

Gainesville Religious Society of Friends  
c/o Jean Larson  
702 NW 38<sup>th</sup> St.  
Gainesville, Fla. 32607

## QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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

Meeting Place: 702 NW 38<sup>th</sup> St., Gainesville, Fla. 32607

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NEWSLETTER, NINTH MONTH, 2006

JEAN LARSON, CLERK

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### Queries for the Ninth Month: Extending Our Message

Do you try to share in the religious life and fellowship of the whole community?

*Do you cooperate as fully as possible in its work, availing yourself of opportunities for worship and service with other local religious groups?*

Is your distinctive Quaker witness characterized by humility and a willingness to learn from others?

### Advice: Children and Youth

Watch with tenderness over the opening minds of your children. Seek to awaken in them the love and understanding of the life and teaching of Jesus, and a sense of security in the love of God. Uphold in your own conduct, and so encourage in theirs, truthfulness and sincerity. Through example and training, help them to recognize and obey the voice of God in their hearts that they may be joyful and willing in service. Remember that there is a unique potentiality in each human being as a child of God, and that the holy spirit may lead your children along paths which you had not foreseen, and that it may also lead children to give wise counsel to listening parents.

As young people, realize that you also can participate in Meetings both for Worship and for Business, and that this may be your responsibility. Faith is needed as a vital part of your living.

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A man prayed, and at first he thought that prayer was talking. But he became more and more quiet, until in the end, he realized that prayer is listening. *Soren Kierkegaard*

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## MEETING NEWS AND NOTES

**First-Day School: First Day School:** Thank you, everyone, for contributing to our needed supplies. We still need **pretty material scraps, yarn scraps, magazines with pictures of animals, empty cardboard egg cartons, straws, white Styrofoam trays, old pantyhose, small shoe boxes, cookie cutter animals (lending the cookie cutters is fine), green chenille sticks (pipe cleaners), yellow cotton balls, and plastic pans @ 13"x9"x4."** If anyone would care to donate books (used is fine) we would like to have *The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Angus and the Cat, and Harry and the Terrible Whatzit.*

The meeting has approved the eventual children's schedule to be: **11:10 a.m.: storytime in the foyer.** Storytime is planned for 4- to 7-year-old children, but others are welcome. **11:20 a.m.: activity time for 4- to 7-year-old children, and lesson time for older children.** This schedule allows children time to become acquainted with silent worship as their maturity permits. This schedule also allows the 4- to 7-year-old children to go from complete silence, to programmed quiet, to structured activity to open play in an orderly progression, without older children disrupting or younger children distracting.

Shelby Hall is working on getting the bags ready with books, lessons and materials. **Older children:** Now that everyone is back from vacations, we can continue looking at the "*Sermon on the Mount*" to find the things that Quakers and the Anabaptists valued in common when the early "Seekers" went seeking the Truth. (*Connie Ray*)

**Things I Discovered While Doing Research for First Day School:** (Bless these children with their searching questions.) "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*" Mt. 5:8 The Greek word for "pure" used here is commonly used for grain that has been cleansed of chaff or for milk or water that is unadulterated. So, to be "pure in heart" is not to be innocent, but to have unmixed motives. It takes serious discernment to evaluate our own motives. If we are able to "see" what our motives are, and can "see" that they are unmixed, then we will be able to "see" God. In the striving to say what we mean, and to do what we say we believe without any ulterior motives, we are discerning God's will. (Thanks to Nicole Domingues who asked if it is the same as Integrity and made me go find out.) (*Connie Ray*)

**Quaker Study Program** will meet on Friday Sept. 29, at the home of Jeannie and Phil Buskirk in McIntosh for potluck supper and community. The discussion will follow a worship-sharing format. The questions for reflection are: What has come to me in worship that I know to be a leading from God, causing me to live out a testimony in the outer world? Of the historical testimonies (peace, equality, simplicity, integrity), which ones do I know from my own experience to be Truth? How am I held accountable for my witness? How do I know I have been faithful? **Everyone is welcome!** (*Connie Ray*)

**Quakerism 101:** The next session will be at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, Sept. 10, in the meetinghouse library. The course of study is for anyone who knows a little about Quakerism, and would like to know more. This time there will be a lecture with readings on George Fox. Bring your copies of the *Journal of George Fox*. We will discuss Margaret Fell and Mary Dyer, so read those handouts before you come. I'll continue the lecture covering William Penn and Robert Barclay, and make sure everyone understands the sometimes confusing Quaker terms used before going on to the topic of the "Inner Light." **Everyone is welcome, even if you haven't been to any of the sessions yet.** (*Connie Ray*)

