



THE SECOND

# QLF Alumni Congress

BARCELONA, CATALONIA, SPAIN

SUNDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2016 – WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2016



*At the Second QLF Alumni Congress, QLF Alumni, partner organizations, and practitioners convened in Barcelona to share knowledge of stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage, to catalyze conservation action, and to set QLF's agenda for the next decade. The ideas and connections generated at the Congress have the potential to make a lasting contribution to a more sustainable global community.*









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Design by Hird Graphic Design  
Printed at RAM Printing, Inc.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings to you, my QLF Colleagues, Alumni, and Friends.

An exciting new chapter in QLF's history began at the *Congress* held in Catalonia, Spain, in November 2016: ten years after our first *Congress* in Budapest, Hungary. I am grateful for the contributions and dedicated efforts of our QLF partners in Catalonia, *Congress* donors, Members of the Governing Boards, Alumni, Staff, and Consultants who collectively made the *Congress* a resounding success—in fact, it was better than I ever imagined.

We were 160 in total—an extraordinary group of Alumni, partners, and conservation practitioners from 38 countries, representing more than 100 organizations. The 2016 *Congress* gave us the chance to powerfully combine our knowledge, expertise, and passion for community-based conservation: and what I witnessed in Catalonia as a result was exhilarating. We rekindled friendships, ignited new energy for our future work, and forged alliances and working partnerships.

The ideas and commitments generated at the *Congress*, and especially during the workshops, affirm my belief that QLF's future holds great promise. Our path forward will be defined by our Global Leadership Network of Alumni, the outstanding individuals who are prominent leaders in conservation and stewardship, and who represent 75 countries and six global regions.

The *Congress* workshops, which provided the platform and fuel for the ideas generated at the *Congress*, were orchestrated masterfully by QLF Senior Vice President Brent Mitchell, along with facilitators, presenters, and *Congress* staff. The recommendations set forth at the workshop Plenary Session mirror my vision of QLF's future: that is, to direct current regional programs and international exchanges, and to launch new initiatives under the banner of the Global Leadership Network. As such, in the wake of the *Congress* we will roll out the following:

**PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS** – QLF is in dialogue with several organizations to establish new program partnerships with our respective Alumni.

**INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS** – QLF remains committed to directing international exchange programs. In particular, we will work to



QLF President Beth Alling addresses the *Congress* - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

revitalize the Middle East Program and expand the Southeast Asia Program.

**QLF GLOBAL** – QLF is developing a new consulting initiative named QLF Global, which is designed to offer consulting assignments to Alumni conservation leaders and practitioners. Assignments are expected to produce innovative solutions to shared local and regional environmental challenges worldwide, and to generate new funding sources for QLF.

I am excited by the energy that came out of this *Congress*, and by our re-confirmed potential for growth as we enter a new QLF chapter and pursue these new initiatives.

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Finally, on a personal note, I wish to express my gratitude to Larry Morris. Over the last fifteen years, I have been inspired by his leadership, his wit, and his vision. Always maintaining a deep connection with the people that make up our QLF family, Larry has never failed us in his belief that each one of us can make a difference.

Thank you, Larry, for your trust in me as a leader of this organization. It is an honor and a privilege to accept the mantle of leadership. I will carry forward and build on your extraordinary legacy as we face the challenges at hand in our world today.

Thanks, too, to all of you for a resounding success in Barcelona. The following pages contain an account of the *Congress*, and the important work that the *Congress* represents.

Beth Alling  
QLF President & CEO



## QLF ALUMNI IN CATALONIA

OVER DECADES, QLF HAS QUIETLY AND DELIBERATELY BUILT A NETWORK OF ALUMNI. There is overwhelming consensus that QLF's greatest strength over its history is its *cadré* of volunteers, interns, international fellows, and staff and consultants who have worked for over five decades in every capacity. QLF's Alumni number more than 5,000 and hail from 75 countries in six regions worldwide. Many are leaders in community and conservation, and share the same spirit and feelings about QLF, undiminished by time and geography. It is only fitting, 10 years after the first QLF *Alumni Congress* in Budapest hosted by the U.S. Ambassador to Hungary George H. Walker, to convene our Alumni once again, this time in Catalonia.

Catalonia (or Catalunya, in Catalan) lies in the northeastern corner of Spain, bordering France and Andorra, on the Iberian Peninsula. This region of Spain includes a section of the Pyrenees Mountains as well as approximately a quarter of the country's Mediterranean seaboard. Catalan terrain includes rocky coasts and mountains, fertile plains and sandy shores. Protected areas, which include marine protected areas, comprise approximately 30% of the region. These areas are divided into

five types: national parks, natural sites of national interest, undeveloped nature reserves, partial nature reserves, and natural parks.

To QLF, Catalonia is distinctive not only for its stunning natural beauty and history of conservation, but also for the fact that QLF's relationship with Catalonia is well-established and has thrived over the latter half of our 56-year history. When QLF began an exchange program in Eastern Europe shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. asked QLF to include Catalonia in its Exchanges. The Fund recognized that the region was still emerging from the Franco regime

in much the same way that Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania were emerging from Soviet dominion.

A decade later, QLF's participatory approach to land stewardship found fertile ground in Catalonia, a region culturally and historically predisposed to a social approach to conservation. One Alumnus teamed with a savings bank to create a network of privately protected areas across Catalonia; another created a Catalan network of local organizations that supports individuals to manage private natural areas. In recent years, QLF advised these Alumni and others in a European Union project to promote land stewardship across the continent. Today, QLF has friends and Alumni across the country, and at high levels of government and NGO conservation agencies.

With this history in mind, QLF's objectives for this *Second Alumni Congress* were as follows: to provide an opportunity for Alumni to convene and network during working sessions and site visits; to share knowledge and expertise among a multi-disciplinary global network of conservation leaders and practitioners who continue to influence public policy at a regional and global level; and to launch new programs, partnerships, and consulting teams under the banner of the Global Leadership Network.



MAP BY STEPHEN ENGLE



Participants from *The First Alumni Congress* in Hungary, 2006 - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

## PRE-CONGRESS DONOR APPRECIATION DINNER

THE CITY OF BARCELONA, CAPITAL OF CATALONIA, sits nestled between the bright Mediterranean to the east and dusky, red-brown mountains to the west. Barcelona itself, in its multi-colored mosaics, fantastical buildings, and rich, storied culture, reflects the beauty of Catalonia's natural landscape. Barcelona's architectural landscape, famous in its own right, reflects a rich history of accepting new ideas and styles: a history that has resulted in a patchwork of distinctive districts which together tell the story of the city's growth from a medieval core, to the 19th century expansion, to today's ultra-modern showpieces and the city's Living Modernism. Throughout the *Congress*' time in Barcelona, we were lucky enough to experience many of Barcelona's masterpieces firsthand.

QLF's exploration of Barcelona's architecture and art began on Saturday, November 12, with the pre-*Congress* donor appreciation dinner. The dinner took place at the MUSEU NACIONAL D'ART DE CATALUNYA, a stunning mid-century Italian style palace at the top of the hill of Montjuïc, overlooking the city. Inside its walls, the Museu boasts an extensive collection depicting the history of Spanish art, with Romanesque murals and Renaissance paintings alongside Catalan Modernist works.

After a guided tour of a featured exhibit on modern art, QLF convened for dinner in the Òleum Restaurant, an historic room above the museum boasting wide windows that overlook the city below.

The next two hours reminded us of what makes QLF special: our camaraderie and connection, and the passion that we share for the work we do all over the world. As we gathered around tables with friends both old and new, Larry Morris, our outgoing President, charmed us all with words of introduction and welcome. We were glad to see a video clip with words from QLF's founder, Bob Bryan, who greeted the *Congress* from his home in Quebec, and from our beloved Chairman *Emeritus*, Donald "Obie" Clifford.

Larry then introduced his successor Beth Alling, who treated us to a brief preview of what was to come in the days ahead. Next, several Alumni were honored with beautiful Audubon prints in recognition of everything they have done for QLF. Finally, Larry introduced the official *Congress* pin—redesigned specially for the Catalan *Congress* — and instructed everyone to "pin" the person sitting directly to their left.

This task resulted in much hilarity, but we were reminded, too, of the meaning behind the gesture. The QLF pin, Larry told us, represented the spirit of the Congress. In "pinning" each other, participants were acknowledging the *Congress* spirit of sharing, teamwork, mutual respect, and understanding.

We headed back to our hotels at the end of the night eagerly anticipating the beginning of the *Congress*.



Museu Nacional D'art De Catalunya, Barcelona, Catalonia, site of the Donor Appreciation Dinner





From left: Miquel Rafa, Director of Territory and Environment, Fundacio Catalunya (Spain) and his wife Barbara, and Quebec-Labrador Foundation Senior Vice President Brent Mitchell (United States) - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



Nicola Cross, Documentary Filmmaker (United Kingdom), Larry Morris, and QLF interns perform - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



From left: Alix Hopkins, Communications & Conservation Consultant, Maine Coast Heritage Trust (United States), Quebec-Labrador Foundation President Emeritus Larry Morris (United States), and Anne-Seymour St. John, Trustee, Essex County Greenbelt Association (United States) - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



Stewart Fefer, Landscape Conservation Biologist and Protected Area Specialist, Department of Interior (United States) and David Manski, Senior Advisor for the Department of Interior (United States) - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



From left: Tom Horn, Senior Consultant, Heritage Rivers (United States), Dart Thalmann, Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Norwich University (United States), Kath Blanchard, Senior Consultant, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (Canada), and Ken Hoffman, Associate Partner, More Partnership (United Kingdom) - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



From left to right: Leslie Van Gelder, Senior Consultant, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (New Zealand), Jameson French, 2016 Chairman, Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation—U.S. (United States), Charley Hildt, Energy Supply Analyst Altenex, an Edison Energy Company (United States), and Michael Morris, Senior Analyst Viacom, Inc. (United States) - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



Reflection in the ceiling of the Ôleum Restaurant - PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN MARANO



Kevin Granahan - PHOTOGRAPH BY TEDDY LYMAN



## MIDDLE EAST ALUMNI MEETING

The first day of the *Congress* officially began with a meeting of Middle East Program Alumni. Since its inception in 1992, the Middle East Program has reflected QLF's essential spirit, and affirmed the effectiveness of QLF's mission to affect real change in environmental and social contexts. Importantly, all this is true while the Middle East Program operates in a political and environmental climate fundamentally different from that of our home region. QLF builds leaders at the grassroots level, and provides neutral ground for people of diverse cultural and religious contexts to engage in sustained dialogue around a shared concern and common challenge: the environment. Building on this strong foundation, QLF's Middle East Program cultivates relationships of trust, mutual respect, and shared learning—thus creating potential for new partnerships across borders.

QLF holds Regional Meetings for Middle East and North American Alumni of the Program every few years, to keep the Alumni Network engaged and to gather consensus for future program direction. Before today's meeting—held in the Gallery Hotel, our Barcelona base—the most recent Regional Meeting had been held in Oman in 2012, on the occasion of the Middle East Program's 20th anniversary.

Following on the topics and ideas explored in the 2012 meeting, today's Middle East Regional



Sami Backleh, Senior Consultant, Middle East Program, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (Israel) at the Middle East Regional Meeting - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



Alix Hopkins and Sharón Benheim, Researcher & Logistics Coordinator, Ben Gurion University (Israel), facilitators of the Middle East Regional Meeting - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER

Meeting focused on two themes:

### Theme 1: Transition and Evolution

- ❖ Both the Middle East Program and QLF at large are currently undergoing transition and evolution. In this context we look toward the future, and examine opportunities for new programs and partnerships

### Theme 2: Financial Challenges

- ❖ Funding from the anonymous foundation that supported the Middle East Program for nearly two decades has now ended. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity for the Middle East Program to explore new funding opportunities in both the public and private sectors

As QLF looks toward the future and embarks on its next chapter as an organization, many of the Middle East Program's planning responsibilities are now being transferred to its Alumni Network. This transfer of management, established at the 2012 Regional Meeting, has the potential to positively impact efforts in the context of both themes identified above. First, in the context of QLF's future, the transfer of planning responsibility to the Alumni who have participated in the Program over 25 years allows the Middle East Program to grow and evolve under new, diversified management. Second, due to the broadening and diversification of Program management, funding for the Program will now be a collaborative effort involving the entire Middle East Program Alumni Network, thus opening the Program up to new funding opportunities.

At the Regional Meeting in Oman in 2012, Middle East Alumni established a set of action items, consisting of strategic goals and objectives for the new, evolving phase of the Middle East



Program. At today's Regional Meeting here at the 2016 Congress, Alumni identified new and existing projects in answer to these action items. These projects are listed below the applicable action item, and identified as either "existing" or "proposed" projects, as follows:

## ACTION ITEMS

### I. Engage in New Regional Initiatives Directed by QLF Middle East Alumni

- ❖ *Existing Project:* Vivian Sansour is working on developing a seed bank in Palestine. She collects both seeds and stories, and is working with teachers in the West Bank to use the seeds as a gateway to help students learn about nature

### II. Encourage Middle East Alumni to Expand the Alumni Network Through Regional Contacts in the Public and Private Sectors

- ❖ *Existing Project:* Stuart Fefer and David Manski traveled to Oman in the winter and spring of 2017, on a 5-month US Department of the Interior-sponsored assignment to consult with the Omani Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs

### III. Expand Regional Initiatives of the Middle East Program to Encompass Work in the Gulf States

- ❖ *Proposed Project:* Birdlife is involved in several projects which present an opportunity for Middle East Program expansion, including:
  - ◆ A project in Iraq working to raise awareness about the diverse values of rivers
  - ◆ A project to bring together 6 Middle Eastern countries and 4 countries on the



Vivian Sansour, Seed Heritage Alumni (Palestine) at the Middle East Regional Meeting - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

horn of Africa, each of which are part of a species migratory route

### IV. Forge Relationships with Academic Institutions across the Middle East

- ❖ *Proposed Project:* A training center meant for the entire Middle East to use for programs related to natural resources will soon open in Ajloun, Jordan. It could be beneficial to look into the possibility of connecting QLF with the training center, and to promote the hiring of Middle East Program Alumni as experts for the training programs
- ❖ *Proposed Project:* Partner with coexistence youth leadership training programs, such as Friends Forever (a program that enrolls 15 to 17 year old students), so that returning students may volunteer with Alumni organizations or choose environmental work for their post-travel projects

### V. Sponsor Eco-Tours and Short-Term Exchanges for Alumni, QLF Directors, and other Friends of the Organization to Introduce them to the Middle East and to Those Involved in the Middle East Program

- ❖ *Existing Project (Planned):* In the spring of 2018, QLF plans to hold an in-region exchange and eco-tour, focusing on flyways

### VI. Update the QLF Website along with other Social Media Outlets to Reflect the New Directions of the Middle East Program

- ❖ The QLF website is undergoing updates now, in the context of the new global consulting program, QLF Global. In the upcoming years, it is hoped that Middle East Alumni will be a part of the QLF Global program, both through identifying clients and acting as consultants

## OPENING RECEPTION AND DINNER AT LA PEDRERA

Finally, as the late afternoon light spread through the city, it was time for the evening's Congress opening reception, and the next stop on QLF's architectural tour. Barcelona boasts a vast and varied patchwork of architectural styles, and most notable of all is the city's Living Modernism. Modernism is a unique architectural style exemplified by the works of Antoni Gaudí, and distinctive for the influence of nature in its curved and twisting lines. Famously, Gaudí's BASILICA I TEMPLE



An iconic part of Barcelona's architectural tableau, La Pedrera was also the very last project undertaken by celebrated Barcelonian architect Antoni Gaudí. Today, this building is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and it houses the headquarters of the Fundació Catalunya, of which *Congress* participant Miquel Rafa is Director of Territory and Environment. - PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

EXPIATORI DE LA SAGRADA FAMILIA remains under construction to this day.

