Park in New York City. This was the big event where we watched and celebrated the first landing on the Moon on July 20, 1969," John reports. "Prominent at the ceremony was a large Earth Flag especially made by volunteers. Several hundred of the small flags were either sold or given away."

John laughed as he told that in the rush to make these first flags, the colors in the screening of the Earth were reversed. "They are probably collectors' items today" he says on the few remaining in his possession.

Shortly thereafter, John was off to California to initiate his first efforts for EARTH DAY. On the first EARTH DAY, March 21, 1970, the City of San Francisco flew his Earth Flag.

Schools, churches, ecology groups, businesses, and youth organizations were quick to fly and display the planet's new flag.

John McConnell has received many heart-warming letters about its effect on people. None does he prize more than one from a tiny isle in the Shetland Islands:

I received the large flag in beautiful condition and I love it. It is now serving as a curtain in my room. The first morning I woke up with it, there the sunrise was shining through it and could imagine the exhilaration the astronauts must experience when they see this beautiful planet, Mother Earth, in its full glory!

In one interesting case, students in Hayward, California draped a steam roller with the flags and flowers while singing "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" Quite obviously, they managed to delay the paving of their school yard.

Since that time requests for the flags have poured in from all corners of our planet. The Earth Flag is displayed in most state capitals and thousands of offices and homes in the majority of the countries of our world. It has been displayed at UN conferences and was featured in Margaret Mead's celebrated Earth Day essay carried around the world by UPI. John has a photo of the flag flying over the South Pole as part of his extensive Earth Flag collection.

When the city of New York celebrated its ethnic diversity in a program at Central Park, 30 of the large Earth Flags were centrally displayed. An executive of the city's Parks Department confided later: "It solved a pressing problem. All you'd have to do is leave out one (ethnic) flag and you'd have a crisis. The Earth Flag covers everybody."

At an Earth Flag ceremony held in New York City in 1978, John stated;

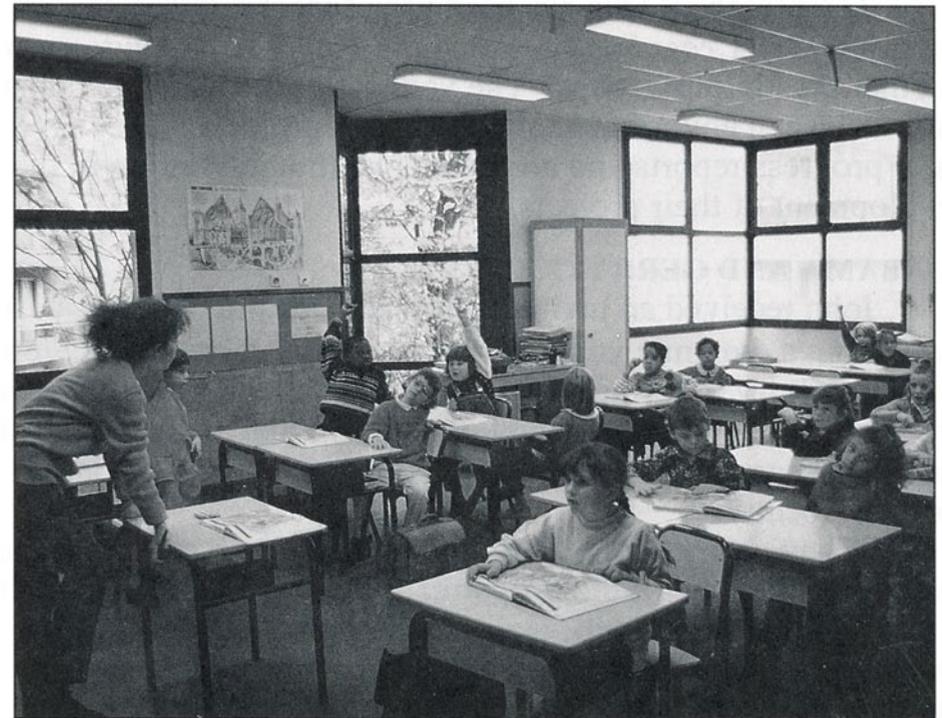
"We raise the Earth Flag to encourage and inspire love of Earth.

