

QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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⇒ *Newsletter submissions are due the Monday before the last Sunday of the month*

NEWSLETTER, FIRST MONTH, 2011

Queries for the First Month: MEETING FOR WORSHIP



Query: Are our Meetings for Worship held in expectant waiting for Divine guidance, with a living silence in which we feel drawn together in the Light by the presence of God? Do we respond to the Spirit's prompting to minister, whether in silence, through the spoken word or through action after the Meeting for Worship? Are we sensitive to one another's needs in Meeting for Worship? Are the spiritual gifts within the Meeting fostered and encouraged? Are our Meetings accessible and welcoming to everyone? Are our Meetings a source of strength and guidance for daily living? Is the vocal ministry in our Meetings exercised under the leading of the Spirit?

Advice: Be prompt and diligent in attendance at Meetings. Come to Meeting with expectant hearts and minds prepared for communion with God. Be faithful, be patient, and persevere in our service as messengers of Truth.

To everyone is given a share of the responsibility for the Meeting for Worship, whether through silence or through the spoken word. Quiet our hearts and minds for worship prior to entering the meeting room, so the whole group can be knit together in spiritual fellowship. Do not assume that vocal ministry is never to be our part. Be ready to speak under the leading of the Light. Learn to recognize when a message felt within is from God, and if it is a message intended for the group to hear. Pray that our ministry may arise from deep experience of the Divine. Let our spoken ministry be audible and free from unnecessary words. Avoid speaking in a manner that brings a sense of discussion or debate. Allow for a period of silence after a message has been spoken, so the group can reflect on what has been said and continue to be grounded in silent worship. Overly long or too-frequent messages can hinder the worship of others present. Receive the ministry of others in a tender spirit. Treat every newcomer as one sent by God.

Ministry & Nurture

Please Hold in the Light: Andy and Eleanor Merritt; Tim Fogarty and family; Ampofo, Megan, Kiren, and Brendan Darko as they depart to start a new job and a new life in a new place.

Meeting News: Morrie Trimmer had a successful surgery and rehabilitation. He is expected to be home for Christmas.

January Events:

Sunday, January 2 Forum: Our clerk, **Mona Morris**, will lead us in prayerful consideration of the Spiritual State of the Meeting. These are the queries that Southeastern Yearly Meeting's Worship and Ministry Committee has asked us to consider. Please think about them beforehand, that our answers be insightful, sincere, and Spirit-led.

1. How do we support each other as members of this beloved community?
2. How well do our meetings for worship with a concern for business lead to a corporate search for and revelation of God's truth?
3. What was our meeting's witness in the wider community in the last year?

4. How has our meeting for worship or other meeting activities nurtured our spiritual growth?
5. Has there been a deepening and strengthening of the sense of the Divine Presence in our midst during the past year? So we feel a sense of our individual spirits fusing into an undivided group as we worship? Do we leave our meetings filled with a sense of love and peace and courage to meet the challenge of Spirit filled living?
6. Where do you find hope in the meeting and in our spiritual life?
7. How is God's presence being experienced in our meeting?
8. Are there places where the meeting isn't reaching fully for the Light?
9. Do you have other reflections on the current condition of the meeting – places where you see new life emerging, loss or sadness that you want to share?
10. How does the spirit of worship extend into our committee work and into meeting for worship with a concern for business?
11. How does love manifest itself in our meeting?
12. How has the Spirit been moving among us this past year? What makes it difficult to attend meeting?
13. Especially in this time of economic uncertainty, are we taking stock of the meeting's financial health and planning for ways to help those in need?
14. What has already and would nourish you in our meeting?
15. What needs to be different to help us attend meeting more regularly?
16. What makes it difficult to attend meeting?
17. What would we like meeting to be to meet our needs and needs of those who would attend meeting?
18. What do I need to say about our meeting?

January 14 -17:

Everyone is encouraged to attend our Southeastern Yearly Meeting's interim business meeting and Michener Lecture. Friday night is the Executive Committee Meeting. Friends may attend. Saturday morning is set aside for committee meetings of the yearly meeting. Anyone attending the weekend event is encouraged to attend any committee meeting s/he chooses. In the afternoon business meeting is held. Committee reports and financial matters are discussed. A particularly fun experience is going out to dinner together. Sunday morning there is worship. Sunday afternoon the **Michener Lecture** is held. This year we are privileged to hear **Lloyd Lee Wilson**, Quaker scholar and author. The lecture will be followed by two workshops. Jeannie Buskirk has contributed \$15 for anyone who may need it in order to attend. More Gainesville attendance is encouraged than has been true in recent years both for the enrichment of the yearly meeting and for our own concerns to be adequately voiced. Our understanding of our yearly meeting and the concerns of other monthly meeting helps to enrich our own meeting. Friendships across meetings help us to increase the love. The event is held in the *Orlando Meetinghouse: 316 E. Marks St., Orlando*

Sunday, January 30 Forum: **Walter Morris** will lead us in a discussion of the Pendle Hill Pamphlet, "Answering the Call to Heal the World" by Patience Schenck.