Tonight's events were to take place at LA PEDRERA, another celebrated Gaudí building. Apart from being a stunning work of modernist design, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and Gaudí's very last project, La Pedrera is also home to the Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera, a Catalonia-based organization focused on environmental protection, cultural heritage, social



Philip Nadeau, Chairman, Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation Canada (Canada) and Larry Morris on the roof of La Pedrera - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

work, and education. This evening, thanks to Miquel Rafa, Director of Territory and Environment for the Fundació, QLF was to be hosted at La Pedrera for our opening reception.

To be hosted at La Pedrera was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera is a deeply influential organization throughout Catalonia, and La Pedrera itself is a cultural landmark, a piece of Barcelona's storied history, and an awesome sight to behold.

La Pedrera's convoluted limestone façade shines white at midday and glows pink with the sunset, and its interior design is more beautiful still. As we entered that evening and walked across the tiled floor of the foyer, we gazed up through a winding staircase and fantastical columns reminiscent of the twisting branches of a forest. We stepped into elevators and emerged on the roof, amid rippling peaks and valleys of limestone that twisted together like ocean waves in some places, and like the spiky spine of a dragon in others. The sun was just beginning to set, bathing the convoluted roof, and ourselves, in pink and gold light. To the north,



From left to right: David Manski, Aida Aljabri, Specialist of Marine Environment, The Directorate General of Nature Conservation (Oman), and Mounir Abi-Said on the roof of La Pedrera - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

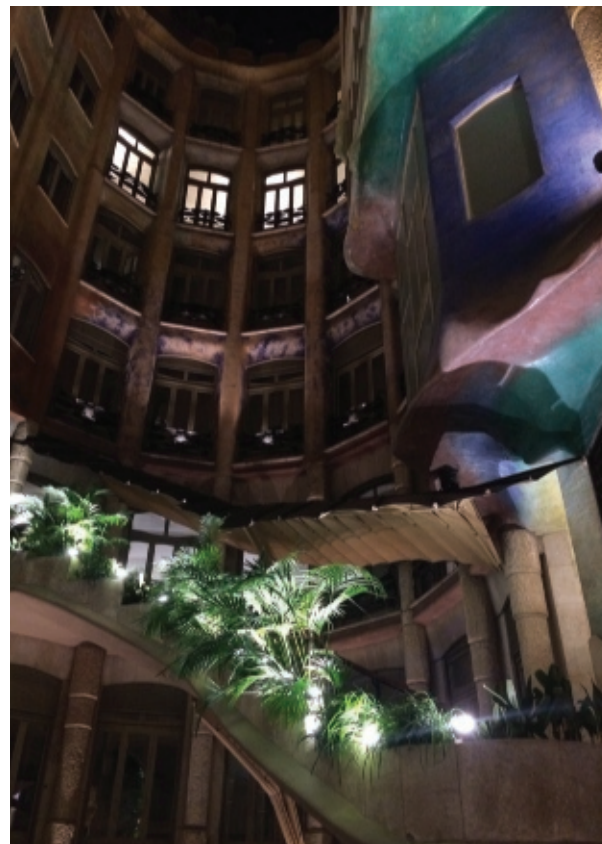




From left to right: Alix Hopkins, Kate Irvine (in background), Senior Researcher, Environment, Wellbeing and Sustainable Behaviour, James Hutton Institute (United Kingdom), Mounir Abi-Said, Faculty of Sciences II, Lebanese University (Lebanon) and Diana Abi-Said, Rural Community Development Program, Animal Encounter (Lebanon) on the roof of La Pedrera - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

we glimpsed the famous spires of La Sagrada Familia, and closer to we admired balconies and roof gardens.

As the light faded, we climbed back down to the basement Gaudí room, eager for the *Congress* to begin. There, tantalizing plates of Catalan tapas were soon circling the room, and the rousing conversations gave way to welcoming words from Jamey French, our Chairman of the Board of Directors; from Beth Alling, our new President; from Brent Mitchell, Senior Vice President; and finally from Miquel Rafa, QLF Alumnus, Director of Territory



Interior of La Pedrera, with spiral staircase - PHOTOGRAPH BY GRACE WEATHERALL

and Environment for the Fundació Catalunya–La Pedrera, and our host in this special place.



The attic of La Pedrera - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

Jamey French:

The night of our first gathering of the Congress, the moon was the closest to the earth as it will likely be in our lifetime, and we were able to see it from the rooftop of La Pedrera, I began my comments acknowledging the pull of the moon and the natural world. My hope for the Congress on its first night was inspired, too, by the moon—that its brightness and reflection of the sun's abiding brightness would shine on the Congress and all who had gathered together to support each other and look for solutions in challenging times.

We start this Congress in a very troubled time where the world is embroiled in outright wars and deeply divided countries. The results of our American election have meant celebration for many—but for others, including many in this room it is a time of deep sadness, shock, and depression. Among the most challenging concepts has been the shocking realization of how divided our own United States is.

Around the world a variety of election results have shown that our deeply held beliefs about climate/ environment/ wildlife and community conservation are NOT big priorities for people who are focused on their basic survival, or saving their jobs, or their way of life.

Fear of immigrants—fear of violence. These have become the all basic angsts that trump fear about climate change or support of community conservation projects.

So what is our role as individuals, as leaders of our NGOs, as business people and community leaders, and above all as members of the QLF family? We can start with the quiet confidence that we all know that even in the bleakest of times, individual action and leadership combined with our connections and social networks can make a real difference. QLF is as good at this as anyone. We see this every day thanks to the ultimate social network team of Larry and Beth...

...There are a few other challenges that we are facing that I want to acknowledge here. Our global conservation community is aging and our members and leaders (especially in North America and Europe) are older white people—those of us who grew up in the idealistic 60s and 70s. How are we going to attract people of color? A younger generation? More women? During the next few days of this Congress I encourage us all to explore how can we confront and openly dis-



Jameson French addresses the Congress -  
PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

cuss these challenges? How can we rebuild and strengthen the traditional QLF network and relationships? How can we find new ways to communicate with and perhaps engage that large part of humankind who do not see relevance in our work? How can we find new ways to communicate and connect with a younger generation and with people of color in ways that are sincere, real, and relevant?

Perhaps these are overwhelming tasks, but I am convinced that the spirit of QLF and its history will aid our discussions and that in the days ahead many new ideas, new friendships, and new partnerships will evolve. Thank you all—and welcome to the Congress!

Miquel:

Well, thank you. Thank you for these words, and welcome to this place... In our foundation, our work is to change the world. We care about our people, and we have an ambitious education program, which deals with both higher education and grassroots primary education.

Since I came back from visiting QLF in North America, we have been establishing an important network of protected areas which belongs to the Foundation. We also promote land stewardship all over the country, and that's quite a substantial job.

We are now excited to show [our land stewardship program] to the rest of the people in Spain, and in Europe, as an example of what is possible. That this is possible. We are not exactly like you are in America. We are a different culture and a different kind of society, but we have many things in common [with communities all over the world.] So, that's why we always think that it's very important to share this, to learn from each other...

And because of that, we are happy and honored to have you here.



Miquel Rafa, Director of Territory and Environment for the Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera, and host of the Congress - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14,  
MARKED THE START OF OUR  
CONGRESS WORKSHOPS, and  
featured tours of the Monastery of  
Montserrat and the city of Barcelona.

## PLENARY SESSION AT SANT PAU

The day opened with a Plenary Session at historic SANT PAU, Barcelona's former Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau. Originally built in 1401 as the grand church Santa Creau, Sant Pau was re-designed as a hospital nearly 500 years later, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997, and finally opened to the public as a museum and cultural center in 2014.

QLF was honored to welcome Raül Romeva, Catalan Minister of Transparency, Institutional Relations and Foreign Affairs, as the keynote speaker for the Plenary Session. Minister Romeva's impressive career has included membership in the European Parliament, and he understands the importance of environmental work as an integral part of government.

Minister Romeva:

*It's a great honor for me to be here with you. I just learned about many of the interesting things that the Quebec-Labrador Foundation is doing—joining together students, volunteers, friends of all sorts, professors... to work for the environment and the common good.*

*Everything is interlinked... We need to talk and cooperate with everybody in order to put all the*



Sant Pau, site of the opening Plenary Session and the first workshop sessions. Originally built in 1401 as the grand church Santa Creau, this building was redesigned as the hospital Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau nearly 500 years later, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1997, and finally opened to the public as the museum and cultural center Sant Pau in 2014. -PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

*world's problems on the table and find the best solutions for them. We see this in Catalonia, which has always had a rich culture, and a diverse culture. [We see this diversity in the countryside as well] where we have everything from the seas to the mountains, from the beaches to the rivers, and the Pyrenees... This landscape is something that we are very committed to preserving.*

*When we talk about how to tackle climate change, and about the [institutions and policy] that we need [for this effort], we approach [the problem] in a very personal way. Because we are already suffering because of what is going on in the climate. But... we are [also] very committed [to] the intergenerational responsibility for keeping this on the right track.*

*... The Government of Catalonia has always considered this a necessity, as [have] many of you, in all your countries. And this is why we're very happy to receive here so much expertise that will help us to improve what we're doing. Hopefully we will [exchange experiences and advice]. It is important to stress the [interconnection between the environment and] social cohesion... It's not only about territory, it's about people, it's about making a strong connection on both elements.*

*Because, basically, it's about a better life, what we are talking about. Better life for the people currently living here, and a better life for the next generations that we're responsible for.*



Raül Romeva, Catalan Minister of Transparency, Institutional Relations and Foreign Affairs (Spain) addresses the Congress at the Sant Pau Plenary Session - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA





The Benedictine Monastery of Santa Maria de Montserrat, high in the mountains west of Barcelona, was founded in 1025 by Oliba, Bishop of Vic, and it is known for housing the Virgin of Montserrat (or “Black Madonna”)—a venerated statue of the Madonna and Child. - PHOTOGRAPH BY KONSTANTIN32



Interior of Montserrat - PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

*These are ... the reasons why we're so committed to these initiatives; why we understand that international exchanges are ... absolutely crucial in the sense that we will have a better knowledge of what is going on everywhere in the world.*

Minister Romeva's words fueled us as we moved from the plenary session to our first Workshop sessions.

### TOURS OF BARCELONA AND MONTSERRAT

Once we had brainstormed up an appetite, it was time for lunch: more delicious Catalan fare served in the basement of Sant Pau. We collected our plates and clustered around tables, continuing our workshop conversations with our fellow group members and tracking down other Alumni to share ideas with them. Ideas grew and evolved over prosciutto and glasses of champagne, until it was time for our next move. Half of the group gathered outside for a walking architectural tour of Barcelona, while the other half piled into buses for the trip to Montserrat.

The BENEDICTINE MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA DE MONTSERRAT was founded in 1025 by Oliba, Bishop of Vic, and it is known for housing the Virgin of Montserrat (or “Black Madonna”)—a venerated statue of the Madonna





Street view in Barcelona - PHOTOGRAPH BY GRACE WEATHERALL

and Child. The monastery itself is magnificent, but more spectacular still are the panoramic views afforded by a hike up the mountains behind the abbey, where dramatic rock formations stand out on the mountainsides.

When the sun began to sink toward the rocky horizon we climbed back into the buses for the trip to our new hotels, Món Sant Benet and the Hotel Parador de Cardona. Those of us staying at the Parador couldn't hold back our gasps of wonder as we rounded the last bend and spotted our hotel, perched far above us at the edge of a cliff. The 1,000 year-old castle looks ready to host King Arthur and his men, and that evening as we approached it the yellow light illuminating its facade echoed the full moon, hanging in the black sky above the castle parapets.



View of the gardens behind Món San Benet hotel, with Sant Benet del Bages in the background - PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

## DINNER AND SPEECHES AT MÓN SANT BENET

As the day came to a close, we reunited at Món Sant Benet for dinner with our fellow Alumni. Miquel Rafa returned to say a few words, and several long-time QLF Alumni spoke about their cherished experiences with QLF.

Miquel:

*Next year, we are going to celebrate the 10th anniversary of this center. On the one hand, we are [preserving] the land, and the river that is just nearby. [These] 16 hectares...belong to the foundation as well, [as] part of the Natura 2,000 network. [On the other hand] we have the cultural side: the restoration of this monastery and the exhibit on the painter, Ramon Casas. So, there are two things, and the third one is [the issue of food, and food activities].*

*Next year, we are trying to develop [this last] concept a bit more, and we want to really create a sort of "capital of food" in this place. We will promote activities like organic production. We now have six hectares of fields [for production]. So, we can employ young people [who are either unemployed] or are handicapped... And so this will also be a part of our social program, which...employs 1,200 people already, and which we [hope to make] larger.*

*So you see that this is a very ambitious program. As we see it...we cannot just focus on culture or environmental protection as isolated things. We have to be able to show the world that the combination of all these elements altogether can be powerful. We can reach much more people in our society. We can...*

touch the heart of many more people... Health is something that touches everybody...

So, if we take this all together, then we can be much more powerful, and that's the way that we want to go in the future...And... we are a foundation open to the world. We really want to be...always with an eye and an ear open to the world. So, we will learn...from you and we [are]...happy to share [our] progress and activities with all of you worldwide.

Phil Huffman:

Beth asked me to speak from the heart about my experience with QLF, over what's been an awfully long time now, and that's easy to do. The challenging part from me will be to get through it without breaking down, as I almost did earlier this evening talking with Helen Hays. That's how much this organization means to me, and has done for a long time. My story with QLF—I'll do a very abbreviated version—is long, and very rich, and as I've called it a symbiotic history...over almost four decades now. It starts when I was 15, and I found myself in the front of a skiff on the Tabusintac River in a driving rainstorm going up river... to participate in the Living Rivers program, in what I think was its third or fourth year; this was back in 1978... and I had three weeks with a group of other 13 to 17 year-olds and a staff of six from northern New England and maritime Canada, and it changed my life. And it has put me on a path that I've been on ever since, working in the conservation field.

