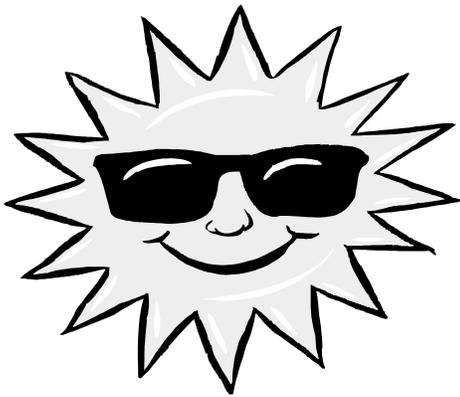


SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN FRIEND

Newsletter
of the
Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting & Association
of the
Religious Society of Friends

SUMMER 2004



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PO Box 2191, Abingdon, VA 24212-2191 (276) 628-5852
www.SAYMA.org

Monthly Meetings & Worship Groups

Anneewakee Creek Worship Group

Douglasville, GA (770) 949-8079

Asheville (NC) Friends Meeting

(828) 258-0974

Athens (GA) Friends Meeting

(706) 546-0056

Atlanta (GA) Friends Meeting

(404) 377-2474

Auburn (AL) Worship Group

(334) 887-9688

Berea (KY) Friends Meeting

(859) 986-2193

Birmingham (AL) Friends Meeting

(205) 592-0570

Boone (NC) Friends Meeting

(828) 263-0001

Brevard (NC) Friends Meeting

(828) 891-7793

Celo (NC) Friends Meeting

(828) 675-4456

Charleston (WV) Friends Meeting

(304) 756-3033

Chattanooga (TN) Friends Meeting

(423) 629-2580

Clarksville (TN) Worship Group

(931) 647-9284

Clemson (SC) Worship Group

(864) 654-6680

Cleveland (TN) Worship Group

(423) 479-4877

Columbia (SC) Friends Meeting

(803) 254-0626

Cookeville (TN) Preparative Meeting

(931) 268-2592

Crossville (TN) Friends Meeting

(931) 277-5354

Foxfire Friends Meeting

Johnson City, TN (423) 283-4392

Greenville (SC) Friends Meeting

(864) 322-6208

Huntsville (AL) Area Friends Meeting

(256) 837-6327

Memphis (TN) Friends Meeting

(901) 762-8130

Murfreesboro (TN) Worship Group

(931) 389-6340

Nashville (TN) Friends Meeting

(615) 329-2640

New Moon Worship Group

Barnardsville/Weaverville, NC (828) 626-2572

Oxford (MS) Friends Meeting

(662) 473-3670

Royal Worship Group

Blountsville, AL (205) 429-3088

Sevier County Worship Group

Sevierville, TN (865) 429-1807

Sewanee (TN) Worship Group

(931) 598-5031

Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting

Black Mountain, NC (828) 669-5914

West Knoxville (TN) Friends Meeting

(865) 694-0036

Yearly Meeting Officers & Clerks	
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Ministry & Nurture Committee Clerk:	
Ecological Concerns Network Clerks:	Carol Gray (Atlanta), (404) 288-8749, chezgray@mindspring.com Susan Carlyle (Swannanoa Valley), (828) 626-2572, scarlyle@main.nc.us
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Archivist/Historian:	Bettina Wolff, (828) 625-4901, bettinawolf@bellsouth.net
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Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) Administrative Assistant:	Therese Hildebrand (Berea), (859) 986-5418, thildebrand@acer-access.com

SAYF Calendar

August 20-22: Nurturing/Steering/Oversight Committee Meetings at Wren's mountain house near Black Mountain NC
Planning: SC Co-Clerks & NC Co-Clerks
Contact: Wren Hendrickson

September 17-19: Retreat at Chapel Hill NC
Program Planning: Chapel Hill YFs
Lead FAP: Wren Hendrickson

October 22-24: Retreat at Penn Center, St Helena Island SC
Program planning: Maria Finch-Hammond & Althea Sumter
Lead FAP: Jeremiah Gold-Hopton

World Gathering of Young Friends

Date: August 16-24, 2005
Place: Lancaster University, UK.
Theme: "Let us then see what Love will do. I am the vine; you are the branches. Now what fruit shall we bear?"

Each yearly meeting is requested to choose one male and one female representative between the ages of 18-35.

