

# 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, FOURTHMONTH, 2008

JEAN LARSON, CLERK

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### Queries and Advice for the Fourth Month: Mutual Care

**Query:** How do we foster a spirit of community among the Meeting's members and attenders? *How does the Meeting keep in contact with all of the Meeting's members and attenders?* How does the Meeting assist couples and families to communicate, grow together, and rear children in a loving environment? *Does the Meeting Community nurture the Meeting's children?* How does the Meeting care for those who live alone, the sick, the aging, the widowed, the separated or divorced, and others with families affected by disruption? *Do we assist Friends in need as their circumstances require?* How do we labor with and care for those whose conduct or manner of living give grounds for concern? *How are visitors to our Meeting made to feel welcome?*

**Advice:** Be truthful and sincere and thus encourage these qualities in others. Through example and education, help each other to recognize and follow the voice of God both in our spiritual lives and in joyful and willing service. Watch with tenderness over the opening minds of children. Seek to awaken in them the love and understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus, and a sense of security in the love of God. Remember that there is a unique potential in each human being as a beloved child of God, and the Holy Spirit may lead children to give wise counsel to listening adults. Young people, too, have responsibility to care for the Meeting and to participate in Meetings both for Worship and for Business. Faith is needed as a vital part of our living.

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**“If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” John 3:18**



## MEETING NOTES AND PROGRAMS

**April's Quakerism 101:** Newcomers and seasoned Friends alike are welcome to attend the next 101 session, which will be on the topic of "Living in the Light: Quaker Witness." We meet in the library of the meetinghouse on Sunday, April 13, at 9:15 a.m. This month we will be discussing the "Concerns, Leadings and Testimonies" section of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*. I will try to have copies of our yearly meeting's section of the same name available as well. There will also be copies of a chart tracing the origins of each testimony. (*Connie Ray*)

**Quaker Study Program:** Everyone is welcome to join us for an evening of fellowship and learning at the home of Phil and Jeannie Buskirk in McIntosh on Friday, April 25th. We gather at 6 p.m. for a potluck supper with the program following. This month we will be treated to a presentation on the topic of "Quakers and Worship." by Sybil Ann Brennan. We will have copies of the booklet *Twelve Quakers and Worship* available in the meetinghouse soon. The booklets, along with information about their cost, will be placed on the bookcase under the clock in the foyer or on the table with the nametags. We will review the ideas presented in the reading and ponder if they "speak to us" as we share our own views of Quaker worship. For directions, see the small map on the calendar on the "Quaker News" bulletin board in the foyer, or ask. (*Connie Ray*)

**Nonviolent Communications:** Everyone is invited to the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) study and practice group, which will meet at the meetinghouse on April 16 and April 30 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. We 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](http://www.cnvc.org). Some familiarity with his book is recommended. For questions or more information, contact Jeannie Buskirk, 352-591-0677 or [ejbuskirk@windstream.net](mailto:ejbuskirk@windstream.net) (*Jeannie Buskirk*)



**Quaker Workday at Gainesville Friends Meetinghouse:** The workday will start at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday April 5. Come by and help out as your Saturday schedule allows. Walter Morris will have a list of jobs to be done, and you can pick one from the list or join a group of people already working on a project. The Hospitality Committee will be working in the kitchen to clean and organize it. The First Day School Committee will be working in the children's room. Some of us will be checking the irrigation system and cleaning filters in it. Others will be washing windows. It is a time of fellowship as we join together around common tasks.



**Quaker Forum: The Personal Energy Transporter:** On March 30, we will show a DVD about “The Personal Energy Transporter,” or PET, what it is, how it came to be, and the way it has transformed the lives of people unable to walk in Vietnam and other third-world countries. The PET is designed to be highly functional, inexpensive, durable, and a machine that can be maintained by its users anywhere in the world. Volunteers manufacture the PET in many locations, including Penney Farms, between Starke and Jacksonville. Local residents can spend a day—or more—learning to assemble PET vehicles at the Penney Farms PET workshop, or they can help in other ways, such as collecting clothing or toys to be included in PET shipments as useful packing material. Please bring your friends. Meeting for Worship at 11 am. Then snacks at 12:10 before the Forum and discussion following the film. (*Jim Morrison*)

**Crisis in Kenya:** On April 6, at 1 p.m., Kate Robins will lead a discussion 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 (over 130,000), and some of them are among those affected by the recent violence.