QLF has been a constant thread, ever since that summer when I was 15. And I've had an unbelievable array of rich experiences that have just become an inseparable part of who I am: how I think, what I do, the relationships that I have with many of you...in this room. Anyway, The experiences that I've had, the places that I've been, it's just been incredibly powerful. It's been in the home region, it's been international, it's been focused on natural resource conservation and cultural resource conservation, the blend that Miquel spoke about so eloquently a few moments ago. And about this global community that we're all a part of. And it has opened opportunities for me that I don't

think would have been there were it not for QLF.

...Suffice it to say, it's just been an incredible part of my life, and a huge part of who I am. And as the last 39 years have unfolded...it's been so exciting and empowering and wonderful to see the way in which QLF has evolved. From an organization that began and has such deep roots in the home region of maritime Canada and northern New England to then broadening out in a way that brings all of us together, and...just as Jamey was saying last night, we're the tip of the iceberg of the QLF family—there are so many others who aren't here with us tonight, but are here in spirit, and are part of the family, whatever they're doing, wherever they are, all around the world. And that is just an amazingly powerful thing.

This is a hard time, as others have alluded to over the last day or two, in the history of the world. There are lots of very troubling trends that are going on, there are very alarming events that we are confronted by, and that may make us pause and wonder... does it all matter? I think the answer is absolutely—that it matters even more, that we're all here together, and that we have this organization and all the other people that are a part of it, and all the people way beyond the network of 5,000 Alumni... who we all touch in our own ways, as we go through life.

That's where the future and the hope for this world lies. And that's why I feel so fortunate to be here, and to be a part of this family, and look forward to watching QLF continue to grow, and to being part of that myself as time goes by. So...I wanted to end with one quote I'm going to borrow from someone else, and it's from one of my favorite authors...I first heard it decades ago, and it's something I've kept close at hand ever since.

To quote from Edward Abbey... who was an author, an environmental protagonist, who was active in the American west...he inspired me and a lot of others and infuriated a lot of people, which is not necessarily always a bad thing. Anyway, he has a wonderful quote...: "One final paragraph of advice: do not burn yourselves out. Be as I am — a reluctant enthusiast... a part-time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your lives for pleasure and adventure. It is not enough to fight for the land; it



Phil Huffman, Director of Landscape Conservation & Policy, The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Chapter (United States) - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it's still here. So get out there and hunt and fish and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forests, climb the mountains, bag the peaks, run the rivers, breathe deep of that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, the lovely, mysterious, and awesome space. Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head and your head firmly attached to the body, the body active and alive, and I promise you this much; I promise you this one sweet victory over our enemies, over those desk-bound men and women with their hearts in a safe deposit box, and their eyes hypnotized by desk calculators. I promise you this; You will outlive the bastards.

Thanks very much.

Leslie Van Gelder:

The thoughts I'd like to share with the Congress and QLF Community all have to do with our relationship to the long view of Time. They were inspired by our trip to beautiful Montserrat, where a millennium or more ago, the cathedral and monastery were built in one of the most beautiful and inaccessible places one could imagine. It was inspiring then. It inspires today and the steps we walked up have been traversed by thousands before us and thousands after.

...[My] appreciation for Legacy and the long connection to time and place came to me very strongly during my last two summers working as an intern for QLF in 1988 and 1989 in southern Labrador. My last summer, I had a job collecting folklore and stories for a collaborative project with the region's historical group. I had a glorious summer interviewing the oldest residents of the district and inventorying the headstones in the cemeteries to put together family genealogies.

...The last story I want to share was inspired by our trip to Montserrat and a comment that Philip Nadeau, our Canadian Board President said wondering how the stones and steps had gotten there. This story perhaps acknowledges the challenges of the times we're in and the difficulties our planet faces in

the times we can see ahead and our individual and collective roles in helping to ensure a future for generations we can't even yet imagine. It comes from a Lakota writer, Joseph Marshall III, in a book he wrote called *Keep Going*.

Many years ago in a village in a valley ringed by high mountains, a young man set out to climb to the top of the mountain behind the village to see the view of the world beyond it. He returned some time later moved by the beauty of the world he saw. "I wish everyone could see this view," he thought, but he knew that the path was too steep and too difficult and that the only way that everyone would be able to access the mountaintop would be if he cut stairs into the stone face of the mountain. Using hand tools, he began his task, but he could only finish three steps. When he grew old, he trained a young man to continue his work, and then that man trained another, and on and on.

Finally, many years later in a very different world, the steps were complete.

The mayor called the village together and they set out together to climb the steps as a community. Old and young, those who remembered the earlier step carvers and those who never knew the project was even happening. Looking up at the steps that could now take them above the clouds, they had only seen the faces of the rising steps. But now, with their feet upon them, the villagers discovered that the centuries of carvers who had namelessly toiled to give them this opportunity had left each other, and all of the community, a gift carved into each step.

As the stairs rose up into the mountaintops, were carved two simple words to remind and

to encourage.

### Keep Going

If I can offer anything to the QLF Community from the perspective of the long span of time, it is that all of our work matters, not just now, but even more so for the future. And to QLF itself, entering into a new era and honoring its past, we need you and all of us all the more to keep going.



Leslie Van Gelder, QLF Consultant - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

## WORKSHOPS

THE THIRD DAY OF THE CONGRESS WAS DISTINGUISHED BY ALL-DAY SESSIONS with our workshop groups, held at the refurbished medieval monastery SANT BENET DEL BAGES at the hotel Món Sant Benet. The Congress workshops were structured around presentations and working sessions, with ample time for group discussion. This format allowed participants to share knowledge, expertise, and experience, and to brainstorm ways in which QLF could lend its unique strengths to the challenges at hand. Ultimately, each workshop established a proposal or a set of proposals setting out innovative new programs and partnerships for QLF to utilize in addressing common environmental issues worldwide.

### THE SIX STEWARDSHIP WORKSHOP STREAMS

#### I. Consensus Building & Collaborative Conservation

##### Participants:

- Benheim, Sharón - Ben Gurion University, Israel (Facilitator)
- Hopkins, Alix - Communications & Conservation Consultant, U.S. (Facilitator)
- Litka, Katy - Quebec Labrador Foundation, U.S. (Co-Facilitator)
- Abu Hayyaneh, Raed - Environmental Educator,



Kate Irvine (UK), Ra'ed Hayanneh, Environmental Educator Volunteer City of Calgary (Canada), and Sharon Benheim (Israel), Consensus Building & Collaborative Conservation workshop, Món Sant Benet - PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER

##### Canada

Al-Sharif, Wedjan - Center for Environment

Palestine, Palestine

Ami, Ben Ben - Friends Forever, Israel

Irvine, Katherine - Environmental Researcher,

James Hutton Institute, UK

##### Concluding Thoughts:

Consensus building and collaboration are essential components of conservation efforts, for two reasons. First, a lack of consensus on the issue at hand inhibits progress and prevents the realization of any parties' goals. Second, consensus building and collaboration is simply the right thing to do.



Workshops were held at the medieval monastery of Sant Benet del Bages, on the grounds of the Món Sant Benet Hotel - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



Environmental projects should be designed from a place of consensus, and undertaken collaboratively, in order to ensure that the concerns of all stakeholders are addressed.

Consensus building and environmental protection are not only tied together, but relate symbiotically with each other. In 25 years of experience working with environmental professionals across the Middle East, QLF has demonstrated that the environment can be used as common ground and a bridge to building working relationships across borders of all kinds.

QLF's 2012 publication entitled *Consensus Building & Collaborative Conservation* laid out a strategic plan for designing successful collaborative projects. In the workshop of the same name at the 2016 Congress, participants built their discussion and developed proposals out of this plan, as follows:

#### **PROPOSAL: Collaborative Conservation to Include Ten Core Principles**

##### **1. Project Adapts to Change**

(Global to Local):

- ❖ Projects are able to revisit initial goals and assess effectiveness, making changes as needed. Solutions are temporal, flexible and scalable. There are mutual recognitions of changes by all group members. The group or project can move from a single-issue focus to a more complex, nuanced understanding if needed.

##### **2. Project Encourages Equity:**

- ❖ Project seeks to share power and work to shift the power differential so all have an equal chance to participate and influence the project. Process fairness is important.

##### **3. Project Integrates Approaches:**

- ❖ Different approaches are needed for success (reactive, active, etc.). Group is able to choose the right solution(s) for the problem at hand.

##### **4. Project Applies Systems Thinking:**

- ❖ Group can think strategically about a problem. For example, is it immediate or long term? Who is affected? What issues are



Bay of Boka Kotorska, Montenegro. Mountain of Lov'cen in background. The inner Bay is recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site for both its natural and cultural features. At this time the outer Bay is not protected. Under the direction of QLF Vice President, Stewardship, Brent Mitchell, along with partner organization, EXPEDITIO, QLF sponsored a landscape stewardship exchange at this site to recommend landscape options and to build public support for conservation and stewardship. - PHOTOGRAPH BY BRENT MITCHELL

connected and what are leverage points?

##### **5. Project Considers and Integrates Culture, Community and Science:**

- ❖ Process includes space and process for including different "ways of knowing" (as opposed to only one way). Social and cultural knowledge are included to broaden understanding.

##### **6. Project Works Trans-Boundary:**

- ❖ Project incorporates and considers multiple boundaries, such as physical, ecological, cultural, social, and economic.

##### **7. Project Encompasses Strong Group Processes:**

- ❖ Processes would include communication, collaboration, exchange, stewardship, transparency, commonality, relationship building, trust, social responsibility, and leadership.

##### **8. Project Promotes Sustainability:**

- ❖ Project considers ecology, economics, and social issues, and crafts solutions that are resilient (able to withstand change without losing underlying functions).

##### **9. Project Remains Flexible and Open to Innovation:**

- ❖ Project develops creative ways of funding the group and seeks solutions that are supportable. Projects can also demonstrate economic benefits

##### **10. Project Embodies and Increases Respect, Empowerment, Dignity, Compassion, and Acknowledgement**

## II. Local Response to Climate Change

### Participants:

**Catzim, Nellie Faustina** - *Islands First, U.S.* (Representing Belize) (Facilitator)  
**Dragojevic, Snezana** - *United Nations Development Programme, Montenegro* (Facilitator)  
**Weatherall, Grace** - *Quebec Labrador Foundation, U.S.* (Co-Facilitator)  
**French, Jameson** - *Board of Directors, Quebec Labrador Foundation—U.S.; Northland Forest Projects, Inc., U.S.*  
**Hack, Randall** - *Member, Governing Boards, Quebec Labrador Foundation; Capstone Capital LLC, U.S.*  
**Marshall, Katherine** - *CipherHealth, U.S.*  
**McDermott, Ruby** – *U.S.*  
**Morris, Michael** - *Viacom, U.S.*  
**Raz, Iris** - *Israeli Airports Authority, Israel*  
**Sauerhaft, Beth** - *Sustainability Consultant, U.S.*  
**St. John, Anne-Seymour** - *Essex County Greenbelt, U.S.*

### Concluding Thoughts:

Based on their professional experience, the members of the Local Response to Climate Change workshop group posited that both the most significant challenges to climate change policy, and the



Snezana Dragojevic (speaking), Programme Manager, Climate Change Portfolio United Nations Development Programme (Montenegro), and Grace Weatherall, Consultant, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (United States), with Kat Marshall, Account Strategy Manager CipherHealth (United States) in background, in the Local Response to Climate Change workshop – PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN PORTER



Port Honduras Marine Reserve, Belize. The Port Honduras Marine Reserve is a national reserve co-managed by the Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE). QLF has a longstanding commitment to support TIDE's work, and has worked with TIDE as a conservation partner for over 20 years, through Internships, Exchanges, and eco-tours of the region. – PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY MORRIS

greatest opportunity for action on climate change, exist at the local level. Because of this duality, community-based organizations like QLF are uniquely suited to the task of enacting meaningful change in climate policy and action.

The Climate Change workshop group concluded that in order to promote climate change policy and action, QLF should work to develop messengers to engage communities with the issue of climate change. Moreover, in order to develop messengers, QLF must first align its goals with those of the community in question.

In answer to these objectives, the group developed the following three proposals for QLF:

### PROPOSAL 1: Promote Education

- ❖ Many communities lack exposure to information on climate change that is both accurate and accessible. There is therefore a need for broad dissemination of reliable information presented in “layman’s terms”. In this interest, the Climate Change workshop made two recommendations for QLF:
  - ◆ QLF should partner with science and news information sources which regularly produce reliable climate change information
  - ◆ QLF should then repackage this information and disseminate it to broader communities through the Global Leadership Network



## PROPOSAL 2: Develop Messengers

- ❖ In order to demonstrate to communities that taking action on climate change is in their long term self-interest, QLF should find ways to demonstrate that taking such action is in a community's immediate self-interest. Two recommendations follow:
  - ◆ QLF should find communities whose livelihoods are already adversely affected by climate change. An example of this would be a fishing community in the Gulf of Maine, where fisheries have been disrupted by a dearth of forage fish due to warming waters and a resultant lack of nutrient mixing
  - ◆ QLF should take advantage of its existing relationship with communities in New England and eastern Canada, and develop new partnerships through the Global Leadership Network
- ❖ Once communities are engaged with the issue of climate change, they will serve as highly effective messengers in communicating their concerns to local and federal representatives, for two reasons:
  - ◆ Elected officials have an incentive to act in their own constituents' interest
  - ◆ Because climate change is often seen as a partisan issue, elected officials will be particularly attentive to climate change concerns communicated from traditionally conservative and blue-collar districts

## PROPOSAL 3: Expand Internationally

- ❖ QLF is an international organization, and climate change is a global issue. Thus, it is important to encourage the exchange of ideas between QLF programs and associates across the world. The Climate Change workshop proposes that this project proceed as follows:
  - ◆ Initially, the project would consist primarily of communication through the Global Leadership Network (GLN)
  - ◆ Ultimately, QLF should work to develop a more structured exchange program: perhaps a program to send established messengers and potential climate leaders abroad in order to gain inspiration before returning to their communities

## III. Local Stewardship: Community-Based Conservation

### Participants:

**Engle, Stephen** - Quebec-Labrador Foundation, Director, Center for Community GIS, U.S. (Facilitator)  
**Hanchet, Simone** - Jeanne Sauve Foundation, Canada (Facilitator)  
**McKee, Nina** - Quebec-Labrador Foundation, U.S. (Co-Facilitator)  
**Abi-Said, Diana** - Rural Community Development Program, Lebanon  
**Caduto, Michael** - Programs for Environmental Awareness and Cultural Exchange (Founder), U.S.  
**Eno, Amos** - Council, Quebec-Labrador Foundation; Land Conservation Assistance Network, U.S.  
**Gyarmathy, Istvan** - Hortobágy National Park, Rónaorzo Society for Nature Protection, Hungary  
**Madaune, Claudio** - Darien Foundation, Columbia  
**Porter, Kevin** - Quebec-Labrador Foundation, U.S.  
**Radovanovic, Olivera** - Green Network of Vojvodina, Serbia  
**Watson, Jo-Ann** - Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation—U.S.  
**Watson, Doug** - U.S.