**Solutions to Nonviolence Series Extended:** The Peace and Social Concerns Committee, in unity with the Gainesville Interfaith Peace Center, has decided to extend the “Solutions to Violence” series through the fall. This decision was based largely on the surprising attendance and positive comments on this summer’s experience. The selections for discussion will continue to come from the anthology *Solutions to Violence*, edited by Colman McCarthy and published by The Center for Teaching Peace. Colman McCarthy is the founder of the Center for Teaching Peace in Washington, D.C. Don Smith will lead the discussions. The ultimate goal of this series is to influence people who are not yet committed to a nonviolent lifestyle. The hope is that it will spawn a number of outreach efforts, that is, courses held at other sites on related topics led by a number of other people. The fall schedule follows (meetings are from 10 to 11:30 a.m.): **Sept 9:** “Could nonviolence really have worked against the Nazis?” (chapter 11); **Sept 23:** “Feminism, Peace and Power” and related essays (chapter 4); **Oct 14:** The death penalty (chapter 7); **Oct 28:** By and about Thomas Merton (chapter 15); **Nov 11:** On the Duty of Civil Disobedience . . . including war tax resistance? (chapter 6); and **Dec 9:** By and about Daniel Berrigan (chapter 10). Each meeting will focus first on an assigned text (which may be read in the 10-15 minutes before the discussion begins) and then on continuing application, i.e., how do we promote dialogue about peace in our own community? People are welcome to attend any or all of the offerings. (*Don Smith*)



**Quaker Market Dinner:** Quaker Market will host a dinner at 6 p.m. on Sept. 30 at the Meetinghouse. The menu will be available at the Quaker Meetinghouse. Quaker Market dinners are a fundraising effort for the new meetinghouse. Suggested donations are \$10.00 per adult, \$5.00 for children over 5 years old, and free for those under 5. For more information, please call Gene Beardsley, 386-462-3201.

### **Fine food and fellowship at the Quaker Market Dinner!**

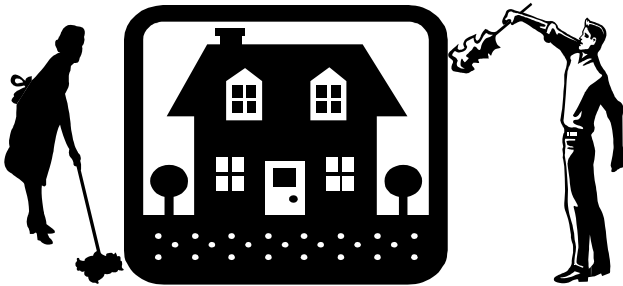
**Wearing Your Beliefs on Your Sleeves: Quaker T-Shirts!!** Please remember the fundraising committee is offering Quaker T-shirts for sale. These come in adult sizes only, small – 2X. (We hope the children can wear adult small.) They can be ordered in white, heather gray, red, royal blue, and natural organic. These T-shirts are preshrunk 100-percent cotton and are fair trade from the women’s co-op in Nicaragua. The suggested minimum donation is \$15, with the request that you consider donating more for the colored and organic natural, since they are more expensive for us to buy. Find our notebook under the clock in the social room and sign up for your shirts with name, size and color. Some of the old T-shirts are on that cart, so you can see what the logo is. We will put in our order in time for Christmas. (*Connie Ray*)

**Meeting Member News:** On Oct. 7, 2006, Heather Loring and Mike Farah will marry on Santa Maria Island.

**New Website for FGC Youth Ministries:** Check out the new website for youth (ages 14-35) at [www.Quakeryouth.org](http://www.Quakeryouth.org). Those of us beyond youth-hood will also enjoy the site. Pass on the site information to

others who might be interested, and please consider filling out the survey at the site. (*Annie McPherson*)

**Open House/Activity Day: Planning Ahead:** Open House/Activity Day has been scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 29 from 3 to 5 p.m. Those of you who have been appointed from your standing committees to serve on the ad-hoc planning committee, please let me know what days of the week are best for you and when you cannot meet at all. (*Connie Ray*)



**Meeting Workday!** A meeting workday is planned for Saturday, Oct. 14, from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (Don't we want our meetinghouse sparkling for Open House/Activity Day?) Wear suitable attire and come prepared to practice community while cleaning. (*Annie McPherson*)