More info: www.wgyf.org, or Betsy Blake hellobetsyblake@hotmail.com.
To donate money, time or support contact: World Gathering of Young Friends North American Based Committee
PO Box 85884
Seattle, WA 98145
wgyf_nabc@yahoo.com

(Spanish translators needed)
— Rachel Weir

SAYMA 2004 Calendar

08/01: Directory list from monthly meetings and worship groups are due in the SAYMA office
09/11: Representative Meeting in Berea, KY
10/01: SAF Submission Due Date
12th Month: Representative Meeting

SAYMA List-server

The SAYMA list-server provides the ability to post messages to Friends from our yearly meeting who have subscribed to this service.

Subscribe at:
<http://kitenet.net/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/sayma>

In case of difficulties, you can reach a live human at AdminAsst@sayma.org

**SAF Submissions—Next Due
Date: 10/01/2004**

Submit meeting or worship group news, original articles, opinions, poetry, announcements, humor, gripes, worries, and cookie recipes to SAFeditor@SAYMA.org or by mail to: SAF c/o Susan & Kim Carlyle, PO Box 439, Barnardsville, NC 28709 (828) 626-2572 (Please include your name and phone number.)
* * *

For resource-saving, electronic delivery of the SAF, send your name, e-mail address and monthly meeting or worship group name to SAFeditor@SAYMA.org

New Location:

Anneewakee Creek WG

The Anneewakee Creek Friends Worship Group announces the change in our meeting place to a space in a retail store (I am Wonderful) on Fairbun Road, south of I-20 in Douglas County (GA), beginning on Sunday July 18th at 11:00 AM.

All it took was 6 years of home meetings before way opened for us. Come and check us out.

Our website [www.acfwg.org] has a link to a map and other information a seeker may need to decide whether to attend or not.

Please tell your acquaintances who live west of Atlanta about our worship group and our new website. We are happy to make it easier for Friends to gather outside the perimeter in the part of Atlanta that is closest to Alabama.

— Free Polazzo

**New Address:
Friends World Committee
for Consultation
World Office**

FWCC
173 Euston Road
London NW1 2AX UK
Phone: 011-44-20-7663-1199
Fax: 011-44-20-7663-1189

>From the Editors: This issue has news and some follow-up from our recent yearly meeting, correspondence from a Friend in the Mid-East, and the usual information and announcements. Enjoy the issue, enjoy the summer, and use your Friendly persuasion to encourage some folks to register to vote in November!

REFLECTIONS FROM CHRISTIAN PEACE TEAM MEMBER

by Asheville Friend Christy Bischoff, a member of a Christian Peacemaker Team visiting Israel and Palestine (via e-mail)

I am currently traveling with a delegation of 10 people from the US, Canada, and UK, meeting with different Israeli and Palestinian peace groups, so far mostly in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. This truly is a *Holy* land. Everywhere there is yet another holy site, whether it be Jewish, Muslim, or Christian, and everywhere seem to be people seeking God. Hearing the Muslim call to prayer, or being at the Western Wall for Shabbat, it is very present — this search for God. And also there is also much that just doesn't make sense, deep pain, fear, and injustice, another great paradox of life.

Going into Bethlehem and seeing the "Separation Barrier" or "Wall" (depending on who you are speaking to, it has many names), was quite shocking. I have heard a great deal about this Wall that Israelis are building under the idea that building a wall between Israel and the Palestinian Territories will be a security barrier, keeping Israel safe from suicide bombings. What we saw didn't seem to be about security. Much of the Wall/Fence is built within the Green Line [the 1949 Armistice Line demarcating the borders between Israel and the West Bank and Gaza Strip], and weaves and turns all over the place, in some places completely surrounding whole towns so that the Palestinians living in that town will be cut off from the rest of the West Bank.... It is very hard to comprehend, and seems that no one is quite sure just how it is all unfolding. But what was clear was that the wall was coming up quickly. In places where we could see nothing but wall (about 8 meters high of concrete; in other places it is series of roads, trenches, fences), other CPTers said there was only about 50 feet of it last week. It is coming fast.

Yet despite this ominous wall that is here and coming, we found many people who were living life and were finding reasons to be hopeful. We stayed in a refugee camp in Bethlehem with a family who welcomed us warmly. As we walked through the camp, I thought of the many images of Palestinians and Islamic terrorists that are ingrained in our minds in North America. These images did not match up with what we experienced at this camp. As we walked through the narrow streets of a camp in which 11,000 people live in a ½ km sq., the children ran around saying "Hallo, how you doing?", some children said "Shalom" to us thinking we were Jewish. One man asked me where we were from. When I said the U.S. his face dropped, he

paused, and then smiled again saying "It's ok. It's ok. You are welcome here."

