

QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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

Meeting Place: 702 NW 38th St., Gainesville, Fla. 32607

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NEWSLETTER, SEVENTH MONTH, 2007

JEAN LARSON, CLERK

Queries and Advice for the Seventh Month: Self-Discipline and Responsibility

Queries: Do we attend Meeting for Worship regularly and punctually? *Do we participate in Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business and support it financially and with personal service according to our resources and abilities?* Are we conscientious in fulfilling all obligations of state and society that are not contrary to our religious convictions? *Are we punctual in keeping promises, just in payment of debts, and honorable in all our dealings?* Do we choose recreations that strengthen our physical, mental and spiritual life, avoiding those that may hinder others, our Earth, and ourselves? *Do we act responsibly concerning substances and behaviors that can become addictive?*

Advice: Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts, which are the leadings of God. *Bring the whole of our life under the healing and ordering of the Holy Spirit, remembering that there is no time but this present.* When tempted to do wrong or to despair, call upon God with an open heart, confessing our weaknesses and our needs. *Be mindful at all times of our connection with the Divine and others – avoid substances, behaviors, and activities which diminish this connection.* Be aware of the ill effects of mind-altering or habit-forming drugs, intoxicants, gambling, and other detrimental practices. *Choose recreations that increase our vitality, self-awareness, and peace of mind and strengthen our will to create what is good.* Make thoughtful use of our time. *Guard ourselves and our children in our choice of print, electronic media, and other entertainments.* Avoid those that promote violence and disrespect for human beings. *Friends, strive to be courteous and responsible while driving.*

MEETING NEWS AND NOTES

Watery Fun for First-Day Schoolers: Water day is planned for Sunday, July 8, during regular First-Day School time, and maybe a bit longer if adults want to play too ☺ We will have a sprinkler, a water table, and perhaps some water surprises. Swimsuits, towels, and changes of clothing will be helpful, as well as a few adults willing to help out. (*Laura W.*)

First-Day School Committee and First-Day School Events: The First-Day School Committee met and has scheduled events. July 8 (see above) is water Sunday for children of all ages; July 15 is nature study day and the

ice cream social; on July 22 we've asked Nicole D. to prepare a lesson for the older children to teach the younger children.

On July 29 Odalis M. will discuss with the older children topics and activities they would like to have for the year, and Laura W. will be with the younger children. After Meeting for Worship the Surprises gathering will include pizza for the children, and then a movie and popcorn for the teens/preteens.

Children, parents, everyone: Please think about and give suggestions for programs/topics/activities to a member of the committee: Laura W., Clerk, Odalis M. and Catherine P. So far for the teens/preteens we have suggestions of Quaker history, spirituality of U2 and Bono, more interviews. . . . For the younger children Sparklers continues. For example, if you have an area of interest that you think would be great to share with the older children for one or more classes in the year, please let one of us know. Examples would be social concern activities (e.g., Habitat for Humanity, prisoner work, peace activism, health-care reform) or other Quaker-related programs and activities. (*Laura W.*)

Youth Group: The First-Day School Youth Group was introduced to George Fox on June 24. We read through a skit about his teen years trying to find answers to his spiritual questions. **Cecilia** and **Shelby** have great acting voices. Then we sang two songs about Fox: "The George Fox Song," and "Walk Cheerfully." (*Connie R.*)

Quakerism 101: Anyone interested in learning more about or discussing some of the basics of Quakerism is invited to attend "Quakerism 101." We will meet on Sunday, July 8, at 9:15 a.m. in the meetinghouse library. We will be discussing "Quaker Universalism." Our texts are two pamphlets: "The Inward Light: How Quakerism Unites Universalism and Christianity" by Samuel Caldwell, and "The Place of Universalism in the Religious Society of Friends" by Dan Seeger. If you would like copies, let me know. After discussion of the two pamphlets, there will be a presentation on Quaker history starting with the second generation of Friends and going through all the splits of the nineteenth century. As usual, discussion follows where the participants have questions or concerns. Also as usual, the presentation starts out as lecture and goes where the participants want to have clarification. The course of study is laid out by Philadelphia, but the participants determine what particular items need deeper examination. (*Connie R.*)