**Books (Movies, Art) and Faith:** At the August Study Group, Arlene Epperson mentioned she would love to know what books individual Quakers have found most moving, inspirational, or thought-provoking. From there, attenders thought it would be great to see if individual Quakers would be moved to write newsletter articles about their favorite spirit- or faith-changing books, movies, and even art (Henri Nouwen wrote a whole book about how Rembrandt's painting, *Return of the Prodigal Son*, changed his life!). Of course, we'd like to know not only what your favorite works are, but also why they moved you or changed you. (*Catherine Puckett*, [catherinepuckett@bellsouth.net](mailto:catherinepuckett@bellsouth.net) for submissions)

**Quaker Earthcare Witness:** On Aug. 20, Claudia Larsen, a UF biologist and research scientist, spoke to the Quaker Earthcare Witness Group on landscaping with native plants with a special focus on some options for our retention ponds and some of the sloping grassy areas. She talked about formal versus informal/naturalistic gardening styles and asked whether we are taking a long view on implementation of a gardening plan or a short view. We responded that we are thinking long term, since we did not see ourselves with the energy and resources to tackle at the present all the jobs we'd like to do. Claudia described some books that are good resources on native plants and mentioned possibilities for field trips to see native plants. This informative talk inspired us and provided us with much-needed guidance. This summary was based on a much more extensive report by Jean Larson. Jean's comprehensive and interesting report is available at the Meetinghouse. (*Gene Beardsley*)

**Fall Schedule Changes to Note for Committees:** Meetinghouse Committee now meets on Wednesdays. The next meeting is Wednesday Sept. 27, 6 p.m.; October's meeting will be on Oct. 25. The Grounds Committee meetings will be at 12:30 p.m. each 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday, starting Sept. 23.

**Worship Group in Alachua:** Every first Sunday of the month, a worship group is meeting in Alachua. The group is convened by the Hooleys; please contact them for more information.

**Sunrise at Flagler Beach**  
(*Richard Beardsley*, 7-30-06)

We stand in the first light,  
dwarfed by a vast expanse  
of sea & sky,

spellbound as the sunrise begins to blossom  
on the gray Atlantic horizon.

In the foreground of this panoramic light show are  
towering cloud formations,  
a row of billowy skyscrapers  
silhouetted against a wash of  
light blues, greens & pinks.

Observing this ever-changing canvas,  
we can only imagine how the old masters  
might have marveled at such virtuosity.

**Violence in the Middle East:** Friends: Attached is a letter that has generated significant attention in Chicago, led by AFSC (American Friends Service Committee). From Noah Merrill, Program Coordinator, AFSC, Southeastern New England Area

July 21, 2006

To: President George W. Bush  
United States Senate  
Members of the House of Representatives

From: Religious Leaders and Organizations of Greater Chicago

We are a coalition of faith-based organizations, religious leaders and religiously identified organizations composed of Christian, Muslim and Jewish individuals from the Greater Chicago region. We represent both religious communities with deep spiritual and family ties throughout Lebanon, Northern Israel, and the Gaza Strip, and other religious communities who are deeply concerned about the escalating loss of human life and increasing violence in the Middle East.

We continue to hear the desperate cries from the innocent civilians who are bearing the burden of the recent hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, and Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. With anguish, we recognize the tremendous grief, anger, suffering and fear felt by the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Israeli people. Given the rapid escalation of violence in Lebanon, Northern Israel and the Gaza Strip, we urge you to take immediate action in order to end the present hostilities in this region before they lead to a wider war that could encompass the entire Middle East. We urge you to take the following steps:

Push for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and monitored truce in Israel, Lebanon, and Palestine.

Facilitate immediate humanitarian relief for the civilian populations throughout Lebanon, Northern Israel, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the reconstruction of the infrastructure (water and electric power plants, bridges, highways, airports, seaports, hospitals and other vital elements).

Support a negotiated and safe return of prisoners currently held by Hamas, Hezbollah, and Israel.

Call upon all parties to uphold International Humanitarian Law and commence negotiations to peacefully resolve outstanding disputes in a just and permanent manner.

We appeal for the urgent protection of civilians on all sides of this conflict. We mourn for those who have been killed, thank God for those who are still alive, and ask you to have the strength to undertake these measures immediately so as to end the present hostilities and avoid more destruction in the Middle East. May God inspire and direct you to pursue these steps as further violence in the Middle East will have dire consequences not only in this region, but throughout the world.