.... I feel overwhelmed. There is life here and many voices of hope, but from what we have seen there also seems to be a great imbalance of power, every day the Palestinians are restricted in their movement, and not just into Israel, but within the West Bank itself. I cannot do justice to what I have seen, but I weep. I weep for the longing for justice, for the pain and fear that both sides experience, but also for the life that I do see here, children laughing in the streets, Israeli and Palestinians working together to rebuild a house, the many voices longing for peace.

* * *

Curfew is an interesting thing that I haven't experienced too much, but hear lots of people talk about it and it seems to be changing. It falls under what some call collective punishment. If there is a shooting in another part of Hebron, or near a settlement, often times there will be curfew imposed on all of the people living in certain areas. Last year there were over 120 days of curfew in a row in the Old City of Hebron, with it being lifted only for a few hours or a day in certain places so that people could leave their homes to get needed supplies. By far it seems that this sort of collective punishment angers people in ways that is just indescribable.... We were not sure why there was this particular curfew happening that Thursday night, but we were concerned about the men sitting in the dark, so we decided to stay and monitor the situation....The Palestinian men ranged from about 10-65 years in age, and they all sat in relative silence, broken only by the sounds of cell phones ringing. We asked one man how long they had been there and he said about 30 minutes. The soldiers were all so young, most between 18 and 21, looking incredibly uncomfortable in their bodies, let alone the fact that they were in full military gear. They would shift their guns from hand to hand, their eyes darting from the men to the dark corners that surrounded us. We engaged in conversation with a couple of them, who said there was curfew — so these men shouldn't be on the streets. When asked why and for how long was curfew, they didn't seem to know, just that there was curfew. "Why are you here?" they asked, but didn't seem to mind our presence.

Uncertain of what we could do, and if our presence was making any sort of difference, we checked in and felt that

Reflections (continued)

our gut reaction was to stay and it didn't seem that our presence was making it harder for the detainees. So we waited, and after only about 30 minutes, all but three men were released to be on their way. The soldiers got in a patrol formation and put the three men in the middle and began marching them down the street. We weren't sure where they were taking them, but decided to follow. The soldiers walked, constantly pointing their guns in many directions and down dark alley ways. We followed, crossing over the barbed wire, random burnt out pieces of metal, broken glasses, and big concrete barriers prohibiting cars from driving. It was very surreal; here were soldiers with big guns, dark alleys, war-looking set up, and us three CPTers in our red caps following behind. The men were taken to a checkpoint... They began to search the men and took them one at a time behind the barricade, but for the rest of the time they just sat under a bright yellow light on the street. The soldiers told us to leave, so we stepped back and just began to assess the situation.

Once again, we questioned what was best for us to be doing, and our gut just told us to stay. So we stayed, singing to break up the boredom. The three Palestinian men sat a ways from us, but kept looking at us. What were they trying to tell us with their eyes? A patrol went out into the night. We thought we might be in for a long night. But after only about an hour, a soldier came out from behind the barrier and yelled at the men some, but handed them their IDs. They were being released, so we turned to walk away.... The men passed us, literally leaping down the streets in complete jubilation, shouting "merci beaucoup" (I am not sure where the French came in) and throwing cigarettes our way....

We were not sure our presence made much difference, but the men were released relatively quickly, but mostly there was something that I can't use words for in how right it felt to stay. I think it meant something for those Palestinian men to know that outsiders were watching on their dark streets.

I think about white American privilege quite a bit, and here was one place that we were able to use that privilege for benefit. But then there is the balance of how much in using it are we contributing to the system of it? I also felt angry and just in disbelief at the system that had all those men out that night. The Palestinian men who were submitting to not being able to walk their streets with any sense of freedom, and being subject to search and detainment at any time. And the young soldiers who were very clearly uncomfortable with the dynamic of power that had put them there that night having to look in every direction for an attacker, and to be put in a power position, with a gun, over another human being.

I think it just does bad things to your soul.