Quaker Study Program: All are invited to attend the potluck and discussion on Friday, July 13, at the home of Jeannie and Phil B. The potluck supper is at 6 p.m. and discussion will follow. This month we are discussing the Pendle Hill Pamphlet, "Quaker Views on Mysticism" by Margery Post Abbott. These will be available in the meetinghouse soon. They cost \$5 plus \$.45 shipping and handling. (*Connie R.*)

Nonviolent Communications: Everyone is invited to the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) study and practice group, which will meet at the meetinghouse on these dates from 7 to 8:30 p.m.: July 11 and 25, and August 1, 15, and 29. We will use Marshall Rosenberg's book, *Nonviolent Communication, a Language of Life*, which is available at Barnes and Noble, Amazon.com, and The Center for Nonviolent Communication, www.cnvc.org.

Potluck and Sundaes on Sunday! On July 15, at rise of meeting, Friends will be able to enjoy our regular potluck and an ice-cream social. When planning what to bring for potluck, please consider something healthy (non-dessert) since ice cream and a choice of toppings will be provided.

Practical Training in De-escalating Conflict: Sponsored by Gainesville Interfaith Peace Center: To live out a nonviolent lifestyle, we need to be aware of how conflict manifests itself, so we can recognize when resolution or escape strategies, both physical and verbal, can be helpful. This workshop aims to import this knowledge and these skills to participants. Dates **July 14:** Verbal De-Escalation Skills **July 28:** Violence in the Workplace and at Home **August 11:** Assertiveness Training I **August 25:** Assertiveness Training II. Susie

Lyons and Don Smith will serve as moderators. Sessions are at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1521 NW 34th St. Contacts: Don S. (371-3719) or Eve M. (377-6577)

Olive Oil from Palestine: Have you noticed the olive oil bottles in the fellowship room? They are a service project of the American Friends Service Committee, supporting peace and fair trade. The oil is of exceptional quality and taste. (Think fresh hot rosemary bread dunked in olive oil!) A donation tub is next to the oil. (*Annie M.*)

Movie Night: Our next film event will be on Friday, July 20, at 7 p.m. at the Meetinghouse. We will be experimenting with our new video projector to show two 50-minute presentations from Bill Moyers' Journal. The first is his May 25 interview with Maxine Hong Kingston with very moving readings from her new book, *Veterans of War, Veterans of Peace*. The second is Moyers' May 18 program with a short segment on the growing economic inequality in the United States (with examples from the airlines industry) and a longer segment with an insightful interview with Katherine Jefferts Schori, Presiding U.S. Bishop of the Episcopal Church. (She discusses issues of science & religion, the role of women and gays in the Church, and, in general, offers very thoughtful views on a variety of issues.) Finally, there is a 17-minute very informative and sobering interview with journalist Christian Parenti about his reporting in "The Forgotten War in Afghanistan." All are welcome. (*Jim M.*)

EarthCare Witness: Join ECW on July 15, 2007, after potluck and ice cream for a discussion on the topics of carbon credits, carbon tax, and carbon neutral. Also, we'd like to know your thoughts about distributing information to drivers about the gas wasted idling their engines as they wait in their cars to pick up their orders at their favorite fast food drive-thru. (*Arlene E.*)

Hold in the Light: Morrie T. as he cares for his wife, Lucy; Annie M. whose sister has cancer; Tak H., George N., and Eleanor M., whose back is seriously strained. (*Connie R.*)

Pastoral Care: The meeting has a pastoral care subcommittee of Ministry and Nurture. If you -- or someone you know in the meeting -- is experiencing difficulties and would appreciate being contacted by a F/friendly presence, please let one of the members of this subcommittee know. They are Morrie T., David C., Sybil B., and Arnold VdP. (*Connie R.*)

News from Friends Abroad: The meeting received greetings from Ashley in Greece and Tim F. in Nicaragua.