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 have a basket for donations to be sent to one of the many organizations that are helping with the current crisis. (*Jim Morrison*)

**Quaker Market Dinner:** There will be a German-themed Quaker Market Dinner on April 12 at 6 p.m. at the meetinghouse. The menu will include a roulade of beef and gravy, potato pancakes and applesauce, red cabbage/apples, Alsatian sauerkraut, dilled carrots, mashed potatoes, cucumber salad and homemade rye bread. Dessert, of course, will be German chocolate cake. Sign-up sheets and all recipes for persons willing to be cooks are in the social room. A sign-up sheet for attendance will also be posted. (*Mona Morris*)

## Praying

It doesn't have to be

the blue iris, it could be

weeds in a vacant lot, or a few

small stones; just

pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try

to make them elaborate, this isn't

a contest but the doorway

into thanks, and a silence in which

another voice may speak.

(Mary Oliver, from *Thirst*)



**Film Night:** Movie night will be on April 18 at 7 p.m. We will be showing *Brother Bear*.

“Set against the majestic natural splendor of the Great American Northwest, the film tells the story of a boy named Kenai, whose life takes an unexpected turn when the Great Spirits transform him into a bear--the creature he hates most. Befriended by a bear cub named Koda, Kenai sets out to regain his human form while his brother--who doesn't realize Kenai is now a bear--pursues him on a mission of revenge and family honor. It is a tale of courage, honor and self-discovery.” The location for the movie showing has not yet been confirmed, so stay tuned. (*Jim Morrison*)

**Chain of Prayer:** Sunday, May 4, is the annual “Chain of Prayer Day.” The Friends United Meeting theme this year is “Yes, United!” We are united with FUM in our concern for peace in the Middle East and a desire to support the work of Ramallah Friends Schools. Events are being scheduled throughout the afternoon including a potluck lunch with a Middle East flavor at 12:45 p.m., a speaker on Palestine arranged by the Peace and Social Concerns Committee at 2 p.m., Dances of Universal Peace at 3:15, and a presentation by the Earthcare Witness Committee on “Water,” to help us to think globally, relate problems in the Middle East to it, and to act locally. The day will end with a walk on our land, being mindful of water issues right here, and, of course, ending with our “Stone Soup Supper.”

*“Varied gifts flow strong among Friends. We are part of one body and God has arranged the parts so the gifts of all members are essential to the work of the body, both in their uniqueness and in their ability to work together. Pray for Friends everywhere to find the commonalities that exist so in the spirit of unity, we can do the work God has called Friends to do in the world.”* - FUM “2008 Chain of Prayer” flyer (*Connie Ray*)

## Meeting News

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



**Cycling for Peace and Environmental Conservation:** Nasim and Jafar Edrisi are an Iranian couple who are riding bicycles around the world, planting a "greenbelt" of trees for Peace and Environmental Conservation. They arrived here after 7907 km and 321 days of travel, and planted their 32<sup>nd</sup> tree at the east end of our split-rail fence, near the entrance to the worship area. The tree is a Chickasaw plum in full blossom. They named it the "Tree of Spring" because it was the Iranian New Year, almost the first day of spring, and it was the first tree they planted that was in flower.

More information about them and their trip is on their website at <http://www.rmc4peace.com/>. Right now, this site has a picture of some blooms from our tree: go down about 10 inches to a scrolling window; our tree is at the top, labeled 3/17/2008. (Bill Mitchell photos and text)







**Around the Meetinghouse:** Spring is here with so many plants showing new growth. The crossvine is blooming on the stump near the children's yard; I have spotted my first blanket flower and first coreopsis flower, which promise of many more to come. One of the conradina plants in the children's yard has been blooming profusely. The deer's tongue, donated by Bart, is sending up a vigorous spike that promises flowers to come. The nearby goldenrod (*Solidago stricta*) is getting ready to bloom.

The woodland phlox are a purple flush in the retention pond, and an iris that Bill staked up in the retention pond has a lovely flower on it. The red flowers of the anise in the back of the retention pond are beginning to fade, and the flowers on the Chickasaw plum "Spring" planted by the Iranian cyclists for Peace and Environmental Conservation are being supplanted by fresh green leaves. The dogwood in the enclosed space bracketed by the worship room and rest of the building put out a spectacular display this year of big, soft white flowers.