**More on the Middle East: Peace and Social Concerns:** As a result of a conversation resulting from a Friend's stated concern about the violent conflict in the Middle East, I checked the FCNL website as promised. The most recent action alert asked supporters to write letters to editors. Found at <http://www.fcnl.org/action/alert.htm>, the call to action connects to Joe Volk's analysis of the situation and to a number of other information sources. By clicking on "send your letter directly," I was able to send an up-to-date letter to the Gainesville Sun and Cedar Key Beacon. Also, you may want to note the call for peace issued by the Churches for Middle East Peace at <http://cmep.org/Alerts/2006July14.htm>. You can also see a letter to the Secretary of State urging that the U.S. not transfer cluster munitions to Israel, at [http://www.fcnl.org/issues/item.php?item\\_id=2018&issue\\_id=36](http://www.fcnl.org/issues/item.php?item_id=2018&issue_id=36). (Don Smith)

### Notes from August Business Meeting

Our treasurer expressed a need for direction in handling donations made in kind, and purchases made for the meeting that have not gone through the committee process. She also expressed puzzlement about earmarked donations, particularly those for which a line item has not been approved in the budget. The meeting requested that she write a proposal for donation procedures. The treasurer will try to have a proposal prepared for the next business meeting.

We do not yet have a mortgage. The treasurer continues to pay interest on the construction loan. There have been large bills this month with the dishwasher repair and the removal of a tree.

Ministry and Nurture is trying out the idea of a poster with the month's queries outside the worship room. Advertisements are being placed in the Gainesville Sun.

The Meetinghouse Committee is going to get an estimate on moving the shed. The AC Handler motor was replaced. The committee reviewed and approved the Meeting Policies and Procedures. No action was taken by the meeting on the Meeting Policies and Procedures. (Connie Ray)

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**Every Child  
Has known God,  
Not the God of names,  
Not the God of don'ts,  
Not the God who ever does anything weird,  
But the God who only knows four words**

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**And keeps repeating them, saying:  
"come dance with Me."  
Come  
Dance.  
(By Hafiz; contributed by Gene Beardsley)**

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Two Pamphlet Reviews:

### Twelve Quakers and Worship (by Quaker Quest)

Basic to Quakerism is a belief in ongoing revelation. As one reads the ideas of others we are sometimes



influenced to form our own. Quaker Quest is an outreach project of Hampstead Monthly Meeting, which is part of Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. The small pamphlets which they publish “express what some Quakers...understand about the heart of their faith.”

“Twelve Quakers and God” (2004), “Twelve Quakers and Worship” (2004), and “Twelve Quakers and Pacifism” (2005) have already been published. Of these I have only read about Worship and noticed that even the shortest entry spoke to my condition. “I wait I still myself I am often encountered I am always changed.”

The practice of stillness is “a practice so beautiful, so nourishing...mystical...Meeting for Worship [is] an essential part of life.” This booklet is so rich in ideas and feelings that I imagine that seekers and seasoned Friends alike would either identify with some of the views expressed here or would find much food for thought. Several entries deal with preparedness for Meeting and one in particular spoke of being greeter. Since our Gainesville Monthly Meeting has taken this idea -- that of having a regularly appointed/selected/volunteer greeter under consideration — I thought that the following description might be helpful.

“Another wonderful preparation for me is when I greet people as they arrive at Hampstead Meeting House. This is a task, but not a chore, which we rotate among ourselves. I stand at the door, saying hello, welcoming Friends, trying not to thrust a hand out to those clutching bags, papers, walking sticks and struggling up the steps, thereby forcing them to find a spare hand with which to respond. I try to spot strangers, hoping not to embarrass an infrequent attender by asking if they are here for the first time, but making sure newcomers get the information they need and some introductions. I wait for latecomers, hoping not to make them feel guilty, but welcome anyway. By the time I slip in ten minutes late I realise how connected I am with everyone. I’ve already spoken to and touched most of them. I haven’t missed the start. I have been giving ministry, the ministry of greeting. It’s easier to centre down into the stillness and community, sensing my part in the whole.” (*Sybil Ann Brennan*)

### **Leadership Among Friends (by Ron McDonald)**

“Leadership Among Friends” is a 1995 Pendle Hill Pamphlet (No. 320) written by Ron McDonald. “Our emphasis on individual conscience balanced with social conscience sends forth from our society many persons with uncommon vision and courage — the seeds of leadership” appears in the first paragraph yet the entire thesis continues to state that we, Friends, squelch leadership and we, the Religious Society of Friends, has lost its vision.

Perhaps the Gainesville Monthly Meeting needs to work on our own personal hopes and dreams for our future and the possible uses of the land and the new meetinghouse. Sharing ideas and plans over this summertime may be helpful to several committees—especially the new House Maintenance Committee.