### Concluding Thoughts:

The Local Stewardship: Community-Based Conservation workshop brought together participants from five regions and with backgrounds in conservation management, environmental tourism, environmental education, animal rehabilitation, rural agricultural women's empowerment networks, GIS/mapping, and storytelling.



Stephen Engle, Senior Consultant, Community Mapping & GIS Program, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (United States), facilitates the Local Stewardship: Community-Based Conservation workshop - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



Simone Hanchet, Director of Programs, Jeanne Sauve Foundation (Canada) in the Local Stewardship: Community-Based Conservation workshop - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANINA

Given the diverse backgrounds of the workshop participants, the Local Stewardship workshop began by establishing a common understanding of the definition of “stewardship”. The group agreed to use QLF’s own definition, which holds that “[t]he concept of stewardship encompasses efforts to create, nurture, and enable responsibility in landowners, [individuals] and resource users to manage and protect land and its natural and cultural heritage.”

Ultimately, the Local Stewardship developed five proposals for QLF:

## PROPOSAL 1: GLN Women’s Leadership Network

- ❖ Establish a QLF Women’s Leadership Network on the GLN in order to increase experience and idea-sharing within QLF’s own network

## PROPOSAL 2: Youth in Agriculture

- ❖ Begin Youth in Agriculture projects as a form of increased sustainable development

## PROPOSAL 3: Mapping

- ❖ Promote conservation by mapping unused agricultural land as a resource

## PROPOSAL 4: Online Training and Skill Sharing

- ❖ Establish training workshops online or in regional gatherings to enable skill sharing within the QLF Community. Examples of workshops could be:

- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ GIS mapping

## PROPOSAL 5: Promote Diversity in QLF Leadership

- ❖ Develop a proposal to QLF leadership to broaden voices in decision-making positions, and ultimately to increase the diversity of QLF leadership. Further possibilities for diversity promotion:
  - ◆ Create an international advisory committee to the Board of Directors
  - ◆ Create a youth advisory committee
  - ◆ Increase opportunities for Alumni to give feedback

## IV. Marine & Freshwater Stewardship

### Participants:

*Aburdeineh, Iyad - Bethlehem Joint Service Council for Solid Waste Management, Palestine (Facilitator)*

*Nassef, Magda - United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), Sudan (Facilitator)*



Northern Minke Whale off Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick. For several years, this small whale has been monitored in the Labrador Straights as part of QLF’s Marine Species at Risk Program. PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANINA





Bonne Bay, Gros Morne National Park, Newfoundland—the heart of QLF's home region - PHOTOGRAPH BY NICHOLAS GATES

**Andrews, Lisa** - *International Water Association (IWA), Netherlands; Quebec-Labrador Foundation (Co-Facilitator)*

**Castresa, Gabriel** - *Government of Buenos Aires, Argentina*

**Conyngham, Jock** - *Engineer Research and Development Center, USACE, U.S.*

**Furfey, Rosemary** - *NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service; Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation—U.S.*

**Gaffney, Jim** - *New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, U.S.*

**Jacobs, Kira** - *Environmental Protection Agency, U.S.*

**Moir, Ronald B. Jr.** - *Ocean River Institute, U.S.*

**Nadeau, Philip** - *Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation—Canada*

**Wilbur, Cricket** - *Quebec-Labrador Foundation, U.S.*

#### **Concluding Thoughts:**

The goal of the Marine & Freshwater workshop was to identify the ways in which QLF can utilize its far reaching network to promote long-term stewardship of water resources worldwide.

In workshop discussions, participants identified three key themes, and their implications:

#### **1. Stewardship Over Time**

- ❖ Locals should feel a shared sense of responsibility for a resource, and work together to protect it long-term

#### **2. Science, Research and Data**

- ❖ Decision-making must be driven by data and sound research, and influenced by an empowered local voice
- ❖ Story maps and citizen science should be utilized

#### **3. Partnerships**

- ❖ QLF should identify the ways in which people can connect through communication tools

In answer to these themes and their implications, the workshop made the following proposal for QLF:

#### **PROPOSAL: Establish GLN Working Group**

- ❖ Establish a 'Water Working Group' on the GLN online to share tools, best management practices and case studies. Further benefits of such a platform include:

- ◆ Building communication and awareness between Alumni
- ◆ Identifying potential funding opportunities

## V. The Nature in Us: Cultural Heritage & Communities

### Participants:

**Hušková, Blažena** - *Nadace Partnerství, Czech Republic* (Facilitator)

**Torres, Miriam** - *Mountain Institute Andean Program, Peruvian Inka Network Trails, Peru* (Facilitator)

**Lalli, Megan** - *McGill University, Canada* (Co-Facilitator)

**Alhasid, Idit** - *Center for Environmental Education, Israel*

**Al Safadi, Rana** - *Cultural Project Manager, Jordan*

**Brown Hoyt, Blair** - *Butler Library, U.S.*

**Hernandez, Myriam** - *Canada*

**Kedmi Pintz, Carmit** - *Ministry of Tourism, Israel*

**Martin, Julie J.** - *Massachusetts General Hospital, U.S.*

**Middleton, Patricia** - *Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation—Canada*

**Ptáček, Ladislav** - *Czech Association for Heritage Interpretation, Czech Republic*

**Sansour, Vivien** - *Seed Heritage Alumni, Palestine*

**Stetson Jr., Barbara** - *Offshore Sailing School, U.S.*

**Singer, Shira** - *U.S.*



Clare McMorris, current Chair of the Board of Directors and Director, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (United States) in The Nature in Us: Cultural Heritage & Communities workshop  
- PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

**Telem, Inbar** - *U.S./ Israel*

**McMorris, Clare Tweedy** - *Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation—U.S.*

**Van Gelder, Leslie** - *Aspiring Reflective Leadership/Finger Flutings Project, New Zealand; Consultant, Quebec-Labrador Foundation*

**Cross, Nicola** - *Documentary Filmmaker, UK/Trinidad and Tobago*

### Concluding Thoughts:

Culture and nature are deeply intertwined, and as globalization becomes a greater threat to both cultural heritage and the environment, communities must come together to find best practices to protect both. As this workshop group began to explore what the “nature in us” meant in terms of

Rainforest canopy, Machaca Hill, Toldeo District, Belize. Toledo is the southernmost district in Belize, and the most remote. It is home to the only true rainforest in the country, with 1,500 square miles of forest providing habitat for mammals such as jaguar, puma, and ocelot. QLF works through local partners to maintain exchanges to New England and to provide technical assistance in such areas as mapping and rail guide production. QLF's Brent Mitchell defines QLF program success as: “meeting your objectives through local counterparts with the fewest possible people knowing you were ever there.” -

PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY MORRIS







Certovka Canal, Prague, Czech Republic. QLF has a 25-year history of working with emerging non-governmental organizations in Central Europe. QLF's focus remains on cultural heritage and environmental stewardship, with a special emphasis on parks and protected areas. - PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

cultural heritage and environmental conservation, participants explored the idea of culture as adaptive, through acknowledging the conflict and disconnect between generations past and present.

As the group summarized its presentations and discussions, QLF emerged as a community in itself: one in which disparate communities, cultures and stories are brought together.

Before developing project proposals, the workshop group identified a platform, or toolbox, made up of “5 Cs”, upon which sustainable communities could be identified and maintained:

1. Community;
2. Communication;
3. Cooperation;
4. Coexistence; and
5. Consciousness

With this toolbox in mind, the following were proposed:

#### PROPOSAL 1: Story Sharing

- ❖ A Seeds of Hope Project would use QLF Alumni and the GLN platform to share stories that aid in preserving and passing on

aspects of cultural heritage, and encourage the reconnection of communities

- ◆ Stories could focus on harvest, climate, culture, or family
- ◆ Stories could be uploaded as text, videos or pictures

#### PROPOSAL 2: Cultural Landscapes

- ❖ A Heritage Trails Project, also piloted on the GLN, would exchange best practices on trail development and management and the development of culture interpretation centers, with the goal of encouraging public connection to cultural landscapes
  - ◆ Explore communication tools that would demonstrate the value of cultures and sites to visitors

#### PROPOSAL 3: Sharing of Expertise

- ❖ Utilize shared QLF expertise through the GLN to train communities to problem-solve
  - ◆ Methods could include stewardship exchanges, internships, and consultant work

## VI. New Directions in Protected Areas

### Participants:

- Mitchell, Brent** - Quebec-Labrador Foundation, U.S. (Facilitator)  
**Zinger, Nathalie** - Nature Conservancy of Canada, Canada (Facilitator)  
**Kotler, Adrienne** - Quebec-Labrador Foundation, Canada (Co-Facilitator)  
**Al Jabri, Aida** - Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs, Oman  
**Britto Rodrigues de Moraes, Marilla** - Independent Consultant, Brazil  
**Clement, Stephanie** - Friends of Acadia, U.S.  
**Fefer, Stewart** - National Wildlife Refuge Association, United States Department of the Interior, U.S.  
**Huffman, Phil** - The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Chapter, U.S.  
**Jacobi, Charles** - National Park Service, Acadia, U.S.  
**Manski, David** - United States Department of the Interior, U.S.  
**Rafa, Miquel** - Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera, Catalonia  
**Rambaldi, Denise** - Instituto Estadual do Ambiente (INEA), Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil  
**Roth, Petr** - Independent Consultant, Czech Republic  
**Thalman, Dart** - Norwich University, U.S.



Adrienne Kotler and Alberto Yanosky, Executive Director, Guyra Paraguay (Paraguay) - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

- Woodward, Renata** - Nature Trust of New Brunswick, Canada  
**Yanosky, Alberto** - Guyra Paraguay, Paraguay

### Concluding Thoughts:

As conservation funding becomes increasingly difficult to attain, entities worldwide are exploring new conservation methods that involve the protection of both natural capital and cultural values. In this effort, conservation organizations are employing such methods as collaborative management techniques and international exchanges.

There remains a need, however, for conservation experts from varied backgrounds to explore innovations for further improving the protection of



Rub'al Khali desert, also known as "The Empty Quarter", Oman. Oman was the site of QLF's 2012 Middle East Regional Meeting. - PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING





Acadia National Park, Maine, United States. QLF's home region, and a historic site for QLF Internships - PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

landscapes and conservation areas. In this interest, the New Directions in Protected Areas workshop developed the following four proposals for QLF and its network, in the interest of catalyzing innovation and improvements in protected areas (PAs) worldwide:

#### **PROPOSAL 1: Showcase Initiatives and Engage in Dialogue**

- ❖ Share case studies of successes and setbacks experienced by QLF Alumni in PA initiatives and amongst the QLF network. These case studies should include key players, ideas, messages, tools, processes, and timelines
- ❖ Facilitate story sharing within the QLF network for professional development. This should include lessons learned, best practices, and worst practices
- ❖ Promote story sharing with external communities in order to build awareness and capacity outside the QLF network
- ❖ Establish initiatives to bring politicians and other stakeholders on field tours of PAs. These can be referred to as “see for yourself what is happening” initiatives

#### **PROPOSAL 2: Engage the Public to Promote Conservation**

- ❖ Share PA evaluation tools—including

methods of measuring CO2 sequestration, water quality, ecosystem services, and benefits of protecting areas—with the QLF network

- ❖ Share evaluation results and documentation with external audiences to continue to communicate these benefits to a wider community
- ❖ Provide the QLF network with workshops, webinars and online services regarding how to better communicate PA narratives in new and innovative ways
- ❖ Engage members of the network to assist one another in bringing in unconventional allies, including celebrities, youth artists, musicians, and others to help communicate the benefits of PAs

#### **PROPOSAL 3: Empower Communities to Protect PAs**

- ❖ Share case studies amongst the QLF network of successes using citizen science, public-private partnerships and other forms of community engagement in PAs
- ❖ Promote story sharing within the QLF network focused on community engagement
- ❖ Promote story sharing with external communities on community engagement in order to build awareness and capacity

- ❖ “See for yourself what is happening” initiative with politician field tours focused on stewardship and implementation

## PROPOSAL 4: New Directions in QLF Leadership

- ❖ Engage QLF and its network in the IUCN discussions around other effective area-based conservation measures
- ❖ QLF as a connector, linking members of its network with specific questions to other Alumni with experience to assist with those questions
- ❖ QLF as a facilitator of new partnerships, introducing members of the network to collaborate on specific projects
- ❖ QLF as a mentorship facilitator, creating a mentorship program amongst its network

## VII. Our Living Planet: Biodiversity & Nature Conservation

### Participants:

**Blanchard, Kathleen** - Intervale Associates, Canada; Quebec-Labrador Foundation–U.S. and Canada (Facilitator)

**Mwangi, Kiragu** - BirdLife International, United Kingdom (Facilitator)

**Déziel, Mégane** - Quebec Labrador Foundation, Canada (Co-Facilitator)

**Abi Said, Mounir** - American University of Beirut, Animal Encounter, Lebanon

**Abou Assi, Kamal** - Shouf Biosphere Reserve, Lebanon

**Al Nouri, Osama** - BirdLife International, Jordan

**Balaban, Amir** - Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, Israel

**Beckwith, Morgan** - Arader Galleries, U.S.

**Castresana, Gabriel J.** - Government of Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Dicostanzo, Joseph** - Great Gull Island Project, U.S.