I sit here today, just feeling a lot of anger and a sense of total confusion. This story is just one of many. I think I could sit here and type and type, and maybe just continually contradict myself. This place screams of paradox. Nothing seems to make sense. Maybe I am trying to make sense of what just can't make sense. We can meet with a man who has had his home demolished for three times (many CPTers and Israelis came to stay to try to stop it, but it didn't work). He asks, "What good is CPT? What good is thinking there will be peace? I just want to live on my land here." I have no answer. Then I can go to the next house and be welcomed, and the love of that family just bubbles over.

This seems to be the only constant, that everything seems to contradict itself, that nothing seems guaranteed, whether that be how long you can live in your house before it is destroyed, if you will be able to get home the quickest way, whether you or someone you love may be hurt or killed by the violence. So what is the choice? To give up or to keep on living, even when it seems an uphill battle and big boulders rolling down your way. Somehow many people choose to keep on living. I don't know how, after only 3 weeks, I could see how easy it would be for one of those boulders to just crush you and not get back up. So for today I want to keep on finding those people that choose to keep on living, and maybe get a glimpse of how they do it.

* * *

We, as a team, have just returned from a 3-day retreat in Galilee and I feel refreshed and an excitement of being back in Hebron. Before we had left on retreat, the coordinator of the Hebron project had been here and commented that he felt like this was the most discouraged he had seen the team.... He pointed out that there are times for action and there are times for retreat, and to do this work from a faith base, that we must also find times to listen and be loving to ourselves.

While away in the Galilee, I was reading the book, *The Road to Peace* by Henri Nouwen, which spoke to me of celebrating life. That too often we do not acknowledge how powerful the darkness can be and that we think we can face it, but one way of countering it, is to celebrate life. I have thought about that. Being at Galilee, a place that was full of great peace and beauty, yet not too far away was all the violence. But still there was beauty. I recognized how inside me there was also a lot of violence and a lot of beauty and the need to really be loving and forgiving of my own self, to in any way be loving with anyone else. So I come back to Hebron with more love for myself, and feel a great deal of love for the people here, the Palestinians, the soldiers, the Israeli settlers, the other CPTers.

(next page)

Web Manager (continued)

and registration information about Yearly Meeting events. There is a calendar of events and links to other web sites for SAYF, FGC, and other Quaker organizations.

Over the past year, I have worked to bring this information up to date and keep it current. In the future I hope the web site will see more use for internal SAYMA affairs (e.g. publishing the *Southern Appalachian Friend* and providing a central workspace where YM committees can post documents and announcements.

As Web Manager, I also maintain a set of e-mail addresses — one for each monthly meeting and worship group and a number of Yearly Meeting positions of responsibility. A major problem has been the quantity of junk mail that the addressees receive, due to the public nature of the address.

To mitigate the junk mail problem and also to open up more possibilities for interactive web sites, I have changed service plans with our web-hosting provider, Interland, Inc. of Atlanta. The new service options includes a spam filter, support for Microsoft web page technology, and database support

I would like to thank my support committee—Ceal Wutka, Kendall Ivie and Sharon Phelps—for their interest and advice over the year. One task for next year is to write up a statement of web policies. I'm also hoping that next year we can do on-line registration for Yearly Meeting!

—Tim Lamm, Berea MM

Mindfulness, Stewardship, & Food

Friends, I offer a fun and creative way to focus on being a more effective steward of the earth. The Mennonite Central Committee is looking for submissions of recipes and thoughts on eating in an environmentally sustainable way for a new cookbook called *Simply in Season*.

I smile thinking about how it may just change my life to spend time collecting or creating recipes based on the query: *How does the food I put on my table and into my body impact local and global neighbors?* And I just might have fun too! You can sign up to offer submissions (recipes and stories are welcome) and/or be a recipe tester. My mind burst forth with yet another moment of joy — I could turn being a tester into an opportunity to practice mindfulness, making the connection from each bite back to the very source of the food itself (e.g., bread, baking, grain, wheat, seed, planters, earth, water, sun, spirit).

If you are as intrigued as I am go to www.morewithless.org or call the Mennonite Central Committee toll free at (888) 563-4676.

— Evan Richardson, Asheville

Reflections on Yearly Meeting

SAYMA's Yearly Meeting is not just about the Business Meetings. It is a spiritual retreat as well, where the soul can be nourished in many ways. Besides visiting with F/friends already known, the highlight for me was, as usual, the worship sharing group. The group had around ten members and met for about an hour each day. The opportunity to connect at a deep level with Quakers from all corners of SAYMA over a three-day period is not to be missed. The Spirit was present as we listened to the journeys of fellow seekers after the Light.

