

QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

<http://www.afn.org/~quakers/>

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NEWSLETTER, THIRD MONTH, 2008

JEAN LARSON, CLERK

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Queries and Advice for the Third Month: HARMONY WITHIN THE MEETING COMMUNITY

Queries:

Are love and unity maintained among us?

When differences arise, do we settle them in a spirit of love and humility?

Are we careful not to hold an idea too firmly, knowing that another may bring us closer to the truth?

Are we patient and considerate towards those we find difficult to understand or like?

Do we demonstrate a forgiving spirit? Do we have concern and respect for the reputation of others?

When people are hurt, do we take care to hold them up with a tender heart?

Do we respect that of God in each person, though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or may be difficult for us to discern?

Advices:

Maintain love and unity by avoiding tale bearing and detraction.

Settle differences promptly, in a manner free from resentment.

When we have a difference with another person, speak to them in private “in the love and wisdom that is gentle and pure”.

Be aware that verbal violence can be as destructive as physical violence.

Be careful that our language does not incorporate violence, consciously or unconsciously.

Listen patiently, and seek the truth another person’s expressions may contain for us.

Be willing to seek and willing to receive counsel and help from one another.

In our daily lives, seek to know one another in the things that are eternal, and to enter with ready empathy and sensitive discretion into the joys, sorrows and needs of each other.

Be mindful that everyone is included in the life and activities of the Meeting.

Testimony of Stewardship

Stewardship of Economic Resources

All that we have, in our selves and our possessions, are gifts from God, entrusted to us for our responsible use, Jesus reminds us that we must not lay up earthly treasures for ourselves, for where our treasures are, there will our hearts be also. We cannot serve both God and Mammon.

Stewardship is a coming together of our major testimonies. To be good stewards in God's world calls on us to examine and consider the ways in which our testimonies for peace, equality, and simplicity interact to guide our relationships with all life.

O that we who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be God only, may we walk in the light, and thereby examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! May we look upon our treasures, the furniture of our houses, and our garments, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions.

John Woolman, c. 1770

In a world of economic interactions far more complex than John Woolman could have imagined, Friends need to examine their decisions about obtaining, holding, and using money and other assets, to see whether they find in them the seeds, not only of war, but also of self-indulgence, injustice, and ecological disaster. Good stewardship of economic resources consists both in avoidance of those evils and in actions that advance peace, simple living, justice, and a healthy ecosystem. Good stewardship also requires attention to the economic needs of Quaker and other organizations that advance Friends' testimonies.

Right Sharing

Friends worldwide have accepted the idea that the testimony of equality in the economic realm implies a commitment to the right sharing of the world's resources. Friends in comfortable circumstances need to find practical expression of the testimony of simplicity in their earning and spending. They must consider the meaning for their own lives of economic equality and simplicity, and what level of income is consonant with their conclusions. They should consider likewise what portion of that income should be shared beyond the immediate family. That decision entails balancing the social value of self-sufficiency against the social value of greater help for those more needy. It also requires judgments about what expenditures are essential and what are discretionary, and about the values that will underlie discretionary expenditures.

(excerpted from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, 2002, pp. 80-81.)

Walk Gently on the Earth

And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food . . .

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden To till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; . . ."

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them;

Genesis 2: 9; 15-16; 18-19 (RSV)

For the Lord showed me that . . . I might not eat and drink to make myself wanton but for health, using the creatures in their service, as servants in their places, to the glory of him that hath created them; they being in their covenant, and I being brought up into the covenant, as sanctified by the Word which was in the beginning, by which all things are upheld; wherein is unity with the creation.

But people being strangers to the covenant of life with God, They eat and drink to make themselves wanton with the creatures, devouring them upon their own lusts, and living in all filthiness, loving foul ways and devouring the creation; and all this in the world, in the pollutions thereof, without God; and therefore I was to shun all such.

George Fox, The Journal of George Fox
John L. Nickalls, ed., 1997, p. 2

We recognize that the well-being of the earth is a fundamental spiritual concern. From the beginning, it was through the wonders of nature that people saw God. How we treat the earth and its creatures is a basic part of our relationship with God. Our planet as a whole, not just the small parts of it in our immediate custody, requires our responsible attention.