**Esteban Bremer, Ricardo** - Fundación Vida Silvestre, Argentina

**Gavrieli, Yael** - Tel Aviv University, Israel

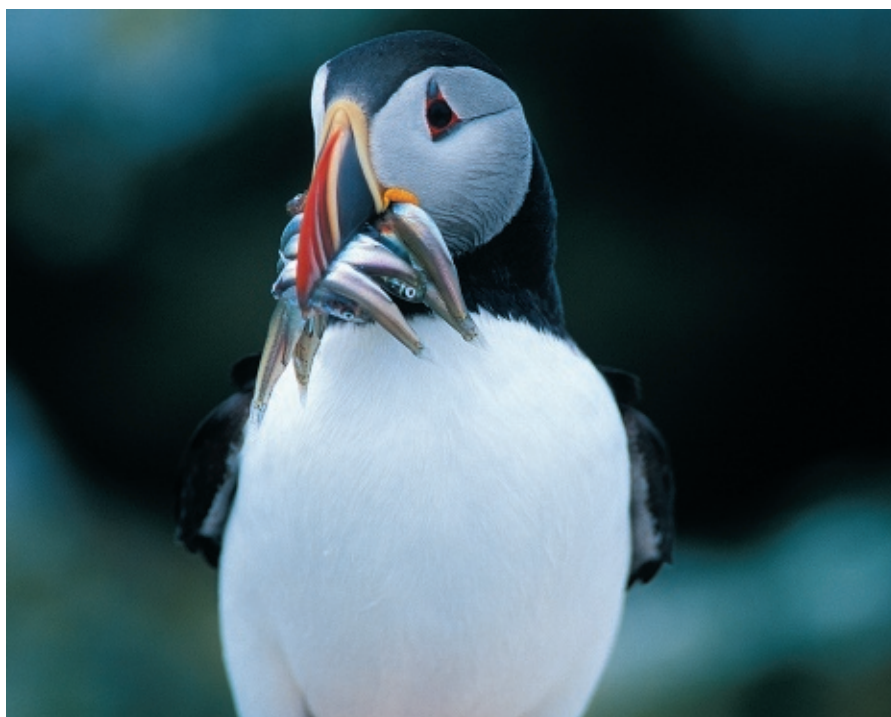
**Hall-Beyer, Myrka** - University of Calgary, Canada

**Hays, Helen** - American Museum of Natural History, U.S.



Mist netting in Argentina with Helen Hays, Director, Great Gull Island Project, American Museum of Natural History (United States), and Argentine Alumni - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA





Atlantic Puffin. Dr. Kathleen Blanchard directed QLF's Marine Bird Conservation Program for 20 years, beginning in the 1970s. Seventy-five interns and volunteers began their careers in wildlife research and environmental education working for this program. PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

**Lima, Pedro** - *Universidade Federal da Bahia, Brazil*

**Kanan, Amer** - *Al-Quds University, Palestine*

**Mansour, Costa** - *Society for the Protection of Nature, Israel*

**Morris, Alix** - *Earthwatch Institute, U.S.*

**Mwangi, Esther** - *Health Care, United Kingdom*

**Neves, Veronica** - *University of the Azores, Portugal*

**Peck, Susan** - *Board of Directors, Quebec-Labrador Foundation, U.S.*

**Sàez, David** - *Fundació Catalunya, Catalonia, Spain*

**Shamir, Hila** - *The Israeli Center for Excellence Through Education, Israel*

### **Concluding Thoughts:**

The Biodiversity & Nature Conservation workshop participants began by identifying threats to biodiversity at both the local and global level—with the understanding that there was overlap between categories.

### **1. Global Threats to Biodiversity**

- ❖ Habitat loss and fragmentation
- ❖ Changes in ecosystem parameters
- ❖ Air pollution
- ❖ Delinking of systems due to disturbances

caused by climate change

- ❖ A dearth of green spaces in urban environments
- ❖ Loss of keystone species
- ❖ Mismanagement and poor regulation

### **2. Local Threats to Biodiversity**

- ❖ Invasive species
- ❖ Light pollution
- ❖ Oil pollution
- ❖ Microplastics
- ❖ Hunting and poaching
- ❖ Ecotourism / tourism mismanagement
- ❖ Persecution of predators (poisoning)
- ❖ Water scarcity

The ultimate goal of the Biodiversity & Nature Conservation workshop was to identify projects that could slow and prevent biodiversity loss in project areas. Although management and regulatory processes were broadly identified as key causes of biodiversity loss, the workshop participants agreed that, from an impact and feasibility perspective, the most effective programs for QLF Alumni to engage in are those that promote public outreach and education—two initiatives that are central to QLF's mission as a community-based organization. With this in mind, the workshop made the following proposals for QLF:

#### **PROPOSAL 1: Information Sharing Platform**

- ❖ Create an information-sharing platform on biodiversity, perhaps through the GLN
- ❖ Monitoring programs should contribute to this platform, and to global, open-access databases

#### **PROPOSAL 2: Training and Education**

- ❖ Establish environmental trainings with targeted groups, such as youth, women, schools and universities, and policy makers

#### **PROPOSAL 3: Traditional Ecological Knowledge**

- ❖ Develop a platform for documentation and distribution of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in the voices of local people

## VIII. Scaling Up and Conservation Finance

### Participants:

**de Brun, Constance** - Quebec-Labrador Foundation, Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, U.S. (Facilitator)  
**Sassi, Sabrina** - Jeanne Sauvé Foundation, Tunisia/France (Facilitator)  
**Hildt, Charley** - Altenex, Edison Energy Company, U.S. (Co-Facilitator)  
**Belaban, Amir** - Jerusalem Bird Observatory, Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, Israel  
**Bolling, Robert H. III** - Council, Quebec-Labrador Foundation, RBC, U.S.  
**Horn, Thomas F.** - Heritage Rivers, U.S.  
**Levitt, James N.** - International Land Conservation Network, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; Member, Governing Boards, Quebec-Labrador Foundation, U.S.  
**Khoshman, Mahmoud** - Levant Consulting Group, Oman  
**Kundrata, Miroslav** - Czech Environmental Partnership, Czech Republic  
**Myron, Emily P.** - International Land Conservation Network, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, U.S.  
**Telem, Inbar** - U.S. (Representing Israel)  
**Trung, Khong** - Quang Tri Provincial Forest Protection Department, Vietnam  
**Tuan Anh, Pham** - Viet Nature Conservation Centre, Vietnam  
**Winans, Sandra** - U.S.  
**Winans, Walter E. Jr.** - Siemens, U.S.



Inbar Telem (United States) and Jim Levitt, Manager of Land Conservation Programs, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (United States), in the Scaling Up and Conservation Finance workshop - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

### Concluding Thoughts:

The Scaling Up and Conservation Finance working group facilitated an active debate on the opportunities and limitations that non-profits face in their efforts to achieve financial stability. Debate centered around the following question: How can non-profits regain power and control from the ground up, so that funders cater to the organization, rather than the other way around?

Over their two days of discussion, participants identified the following three main financial challenges faced by NGOs and non-profits like QLF:

#### Challenge 1: Competition

- ❖ With the current number of non-profits competing for grants and funds there are limited pieces of the pie to go around

#### Challenge 2: Projects to Visions

- ❖ How can organizations transform so that funding shifts from short-term projects to long-term visions?

#### Challenge 3: Reclaiming Control

- ❖ Currently NGOs have to request for funding from investors who can dictate the direction of programs. How can non-profits reclaim control?

With these challenges in mind, the workshop developed the following proposals for QLF:

#### PROPOSAL 1: Sharing Work to Maximize Cost Effectiveness

- ❖ There may be an opportunity for QLF Alumni to 'share' work when large entities (companies, governments etc.) are not confined to a geographic region

#### PROPOSAL 2: Promoting a Long-Term Vision

- ❖ By pitching an image and vision to investors, as opposed to a short-term program, there will be more opportunity and interest for further fundraising
  - ◆ In this time of transition for QLF, when we look toward our future, we should work to communicate and promote our vision for the coming years to funders
  - ◆ QLF's new global consulting program, QLF Global, could provide just such an opportunity to communicate QLF's vision for the future





Left to right: Mahmoud Al Koshman, Managing Partner, Levant Consulting Group (Jordan) and Charley Hildt, in the Scaling Up and Conservation Finance workshop  
\* PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANINA

### PROPOSAL 3: Developing Self-Sustaining Assets

- ❖ La Pedrera is the epitome of a success story where local governments and conservation interests coincide to create long-term revenue streams to promote further conservation work. QLF should work to develop to emulate this system where possible

### PROPOSAL 4: Monthly or Quarterly Town Hall/Webinar

- ❖ These semi-frequent updates can alert the QLF community to knowledge or funding that may coincide with Alumni efforts

### PROPOSAL 5: Sharing Knowledge and Support

- ❖ QLF has a wealth of experience and information within its Alumni network regarding funding challenges and opportunities. Alumni can and should leverage these opportunities through open lines of communication
- ❖ This is an opportunity to leverage the GLN



Ras Al-Jinz Nature Reserve, Oman. Sooty Terns (*Sterna fuscata*) and Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*), all in winter plumage, await the green turtle hatchlings as they make their way to the Arabian sea. Over several years, QLF Alumni have worked with Oman's Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs to consult on community-based natural resource management.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY MORRIS

## APPRECIATION DINNER FOR LARRY MORRIS

WHEN EVENING FELL ON DAY 3 OF THE CONGRESS, WE GATHERED IN SANT BENET'S GRAND DINING ROOM for a tribute to our beloved departing President, Larry Morris. Old friends, colleagues, and family addressed the gathered Alumni to tell their own Larry stories. Whether the topic was Larry the QLF President, Larry the college kid, or, in the case of Michael and Alix Morris, Larry the father, the same theme continued through everyone's words: that of friendship, kindness, jollity, and an uncanny ability to make friends with anyone and everyone, anytime and anywhere in the world.

### Phillip Nadeau

*Larry Morris was the right man in the right place at the right time for a long time, and we should all be grateful for that because it could've been a much different scenario than what it turned out to be. I am really grateful for Larry Morris for a number of things. I think, first and foremost, I am grateful to Larry for his loyalty. One of the things that Larry Morris has always endeared to me is the way that he has handled his relationship with the Chairman. It was done with grace, which is what Larry does very well.*

*When I think of what he's done, not just in terms of his career, but when I think of the investment that he's made in this organization, and the investment that he's made with each one of us in this room. We're just the tip of the iceberg, really, of all the people that he has touched. I just am deeply appreciative of my relationship with him. It's been very special, and I look forward to it continuing.*



Randall Hack, QLF Honorary Director (United States), shares memories of his time with Larry at Princeton University - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



Phillip Nadeau reminisces on Larry's time with QLF - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

*And I will just end by saying that I'm really grateful to be here. It's a real pleasure to be here at this conference and to see all of you because you're very special people and you make QLF very special. So, thank you.*

### Randall Hack

Randall Hack described Larry's early career—his Princeton days, his unexpected matriculation at Harvard Business School, and his even more unexpected departure from Harvard:

*I think he had, in all seriousness, what can only be described as a spiritual epiphany. I envision him round about October of that first year, sitting at his desk, trying to absorb his Corporate Finance assignment for the next day. And the numbers are kinda bouncing off his eyeballs. He doesn't get it. And then he looks out the window and sees the last of the fall foliage or some birds saying, "Come, Larry. Come to me." So he has this epiphany, a flash of insight into his deepest self, his deepest being. And that insight, in all seriousness, I think was this, that Harvard was leading him to a life that he would never find fulfilling. And he had the courage and the strength to admit that. Changed his life. And the rest is history.*

Larry went on to get his Ph.D. from Cornell, where he met people who were pivotal for the evolution of QLF years later.

### Michael Morris

Larry's son, Michael Morris, spoke about his father and the impact of QLF on their family life:





Michael Morris tells us stories about his dad, both hilarious and touching  
- PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

QLF has always been a very grand part of my life and my family's life. And so it's really important that we had the chance to address you tonight. I witnessed QLF's work since before I can remember. Family vacations to Quebec and Labrador, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick. My dad has an unconditional love of people and a philosophy that you can turn even your biggest adversaries into your friends, and then your best friends, and then your donors. And he makes it look so easy, but I can assure you for most people it is not. But it's his love of QLF and his love for all of you that makes it so easy for him. And at times, it's been challenging sharing my dad with the QLF family. There were a lot of trips away, a lot of work to be done. But being here and seeing what you all do, thank you so much for making that sacrifice so worth it.

#### Alix Morris

Then Alix Morris, Larry's daughter, shared her thoughts:

His use of humor immediately puts people at ease. And humor and laughter, they're universal. They cross religious, political, cultural borders. They break down barriers. And it's one of my father's tricks of the trade. I was lucky enough to attend the first Congress 10 years ago. I was amazed by what I experienced. As with this Congress, people came from all over the world, from more than 30 countries. They united over a common mission, which is not always easy to explain.

As a child, in particular, it was very difficult to explain what our father did. Instead of a dentist or a fireman, we said, "He goes to meetings. He talks on the phone a lot. He travels, and it's [to] places we've

never heard of. And he works for the environment." But the mission really, in my mind, is to make our world better, stronger, more unified to safeguard our natural resources, to promote community-based conservation, to protect local heritage, but, more than anything, is to embrace one another as family. So many of you have approached me during the last Congress and during this one to tell me about the impact that my dad has had on your lives. And my brother mentioned that it was at times hard to share our father, but in meeting all of you, we are so happy to discover how big our family really is. And we know that when he wasn't with us, he was being welcomed and loved by all of you. And for that, we are so, so thankful. So, thank you. Cheers to you, dad, and cheers to all of you, the QLF family, our extended family.

#### QLF Alumna and Middle East Fellow (Name Redacted):

You can think of Larry the visionary, if I may say so. When the American soldiers were invading Iraq, he was coming to Syria to be in the most peculiar place, in a country that he never visited [before], and the same night he would be in religious shrines at night... that American, whiteskinned, among ladies all in black, looking at him but still welcoming him. ...[H]e had that kind of genuine attitude towards people of all kinds of all backgrounds.

We can also think of Larry in the waters of the river Euphrates, in a boat, just [outside of] Raqqa, the city we hear about today. Larry for many long years had been there, trying to [find] ways for Syrian-American cooperation in [the] most unique places.



Alix Morris, Senior Science Writer, Earthwatch Institute (United States) talks to us about her dad and his love for QLF and his family - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

You can also think of him in the city Ruins of Palmyra, before they were taken into ISIS, and trying...to bridge cultural heritage issues between the United States and a country like Syria, to bring two countries that have historically been enemies into a new page. Equally, Beth has been trying do the impossible, to run an exchange program between Syria and the United States, where we are almost sure that both administrations, in reality, did not want that program to go.

So this is a unique opportunity for me [to be here at this] Congress, and it is one of those opportunities to find...people that are really aspiring for a change. Larry was just asking me how I feel about the Congress to date. And I said, "Larry, if the Congress ends here, in this very moment, tonight, I've had excellent, valuable opportunities of talking to a couple of people here in the room, and I think [with these people] so many things can be done [in the future]; that [we] can really push conservation work at many levels. Huge opportunities in the room, and that can serve a number of countries."

I learned a lot from QLF.. Larry told me, "\_\_\_\_, what you are doing is called environmental stewardship." Before that moment I had never heard about that, environmental stewardship. I knew about my own



Mounir Abi-Said and Larry Morris, with a photo of King, the hyena - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

efforts trying to revive a co-existence tradition... but that was new to me at the time. So meeting like-minded people and happening to know them because Larry and Beth were the only two people I knew from QLF. I am now fortunate to have met some of you. I think those opportunities are valuable and I really appreciate them. Despite all the despair in Syria and the Middle East, I would look forward to more opportunities.



Friends celebrating Larry - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



## PLENARY SESSION: WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

THE FINAL DAY OF THE CONGRESS BEGAN WITH A PLENARY SESSION at Sant Benet, where each working group presented their group's findings and recommendations. It was exciting to hear the ideas that our fellow Congress participants had developed, and the presentations served as an inspiring demonstration of the diverse wealth of talent, expertise, and interest represented by the QLF Alumni network. The *Alumni Congress* is a rare and special opportunity to combine all of that talent in one room, and this final plenary session reminded us of what can happen when we do so.