This year I was led to bring my concern that Friends not see business as an "enemy." I showed a film, "The Next Industrial Revolution," to Friends who later thanked me for helping them feel more optimistic about the future of the environment. In the film, architect Bill McDonough and his partner chemist Michael Braungart, show how many companies are changing their business processes so that they include *respect for people and respect for the environment*. Companies included in the

55-minute film are: Nike, Designtex, Ford Motor Company, and Oberlin College,. To learn more, see: www.thenextindustrialrevolution.com

—Free Pollazzo,
Anneewakee Creek

FLGBTQC Report

Once again thank you for letting me be your representative to Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns. While I was unable to attend Midwinter Gathering in Burlington, NJ, I do have copies of the epistle from this gathering. Please let me know if you would like a copy. The theme this year was "Inward Work/Outward Mission" and 125 Friends attended.

We have now joined the Pendle Hill Peace Network and look forward to sharing our unique gifts with this organization. Among the experiences shared at the gathering were:

-The theme of wounded healer and how we are called to heal ourselves and others, and how this opens us to the pain of the world.

-The awareness of continuing discrimination, pain, and misunderstanding caused by members of our own Religious Society of Friends, and how we have continuing work to do in this area.

-Our keynote speaker, Tracye Peterson, spoke of using our own experiences of oppression to bring about awareness of the oppression of others.

-Peter Toscano talked about his experiences in a residential "Ex-gay Christian" program.

On the FLGBTQC listserv, we have been having a very lively discussion of "gay marriage" and all the issues that surround it. After some technical difficulties, the newsletter is now being sent out several times a year. Midwinter gathering will be held at Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu, NM in 2005. I would be happy to try to answer any questions. Thanks again for your support.

— Annie Black, Cookeville

Excerpts State of the Meeting Reports Presented at Yearly Meeting
(full reports from all meetings can be found in the YM minutes)

Annewakee Creek: With financial help and spiritual support from Friends in Atlanta Meeting, we have found a new site for worship and will hold our first meeting there on 07-18-04... We also ...designed a web site [www.acfwg.org] with information about Friends.

Athens: Several homeless advocates, who choose to live with the homeless, trying to provide a supportive atmosphere, joined us in worship throughout the fall. Their presence led us to explore some of the issues related to homelessness... We provided a letter explaining Friends beliefs regarding rehabilitation to the State Board of Pardons and Parole in response to a request to support the parole of a prisoner with whom we have corresponded for many years.

Birmingham: Several F/friends are facing personal illness or the illness of a loved one, caring for family members, or anticipating major life changes. The Meeting seeks to support Friends through this period. Birmingham Friends continue to hold Connie LaMonte in the Light as she undergoes chemotherapy, and we are cheered by her return to Meeting after a brief absence.... Our low membership and attendance numbers are the greatest source of concern to the Meeting. We have tried many types of outreach, and attendance has increased only incrementally.

Celo: We continue to be involved in local immigration issues. We have sent postcards to our state legislators against the death penalty.... Work began on our new Meeting House in February. The foundation is almost completed, then landscaping will be done around the site so it won't be so muddy, even though the children are definitely enjoying the dirt piles. There have been several workdays and dedicated crews working on this. Several trees were cut down in Celo Community and a portable saw mill was brought to the site to cut the logs into timbers for the new building. All the lumber will come from our community.

Chattanooga: We actively participate in the Interfaith Hospitality Network by supplying volunteers to another church when it hosts homeless families, and we contribute financially to this effort. In February, the local branch of the Association of African-American Life and Culture awarded the meeting a plaque in recognition of Quaker contributions to black experiences over the last two centuries.

Foxfire: Our visibility in the neighborhood grows. Our grounds have undergone improvements with new flowers and trees and a tree house is in progress.... We also painted a large cloth banner that

reads: "Another Quaker Voice for Peace-Foxfire Friends Meeting, Johnson City, TN"; several F/friends marched with the banner at a peace march in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. in Abingdon, VA.... Foxfire Friends attended a Friday service and shared a Ramadan meal with members of the local Islamic center. This gave us an opportunity to share traditions from our faiths.