We raise the Earth Flag to enlist and unite young and old in courageous action for our planet's protection -- for cautious nurture of its life and care of its resources in every acre and in all neighborhoods.

We raise the Earth Flag as a promise to all who work to help our planet that they and their children will obtain a fair stake in Earth and its future, with equitable access to its beauty and bounty.



Young Earth Trustees in Sarasota, Florida



Discussing Earth Day in Paris, France

EARTH TRUSTEES

“Any person who makes responsible choices in ecology economics and ethics that benefit people and our planet, is an *Earth Trustee*,” John has affirmed.

He has been using the term *Earth Trustee* since the early ‘70s. Since the founding of EARTH DAY, he has been concentrating on getting as many of us as possible taking on responsibility for our planet’s welfare. Today many groups are using this designation which pleases John greatly.

Today his concentration is mostly on “creating a whole new generation of Earth Trustees.”

YOUNG EARTH TRUSTEES

His preschool program - *Young Earth Trustees* (YET) - has been tested, and the results presented to UNICEF, UNESCO and UNEP. All have environmental programs for school-age children but none for preschool youngsters. All have shown interest in the program and have pledged to help in the global spread in any way they can.

The preschool idea has been used successfully by the *League of Red Cross Societies* and *the Young Astronauts* as well as other prestigious groups. The youngsters are asked to come up with their own environmental “hands-on” projects. They give daily progress reports and are given maximum freedom in the development of their projects.

ALABAMA AND GERRY COFFEYAL

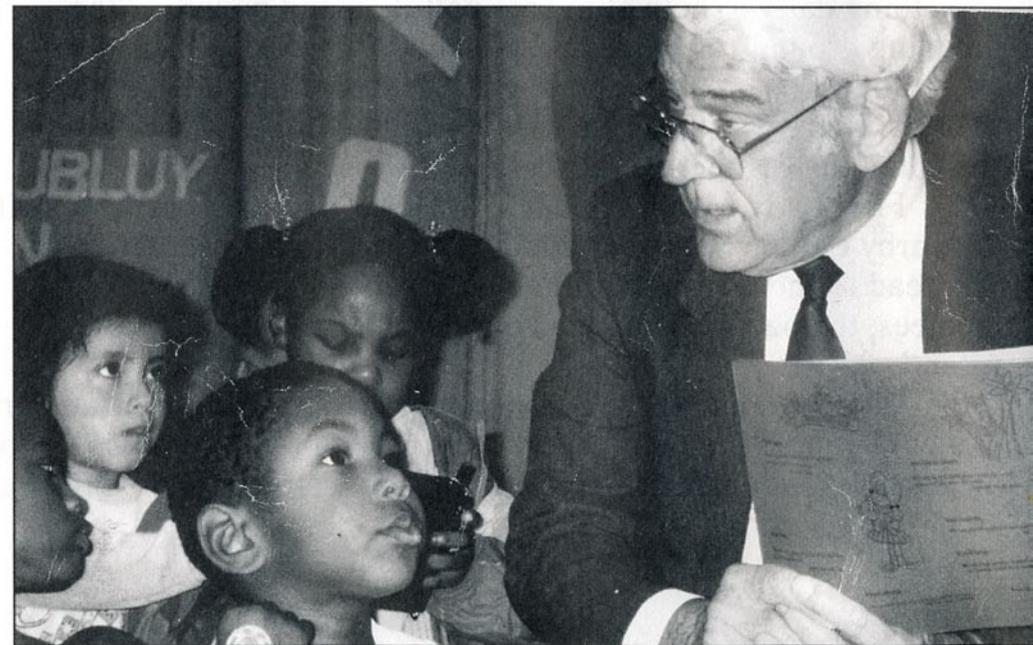
John received an invitation to visit Decatur, Alabama. It came from a dynamic young grandmother by the name of Gerry Coffey. Gerry, a former foreign correspondent, was concerned about her state’s environmental problems. She and her husband, Ray, a former Army officer, have both a radio and television program locally.