The trees around the retention ponds are leafing out. The little hophorn beam was the first I noticed to get new leaves, a relief since it did not shed its leaves in the fall in the way its older counterpart had. I had wondered about the bald cypress trees since the street trees on NW 8th Avenue had long since grown lovely delicate needles, so I looked closely after the meeting for worship in nature (held in connection with the meeting birthday party) and saw that the buds were ready to open. Now the fresh green foliage is visible from a distance. The sweet bay magnolias were looking a bit droopy, and suddenly they are sporting perky young leaves.

During a walk in the woods I spotted a St. Andrews Cross like the one that volunteered in the front retention basin. The newly identified one is close to the tree uprooted in the wake of hurricanes Jeanne and Charlie, not far from the grandfather oak that is visible from the worship room.

The Cherokee bean planted near the drive east of the meetinghouse has been putting out some leaves. It is so

inconspicuous in the winter that some of its branches were broken inadvertently. It may take a few years before it is sufficiently established to put up its beautiful red flowers.

The number of butterflies one sees is increasing from an occasional sulfur to include a swallowtail. I spotted both a red (male) cardinal and a mockingbird swooping across the children's yard one morning. The mockingbird had proudly called from the top of the stump, hung out on the fence of the children's yard, and busied himself in the cherry laurel shrub by the stump. I looked up mockingbirds on the web and found they like living near lawns, which are good sources of insects for them to eat.

While investigating what Florida birds like to eat, I found that the cherry laurel is also a good source of berries, as are wax myrtle bushes and smilax, also known as sweet briar. There are several, perhaps as many as five kinds of Florida smilax, which is more known to me for its substantial underground tubers and its thorns, which appear not only along the aboveground stems, but also on the underground stems, making them easy to locate if you want to dig one out.

The yellow jessamine continues to flower along the fence where we can see it from the worship room. Its cheery presence brightens my entry when I come in to settle down for worship.

(Jean Larson)

## APRIL 2008 GFM CALENDAR

All 1 <sup>st</sup> -Days	11 a.m.	Meeting for Worship, Gainesville Friends Meetinghouse, 702 NW 38 <sup>th</sup> St, Gainesville, Fla.
All 1 <sup>st</sup> -Days	11:15 a.m.	First-Day School
March 30	After snacks	Quaker forum: PET
April 1	11:45 a.m.	Friendly Lunch, Books, Inc.
April 5	9:00 a.m.	Workday at the GF Meetinghouse
April 6	9:30 a.m.	Meetinghouse and Library Committees
April 6	1:00 p.m.	Forum: Kenya 101 (Kate Robins)
April 7	6:30 p.m.	Yoga with Gary Arthur
April 12	10-11:30 a.m.	Solutions to Violence: Gifts – at Westminster Presbyterian
April 12	6 p.m.	Quaker Market Dinner
April 13	9:15 a.m.	Quakerism 101
April 13	12:45 p.m.	Meeting for Worship for Business
April 14	6:30 p.m.	Yoga with Gary Arthur
April 16	7 – 8:30 p.m.	Nonviolent Communications
April 18	7:00 p.m.	Film night: Brother Bear
April 20	12:30 p.m.	Meeting Potluck – please bring a dish to share
April 20	After potluck	Quaker EarthCare Witness Committee meeting
April 21	6:30 p.m.	Yoga with Gary
April 25	6:00 p.m.	Quaker Study Program
April 27	9:30 a.m.	Peace and Social Concerns Committee
April 27	12:45 p.m.	Bible Study
April 28	6:30 p.m.	Yoga with Gary Arthur
April 30	7 to 8:30 p.m.	Nonviolent Communications
May 4	12:45 p.m.	Chain of Prayer

**Unless noted, meetings are at the GF Meetinghouse.**

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### Making the House Ready for the Lord(*by Mary Oliver*)

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but  
still nothing is as shining as it should be  
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an  
uproar of mice—it is the season of their  
many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves  
and through the walls the squirrels  
have gnawed their ragged entrances—but it is the season  
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And

the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard  
while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;  
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling  
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly  
up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will  
come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox,  
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know  
that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,  
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.