Brent Mitchell closed the session with a reflection on the power of our team, and a reminder to all of us to keep this power going through QLF's Global Leadership Network.



Brent Mitchell address the Plenary Session - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



Magda Nassef, Consultant, U.N. Environment Post Conflict and Disaster Management Branch (Egypt) at the Plenary Session - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



Blazena Husková, Consultant, Nadace Partnerství (Czech Republic) addresses the Plenary Session - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



Alumni of Living Rivers Environmental Program, from left to right: Phil Huffman, Michael Caduto, Director, Programs for Environmental Awareness & Cultural Exchange (United States), Bob Bolling, Senior Vice President, RBC (United States), Rosemary Furfey, Salmon Recovery Coordinator, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (United States), Greig Cranna, Photographer (United States), Tom Horn, Senior Consultant, Heritage Rivers (United States), Jim Gaffney (United States), and Larry Morris - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



## FAREWELL DINNER AT MERCAT DEL BORN

At the Congress farewell dinner, Jamey French, then Chairman of the U.S. Board, addressed the Congress one last time with his remarks of Larry Morris' tenure as President of QLF. In doing so, he identified three qualities that define Larry Morris and his leadership for more than four decades. Jamey notes:

*We have all heard about Larry's remarkable sense of loyalty. I need only ask how many people are here, or are connected to QLF, because of their sense of Larry's loyalty to them, and it becomes clear what an enormous role this has played in the life Larry has led and his impact on all of us.*

*Larry also has to be one of the kindest people we all know. Whether it is a family illness, or going to a funeral, or empathizing with a job loss or a bad run of luck, it is Larry who is always there to lend support and also to make sure that others know you need a little extra care. He has always done this so naturally, and we have all been beneficiaries of his empathy at one point or another.*

*Larry's exuberance for QLF has been infectious and encouraging. As he always says, 'this should be fun'—and his sense of fun is...contagious.*

*I think these three words also define the QLF network that I have observed during the last three days.*



Jameson French addresses the Congress at Mercat del Born - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA

*As we go forward under the inspired and skilled leadership of Beth Alling, and we work to create a more diverse and inclusive organization, I urge our extended community to join us on this quest.*

*I know we will all continue to be exuberant about our ideals and our goals. We will remain deeply loyal to all QLF Alumni and our broader community. And above all, [we will always be] empathetic to those from different or even conflicting political, cultural, and religious backgrounds as we find ways to work together in this world.*

*We thank Larry for his work over the last 42 years, and we applaud Beth on her new position as President.*



Mercat del Born, Barcelona, is the largest cast-iron covered market in Europe. Once a bustling marketplace, today the intricate iron structure shelters excavated ruins of medieval Barcelona, shown here. On the last night of the Congress, we held our farewell dinner in a side room of the old market. PHOTOGRAPH BY GRACE WEATHERALL



## CLOSING MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In 2002, I had the good fortune to join QLF's Staff. While I knew QLF was the right fit, I never imagined that I would one day have an opportunity to lead this organization. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in my new role, which began on the 1st of January, 2017. I am grateful for the support of all of you: QLF President *Emeritus* Larry Morris, the Governing Boards, Staff, Consultants, and our outstanding group of Alumni and loyal friends who appreciate QLF's unique niche—working in community-based conservation across the U.S./Canada border and beyond the shores of North America reaching 75 countries.



The recommendations set forth by our Alumni at the 2016 Catalonia *Congress* affirm my commitment and vision to lead the organization with new and innovative mission-driven programs under the

banner of QLF's Global Leadership Network of Alumni. QLF will invest in regional and international programs with newly established public/private program partnerships, International Conservation Exchange Programs, and a new Global Consulting Initiative, QLF Global, that has the potential to generate positive impact and innovative solutions to shared environmental challenges in communities worldwide. Now is the time to capture the energy, goodwill, and strategic thinking that began in Barcelona. And I have the support of a team that is second to none.

Since my first days at QLF, I have been inspired by your support, friendship, and commitment to make a difference. I will carry forward and build on QLF's legacy as we face the challenges at hand in our world today.

Beth Alling  
President & CEO  
Quebec-Labrador Foundation  
Atlantic Center for the Environment



Tabusintac River, New Brunswick: site of the Living Rivers Environmental Education Program and the heart of QLF's home region. PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA



*Congress participants at the conclusion of the Workshop Plenary Session, Day 4 - PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA*



## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

# CATALAN STEWARDSHIP: A POST-CONGRESS STUDY TOUR

A select group of QLF Alumni from other regions joined with Catalan counterparts and policymakers to explore the current practice and future potential for nature stewardship and privately protected areas in the country.

This two-day event explored local issues in detail and helped to inform and lend context to discussions held with the larger group during the main *Congress* program.



Photographs—clockwise from upper right

Miquel Rafa i Fornieles was among the first QLF Fellows from the European continent in 1990. He now oversees the 24 nature reserves of the Catalunya-La Pedrera Foundation. PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY MORRIS

Jordi Pietx, QLF Alumnus and Catalan conservation leader serves as the Senior Advisor to The Second QLF Congress.

View of El Priorat (The Priory) region of Catalonia. In the distance lies the Nature Park named Montsant (Holy Mountains) where hermits lived in medieval times. The cliffs in the center secured Siurana, the last enclave of the Moors to fall in the reconquest of Catalonia, in 1153. The cliffs now protect nests of Red-rumped Swallows and other birds, and are popular with climbers.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRENT MITCHELL

QLF Senior Vice President Brent Mitchell introduces the Stewardship Workshop, QLF Congress, Bükk National Forest, Hungary, 2006.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA







# ANDALUSIA: A POST-CONGRESS CULTURAL TOUR

A post-*Congress* tour to Seville and Córdoba brought Alumni and other QLF constituents to Andalusia. Andalusia is one of Spain's seventeen autonomous communities and lies in southwest Spain bordering both the Atlantic and Mediterranean oceans. Over its long history, the region has seen a succession of cultures and religions, including long periods of Roman and Islamic rule. Today, architecture and traditions in Andalusia reflect a blend of cultures. Andalusia represents UNESCO sites, protected areas, important historic cross-border trade, and coexistence of the world's great religions. The area echoes QLF's focus in community, culture and conservation, and the organization's work across cultural, religious and geographic borders.



Photographs – top to bottom

Panorama view of Alhambra that highlights its mountainous location, with Andalusia's Sierra Nevada mountain range in its background. PHOTOGRAPH BY KONSTANTIN KALISHKO

Alcázar of Seville, founded in 913 AD and primarily constructed in the 1300s, is the oldest European royal palace still in use. Throughout its history, the palace was commissioned and used by both Muslim and Christian rulers, as control of Seville changed over time. PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING



# SEVILLE & CORDOBA

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER – SUNDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2016 ~

*Andalusia is noted for its UNESCO sites, protected areas, historic trade,  
and crossroads of the world's great religions.*

## Schedule

THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2016

### DEPARTURE FOR SEVILLE FROM BARCELONA & SEVILLE TOUR ~

Seville's CATEDRAL DE SANTA MARÍA DE LA SEDE is one of the largest Christian churches in the world. The impressive building sits on the site of a 12th century mosque whose minaret, the GIRALDA, still stands alongside the cathedral, and today acts as its bell tower. Although the former mosque was largely destroyed in 1401 when the site was reconstructed, legacies of the Islamic mosque persist throughout the architecture of the building. The cathedral was designed to demonstrate the city's wealth, influencing its lavish design and extensive gilding. The site also houses the tomb of Christopher Columbus, the famous explorer.

ALCÁZAR OF SEVILLE is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the oldest European royal palace still in use. It was originally founded in 913 AD, and was primarily constructed in the 1300s. Throughout its history, the palace was commissioned and used by both Muslim and Christian rulers as control of Seville changed over time. Both Islamic- and Christian-inspired architecture and design are apparent, and coexist in the building walls. Alcázar's intricate architecture is breathtaking. The palace also includes gardens, orchards, and ponds to visit.



#### Photographs – top right to bottom

Alcázar Seville's Patio de las Doncellas, also known as The Courtyard of the Maidens, features a reflecting pool with sunken gardens and iconic arches.

PHOTOGRAPH BY WATCHARAKORN CHOTIGO

Duck Pond in the Maria Luisa Park. The Maria Luisa Park stretches along the Guadalquivir River in Seville, Spain. It is Seville's main green area.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSE PIZARRIO

Seville Cathedral or the Cathedral of Saint Mary, Spain. It is a Roman Catholic cathedral and is the largest Gothic cathedral and the third largest church in the world. Opened in 1528.

PHOTOGRAPH BY IEVGENII FESENKO



PARQUE DE MARÍA LUISA pairs cultural sites with a tranquil urban green space. The park includes tree-lined trails, fountains, small canals and duck ponds that can be explored by foot, rowboat, or bicycle. Among Parque de María Luisa's beautiful gardens are several cultural sites to visit. The MUSEO ARQUEOLÓGICO highlights local archeology, including Roman sculptures and mosaics. The MUSEO DE ARTES Y COSTUMBRES POPULARES is an ethnographic museum, nestled in the park, that seeks to highlight the traditions of Seville through various forms of art and ethnographic film.

FRIDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2016

## SEVILLE'S DOÑANA NATURAL PARK ~

Andalusia's UNESCO World Heritage Site, Doñana National Park is one of Europe's most important wetland reserves; the park is recognized for its marshes, lagoons, and streams, and is positioned where the Guadalquivir River joins the Atlantic Ocean. Doñana is home to 360 species of birds, including five endangered species, and its salt marsh is an important breeding ground. Along the African-Eurasian Flyway, a half-million migratory birds rely on Doñana's habitat.

Andalusia Tour participants had the opportunity to explore the park's rivers and streams and its ecosystems. Doñana faces many challenges as an ecotourism site: marsh and river water from the park irrigates nearby agricultural lands, draining its marshes; and mining upstream poses a threat to its ecosystems. Conservation of this World Heritage site, and the many others that provide refuge for migratory birds, is critical for environmental sustainability.

Congress and Andalusia Tour participant, Joe DiConstanzo is a colleague of Helen Hays, Director of the Great Gull Island Project of the American Museum of Natural History. Remarkably, in its 50th year, the Great Gull Island Project is the longest longitudinal study of Common and Roseate Terns in the Western Hemisphere.



### Photographs – top to bottom

Traditional flamenco dresses hang on a balcony in Andalusia. Flamenco originates in Andalusia, influenced by the area's historic blend of cultures. PHOTOGRAPH BY JORISVO

Grey heron in its natural habitat, the wetlands of Doñana National Park, Spain. PHOTOGRAPH BY JUAN ALUNION

Katy Litka keeps an eye out for birds in Doñana National Park. PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING

Flamingos in the Bonanza marshes of Doñana National Park. This area lies on the bank of the Guadalquivir River and its marshes are the only ones in Doñana that are flooded by tides, not by streams and rain. As a result, the Bonanza marshes are home to flamingos. PHOTOGRAPH BY JUAN ALUNION

Joe identified the following species in Doñana National Park:

Graylag Goose (100)	Cattle Egret (4)	Northern Lapwing (2)	Common Raven (8)
Mallard (500)	Glossy Ibis (150)	Black-tailed Godwit (3)	Bank Swallow (15)
Northern Shoveler (1000)	Eurasian Spoonbill (2)	Green Sandpiper (2)	Barn Swallow (20)
Green-winged Teal (1)	Black-shouldered Kite (1)	Lesser Black-backed Gull (1)	Long-tailed Tit (1)
Red-crested Pochard (2)	Eurasian Griffon (20)	Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) (5)	Blue Tit (1)
Common Pochard (1)	Spanish Eagle (1)	Stock Dove (1)	Common Chiffchaff (10)
Little Grebe (6)	Eurasian Marsh-Harrier (10)	Eurasian Collared-Dove (1)	Eurasian Blackcap (1)
Eared Grebe (8)	Red Kite (2)	Little Owl (1)	Sardinian Warbler (1)
Greater Flamingo (6000)	Common Buzzard (4)	Eurasian Hoopoe (1)	Black Redstart (1)
White Stork (1)	Eurasian Moorhen (1)	Eurasian Kestrel (6)	Spotless Starling (20)
Great Cormorant (1)	Eurasian Coot (40)	Southern Gray Shrike (1)	White Wagtail (2)
Gray Heron (8)	Common Crane (25)	Eurasian Magpie (1)	Meadow Pipit (5)
Great Egret (3)	Black-winged Stilt (200)	Azure-winged Magpie (2)	House Sparrow (10)
Little Egret (2)	Pied Avocet (200)	Eurasian Jackdaw (8)	







SATURDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2016

## SITE VISITS IN CÓRDOBA ~

Flamenco show after dinner in Seville ~

Córdoba is perhaps most notable for its great mosque, the MEZQUITA, and the ROMAN BRIDGE apparent just beyond it. The impressive mosque was constructed beginning in the 8th century. It also features a 16th century cathedral built in its centre. The site was originally a church, which was later divided into Muslim and Christian halves, before the Christian half was purchased and the whole site was demolished in order to build the present-day Mezquita. The site hosts a beautiful courtyard, a bell tower that influenced Seville's Giralda minaret, and interior architecture that was far ahead of its time with large, open interior spaces. The site is considered an exceptional example of Moorish architecture. The Mezquita features columns made of jasper and marble, double arched high ceilings, mosaics, and wood panels.

The ALHAMBRA is a palace and fortress complex that lies in Granada, a neighbouring city near Córdoba. The site first housed a palace, built by a Jewish grand vizier in the 11th century. It was later turned into a fortress and mosque, then a church replaced the mosque, and later the site was used as a barracks. The site is now known for its fountains, courtyards, and spectacular architecture. The Alhambra is surrounded by a mountain range, and features a park known for its dense cover of English elm trees. The Alhambra is notable for being an example of Muslim art relatively unchanged by the Roman styles that came later and influenced many neighbouring sites, such as the MEZQUITA. The Alhambra is quadrangular, with all buildings opening onto a central courtyard. The building is open and includes reflecting pools and columns. Painted tiles and geometric patterns characterize its decoration.

Photographs – top to bottom

La Mezquita in the background, the Roman Bridge of Cordoba on the Guadalquivir River, a night scene. Cordoba has one of the most unique combinations of architecture in any city worldwide, including Roman and Islamic history. PHOTOGRAPHE BY SEAN PAVONE

Calleja de las Flores is a favorite street for tourists to visit in Cordoba. It is a narrow alley, lined with flowers, that boasts views of the Mezquita in the background. PHOTOGRAPH BY ALINA PAVLOVA





Córdoba is home to its own Alcázar, the ALCÁZAR DE LOS REYES CRISTIANOS. This medieval fortress is located nearby the famous Mezquita, along the Guadalquivir River. Construction on the present-day structure first began in 1328, retaining only small portions of the Moorish ruins that lay on the site previously. The fortress was an important part of the civil war in the mid-1400s, which necessitated that the structure be altered to accommodate fighting with gunpowder-based weaponry. The building is known for its PATIO MORISCO courtyard, collection of Roman mosaics and sarcophagus, and two towers.