On her postcard, Ashley wrote the following (our editor and clerk found themselves challenged with the Greek here since neither of us know how to get Greek letters in the mail program or even in word documents. So this is written out):

Dear Friends: Gamma epsilon iota alpha (space) sigma omicron upsilon (hi) from Greece! I started in Athens, where I got to see the Acropolis and the Parthenon. Now I am on the little island of Skopelos in the Aegean. The art studio is at the top of a hill that looks out over the village and harbor. It's gorgeous! See you in the fall! (*Ashley*)

Hello Friends: I just wanted to let you know that two weeks into our Nicaraguan experience we are winding up our time with ProNica, which has taken us to some very out of the way places. We have just returned from 5 days in the countryside, living with peasant families, learning how to yoke oxen, and make plows and grind corn for tortillas, etc. The conditions challenge our North American lifestyle expectations but spirits among the UF students are good, and I have met many people associated with ProNica and will be able to share about it on my return during a scheduled forum in the future. So until I see you and get the opportunity to worship with you again, I want you to know that holding us in the light would be appreciated. The itinerary is physically and

culturally challenging, but we are looking forward to the next month here. Details of our itinerary and some blogs by the students are available at www.uf-in-nica.org. Peace, Tim F

News Items: **Becky R.**, daughter of Connie and Tim, and a member of our meeting, recently received a promotion at the Center for Economic and Policy Research where she works in D.C. Her first professional research paper, "The No-Vacation Nation," attracted media attention as reporters attempted to explain why Americans are not deterred by high gasoline prices from taking advantage of every vacation day they get. The quality of her work earned her the promotion as "research assistant" to a top economist in the think tank starting July 1. **Eddie Atkinson**, son of member Nancy Atkinson, has been accepted into graduate school at the University of Florida where he will study entomology. (*Connie R.*)

Visit to QUNO: Quaker United Nations Organization (May 2007): The Quaker United Nations Organization office is in a building across the street from the United Nations. We were warmly greeted by the new director, Rob Callard. He invited us into his office and spoke of the work QUNO continues to do. The scope of QUNO interests and activities ranges widely; an amazing amount of work is done by the small dedicated staff of interns in a cramped space.

Then Rob, a long-time Friend, took us for a walk to Quaker House. The three-story house abuts the street, looking very ordinary, but as we entered the house, peace seemed to envelop us. The living room, where small groups of UN delegates and others come to work out problems, is on the second floor, a room of light and simplicity. The large courtyard garden, shared by several houses built around it, is beautiful and inviting. When people gather in a private home, they can come to feel congenial and cooperative. On the third floor are four very small bedrooms; in the past, they were probably the servants' quarters, but now serve as space to be used by interns and visitors.

We urge everyone to go to www.quno.org/newyork to get the latest wealth of information on QUNO's interests, directions, accomplishments, and many works in progress. QUNO represents us in the world, to the world. Copies of the January "State of the UN 2007: A Quaker Perspective" are available at the meetinghouse. (*Laura and Jim W., SEYM representative*)

A Blessing

May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds. May your rivers flow without end, meandering through pastoral valleys tinkling with bells, past temples and castles and poet's towers into a dark primeval forest where tigers belch and monkeys howl, through miasmal and mysterious swamps and down into a desert of red rock, blue mesas, domes and pinnacles and grottos of endless stone, and down again into a deep vast ancient unknown chasm where bars of sunlight blaze on profiled cliffs, where deer walk across the white sand beaches, where storms come and go as lightning clangs upon the high crags, where something strange and more beautiful and more full of wonder than your deepest dreams waits for you --- beyond that next turning of the canyon walls.

May you do your needed work out of love, the love that dares not speak its name, the love of sparseness, beauty, open space, clear skies, and flowing streams, grizzly bear and mountain lion, wolf pack and twelve-pack, of wilderness and wanderlust and primal human freedom and so forth. (*Edward Abbey*)

Around the Meetinghouse:

Today I saw the first purple flowers this season on the golden dewdrop (*Duranta erecta*) planted by Traci. These flowers are delicate and lacy, well worth a stop by the tree stump in our front yard to check them out. They are nectar plants for the sulfur butterfly.

A white-flowered salvia planted by Karen A is also blooming, and it attracts a variety of butterflies. I was able to find some native butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) and planted them among the beach sunflowers (*Helianthus debilis*). The butterfly weed may be slow to grow and flower, but it is both a larval and nectar source for the monarch butterfly and is used by queen and soldier butterflies.