"There is a role for each of us to play in healing the wounds of the world and bringing into being the wholeness that is possible in God's creation. But where do we begin? The pamphlet invites us to explore our unique gifts and the hungers of our hearts, to discover our own calling in this sacred work. In a wise and intimate conversation with her readers, Patience Schenck walks us through the life of a leading: hearing a call, testing our discernment, overcoming the obstacles to faithfulness, finding the support we need, and finally recognizing when our work is done."

Words to contemplate: *"If we believe that war is wrong, as everyone must, then we ought to believe that by proper efforts on our part it may be done away with."* Lucretia Mott, 1876

Friendly Reading Group: *Sandy Lyon, Clerk*



The Friendly Reading Group meets immediately after fellowship following worship the third Sunday of the month. Starting at 1:00PM, we meet for about an hour to informally discuss a selected piece of literature. The book for **January 16th** is *A Prosperous Way Down* by HT and EC Odum. The book considers how the future, with less fossil fuel, could be peaceful and prosperous. Specific suggestions are made based on their evaluations of trends in global population, wealth distribution, energy sources, conservation, urban development, capitalism and international trade, information technology, and education. An excellent summary pamphlet (Excerpts) has been prepared by Betty Odum and Carol Clark, who will lead the discussion. Pamphlets are available in the library. On **February 20th**, **Arnold Von der Porten** will lead a discussion about several selections of his writings. Copies of the selections will be available at the January 16th meeting and in the library. The book, *Do Droids Dream of Electric Sheep?* originally scheduled for March 20, has been rescheduled for the **April 17th** meeting. The **March 20th meeting will be about *People of the Book*** by Geraldine Brooks. Inspired by a true story, *People of the Book* is a novel of sweeping historical grandeur and intimate emotional intensity. It is about the history (1480-2002) of the Sarajevo Haggadah, a priceless and rare Jewish book. At each discovery in its travels, the author tells a wonderful story of the lives of people living in that time. Carol Clark and Betty Odum will lead the discussion. They highly recommend the book. It is easy to read and fascinating. All of our meetings are scheduled for the third Sunday of the month from 1:00 until 2:00PM. *If you have any questions or suggestions for our meetings, please see Sandy Lyon or Carol Clark.*



Hannah, Lex and Tucker Fetko invite you to see their beautiful *Christmas light display* at their home – up until January 3rd. Directions: From NW 43rd Street turn west onto NW 12th Place, a dead-end street. Proceed west on NW 12th Place and you'll see the lights on the right. Mark and Anne turn on the lights at around 6:45 every night unless rain is falling.

Film Night: Friday January 21st at 7 pm in the Meeting House social room. We will show "Iron Jawed Angel" about Quaker Alice Paul and her important role in the early women's voting rights movement.

Yoga: Mondays at 6pm in the meetinghouse.

Thanks to those who continue to bring non-perishable food for Community Ministries. The need is great.

Peace & Social Concerns Committee will meet Sunday, January 23rd at 9:40am at the Meetinghouse. We will focus on setting our priorities for the coming year.

An Evening of Warm & Witty Singing Truth to Power..

On **Friday, Jan.14th at 7:30 PM** at the Gainesville Friends Meetinghouse, **Tom Neilson**, a touring folk singer and a member of Mr. Toby Friends Meeting (Mass.) will perform in concert. A veteran of stage and street theater, his songs remind people of what is really important and the power of music to say it using satire, parody and social commentary. Proceeds of the admission suggested donation of \$10 at the door will benefit Gainesville Friends General Fund. Intermission refreshments will be available. <http://www.tomneilsonmusic.com>



First Month 2011 GFM CALENDAR

Worship 11am First Day (Sunday)