On the outskirts of Córdoba lies MADINAT AL-ZAHRA, the ruins of a fortified Arab Muslim palace-city built in the 10th century. The city served as the capital of Muslim Spain, also known as al-Andalus. The city included reception halls, mosques, administrative offices, gardens, barracks, and residences. Today, the palace ruins remain; the residential area of the city has not yet been excavated. The site overlooks former gardens and fields, and a modern museum just below it illuminates the history of the city.

Andalusia is also the home of FLAMENCO. The origins of Flamenco are still somewhat disputed, but it is thought that it was borne in part out of Andalusia's unique blend of cultures at the time of its origin, which included cultural Andalusians, Moors, Castilians, Romanis, and Jews. UNESCO recently considered Flamenco a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Post-Congress tour participants ended their tour with a Flamenco show after dinner in Seville.

SUNDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2016

**Departure for Madrid or Barcelona for return flight ~**



Photographs – top to bottom

Ruins of the entrance to the central nave of the Reception Hall of Abd ar-Rahman III in Madinat al-Zahra. PHOTOGRAPH BY ARENAPHOTOLOK

View of the ruins of Madinat al-Zahra, a fortified palace-city built in the 10th century, which once served as the capital of al-Andalus.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARENAPHOTOLOK

Gardens of Alcazar de los Reyes Catolicos, Cordoba, Spain. Alcazar of the Christian Monarchs features a 1300s castle with gardens, Roman mosaics, and Gothic towers. PHOTOGRAPH BY FRANCISCO JAVIER GIL OREJA

View of Alhambra as the sun sets. The Alhambra is arguably the most major tourist attraction in Andalusia, known in part for its spectacular architecture. PHOTOGRAPH BY SBORISOV.



## WHAT CAME OF THE CONGRESS, AND WHAT'S NEXT?

AS WE MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER INTO THE NEXT CHAPTER OF QLF'S HISTORY, I am particularly excited to undertake our three new initiatives with you. The recommendations set forth at the *Congress* Workshop Plenary mirror QLF's directive to pursue current regional programs and international exchanges, and to launch new initiatives under the banner of the Global Leadership Network. I am excited, now, to introduce our three new initiatives in greater detail, and to discuss these initiatives in the context of new programs that grew out of the 2016 *Congress*.

-Beth Alling  
QLF President and CEO

**PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS** – QLF is working with several organizations to establish new program partnerships with our respective Alumni. Following the *Congress*, QLF is excited to introduce three of these new partnerships:

- ❖ **Rift Valley Flyway Partnership Program**  
An in-region partnership program to protect the Rift Valley Flyway in the Middle East.

- ❖ **Climate Change Adaptation Project**  
Sami Beckleh, in partnership with QLF, is beginning a new project in Palestine that will implement traditional ecological knowledge, in concert with new models, as a tool for climate change adaptation.
- ❖ **Seed Bank Project**  
QLF has supported Vivian Sansour's seed saving and cultural heritage project in the West Bank.
- ❖ **Jerusalem Tower**  
The Partnership Foundation made an official grant to the architect Martin Rajnis, for his work on Jerusalem's "cactus tower". This wooden tower, to stand in the gardens of Jerusalem's Hansen House, will host workshops, lectures, and cultural programs.

**INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS** – Among the new program partnerships that QLF is now working to develop alongside several organizations worldwide, we are glad to introduce two specific outcomes of the *Congress*, below:



The Rift Valley Flyway stretches across a large section of northeast Africa and the Arabian peninsula, and includes Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Israel, and Palestine. Over 1.5 million migrating bird species use the Rift Valley Flyway every year. Pictured here is a section of the Flyway in Ethiopia, close to Debre Libanos. PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA MARZORATI

# ❖ The Southeast Asia Exchange Program

In early April of 2017, conservation leaders and practitioners representing Vietnam's leading non-profits and government agencies traveled to the U.S. for an Exchange in New England, culminating with meetings in Washington, D.C. with the Embassy of Vietnam to the United States. The focus of the Exchange was public/private partnerships in Biodiversity Conservation, and one of the site visits during the Exchange was the National Park Service Stewardship Institute and the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock, Vermont. New to this exchange was the financial model: a partnership with Viet Nature. Also, this exchange was an opportunity for QLF to plant seeds for future collaborations with Viet Nature to include an Exchange, this time to Vietnam, with a focus on biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, scheduled for the Fall of 2018.

# ❖ Jerusalem Bird Observatory/ Manomet Exchange

Manomet and the Jerusalem Bird Observatory (JBO) convened an exchange about the impact and potential of bird observatories as catalysts for effective conservation and experiential science education. In mid-September, Manomet sent a team to Israel to visit the JBO and exchange ideas about methods for strengthening education and outreach programs in order to better achieve conservation goals. In late October 2017, staff from the JBO visited Manomet headquarters in Massachusetts to continue this exchange. The JBO also co-presented with Manomet at the International Bird Observatory Conference in Cape May, New Jersey (October 26-30). QLF sponsored two of the JBO teams for the visit with Manomet, and the Conference.

# ❖ Middle East Program Exchange

As part of QLF's commitment to the revitalization of the Middle East Program, we have planned an in-region exchange and eco-tour for Spring 2018.

# ❖ Vietnam Conservation Exchange Program

A Fall 2018 Conservation Exchange Program in Vietnam on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development. If the

Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEAL) Workshop is funded, this exchange program would participate in the poster session on the final day of the YSEAL workshop.

**QLF GLOBAL PROGRAM** – QLF Global is particularly exciting, because this new initiative presents an opportunity for new mission-driven programs that result in diversified funding to support QLF's programmatic growth and our Network of Alumni. QLF Global has the potential to meet funding challenges as nonprofits experience increased competition for philanthropic support. Creative adaptation is crucial, and this initiative should lead to a more sustainable organization. A Business Plan is currently in development with examples of consulting projects that demonstrate Return on Impact. Now is the time to harness the energy and good will of the Congress. I welcome a dialogue with you on this new venture, and I am pleased to introduce planned QLF Global projects that grew out of the 2016 Congress:

# ❖ Young Southeast Asian Leaders Workshop

A contract with the U.S. Department of State U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City for a six-day workshop for Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEAL) on protecting the Mekong Delta environment.

# ❖ Southeast Asia Environmental Projects

A contract with the U.S. Department of State Bureau of East Asia Pacific Affairs (EAP) to support local and regional small-scale envi-



In April 2014, Larry Morris traveled to Vietnam to explore ways to build new conservation partnerships with Viet Nature, non-governmental organizations, and government agencies. His travel in Vietnam included a site visit to the Xuan Thuy National Park, Red River Delta, Vietnam, with Ranger Phan Van Truong (with spotting scope); Le Trong Trai, Director, Viet Nature Conservation Centre and participant in the 2017 Exchange in New England; and Do Minh Hoa, Administrative Officer, Viet Nature Conservation Centre. Upon returning to the U.S. QLF lead its first Southeast Asia Exchange in partnership with Viet Nature which included representatives from the public and private sector. PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY MORRIS



ronmental projects in Southeast Asia: e.g. capture and record the biodiversity in the Annamese Lowlands of the Bac Huong Hoa Nature Reserve (BHH NR).

#### ❖ **Soundscape Mapping of Khe Nuoc Trong Forest**

In collaboration with Viet Nature, a project to map the soundscape of the Khe Nuoc Trong (KNT) forest using acoustic recorders to detect environmental crime and safeguard endemic species, identify crucial habitat for biodiversity, raise awareness about natural resource management, and build capacity with local communities nationwide to promote wildlife and natural resource conservation by emulating this methodology in other Vietnamese nature reserves.

#### ❖ **Best Practices Guidelines**

The drafting of Best Practice Guidelines on Privately Protected Areas (PPAs) by Brent Mitchell and the IUCN Specialist Group on Privately Protected Areas and Nature Stewardship.

#### ❖ **Mongolia Nature Conservancy Collaboration**

Expanding QLF's reach into East Asia through collaboration with the Nature Conservancy in Mongolia for conservation projects. As this relationship matures, it is hoped a Fellow from Mongolia will join the 2018 exchange in Vietnam.

**OTHER PROJECTS** – While QLF embarks on a new era characterized by international exchanges, program partnerships, and QLF Global consulting, we remain dedicated to programs in our home region. One such program, also a result of the Congress, is described below:

#### ❖ **Biodiversity Conservation and Youth Leadership**

In the Greater Saint John Area, the Kingston Peninsula and Fredericton, New Brunswick, Interns provided



A mountain landscape in Mongolia. QLF has recently begun collaborating with The Nature Conservancy in Mongolia on conservation projects, and we hope that, as this relationship matures, a Fellow from Mongolia will join the upcoming 2018 exchange to Vietnam. PHOTOGRAPH BY ZOOTEAM

environmental education projects and workshops for youth to encourage their interest in their surrounding environments. The projects focused on shorebirds and seabirds, marine species, climate change, marine debris and conservation action.



Fellows and QLF Staff, 2017 Southeast Asia Exchange Orientation Meeting at the Inn at Castle Hill, a property of The Trustees of Reservations, the Crane Estate, Ipswich, Massachusetts. From left to right: Phan Thi Hoai, Director, Quang Binh Community Development Center; Phan Thi Luot, retired, Quang Binh Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; To Thi Thu Huong, Interpreter; Pham Tu Anh, Cau Giay District People's Procuracy; Pham Tuan Anh, President & Deputy Director, Viet Nature Conservation Centre; Nguyen Huu Hoai, Chairman, Quang Binh Provincial People's Committee; Khong Trung, Head, Quang Tri Provincial Forest Protection Department; and Le Trong Trai, Director, Viet Nature Conservation Centre. Second row: Larry Morris, QLF President Emeritus

The oldest regional land trust in the world, The Trustees of Reservations is a non-profit land conservation and historic preservation organization dedicated to preserving natural and historical places in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. PHOTOGRAPH BY ELIZABETH ALLING



## AFTER THE CONGRESS...

### Catalonia's Challenging Relationship with Spain

On October 27, 2017, nearly a year after the QLF Congress in Catalonia ended, the Catalan government declared independence from Spain. Since then, the Spanish government has refused to accept this declaration, arguing that the Spanish constitution forbids fracturing of the state.

For those of us participating in the QLF Congress in Catalonia in November 2016, the idea of a Catalan separatist movement existed at the edge of our minds. We knew that Catalan was a distinct language, and that nearly all Catalan citizens were bilingual. Some of us glimpsed the red, yellow, and blue flags fluttering in some of the windows throughout Barcelona, and learned that these flags symbolized Catalan independence. For many of us, however, the concept of a Catalan identity seemed more of a curiosity than a source of strife—and it was startling, this year, to see pictures in the news of Spanish police blocking Catalan citizens from polling places, as the Catalans attempted to cast their votes for or against independence.

Throughout the Middle Ages, Catalonia was a major trading power in the Mediterranean region, and it was not until 1469 that Catalonia was first incorporated into Spain. Catalonia initially retained its autonomy and government, but Spain continued to curtail its independence throughout the centuries that followed, leading to Catalan revolts in the sixteen and seventeen hundreds—each of which were quelled by the Spanish crown.

Still, the Catalan sense of nationhood persisted. Beginning in the mid-eighteen hundreds, a revival movement for Catalan language and culture swept through the region, culminating in 1932 with a reconstitution of Catalan autonomy. Crushed for 40 years by Franco's fascist regime, Catalan autonomy was reinstated in 1979 with Spain's return to democracy.

Today, Catalonia continues to promote its distinct culture through Catalan language immersion programs in its public schools, and the use of Catalan in mass media. Thus, in the face of political challenges, the spirit of Catalan nationhood lives on.

It was just over a year ago that QLF spent four wonderful days in Catalonia, exploring the culture and the environment, and meeting incredible partners throughout the region. As we anticipate continuing strife, we are grateful, as ever, for QLF's network of friendship and peace. Whatever the future holds, we wish the very best to our Alumni and partners in Catalonia, and across Spain.

• • •

### A Message from Brent Mitchell 6 November 2017

It has been almost a year since we came together in Catalonia for the 2nd QLF Congress. We enjoyed many sights, sounds and tastes of Catalan culture, and made friends with our peers there. Those friends, and everyone in Catalonia, are now living through turbulent times, and we at QLF hold them in our thoughts and prayers.

As you have almost certainly seen in the news, after many years of unresolved grievances, the Catalan government declared independence from Spain on the 27th of October. Spain has since removed that duly elected provincial government, and Thursday most of its leaders appeared in court in Madrid. Those of you in Massachusetts may have seen a photo in Friday's *Boston Globe* of Raül

Romeva, the minister who opened our Congress, waving as he walked toward a hearing before a Spanish court.

QLF does not take political positions, especially regarding politics in another country. But the drama unfolding in the Autonomous Community of Catalonia is as much social as it is political. We are in almost daily contact with our Catalan friends as they work to preserve their unique identity, a culture we had the privilege of enjoying over several wonderful days last fall. Our colleagues feel they are under assault, and anyone who has seen the images of faceless, black-armored policemen violently attacking civilians at referendum polling stations can understand why. It did not have to come to this; what one of the people you met describes as "a really sad situation."



The last few months have been a roller coaster ride for the people of Catalonia. They, and we, were shocked by the cowardly terrorist attack 10 weeks ago when a van was used as a weapon to kill 14 pedestrians and wound 130 others on Las Ramblas —the pedestrian boulevard where many of us strolled less than a year ago. Then came the struggle to give the people a voice through a non-binding referendum, a day that was both frightening and exhilarating. I treasure a photo of one friend kissing a ballot box, another shares photos of crowds filling the streets in solidarity. Catalans risked much to vote: I have a video of young men running through back streets with ballot boxes, avoiding Spanish police in scenes reminiscent of the running of the bulls in Pamplona. One friend describes volunteering at her local polling station in an elementary school. They preserved the vote by hiding the ballots in the school cafeteria, under the frozen peas.

The declaration of independence brought a moment of celebration, a moment that proved all too brief. I think it is important for you to know that the situation is not as simple as some recent news reports describe, of a “separatist” government determined to foment revolution and division. At risk of appearing to take sides, what I hear is a

long record of attempts to resolve issues with an intractable central government.

While technically it was legal for Madrid to remove the elected government of the province, they lacked both precedent, and, in the eyes of many, the moral authority for such action. More than 40 years later, the people of Catalonia have never fully recovered from the oppression of the Franco dictatorship, when they were forcibly subjugated and forbidden to use their language. They see reflections of the Franco era in the uncompromising stance of the Spanish authorities today. For most, it is relief from that oppression, not necessarily independence, which they long for.