Memphis: Memphis Friends have concentrated on community building this year, looking inward perhaps more than outward, deepening a shared sense of identity as Quakers and as friends. In the process we have laid aside some concerns we have long carried: the anxiety to buy a meetinghouse and the urge to grow in numbers.... This year we have embarked upon an effort that includes developing a better sense of Friends' needs, acknowledging each person's gifts and contributions, and recognizing the importance of every job to the health of the Meeting... We have also nurtured community through our Meetings for Learning on the third and fourth First Days each month, our monthly newsletter, and our new website [www.memphisquaker.org]. In the ecological and technological spirit of the times, we are distributing *Memphis Friends News* through a listserv associated with the website.

Nashville: It seems as if the openness of our new worship space has opened our hearts to deeper and more varied messages of and from God. Our several year search for a new meeting house was carried to fruition by our faithful listening — to each other and to what Spirit would have us do.... The Meeting as a whole has gotten under the weight of carrying out the work of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee by our participation in the Shalom Community, Tying Nashville Together, and Nashville Peace and Justice Center.... Having approved a statement of purpose, we are challenged to live into it, to uphold our integrity as we live up to the measure of Light each has been given.

West Knoxville: Increased opportunities for community building included a November "Birthday Bash" when we celebrated the meeting's 50th anniversary. We shared food, memories and music with lyrics specially written for the occasion. In May, Friends held a retreat at the meetinghouse.... Continuing delight with our "SAYFers", 8-12 in number, who have hosted two retreats, organized Christmas baskets for shut-ins, and involved adults in discussions. The two most involved adult leaders need to step back from intense commitment. Their love and work is greatly appreciated.

FWCC Report to SAYMA —2004

The heart of Friends World Committee for Consultation is bringing Friends together from different traditions not with the idea that we all turn out cookie cutter Quakers, but that we can all learn from one another, support one another and truly form a family of Friends. For example, at the Triennial one of the issues being discussed in interest groups was homosexuality. Folks who normally would have avoided this topic went to the workshops and were asking questions. A sense of unity will not be reached any time soon, but the discussion has been started.

One of the biggest disappointments of the Triennial and on a smaller scale at the Section's annual meeting was the denial of visas. All of the representatives from India were denied visas. Most of the representatives from Africa were denied visas but later received them upon appeal joining us after the Triennial was more than half finished. The representative of El Salvador Yearly Meeting went to the Canadian Embassy six times trying to obtain a visa for the Section Meeting, but no one was ever able to see her. This affected our sessions on many levels. Not only were voices missing from business meeting, but also early morning worship was limited in its variety as unprogrammed worship was the default style when the group to lead worship had not been permitted to come.

Despite this obstacle Friends are working on outreach and being inclusive. FWCC is promoting a new image with colorful, bilingual materials. As representatives cycle through FWCC they learn how to work with interpreters. FWCC is also interested in putting together a brochure to help bridge the gap beyond just language. FWCC is a strong supporter of the World Gathering of Young Friends.

FWCC is now facing the challenge, especially at the world level of how to continue to have interactions among Friends while taking into account environmental costs, visa restrictions, language barriers, etc. Any thoughts on ways to get folks together that is more efficient than a Triennial are welcome.

Another cost is financial. The World Office is running on reserves due to reduction of investment income of their own and in terms of donations. Also the weak dollar has lessened the impact of funds contributed to the World Office from the Section of the Americas. The World Office is asking for a 12% increase in giving from the yearly meetings.

Respectfully submitted, Rachel Weir

Actions Requested at the FWCC Triennial 2004

Friends from the Northeast Region invited Friends everywhere to labor with the following queries: *Do you know when Truth is offered with grounded, spiritual authority? Do you speak truth in love at all times? Do you*

live your life in accord with the words you speak? Are you faithful in witnessing to the Truth in your community and to the world?

Those with a concern about HIV/AIDS in Africa are welcome to contact the Africa Section office.

Yearly meetings in Africa are interested in partnering with yearly meetings outside of their section. Contacts can be made through the Africa Section office.

FWCC continues to be represented at meetings of the UN Commission for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. Issues include prevention of crime, terrorism, the drugs trade and trafficking in people. Friends' contribution has been in bringing to public view the potential of restorative justice. The World Office is maintaining a list of Friends interested in international aspects of the justice system.

Soon there will be a UN Global Study of Violence Against Children. Friends' experience of working to prevent all forms of violence . . . could be the basis of a useful contribution to this study. We urge Friends to carry this concern to their yearly meetings for discernment and possible action. We ask that responses be referred to the Secretary of Australia YM who is willing to coordinate preparation of a submission in consultation with FWCC.

