

LEGACIES

THE EARTH NEEDS A FEW GOOD FRIENDS

SUMMER 2025

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS to Our Planet

Barbara “Kitti” Reynolds, a longtime supporter of Friends of the Earth and a member of the Shared Earth Society, has always felt a strong connection to her natural surroundings. She grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, in a neighborhood built on old farmland and remembers often hearing the songs of wood thrushes, meadowlarks and bobwhite quail.

With a passion for animals, Kitti enrolled at Earlham College, intending to become a veterinarian. Earlham also had an excellent biology department and a horse-riding program on campus. “Imagine getting physical education credit for learning to ride!” she says, laughing.

Kitti met her husband, Lee, at college and also took up birding. After graduation, the couple both worked for the University of Georgia at the Coweeta Hydrologic Lab, a U.S. Forest Service research laboratory, where her interests shifted towards ecology. Once her son started first grade, Kitti began studying for her master’s degree in insect ecology, focusing on canopy arthropods at Coweeta, where she used canopy walkways to reach the leaves that housed the arthropods.

“I loved academia and studying ecology at UGA, so I began a five-year journey of more coursework and studies at Coweeta—this time on the ground! I examined how the inputs of canopy insects affected



Barbara “Kitti” Reynolds

soil microarthropods and the decomposition process along an elevation gradient,” Kitti explained.

After graduating, Kitti accepted a position at the University of North Carolina-Asheville, where she taught courses in the humanities, ecology and air pollution. At UNC, Kitti continued her research on soil microarthropods and decomposition at Coweeta, involving many students in her studies.

Kitti retired in 2016 and has remained active by supporting various environmental and birding organizations while traveling on birding trips. “My support for Friends of the Earth probably began then, if not earlier. FOE is a small organization and can pivot. Other, larger organizations are probably not able to be as nimble,” she says.

FOE’s work addressing the climate change crisis is critically important to Kitti. “I’m also against palm oil production—I’ve seen the plantations in places like Borneo, and they result in the loss of habitat for many birds plus other wonderful animals,” she notes.

As for Kitti’s hobbies— “did I mention birds?” she says. Her peers nominated her to serve on the board of her local Audubon group, and she is an active member of her local Peace and Earth Committee and Quaker Meeting. She also enjoys horseback riding, playing the piano and cultivating a

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A Legacy for a Healthier Earth

Including Friends of the Earth in your will or trust is a simple, meaningful way to protect the environment for future generations without affecting your finances today. Below, we've answered some common questions about how you can make a lasting commitment to the Earth.

Q: Why should I consider leaving a gift in my will or trust to Friends of the Earth?

A: A gift in your will or living trust—a bequest—is one of the most impactful ways you can protect people and the planet for future generations. It's a simple and flexible option that allows you to build a legacy of environmental justice without impacting your finances today.

Q: What types of bequests are there?

A: There are several easy ways to leave a bequest that reflects your values:

- **General bequest:** Leave a specific amount (e.g., \$50,000) to Friends of the Earth.
- **Percentage bequest:** Designate a percentage of your estate (e.g., 10% or 25%) to support our environmental advocacy.

- **Residuary bequest:** Give what's left of your estate after all other specific gifts are fulfilled.
- **Contingent bequest:** Make a gift that only takes effect if a specific condition is met (e.g., if a primary beneficiary is no longer living).

Q: How will my legacy gift make a difference?

A: Your bequest will help power bold action on climate change, protect biodiversity, defend environmental rights and hold polluters accountable. It's a long-term investment in a healthier, more just world for generations to come.

Q: Is it difficult to include Friends of the Earth in my will or trust?

A: Not at all. Whether you're updating your existing plans or starting from scratch, it's easy to include a bequest. Friends of the Earth has partnered with FreeWill to offer an easy, no-cost way to create or update your will, regardless of whether you choose to include a gift to Friends of the Earth. For more information, visit <https://www.freewill.com/foe> or foe.org/planned-giving or contact Caroline Bruder at (202) 222-0726 or cbruder@foe.org.

Q: How can I learn more or take the next steps?

A: We're here to provide more information about including Friends of the Earth in your plans. Contact us today!



A Gift That Gives Back

Many people are concerned about maintaining financial security in retirement while still seeking ways to make a lasting impact. The good news? You don't have to choose between supporting your loved ones and supporting the planet.

A charitable remainder trust (CRT) is a smart, flexible giving option that helps you do both.

This popular gift plan allows you to convert assets into lifetime income—for yourself or others—while ultimately supporting Friends of the Earth's mission to protect people and the planet.

With a CRT, you receive regular income—either a fixed amount or one that varies with

asset performance—based on your preferences and goals. Additional benefits include:

- Increased income from low-yield assets.
- Reduced or eliminated income, capital gains, estate and gift taxes.
- Potential for tax-free asset growth within the trust.
- A reliable income stream for you, your spouse or partner, children or other loved ones.
- There's even an option to use your IRA to fund your trust. With this option, there are certain restrictions in place.

By choosing a CRT, you can invest in a more sustainable future—for yourself and the Earth.

We're here to support you and your financial advisors as you explore the charitable options that align with your values.

Considering a Bequest?

If you are considering making Friends of the Earth a part of your legacy, please accept our thanks. Here is some suggested wording to share with your attorney:

"After fulfilling all other specific provisions, I give, devise and bequeath __% of the remainder [or \$_____] of my estate to Friends of the Earth, a District of Columbia charitable corporation [tax ID #23-7420660] currently having offices at 1101 15th Street NW, 11th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005."

Have you already made a gift through your estate plans? Please let us know so we can thank you and welcome you to our Shared Earth Society.

A Great Way to Give to the Future

One increasingly popular and effective way to support Friends of the Earth is through a donor advised fund (DAF). Giving through a DAF offers maximum tax benefits while giving you the flexibility to support environmental advocacy on your timeline.

Here's why a DAF is a smart way to make a lasting impact:

- **Immediate tax benefits:** You receive a charitable income tax deduction when you contribute to your DAF—even if you choose to grant funds to Friends of the Earth at a later time.
- **Flexible giving:** You decide how and when to distribute funds—whether through one-time gifts or recurring contributions. You can even name Friends of the Earth as a final beneficiary of your DAF.
- **Simplicity:** Your DAF sponsor handles all the administrative work, making the giving process seamless and stress-free.
- You can easily designate Friends of the Earth as a beneficiary of a DAF, creating a lasting environmental legacy.

When you give to Friends of the Earth through a DAF, you're helping protect communities, fight climate change and preserve biodiversity—on your terms.

If you plan to recommend a grant through your donor advised fund or have already done so, please let us know. This allows us to acknowledge your generosity and ensure your gift supports the environmental work you care about most.

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native plant garden in her yard. She loves spoiling her mixed-breed dog and cat, and more recently, she became the proud grandmother of a baby boy.

“I chose to leave a legacy gift to FOE because I want to protect the environment for generations of birds and other animals, and so now my grandson can enjoy what I have enjoyed,” says Kittie.

The purpose of this publication is solely educational, namely to provide general gift, estate, financial planning and related information. It is not intended as legal, accounting or other professional advice, and you should not rely on it as such. For assistance in planning charitable gifts with tax and other implications, the services of appropriate and qualified advisors should be obtained. Consult an attorney for advice if your plans require revision of a will or other legal document. Consult a tax and/or accounting specialist for advice regarding tax- and accounting-related matters. © Copyright 2025 by Sharpe Group. All Rights Reserved.



For more information on ways to include Friends of the Earth in your estate plan, please contact:

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