“They call our state ‘the toxic waste dump of the nation,’” she told John on her radio program. “What can we do about it?”

John replied, “Well, we’re looking for the world’s first Earth Trustee Community?” Yes, he posed the answer as a question.



Alabama's First Lady, Marsha Folsom, taught our nation's first official *Young Earth Trustees* class. All had ideas on how they could make our planet “nicer and prettier.”



The Mayor of Decatur, Alabama tells preschoolers about *Young Earth Trustees*.

Gerry said she held her breath . . . Could our state be considered? She asked the question out loud this time.

“Mr. McConnell’s reply became our rallying cry: ‘Alabama is first in our nation alphabetically, first in Space, and Alabama can be first in the environment!’”

Some two weeks later, John joined 22 concerned local citizens representing international corporations, parents, teachers, merchants and students at an Alabama Town Meeting held at the Calhoun Community College. Gerry tells us that “After two hours of spirited discussion, I went out on a limb. ‘How many of you,’ I asked, ‘are willing to commit to becoming the core committee for the world’s first Earth Trustee Community?’”

She tells us she held her breath and her heart was beating like a trip-hammer, her eyes glued on the faces around her. A hand went slowly up, other hands followed until all were held high.

This beginning was followed by official Earth Trustee proclamations by the mayors of Decatur and nearby Huntsville, the Morgan County Board of Supervisors, WAAY-TV, and Jim Folsom, the governor of Alabama.

All proclamations requested that every Alabaman do something daily to help eliminate pollution and poverty, “the breeding grounds of crime and violence.”

John was greatly encouraged, “It seemed that everyone in the state was eager to, as we used to sing in Sunday School, ‘brighten the corner where you are.’”

First Lady Marsha Folsom, at Gerry’s request, made a visit to nearby Crump School to conduct a teach-in for preschoolers. She read to them from our *Teacher’s Album* about “the birds, the bees, the people, who need our help in making our planet safer.”

When she asked the question “What can we do to make our planet nicer and prettier?” every hand shot up. Suggestions to go on trash walks, grow flowers, recycle, etc. came out like wildfire.



OUTRIDERS OF TOMORROW

The first individuals who register their names as Earth Trustees, committing themselves to choose actions that will help achieve Earth Trustee goals, will be acting as “outriders of tomorrow,” pointing the way to Earth’s rejuvenation. Institutions -- municipalities, corporations, unions, service clubs, etc... -- who establish an Earth Trustee program to further Earth Trustee goals, may register as Earth Trustee Organizations.

Receiving a proposal made early in the Space program, efforts are being made to launch a visible Star of Hope Satellite by the year 2000. This symbol of goodwill and hope for a better future will carry the names of Earth Trustee individuals and institutions in a Star of Hope Memory Disk. The satellite will have a polar orbit, be seen every night on every continent -- as bright as Venus -- and signal the latest data on what Earth Trustees are doing and can do to win the battle for Earth, with new reports on actions to nurture life on our planet and provide better opportunities for everyone to realize their best potentials.

By acting now, in the next century we can see rapid progress toward a healthy prosperous future all over the world. To register your name in the Star of Hope Memory Disk as an Earth Trustee, send a contribution of five dollars or more to the Earth Society Foundation, the tax exempt organization that supports and organizes the annual Earth Day celebrated at the United Nations; a seeker and developer of policies and programs in ecology, economics and ethics for the benefits of people and planet.

STAR OF HOPE

The object of Star of Hope and its symbolism is to encourage a global state of mind that will focus on solutions with a new sense of responsibility. When the Star of Hope Satellite is launched, a child looking up at the night may say, “That’s the Star of Hope. My name’s in it. I’m a Trustee of Planet Earth.”

EARTH SOCIETY FOUNDATION

John McConnell and Margaret Mead set up the Foundation in 1976. It was incorporated in the State of New York for the purpose of:

Encouraging people of all races, creeds, and religions, nationalities and ideologies to become active participants in the preservation of the Earth's natural resources.