As Friends become aware of the interconnectedness of all life on this planet and the devastation caused by neglect of any part of it, we have become more willing to extend our sense of community to encompass all living things. We must now consider whether we should lay aside the belief that we humans are acting stewards of the natural world, and instead view human actions as the major threat to the ecosystem.

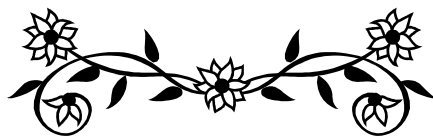
Friends are indeed called to walk gently on the earth. Wasteful and extravagant consumption is a major cause of destruction of the environment. The right sharing of the world's remaining resources requires that people in underdeveloped nations can have more, and the earth's life-sustaining systems can be restored. The world cannot tolerate indefinitely the present rate of consumption by technologically developed nations.

Friends are called to become models and patterns of simple living and concern for the earth. Some may find it difficult to change their accustomed lifestyle; others recognize the need and have begun to adopt ways of life which put the least strain on the world's resources of clean air, water, soil, and energy.

A serious threat to the planet is the population explosion and consequent famine, war and devastation. Called on to make decisions to simplify our lives, we may find that the most difficult to accept will be limiting the number of children we have.

Voluntary simplicity in living and restraint in procreation hold the promise of ecological redemption and spiritual renewal.

excerpted from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, 2002, p. 81



Meeting News

Nancy Atkinson's granddaughter, Ella Cate Atkinson, was born on February 12, 2008 to parents Eddie and Crystal Atkinson. Eddie and Crystal live in Gainesville where Eddie is a graduate student at the university.

Sally Gillespie's daughter, Emily, has moved with her husband to Boston where Emily is a graduate student at Simmons College studying Children's Literature and a research assistant for a long term sociology study.

Seamus Patrick Moran, was born 2/25/08 to mom Emily Jeske and Grandma Catherine Puckett. He was born 9 pounds 3 ounces and 20 inches long! Emily and baby are well and Catherine was able to be a birth coach. She was beaming joy over the phone...

Firstday School: The children have been enjoying the lessons provided by the Earthcare Witness Committee on the 3rd Firstday of each month. The children enjoy the classes with Nicole Domingues, who provides creative activities. Thanks to the children who attend Firstday School and thanks to all who help us. Suggestions are always welcome.



Friendly Lunch: Tuesday March 4, 11:45, Books Inc.

Breakfast by Jim: On Sunday, March 30, Jim will be cooking and serving breakfast from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. at his home. The suggested donation to benefit the mortgage fund is \$10. The menu sounds delicious: cream cheese and crab omelet with real crab (except for those who request it done vegetarian), sauteed potatoes, toasted English muffins, with orange juice and coffee to drink.

For reservations and directions see bulletin board or contact Laura. There are flyers available at the meetinghouse with a map - the critical piece of information is that their street can be found only from NW 34th Place, which can be reached directly from NW 43rd Street or via NW 40th Street from NW 39th Avenue.

Housing needed: Looking for affordable one bedroom apartment within 10 miles of Gainesville without high start up costs. I have 2 well behaved cats in good health. I am quiet. Please call Karen Arrington 352-682-3632.

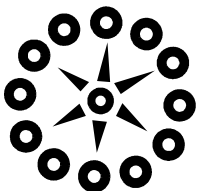
Quakerism 101: Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend these sessions that cover the basic concepts of Quakerism. It has been the experience of those attending that seasoned Friends as well as newcomers benefit from the readings and discussions. We meet at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, March 9th in the meetinghouse library. Rest assured coffee is the first thing on the agenda. Our topic is "Living in the Light: Quaker Witness." The reading for discussion is chapter 7 of Friends for 300/350 Years by Howard Brinton, and two one-page handouts on clearness committees. If you can't find a copy of Brinton's book in the library, it can be obtained at www.quakerbooks.org. See Connie Ray for the handouts.

