

## Earth Day Reflections at Purcell Park Pond, Harrisonburg, Virginia

April 22, 2021 Lynn Smith

Can we humans ever conceptualize that the work of all Earth's living things and living systems is an essential web that sustains all life? We cannot continue to use without preserving or restoring or giving back what WE HUMANS take from Earth only to waste and destroy resources. We do not realize the value of what we think has somehow been given to us alone to selfishly, thoughtlessly use, destroy and abandon. What if we had to pay for all that seems to be free for us to take? How will we learn the true cost of our excesses?

The bill is now coming due. Will we, can we, ever understand the depth of our ignorance and fallibility and correct the deficit?

Today I have brought a pledge to be Earth stewards from the book *We Are Water Protectors* by Ojibwe author Carole Lindstrom illustrated by Tlingit and Haida tribal artist Michaela Goade.

This 2021 winner of the Caldecott medal, with its inspiring indigenous story, asks us to honor Earth, our one and only home, and pledge to stand as Earth Stewards and Water Protectors.

I have amended the pledge for myself to include:

\*plants and all organisms on and under the ground which are building, restoring, and strengthening soil, and

\*\*ocean environments which human actions have poisoned, trashed, injured and comprised.

### **EARTH STEWARD AND WATER PROTECTION PLEDGE**

I will do my best to honor Mother Earth and all living beings, including the water and land.

I will always remember to treat the Earth as I would like to be treated.

I will treat ...

the winged ones, the crawling ones,

the four-legged, the two legged,

the plants\*, trees,

rivers, lakes, oceans\*\*,

the Earth

with kindness and respect.

I pledge to make this world a better place by being a steward of the Earth and a protector of the water.

My name \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date \_\_\_\_\_