Seeking to redirect the energies of governments, industries, and individuals away from destruction, waste and pollution of the physical environment and toward the development of products and services which will protect, enhance and improve the condition of the Earth, on the land and sea, and thereby benefit all the citizens of all nations.

Encourage and increase awareness of Earth life through the exposure to nature's wonders and through individual silent reflection, meditation, or prayer-seeking attitudes, feelings, and conduct that will foster unity and cooperation in the love and care of Earth.

Conduct educational programs and seminars and promote research and investigation throughout the world for the purpose of providing data to all individuals and institutions who are joining in the movement to promote and implement the Earth care ethic: namely, that the stewardship and care of Earth requires action to produce and use materials and services that help nurture, conserve and recycle, without destructive pollution, the organisms and nutrients of Earth's web of life. Coordinate or assist the work of like-minded organizations for the purposes of minimizing unnecessary duplication of energies and maximizing the impact and effectiveness of the Earth care movement.

John McConnell celebrated his 80th birthday about 48 hours after the 25th Anniversary Observance of *Earth Day* at the United Nations.

His close friends and international dignitaries met at a gathering planned by *Earth Society Foundation* President, Hans Janitschek.

All agreed that John will go down in history as one of the century's truly great social motivators. Modest, self-effacing and still highly productive in spite of the weight of eight decades, few men have had such a positive effect on the welfare of people, plants, all living things.

You, who read this modest tribute, can best honor him by becoming involved in community environmental programs. Your example will motivate countless others. And for that, John and all involved with him, will be grateful. As will all living things on our precious planet.

Earth Magna Charta

EARTH TRUSTEE GOALS

ECOLOGY

Protection and nurture of Earth's life and natural resources by Earth Care choices in buying, selling and giving; choices that diminish pollution and increase Earth's natural equilibrium and bounty.

ECONOMICS

Action and programs that will provide people everywhere, including the disinherited poor, a stake in their planet -- a secure homestead in city or country with stable money and fair credit for everyone.

ETHICS

An inner commitment -- through daily prayer, mediation or reflection, -- to combine love of God (or love of the mystery that is the source of life) with love of world neighbors and love of Earth, joining each year on EARTH DAY, at the time of the March 20-21 Equinox, in a global dedication to this task.

Every Earth Trustee is urged to join some group with a project for the care of Earth that meets some of the above criteria and to network or be a connecting link between two or more groups who are pursuing these purposes.

Global acceptance of responsibility for protection and nurture of life on our amazing planet will bring new hope, health and prosperity for all Earth's people. We will continue the human quest for meaning and purpose in the Cosmos-- "Why are we here and where are we going?" We will seek answers to the enigmas of time and space. We will test hypotheses about creation and moral creeds by how much they inspire freedom and order, faith and love.

A new day is dawning. Light is piercing our gloom,. New life is stirring in our bones. We're learning the meaning of love. We can, we will, now make of our planet a Garden of Eden.... our home in space, a nest surrounded by beckoning stars.

John McConnell's inspiring and carefully crafted document, The Earth Magna Charta could serve as a vital global rallying cry at this moment in history.

George Gallup, Jr., Chairman
The George H. Gallup International Institute

Almost from the moment John conceived the EARTH DAY idea, he envisioned all of us who travel on Planet Earth taking responsibility for its welfare. He has been working tirelessly to this end. One result of this work is the Earth Magna Charta. His Earth Magna Charta has gone through many revisions as a result of suggestions solicited from globally prominent people.

According to studies by the Gallup International Institute, "People around the world appear ready to shift from short-term to long-term thinking regarding the environment and economic growth. Furthermore, populaces seem to be coming more aware of the need for individuals to take responsibility for the environment and they're ready to see themselves as part of the problem."

Gallup points out that "in view of this changing global mood, a clear statement of goals and policies is sorely needed."

He felt that John has the answer in his Earth Magna Charta. John will gladly send an autographed copy to anyone. Mail check or money order for \$5.00 to Ridgewood Printing (to cover publishing and mailing costs). The address is:

This is a gift from John and Anna McConnell.
Please read, sign, date, and pass this booklet on
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