"Warm Fuzzy" Birthday Party: Sunday, March 16 we will celebrate the founding of Gainesville Friends Meeting and the anniversary of our new meetinghouse with a party at our regular pot luck lunch. We will have special birthday cake. It will be an occasion to celebrate each other and all that we do for the meeting. Karen Porter will lead us in a "warm fuzzy" activity. So, come with warm hearts open to the Spirit. **Meeting for Worship will be held outdoors in the meeting for worship nature area at 11:00 a.m.** Bring something on which to sit and, if desired, insect repellent.

Quaker Study Program: Everyone is invited to the home of Jeannie and Phil Buskirk in MacIntosh on Friday, March 28 for fellowship and an exploration of issues touching Quakers today. Ellie Clayton will lead us in clarifying our thoughts on how we as Quakers cope with global warming and climate change. Pot luck supper is at 6:00p.m. with program following. Directions are on the foyer bulletin board or ask someone. We meet at the home of Phil and Jeannie Buskirk in McIntosh. Potluck supper is at 6 p.m. or as soon thereafter as folks can assemble. Discussion follows. Newcomers and visitors are welcome. See the foyer bulletin board for directions, or ask someone. 352-591-0677 (*Connie Ray*)

Hold in the Light: Tak Hayakawa, Morrie Trimmer, George Newkirk, Phil Klein

Movie Night: March 14 at 7pm the movie will be "*Stand By Me*" - location to be announced.



Around the Meetinghouse - Jean Larson

Spring is showing off with beautiful bright colors. The winged elm by the social room door has just put out tiny pale green leaves. The red maples are showing their red coloring in their new foliage visible looking up through the trees near the pond. One of the Conradina plants in the children's yard has been flowering profusely as had the rosemary plant by the social room door with its lovely blue flowers.

Some of the wax myrtles by the pond are flushing with little pale green leaves pushing out in places where there is light in contrast to the mature dark green leaves already there. The St. Andrews Cross put out a yellow blossom or two with promise of more to come later in the season.

Some of the flowers planted last year are coming back. There are small blanket flower plants popping up around the children's yard. Karen Arrington weeded the area around our peace pole and sign, digging in compost, and now it is coming up in dune sunflower (*Helianthus debilis*).

This month I was blessed with the sight of a turtle in the creek just upstream from where the ditch by Shir Shalom intersects it - the sighting was brief because the turtle submerged almost immediately.

News from Southeastern Yearly Meeting

- Clearwater Monthly Meeting is starting a meetinghouse fund.
- Managua Worship Group regularly has about 14 members and attenders for worship.
- St. Petersburg Monthly Meeting had a trip to tour Philadelphia seeing all the Quaker sites. Herb Haigh reported that the event was “transforming.” There was greater attendance at Interim Business Meeting and the meeting has revived quarterly meeting.
- The trustees inform us that with the economy down, this is a good time to invest. They are looking at several good investment opportunities and encourage individual contributions. Net income is up and more money is being put aside for travel than is being used. So, we are encouraged to request travel reimbursement to Friends’ organizations. A suggestion was made to send youth to Friends General Conference Gathering in July in Jonestown, PA.
- Recommendations from all monthly meetings are needed as to whom we would like to have on the SEYM Nominating Committee. Names should be sent to Herb Haigh.
- The Faith and Practice Committee is requesting faith statements and statements of practice to be collected and sent to Phoebe Andersen. Statements should be no more than a couple of paragraphs telling where you are in your spiritual life and what you believe. Messages from worship are acceptable if the speaker approves it. Send statements to Phoebe or hand to Connie Ray.
- The pastoral letter from The Friends Church in Kenya that was sent to the two presidential contenders is to be put into the Documents in Advance for the SEYM annual gathering. Please read this sensitively written peace testimony and plea for reconciliation. SEYM will write a response to it at our gathering.
- The Stewardship Testimony of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has been amended with two quotations, one from the Bible and one from George Fox and will be presented to the Faith and Practice Committee for consideration and discernment. Copies are available on the bookcase under the clock in the foyer.

Pendle Hill:

“Spirit-Led Eldering,” a weekend with Margery Mears Larrabee, March 7-9.

“Wanted: Dead or Alive?” an Easter retreat with Jan Hoffman, March 21-23.