No one can foresee how the current impasse will be resolved. As one of our hosts put it, “Spain is broken and Catalonia will not be part again, being an independent country or not. Healing will take a generation at least...”

Beth and I want you to know that at QLF we hold our Catalan friends very close to our hearts in these difficult days, and hope for healing and peace.

Brent A. Mitchell  
Senior Vice President  
Quebec-Labrador Foundation  
Atlantic Center for the Environment

## Responses From Alumni and Congress Participants:

*Thank you for this message of support, Brent. Much appreciated. It was good to stop and pause and think of our Catalan friends and QLF family at this time and almost one year on.*

Sending much love.  
Nicola Cross

*Thank you for shedding light and bringing some clarity to these difficult times for Catalonia. The 2nd QLF Congress was a most remarkable and memorable event.*

Rob Moir

*I thank you very much your kind message. You are right, Catalan people of my age, who were raised under Franco dictatorship, and did many peaceful political clandestine activities during our university years, feel that this is a “déjà-vu”...*

*Despite the hardships, and the dark perspectives of the near future, there are many good signs, however. I do hope that this will help many people to awake, not only in Catalonia, but in Spain and other European countries, realising that freedom can never be taken for granted. Political non-violent organisations, activities and techniques have gained an impressive momentum, which I would never have dreamt, fostering noble attitudes and reactions.*

*We are aware that this is part of a general trend to reduce democracy to the formal, apparent dimension, moving towards authoritarian regimes, which is happening in many countries in this part of the world. One has to look only at what happened in Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey and other Mediterranean countries...*

With gratitude and hope,  
Josep Maria Mallarach



## A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE CONGRESS

Personal Narrative Submitted by Adrienne Kotler, QLF Alumna

IN SPRING 2015, I GRADUATED MCGILL UNIVERSITY with a degree in Environmental Science, and I was exploring options for post-graduation work. At that time I ran into a childhood friend who mentioned QLF. I was taken by QLF's international scope and grassroots approach, and got in touch with Beth Alling to learn more. Before long, in May 2015, I began work as a QLF intern tasked with assisting with formalizing the Global Leadership Network (GLN). In August, I transitioned from intern to full-time staff, and I spent the subsequent year as the Program Manager of the GLN, focusing on the GLN Online and the *Second QLF Alumni Congress*. My responsibilities included helping to launch the new QLF website and GLN Online, coordinating early work on the *Second QLF Alumni Congress*, communicating with international Alumni and consultants, and managing GLN interns and staff.

Working for QLF has had a profound impact on my professional life. I am particularly grateful for the degree to which QLF's staff value and trust young professionals. From my first day of work, I was invited to contribute meaningfully to staff meetings, and was challenged to present innovative ideas and proposals for the GLN. I was given the opportunity to interview exceptional QLF Alumni, collaborate with staff and consultants from a variety of fields, and present my work on the GLN at two Board of Directors meetings. Beth and Larry empowered me to speak up, and to have confidence in my abilities.

In July 2015, Beth and I first discussed QLF's intention to host a second *Alumni Congress*, to bring together Alumni from its six regions, catalyzing collaboration and innovation across borders. I was familiar with the 2006 *Congress* and was excited by the prospect of contributing to another. My first *Congress* task was to propose a location for the event; I continue to believe that Barcelona was a perfect fit!

Over the following months, I got to know Alumni from around the world through my work on the GLN. The expertise, positivity, and dedication of QLF Alumni does not cease to inspire me. I became convinced that convening this group of experts, who share a common vision for a more sustainable and peaceful future, would yield great results. My vision for the *Congress*—informed by

Beth's guidance and mentorship—was to catalyze the knowledge of expert Alumni in order to produce new, concrete conservation projects, led by Alumni and supported by QLF. Additionally, convening Alumni would allow these professionals—who know and care about QLF so profoundly—to help guide the future of the organization.

In September 2016, I was accepted to a master's degree in Environmental Governance at the University of Freiburg. It was difficult deciding to leave my job at QLF, and I was fortunate to have been offered the opportunity to continue to work remotely for QLF as a consultant. This was especially exciting to me, as it meant that I would be able to see the *Congress* through. Katy Litka, another consultant, and I were tasked with co-managing the team of young professionals who worked tirelessly before and throughout the *Congress* to ensure that the events, hotels, speakers and workshops ran smoothly. I had the confidence and knowledge to do this job thanks to months of training and mentorship that I received from QLF.

Being able to see the *Congress* from its early brainstorming and inception through to execution is among the most rewarding professional experiences I have had. I am proud to report that indeed the *Congress* catalyzed new partnerships and projects, and gave Alumni an opportunity to guide QLF's direction forward. After months of communicating with international Alumni over Skype and email, it was incredible to meet many of these experts in person. And, I was especially proud to hear the overwhelming enthusiasm for the GLN and GLN Online.

The 2016 *Congress* brought together two factions of QLF's Alumni base: expert Alumni with experience to share, and young professionals like me who are keen to learn and take action to better our world. Both factions share a passion for and belief in QLF. It was clear that those in attendance at the *Congress*—both young and seasoned—have faith in QLF's impact, and are grateful for QLF's presence in our lives. Having the opportunity to be a part of the *Congress* has made me more confident than ever that QLF will move in new directions and be highly impactful in its next decade. I am so grateful to have been a part of the organization for the past two years, and I hope to continue to contribute to QLF however I can in the decade to come.



We conducted a survey on participants' experiences at the Congress, and received many wonderful responses. Here are a few:

*We all face the same environmental challenges regardless of our diverse backgrounds, cultural and political contexts. Because of this, it is encouraging to know that there are so many professionals, experts, enthusiasts, and friends and Alumni across the globe who share the same mission and ultimate goal.*

...

*The Congress reminded me of the great work that QLF has done and continues to do, and served as a source of inspiration to the work I am currently doing.*

...

*QLF brings together and convenes the best and brightest minds from the worlds of conservation, finance, and culture.*

...

*The workshops inspired capacity building, sharing knowledge and innovation, and encouraging collaborative projects among Alumni worldwide.*

...

*I left Barcelona with a renewed sense of optimism. The QLF community is a group of individuals who pour their souls into building a better world. They work against huge odds, and with huge love.*

...

*To meet with the QLF family is to learn, exchange and stay connected with what is going on all over the world, and to discover solutions to global challenges through this network of experts, environmentalists and youth.*



Parador Castle - PHOTOGRAPH BY MEGAN LALLI

## CONGRESS PARTICIPANTS

### EUROPE, CENTRAL AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE

**LISA ANDREWS**

International Water Association  
THE NETHERLANDS

**GREN CARR-JONES**

Real Estate Consultant  
LUXEMBOURG

**EULÀLIA COMAS LAMARCA**

Departament de Territori i Sostenibilitat  
CATALONIA

**NICOLA Z. CROSS**

Documentary Filmmaker  
UNITED KINGDOM

**SNEZANA DRAGOJEVIC**

United Nations Development Programme  
MONTENEGRO

**KEVIN GRANAHAH**

Cole Creative  
ITALY

**JENNIFER GRIGG**

Green Bottle Press  
UNITED KINGDOM

**MIRIAM GONZALEZ**

M.I.C.E. Barcelona  
CATALONIA

**ISTVÁN GYARMATHY**

Society for Nature Protection  
HUNGARY

**MYRIAM HERNANDEZ**

CATALONIA

**KENNETH TAYLOR HOFFMAN**

More Partnership  
UNITED KINGDOM

**BLAZENA HUŠKOVÁ**

Nadace Partnerství  
CZECH REPUBLIC

**KATHERINE IRVINE**

James Hutton Institute  
UNITED KINGDOM

**ADRIENNE KOTLER**

University of Freiburg  
GERMANY

**MIROSLAV KUNDRATA**

Czech Environmental Partnership  
Foundation  
CZECH REPUBLIC

**ALENA KUNDRATOVA**

CZECH REPUBLIC

**KIRAGU MWANGI**

BirdLife International  
UNITED KINGDOM

**JORDI PIETX**

Ecoembes  
CATALONIA

**LADISLAV PTÁČEK**

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Interpretation  
CZECH REPUBLIC

**MARTA PUJOL MARTIN**

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**OLIVERA RADOVANOVIC**

Green Network of Vojvodina  
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CATALONIA

**VERÓNICA NEVES**

University of the Azores  
PORTUGAL

**PETR ROTH**

Independent Consultant  
CZECH REPUBLIC

**DAVID SAEZ**

Fundació Catalunya  
CATALONIA

**SANTI PÉREZ SEGÚ**

Departament de Territori i Sostenibilitat  
CATALONIA

**MOJMIR VLASIN**

CSOP Veronica  
CZECH REPUBLIC

### LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**RICARDO ESTEBAN BREMER**

Fundación Vida Silvestre  
ARGENTINA

**NELLIE FAUSTINA CATZIM**

Islands First  
UNITED STATES  
*Representing Belize*

**MARILIA BRITTO DE MORAES**

Project Coordinator & Independent  
Consultant  
BRAZIL

**GABRIEL JULIAN CASTRE-SANA**

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South Arm, Bonne Bay, Gros Morne National Park, Great Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland. Gros Morne National Park was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. The geology of Gros Morne provides some of the world's best illustrations of plate tectonics. PHOTOGRAPH BY NICHOLAS GATES



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Raül Romeva  
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Marta Subirà i Roca  
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And we extend our gratitude to our Consultants in Barcelona for their tireless effort on behalf of The Second QLF Alumni Congress. Thank you, thank you! With deep appreciation to you, always ~

Marta Pujol Martin  
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Brent Mitchell with Congress staff, before Plenary Session. Left to right: Marta Pujol, Consultant on Biodiversity Conservation and Management projects, Consell de Cent (Spain), Delphine Slotten, Independent Consultant (United States), Nina McKee, Intern, Quebec-Labrador Foundation Congress (United States), Adrienne Kotler, Senior Consultant, Quebec-Labrador Foundation (Germany) - PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY MORRIS

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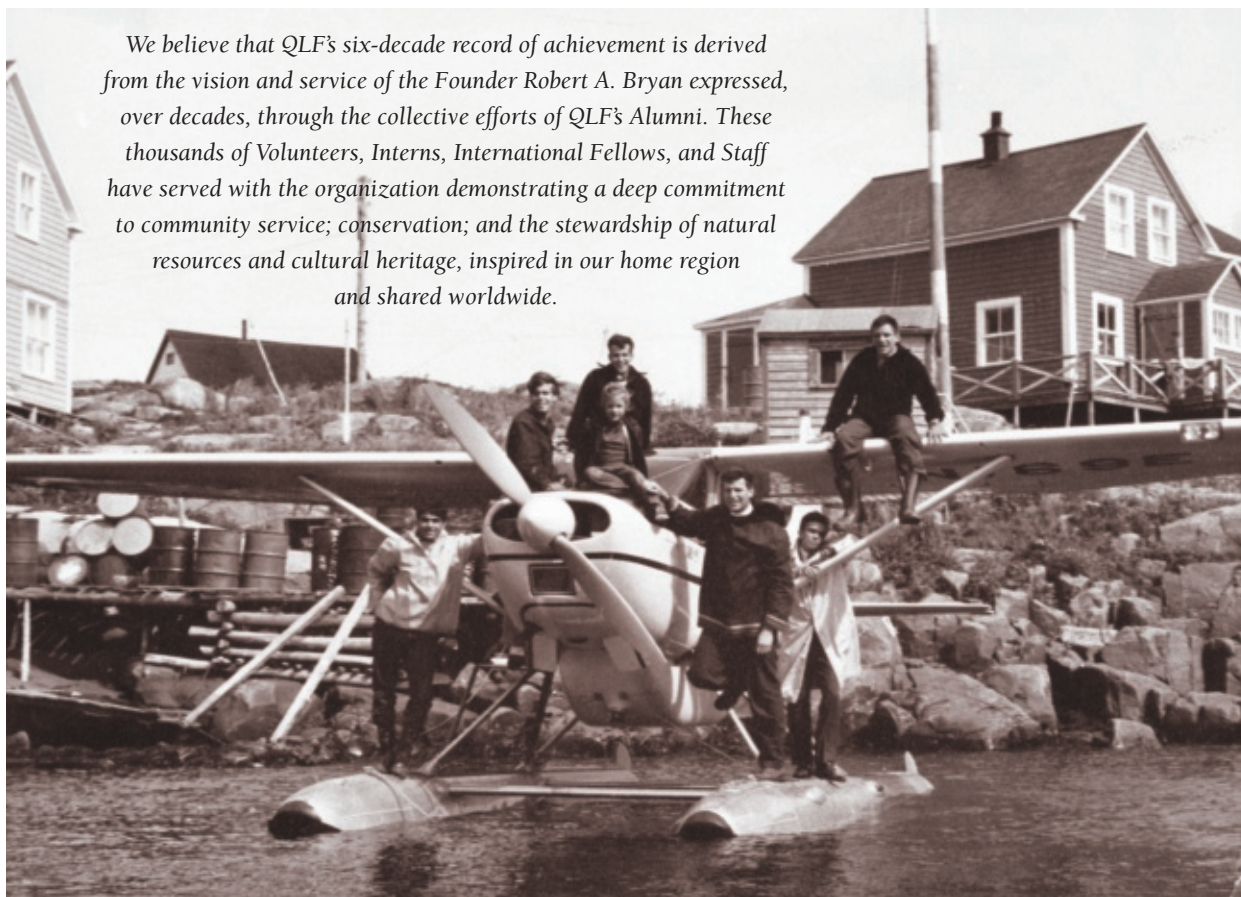
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*We believe that QLF's six-decade record of achievement is derived from the vision and service of the Founder Robert A. Bryan expressed, over decades, through the collective efforts of QLF's Alumni. These thousands of Volunteers, Interns, International Fellows, and Staff have served with the organization demonstrating a deep commitment to community service; conservation; and the stewardship of natural resources and cultural heritage, inspired in our home region and shared worldwide.*



QLF Founder, Robert A. Bryan, with QLF Volunteers, Harrington Harbour, Québec, Canada, 1963 - QLF ARCHIVES





**Cover photograph:** The Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Montjuïc Hill, Barcelona. The Museum is noted for its collection of Romanesque paintings and Catalan art from the 19th and 20th centuries. PHOTOGRAPH BY FESUS

**Back cover photograph:** Early morning view from the Hotel Parador de Cardona, El Bages region, Catalonia - PHOTOGRAPH BY GRACE WEATHERALL

**Inside front cover:** Aerial view of Las Ramblas, Barcelona. Las Ramblas is the central-most boulevard, which runs through the heart of the city center. PHOTOGRAPH BY PERE SANZ

**Inside back cover:** Món Sant Benet, site of the Congress workshops. Located in the region of El Bages, one hour outside of Barcelona, is the Món Sant Benet cultural heritage center with its refurbished medieval monastery of Sant Benet del Bages, the former summer residence of Catalan painter, Roman Casas. PHOTOGRAPH BY GREIG CRANNA





