

WILLIAM PENN HOUSE SAYMA REPRESENTIVE REPORT
National Consultative Committee
November 19-20, 2014
Prepared by Bonnie Issacs

Wednesday, November 19

NOON We started out by travelling to the Southeast White House for a Luncheon with the local Clergy and other leaders in the local Spiritual Community. The Southeast White House calls itself "a house on the hill or all people." The hill, in this case, is Randall Heights in southeast DC, east of the Anacostia River. It is a community and fellowship center that provides weekly prayer breakfasts, semi-monthly fellowship lunches, after school programs for local youth, parent support programs and other community supports in one of the underserved areas of DC.

2:00 to 5:30 - We returned to the William Penn House to hear about the William Penn Quaker Workcamps. The WorkCamps are often Youth from Privileged Background who have a Academic Service Requirement who will work with members of an underserved community with projects to improve that community. It was reported that within 4 days of the Work Camp - the mindset of the participants changes and it becomes more about working together versus social boundries. The Main focus seems to be on community gardens . Community gardens not only make nutritious foods more readily available, but help provide healthy water filtration to the watershed. In addition, maintaining community gardens is a social event that helps build community relations. Activities will not be limited to gardening, and may include riverbank cleanup, picnics, and fellowship breakfasts.

6:30 to 7:30 was Supper where we were be joined a Guest Speaker was a Ms. Janie Boyd - an outspoken elderly black woman who does gleaning for her community.

Black History Moment: Janie Boyd with the Late President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Late President presented this civil rights activist for her work in nutrition. She stood up for black neighborhood grocery stores who were receiving expired meats from white neighborhood grocery stores. She testified before Congress in 1971 around the issue.



There was also a local attorney who runs a Community Breakfast at one of the local Churches for mostly homeless folks.

Thursday, November 20

We opted to have breakfast at the Community Breakfast. This is an example of what William Penn calls "Radical Hospitality." I was talking to a Gentleman and we were comparing Quaker Spirituality to 12 Step Spirituality. 12 Step Groups are Recovery Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous. Ad Infintum. I mentioned being an Alcoholic in Recovery for several years. He mentioned being sober for 10 days and talked about his struggles. He was also helping to set up the breakfast. I assured him that one of the best ways to expedite recovery is service work.

The Breakfast itself was not conventions. Gleaning is not just done in the fields. The Gentleman who runs the Breakfast gleans the local restaurants and utilizes whatever is donated. Chicken on a stick, Mozzarella slices, Ad Infintum.

Several Friends were involved with FCNL in addition to National Consultative Committee. There was discussion on how we can become a meaningful resource for yearly and monthly meetings, and what we can take from the National Consultative Committee to bring to our own groups.

In my own Quaker Meeting in Greenbrier County- We are a very small group. We do donate to the local Food Bank. We have put together a petition for Clean Water and issues that West Virginia has with our water system being compromised. The woman who introduced me to the Quaker Meeting has started

Oakhurst Outreach, a Transitional House for women in Recovery. One of our members is on the board for Oakhurst Outreach. I travelled to Washington D.C. in January to take a class in Grant Writing. My goal is to be able to find money and write grants for worthy causes.

Southeast White House

The social makeup is generally people from African-American urban churches and people from Evangelical/Protestant churches. William Penn House staff and interns have been attending the fellowship lunches for the past 4 years, have prepared these lunches a few times, and have taken Workcamp groups there to be a part of the service aspect of the organization. We have found it to be an enriching and nourishing time – and a great opportunity to be a part of a very diverse group while doing some good Quaker outreach. William Penn House likes to talk about "Radical Hospitality"; The Southeast White House is an example of what we aspire for – truly welcoming all, speaking our truth while honoring others. Attending their lunch is an opportunity for NCC to experience this as well