Unless noted, meetings are at the Meetinghouse

12/26/10	Sun		No Peace & Social Concerns Committee nor Bible Study
1/2/11	Sun	9:30am	Library & Hospitality Committees
		1pm	Forum: State of the Meeting led by Clerk Mona Morris
1/3/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
1/9/11	Sun	1pm	Meeting for Business
1/10/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
1/14/11	Fri	7:30pm	Concert! Tom Neilson http://www.tomneilsonmusic.com
1/15/11	Sat	9am	SEYM Committees & Interim Business Meeting – Orlando Mtg.
1/16/11	Sun	1pm	SEYM Michener Lecture & Workshops – Orlando Meeting
1/16/11	Sun	12:30am	Potluck
		1pm	Friendly Reading Group
1/17/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
1/21/11	Fri	7pm	Film Night: Iron Jawed Angels
1/23/11	Sun	9:40am	Peace & Social Concerns Committee
		12:45pm	Bible Study
1/24/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
1/30/11	Sun	1pm	Forum: Answering the Call to Heal the World
1/31/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga
2/6/11	Sun	9:30am	Library & Hospitality Committees
2/7/11	Mon	6pm	Yoga



A Walk in the Quaker Woods ♦ Jean Larson ♦ December 19, 2010

Photographs by *Bill Mitchell*



After an extremely dry November, the cold settled in with temperatures in the twenties at night several days, then with a short warmer spell followed by more cold. The beans and squash in the children's garden have gone the way of summer crops, but the onions, garlic and butter lettuce have



taken the cold weather in stride. The sennas whose cheery yellow flowers greeted us along the drive look to be dying back for the winter. Since they are invasive exotics in central and south Florida, I will be keeping an eye on them to make sure they do not become invasive. When seeing an attractive plant like the senna, it can be difficult to envision its potential for taking over the landscape, but Bill has provided a photograph of the air potato vines on our neighbors to the south that show what a difference his vigilance has made. It is easier to nip an invasion in the bud than to turn one back.

Impulsively I bought some blooming Georgia calamint (*Calamintha Georgiana*) at a butterfly plant sale at the Museum of Natural History and I planted them near the rosemary bush that has spiraling branches. I expect its leaves to die back in the winter and sprout again in the spring. Also blooming in December was an unknown member of the aster family growing in the pond area. We found it walking in the woods a week ago. Nearby was a photogenic bracket fungus -- this time of year seems to bring out the best in them. Resurgence was visible in the same area with a downed tree sprouting new tree-size shoots.



While it has been very dry, the occasional rain storms have been washing soil from the slope in front of the meeting house. Jean Chalmers, Bud Brennan and I consulted with David Pais, brought a proposal to the Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee, which discussed it and brought it to Meeting for Business last week. This week David Pais brought in a small crew and the slope has been regraded, a revetment of landscape cloth and lime rocks put down to hold the slope in place, and pine straw over the top as mulch. We will be planting through the mulch and landscape cloth sometime next year, but the pine straw looks quite nice for the winter. A path of paving stones was also installed for those of us walking from the grassy

parking areas to the meeting house. Thanks to Bud for getting the pine straw, to Jean C. for donating the paving stones.

Bill and I walked past the meeting for worship in nature area, looking ready for us to use it, went up to the boundary with Shir Shalom, down the ditch, now filled with soft sand, and for a change, headed up the creek along the southern bank. As I often do, I picked up the litter that comes down the flood zones, and Bill spotted coral ardisia, one of the exotic invasives on the property that he is taking care to remove. It was nice to see that there were only scattered specimens, and none with the beautiful red berries that birds eat this time of year and then spread the seeds. With the canopy opening up with fall leaf drop, it was easy to see through the woods. Some substantial trees have started falling, some propped in slanted position where they have fallen against other trees or the opposite bank. At this time, the water in the creek stops flowing above where the ditch usually meets it, so it was nice to see small fish swimming in the part of the creek that is still flowing.



in the picture to a dark scarlet. We found a from a swamp-chesnut oak (*Quercus prinus*) dark bark of a nearby tree. The wax myrtles substantial crop of berries tight along their

As we headed back toward the ditch on the north side of the creek, I looked up on a small hill and spotted an armadillo at ease just outside a burrow. When I tried to point it out to Bill, the noise we made startled it enough to slip into the burrow. Nearby we found a box turtle shell with a few remnants of the turtle whose home it was. From there it was a pleasant walk through the leaf litter that carpets the forest floor to the pond area and then back to the meeting house.



This fall the leaves are taking on wonderful colors, with the winged sumac west of the meeting for worship room shifting from the red pink leaf that had drifted down and Bill photographed it against the along the parking lot have a branches with a bluish waxy haze.

May your holidays be filled with good cheer and may the new year bring you blessings.



Berries on Wax Myrtle at edge of parking lot



Shelf fungus on tree stump