The Pendle Hill Pamphlets, published since 1934, speak of religion and social action. They are available for borrowing in our library; they are also available by subscription for 6 issues a year. As Pendle Hill -- itself a retreat center for adult education and an experiment in living, considers its future -- these pamphlets “like the early Christian or the early Quaker tracts, present a variety of viewpoints...” I have found them enjoyable and thought provoking! (*Sybil Ann Brennan*)

## Poems in memory of September 11 and Hurricane Katrina

### **Wage Peace (*Judyth Hill*)**

Wage peace with your breath.  
Breathe in firemen and rubble, breathe out  
whole buildings and flocks of red wing blackbirds.  
Breathe in terrorists and breathe out  
sleeping children and freshly mown fields.  
Breathe in confusion and breathe out maple trees.  
Breathe in the fallen and breathe out lifelong  
friendships intact.

Wage peace with your listening: hearing sirens, pray  
loud.

Remember your tools: flower seeds, clothes pins,  
clean rivers.  
Make soup.

Play music, learn the word for thank you in three  
languages.

Think of chaos as dancing raspberries,  
imagine grief as the outbreath of beauty or the  
gesture of fish.  
Swim for the other side.  
Wage peace.

Never has the world seemed so fresh and precious.  
Have a cup of tea and rejoice.  
Act as if armistice has already arrived.  
Don't wait another minute.

### **The Cure at Troy (*Seamus Heaney*)**

Human beings suffer,  
they torture one another,  
they get hurt and get hard.  
No poem or play or song  
can fully right a wrong  
inflicted and endured.

The innocent in gaols  
beat on their bars together.  
A hunger-striker's father  
stands in the graveyard dumb.  
The police widow in veils  
faints at the funeral home

History says, Don't hope  
on this side of the grave.  
But then, once in a lifetime  
the longed for tidal wave  
of justice can rise up,  
and hope and history rhyme.

So hope for a great sea-change  
on the far side of revenge.  
Believe that a further shore  
is reachable from here.

Believe in miracles  
and cures and healing wells.

Call the miracle self-healing:  
The utter self-revealing  
double-take of feeling.  
if there's fire on the mountain  
or lightning and storm  
and a god speaks from the sky.

That means someone is hearing  
the outcry and the birth-cry  
of new life at its term.

### **The Peace of Wild Things (*Wendell Berry*)**

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may  
be,  
I go and I lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron  
feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.  
I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting  
with their light.  
For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am  
free.



## SEPTEMBER 2006 GFM CALENDAR

Every First Day	11 a.m.	Meeting for Worship, Gainesville Friends Meetinghouse, 702 NW 38 <sup>th</sup> St, Gainesville, Fla.
Every First Day	11:15 a.m.	First Day School*
Sept. 3	9:30 a.m.	Library (in library) and Hospitality Committees (in Social Room)
Sept. 5	11:30 a.m.	Friendly Lunch at Books, Inc., 505 NW 13 <sup>th</sup> St. (all welcome)
Sept. 9	10 a.m.	Solutions to Violence Discussion (nonviolence and Nazis)*
Sept. 10	9:15	Quakerism 101 (Library)*
Sept. 10	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Worship for Business
Sept. 11	5 p.m.	School Committee
Sept. 17	Rise of Meeting	Potluck
Sept. 17	After Potluck	Quaker Earthcare Witness
Sept. 18	6 p.m.	Ministry and Nurture
Sept. 22		Rosh Hashanah (neighbors may want to park in GFM lot)
Sept. 23	10 a.m.	Solutions to Violence Discussion (Feminism, Peace, and Power)*
Sept. 23	12:30 p.m.	Grounds Committee Meeting (at meetinghouse)
Sept. 24	9:30 a.m.	Peace and Social Concerns
Sept. 24	Rise of Meeting	Bible Study
Sept. 26	6 p.m.	Meetinghouse Committee
Sept. 26	7 p.m.	Religious Ed Committee
Sept. 27	6 p.m.	Meetinghouse Committee
Sept. 29	6 p.m.	Quaker Study Group w/potluck (6 p.m.), discussion (7 p.m.)*
Sept. 30	6 p.m.	Quaker Market Dinner*

**\*Please see Meeting Notes for details. Unless noted, meetings are at the GF Meetinghouse.**

### **Forthcoming Dates to Keep in Mind:**

**Oct. 1: tentative date for threshing draft sections of the SEYM Faith and Practice**

**Oct. 7: SEYM Fall Representative Meeting in St. Petersburg.**

**Oct. 14: Meeting Workday, 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (to get meetinghouse ready for Open House)**

**Oct. 14: Solutions to Violence Discussion, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.(the death penalty)**

**Oct. 28: Solutions to Violence Discussion, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (Thomas Merton)**

**Oct. 29: Open House/Activity Day, 3 to 5 p.m.**