After a visit to Kanapaha Gardens, I wandered through our woods and found a green dragon (*Arisaema dracontium*), a plant in the same family as Jack in the pulpit.



Green dragon NW of worship area. Photo by B. Mitchell

One site said this plant was infrequently seen in the wild; another describes it as occasional for Alachua County. It has an interesting single leaf with leaflets arranged in an arc.

Bill found a Virginia dayflower (*Commelina virginica*) near the end of an uprooted tree that fell into the pond. The flower is similar to the spiderwort that grows among the sparkleberries near the bike rack, but the leaves are quite different. It is a lovely blue flower that only opens during the day,

as its name suggests. It is a native plant described as occasional for North Florida.



Virginia dayflower in GFM woods. Photo by B. Mitchell

There used to be a hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) next to the creek near where the trail through the woods ends, but it died after one of the big storms, possibly Frances or Jeanne. I planted a small one on the edge of the front retention pond, since I knew it was native to the site. Now I have discovered a substantial one close to the mulch pile at the end of the drive; this one is in bloom with flowers that look a bit like dangly earrings to me, as well as somewhat like the cone-like inflorescences of the hop vine used in making beer.

Air potatoes are now visible along the trail, in the pond area, and in the meeting for worship in nature area. I saw some leaves as big as dinner plates and am happy to report that Bill dug up the subterranean tubers that supported them.

It is a real pleasure to take a walk in the woods and see all the different plants growing there, to feel the coolness of the shade as you walk into the woods from the sunny areas, hear the woodpeckers, see the cardinals and the anoles darting one way and another. (*Jean L.*)

SEVENTH-MONTH 2007 GFM CALENDAR

All 1 st -Days	11 a.m.	Meeting for Worship, Gainesville Friends Meetinghouse, 702 NW 38 th St, Gainesville, Fla.
All 1 st -Days	11:15 a.m.	First-Day School
July 1	9:30 a.m.	Meetinghouse Committee Meeting (no Library or Hospitality Committee meetings in July or August)
July 3	11:30 a.m.	Friendly Lunch at Books, Inc., 505 NW 13 th St. (all welcome)
July 8	9:15 a.m.	Quakerism 101
July 8	11 a.m.	Water Play for First-Day Schoolers! (No Business Meeting)
July 9	5 p.m.	School Committee
July 11	7-8:30 p.m.	Nonviolent Communication Group (see newsletter)
July 14	10-11:30 a.m.	De-escalating Violence: Verbal De-escalation – at Westminster Presbyterian (see newsletter)
July 15	9:30 a.m.	Meeting for Worship in Nature; also nature class for First-Day School
July 15	Rise of Meeting	Potluck and Ice Cream Social
July 15	12:45 p.m.	Earthcare Witness Committee (see newsletter)
July 20	7 p.m.	Movie Night at the GF Meetinghouse (see newsletter)
July 22	9:30 a.m.	Peace and Social Concerns Committee
July 22	12:30 p.m.	Bible Study
July 22	6 p.m.	Newsletter Submission Deadline; email or mail to newsletter editor, Catherine P.
July 25	7-8:30 p.m.	Nonviolent Communications Group
July 27	6 p.m.	Quaker Study Group at Buskirk's home (see newsletter)
July 28	10-11:30 a.m.	De-escalating Violence: Violence in the Workplace and at Home. Westminster Presbyterian (see newsletter)
July 29	11 a.m.	First-Day School: Older Students Come with Ideas for the Next Year!
August 1	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Nonviolent Communication Group (see newsletter)

Unless noted, meetings are at the GF Meetinghouse.

The things that will destroy us are: politics without principle; pleasure without conscience; wealth without work; knowledge without character; business without morality; science without humanity; and worship without sacrifice.” (*Mahatma Gandhi*)

“Pray - period! Don't expect anything. Or better, expect nothing. Prayer cleanses us of expectations and allows holy will, providence, and life itself an entry. What could be more worth the effort -- or the non-effort?” (*Thomas Moore*)