We ask Friends with knowledge of issues concerning women in prison and children of women in prison to share their information and expertise with the FWCC representatives at the UN commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

Noting that 2004 is the final year of the UN Decade of the Indigenous Peoples of the World, and that the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is still under negotiation, this Triennial urges Friends to encourage their national governments to take a constructive role in negotiations, in order that the Declaration can be completed before the end of the International Decade. In addition, Friends are asked to seek to ensure that the final Declaration is acceptable to Indigenous Peoples themselves and that it reflect standards that secure and protect their rights.

The triennial invites all Friends interested in or working on Indigenous Peoples' issues to participate in the Friends Indigenous Rights Network, an electronic network set up to enable Friends to collaborate more closely.

While in South Africa, we [the FWCC delegation to the World Conference Against Racism] witnessed racism at the local level and chose to act. Friends, we ask you also to act as we did in Durban by returning to your Yearly Meetings and seeking prayerfully to discern how your Meetings address the issues of racism.

The World Council of Churches has urged us to take part in the Decade to Overcome Violence, and to report activities to the WCC.

**SAYMA Representatives to Friends General Conference Representative Report
Sixth Month, 2004**

Your representatives, Julia Sibley-Jones and Penelope Wright, continue to be thankful for the trust you have placed in us to serve you at the Central Committee of Friends General Conference (FGC).

The culmination of a two-year process of review and revision of the Five Year Long Term Plan was accomplished in 2003. These five-year plans have been undertaken by FGC as acts of discernment, faithfulness and recognizing the evolving and emerging needs of the meetings and Friends we serve. This is the second five-year plan discerned by FGC. Those who were present for the first discernment process have noticed significant differences in the manner in which this plan was brought into being. We saw it as an opportunity to clarify and sharpen the focus of both the whole organization and committee work. Additionally the process provided deeper understanding of the inter-relatedness of the work of committees, thereby decreasing counterproductive turf issues.

Using the four goals of the Long Term Plan, which have remained the same since their inception, we would like to share some of the ways these goals have been realized and what is planned for the future.

- I. Provide opportunities for worship and spiritual nurture.
Accomplished
 - ◆ Traveling Ministries Program created
 - ◆ QuakerFinder.org establishedPlanned
 - ◆ Facilitate ministry by seasoned Friends by helping meetings call forth, nurture, support and hold accountable those called to ministry and by nurturing the most active members who serve in yearly and monthly meetings
 - ◆ Take the Quaker message out into the world using the internet and literature and supporting outreach work by yearly and monthly meetings
- II. Nurture monthly meeting and worship groups
Accomplished
 - ◆ Creation and expansion of 3 FGC websitesPlanned
 - ◆ Support the vitality of meetings and worship groups, especially those that are small and isolated.
 - ◆ Enhance communication between monthly meetings and FGC by the identification of FGC contact persons in each meeting.
- III. Build and sustain a loving community of Friends
Accomplished
 - ◆ Established Committee for Ministry on Racism
 - ◆ Commitment to take the Gathering west of the Rockies in 2006Planned
 - ◆ Continue to challenge/reduce/eliminate racism within FGC and the meetings it serves by working with meetings to become welcoming and inclusive to People of Color
 - ◆ Provide care and support for high school and young adult Friends through working collaboratively to find ways to bring these age groups together and to support them in connecting with meetings and each other as their lives take them beyond their home meetings.
 - ◆ Gathering 2006 will be in Tacoma, Washington
- IV. Communicate and model core experiences and values of Friends
Accomplished
 - ◆ Central Committee models good Quaker practice, including conducting business in the context of worship, discernment and engaging in corporate action under Divine guidance.Planned
 - ◆ Engaging Friends in renewing the spiritual foundation of Friends Testimonies by advancing the understanding that social witness and service grounded in worship are important aspects of Quaker outreach
 - ◆ Assisting caregivers in raising children to be Quakers in a world that often does not share Quaker values.

Regarding the Monthly Meeting Contact Program — this program asks only that a dedicated person in each meeting be willing to receive and share with the meeting, information mailed quarterly by FGC. In return this person serves as a conduit for concerns, requests and feedback from the meeting to the FGC. More information is available from your representatives or by contacting Carrie Glasby (carrieg@fgcquaker.org or 215-561-1385).