“Facing Our Shadows” with Erva Baden, and “The Sacred Art of Listening” with Kay Lindahl, a weekend of workshops, April 11-13.

Each course: \$275 shared room; \$330 private room. Matching scholarships available.

Young Adult Leadership Development Program for young adults ages 18 – 24, June 15 – August 3, 2008.

Room, board, and a small stipend provided. Applications are due March 21. Admissions decisions will be finalized by April 18. To apply, please download the application materials at www.pendlehill.org. For more information, contact Zachary Moon, coordinator, at zmoon@pendlehill.org, 800-742-3150 ext. 182.

Kenya 101: Background to The Current Tragedy in Kenya Sunday April 6, 1:00 pm

Kate Robins will lead a discussion at the Meetinghouse on the background of the current crisis in Kenya in which 100,000 have been killed and hundreds of thousands more displaced. Kenya is home to the world's largest population of Quakers, and some of them are among those affected.

Kate Robins has lived in Kenya for 17 years. She is a consultant for a variety of non-governmental organizations in Africa. She was part of the team that worked on the Kenya portion of the Real Time Evaluation of the humanitarian response to the 2005-2006 drought, a multi-agency process initiated by UNICEF and a small group of UN agencies (OCHA, UNICEF, FAO, and WHO).

Snacks that day will include some of the foods that may be served at a welcoming tea in Kenya: bananas and hard-boiled eggs to peel, pan-roasted peanuts, and bread and butter sandwiches.

We will collect for donations to be sent to one of the many organizations that are helping with the current crisis.

Kenya Relief: David Zarembka, Coordinator of the African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams, has written that over 300,000 Kenyans are in Internally Displaced Persons camps. More than 1,000 people have been killed, most of them macheted, some youths shot by police. Rural tribes have attacked the towns to kill the “strangers” on “their land.” Rival ethnic gangs of youth attack each other in the slums. “Due to the large population increase in recent decades, there are large numbers of youth with few jobs and nothing to do. . .”

This is not just about elections gone bad. Economic injustice has been noted by Friends in Kenya for some time. “Those at the bottom. . . have no contact with Kikuyu tycoons and politicians so they are taking out the pent-up rage of 44 years of economic oppression on average Kikuyu in their community. The Kikuyu are then retaliating. . .”

In the Mt. Elgon area there has been an active conflict for the last year and a half between two clans of the same ethnic group over land distribution. 400 people have been killed and 150,000 or more were displaced by this violence before the election violence began on December 30.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the Kenya Relief effort. Kenyan Friends continue to use money from Friends abroad to purchase food, soap, salt, and Vaseline for the people in the camps. Some meetings shelter displaced people. Some have engaged in listening projects to reconcile local groups. Kaimosa Hospital is housing Friends who have fled violence in Kisumu. A letter has been sent from the Friends Church of Kenya to both presidential contenders. A copy of the letter will be in the Documents in Advance for the Southeastern Yearly Meeting. It is beautiful, and contains the best expression of our peace testimony I have ever read. This is the first time that the many yearly meetings of Kenya have acted with one voice.

The Friends Peace Teams has a new Indonesian Initiative headed by **Nadine Hoover**, who was our SEYM secretary for several years, in the province where the Tsunami struck a few years back. She says the only other non natives there are missionaries and Al Qaeda. **Cece Yokum** of Tampa Meeting is going to be starting a Colombian Initiative this summer. Plans are to bring Burundis who have completed the Alternatives to Violence Program leadership training to Colombia to teach AVP there.

We hope to have copies of the new Friends Peace Teams pamphlet in the meetinghouse soon. The jar for collecting money for Kenya Relief and information about the current violence as well as African Great Lakes Initiative work camps are on the Peace and Social Concerns table in the social room.

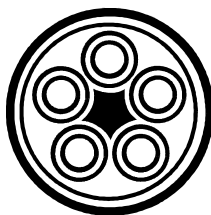
Yoga With Gary: Gary Arthur is offering yoga Mondays at 6 p.m. in the Meetinghouse. Please come a few minutes early in order to get your mat situated and begin promptly. Suggested donation is \$5 per class if you pay for the series, \$10 for walk-ins. Please don't let the cost prevent you from attending, as any donation will be kindly accepted. It's my privilege to share this experience. More info? Please email or call 224-5143.
(Gary Arthur)

New Director of **Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)** appointed. Andrew Tomlinson began on February 1st as the new Director of the Quaker United Nations (QUNO) Office in New York.

A Quaker since he came to Philadelphia from the UK on an exchange scholarship, he and his wife Ursula were married at Central Philadelphia Friends Meeting, and he is now Clerk of Chatham-Summit Monthly Meeting in New Jersey. His work has included projects in Mexico, in the Far East and Latin America. Andrew lives with his family in New Jersey and is a citizen of the United Kingdom.

Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP) announces plans to publish an anthology of short, non-fiction prose, poetry and visual art by young Quakers ages 15-30 from all branches of the Religious Society of Friends. The collection will focus on the personal spiritual experiences, beliefs, and identities of contemporary young Friends and offer a resource both to younger Friends and to the meetings and churches striving to understand and support their younger members. The project will be guided and edited by an international Editorial Board of Stay tuned for a call for submissions in early summer 2008. <http://www.quaker.org/quip/>

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FRIENDS PEACE TEAM PRESENTS: BURUNDI TO BOGOTA

TRAUMA HEALING ACROSS CULTURES Cecilia Yocum, Ph.D

Gainesville Friends (Quakers) Meeting Sunday, March 2, 2008 – 12:45 pm

About the presenter: Cecilia Yocum, Ph.D., has been active with Friends Peace Teams in the African Great Lakes Initiative and the Latin America/Caribbean Working Group for over ten years. During the last four years, she has helped with training lay facilitators in Rwanda and Burundi to provide programs that focus on community trauma healing. She plans to travel to Colombia next year for similar training.

She has obtained training at USF in a two-year program on trauma healing, international trauma healing training through the University of Missouri, as well as additional training with the Psychologists for Social Responsibility and Division 48 of APA (Peace Psychology). Dr. Yocum is also certified in psychodrama and uses action methods in her work and presentations. In 2006, she received the "Outstanding Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest" award from the Florida Psychological Association.

Handicrafts from Burundi will be available for sale after her presentation.

MARCH 2008 GFM CALENDAR

All 1 st -Days	11am	Meeting for Worship, Gainesville Friends Meetinghouse, 702 NW 38 th St, Gainesville, Fla.
All 1 st -Days	11:15am	First-Day School
March 2	9:30am	Meetinghouse and Library Committee meetings
March 2	12:45pm	Forum: Burundi to Bogota by Cecilia Yocum
March 8		Solutions to Violence: War (Westminster Presbyterian)
March 9	9:15am	Quakerism 101
	12:45pm	Meeting for Business
	4pm	Interfaith Social Justice Forum: Proposals for a Universal Healthcare System that Americans want and deserve (at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship)
March 10	6:30pm	Yoga with Gary Arthur
March 14	7pm	Movie Night – “Stand By Me”
March 16	11am	Meeting for Worship in Nature; Meeting Birthday Party & Time of Gratitude
March 17	6:30pm	Yoga with Gary Arthur
March 21	7-9pm	Workshop on Nonviolent Communication
March 21	9am-5pm	Workshop on Nonviolent Communication
March 22	10-11:30am	Solutions to Violence: Compassion (Westminster Presbyterian)
March 19-23		SEYM Annual Gathering – Leesburg FL
March 23	9:30am	Peace and Social Concerns Committee meeting
March 23	12:45pm	Bible Study
March 24	6:30pm	Yoga with Gary Arthur
March 30	8:30-10am	Quaker Market Breakfast - at Jim's
	12:45pm	Personal Energy Transporter (PET) video
March 31	6:30pm	Yoga with Gary Arthur
April 1	11:45am	Friendly Lunch at Books, Inc.
April 1	7pm	GI Hotline Group
April 5		Workday at the Meetinghouse
April 6	9:30am	Meetinghouse and Library Committees
April 6	1pm	Forum: Kenya 101 by Kate Robins
April 7	6:30pm	Yoga with Gary Arthur
April 12	6pm	Quaker Market Dinner

Unless noted, meetings are at the GF Meetinghouse.