In closing, we invite SAYMA Friends to consider serving on the planning committee for 2005 Gathering to be held in Blacksburg, VA.

SAYMA Friends Currently Serving FGC: Julia Sibley-Jones (Columbia), appointed representative/recording clerk of Ministry & Nurture Committee; Penelope Wright (Nashville), appointed representative/clerk of Ministry & Nurture Committee; Sharon Annis (W. Knoxville), ex-officio to Central Committee; Mary Ann Downey (Atlanta), FGC rep to Friends Journal; Tom Kenworthy (Atlanta), co-opted to Development Committee; Perry Treadwell (Atlanta), clerk Long Range Planning Committee; Robin Wells (Asheville), invited member of Religious Education Committee.

Yearly Meeting 2004 from an Ecological Concerns Network Perspective

A lot of work went into ECN's presence at this yearly meeting gathering.

- The ECN display had samples of 100% post consumer recycled, processed chlorine free paper, as well as samples of kenaf, blue denim, old money, and other tree-free papers.
- At our display, we gave away 93 of the 100 organic cotton cloth napkins that Alice Wald and Susan Carlyle had hemmed. Carol Gray made beautiful signs for each table in the dining room inviting Friends take and use cloth napkins.
- Bill Reynolds arranged to sell compact fluorescent light bulbs in the bookstore.
- ECN sponsored the early morning outdoor worship again this year. Each morning at 6:30, 10 to 12 people met to hear the birds and watch the sun come up in the mountains.
- We posted the State of the Meeting Reports outside of the meeting room in an attractive display with signs for each Meeting and Worship Group. We also placed copies in a ring binder for reading while sitting down. This effort saved reams of paper and still allowed Friends easy access to each report.
- Carol Gray was approved as the new co-clerk for a two-year term to serve with ongoing co-clerk Susan Carlyle. · Kathy Johnson of Atlanta rotated off after three years as co-clerk. Thank you, Kathy for your work.
- We presented a minute recommending the endorsement of the Earth Charter:

Proposed Minute Endorsing the Earth Charter

We of the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association of the Religious Society of Friends (SAYMA) find the Earth Charter to be consistent with Quaker Testimonies. We affirm its substance and encourage its application at all levels of social organization (local, global, public, private, and corporate). We endorse the Earth Charter as a guide consistent with our faith for spiritual practice and for social action. By endorsing the Earth Charter, SAYMA signifies its commitment to the spirit and aims of the document and will continue its work on the implementation of its principles.

During discussion, some Friends questioned why we should endorse it and how might we implement it if we did. The answers came forth from a well-attended workshop on the Earth Charter, the ECN committee meeting, and a communication from Berea MM.

Reasons for endorsing the Earth Charter:

- SAYMA Friends would feel a connection with a worldwide movement.
- The EC initiative would have one more US endorser which would strengthen them ever so slightly.
- People in other countries might feel more hopeful and supported seeing another US endorser.
- The Earth Charter could be used to help Monthly Meetings take action. (If every SAYMA MM took on one action and tried to implement it concretely, it would really make a difference.)
- The EC raises one's level of consciousness.
- It can make us personally accountable.
- It might serve as a connector to other groups, faiths, etc.
- It could be used as a blueprint for measurable changes (pounds of waste, etc.)
- We would be inspired to use it as a working document.
- ECN could use it as a tool to guide the work of SAYMA.
- There is nothing wrong with setting idealistic goals.

How would we implement the Earth Charter?

SAYMA is already applying Earth Charter principles such as paper reduction, carpooling, energy efficiency, and education; and some applications could challenge us to new activities including use of 100% pcr-pcf paper by our office and by MM's, and the empowerment of our youth thru education about sustainable development.

Unfortunately, time constraints prevented us from considering these responses during the YM business sessions. But I will be glad to lead this effort and will bring it back to representative meetings and to Yearly Meeting next year. To date, six SAYMA monthly meetings endorsed the EC. Eight others have had EC discussions but have not reached unity. We still hope to hear from Athens, Birmingham, Boone, Crossville, Greenville, Huntsville, Memphis or Oxford.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Carlyle, co-clerk of ECN

New from Quaker Earthcare Witness:
Earthcare for Friends:

A Study Guide for Individuals and Faith Communities
More info: info@QuakerEarthcare.org 802/658-0308