

Southern Appalachian Friend

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

FALL 2005



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) 353-2856

Atlanta (GA) Friends Meeting
(404) 377-2474

Auburn (AL) Worship Group
(334) 887-9688

Berea (KY) Friends Meeting
(859) 986-9262

Birmingham (AL) Friends Meeting
(205) 592-0570

Boone (NC) Friends Meeting
(828) 263-0001

Brevard (NC) Friends Meeting
(828) 885-2889

Canton (GA) Worship Group
(770) 720-4669

Celo (NC) Friends Meeting
(828) 675-4456

Charleston (WV) Friends Meeting
(304) 925-6123

Chattanooga (TN) Friends Meeting
(423) 629-2580

Clarksville (TN) Worship Group
(931) 647-9284

Clemson (SC) Worship Group
(864) 654-6680

Columbia (SC) Friends Meeting
(803) 252-2221

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) 246-6852

Gwinnett Worship Group
Norcross, GA (770) 315-9478

Huntsville (AL) Area Friends Meeting
(256) 837-6327

Memphis (TN) Friends Meeting
(901) 274-1400

Murfreesboro (TN) Worship Group
(931) 389-6340

Nashville (TN) Friends Meeting
(615) 329-2640

New Moon Worship Group
Barnardville, 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) 664-0092

West Knoxville (TN) Friends Meeting
(865) 694-0036

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SAF Submissions—Next Due

Date: 01/01/2006

Submit news of your meeting or worship group, 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.)

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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

SAYF Calendar

- October 21-23, 2005** Retreat at West Knoxville Meetinghouse; Lead FAP: Sig Christenson
- November 11-13, 2005** Retreat at Asheville Meetinghouse; Lead FAP: Margaret Farmer
- January 13-15, 2006** Retreat at Atlanta Meetinghouse; Lead FAP: Ceal Wutka
- February 24-26, 2006** Nurturing, Steering, Oversight Committees Meeting; Athens, GA at Sam Fisher's house; Lead FAP: Cathi Watkins
- March 10-12, 2006** Retreat at Berea Meetinghouse; Lead FAP: Therese Hildebrand
- April 21-23, 2006** Retreat at Camping Lodge near Asheville or Knoxville; Lead FAP: Cathi Watkins or Adrienne Labotka
- June 8-11, 2006** SAYMA Yearly Meeting at Warren Wilson College; Lead FAP: Wren Hendrickson

SAYMA Calendar

- December 3, 2005: Winter Representative Meeting; Atlanta, GA
- April 8, 2006: Spring Representative Meeting; Birmingham, AL
- June 7-11, 2006: SAYMA Yearly Gathering; Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC
- September 9, 2006: Fall Representative Meeting;
- December 2, 2006: Winter Representative Meeting;
- April 7, 2007: Spring Representative Meeting;
- June 6-10, 2007: SAYMA Yearly Gathering;

Quaker Youth Speak Out

The Friends Journal website, www.friendsjournal.org has a new link, **Quaker Youth Speak Out**, that features interviews with young Friends (ages 13-24) on Quaker beliefs, how they speak to others about beliefs, and how being a Quaker affects their lives. Tune in to hear from some amazing Quaker leaders of tomorrow. Encourage young Friends in your meeting to participate by answering the same questions online.

On the website, you can always find an article featured in each month's issue that you can download and copy for discussion. This is a great way to offer those folks who are newcomers, as well as those who are long time members, a link to the wider Quaker world. The October issue has a special on Building Community and the Life of the Meeting.

From the Editors:

This issue has fewer pages than most of our recent issues — because we had fewer contributors this time. We thank those who submitted the news and announcements for this issue and we're hopeful that more Friends will share their news, opinions, and other items of interest with SAYMA Friends in the Winter issue (before 01/01/2006, please).

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I just want to comment on how much I appreciated the summer 2005 issue, particularly Joe Parko's article on "Marching for Peace in Bethlehem."

Going there to show "our support" for both Israeli and Palestinian peace groups, they certainly succeeded as far as I am concerned. Their witness was surely a powerful one and one with which I fully unite.

My only question is: did the group consider having a smaller group of volunteers willing to challenge the Israeli soldiers by walking into and across their line and of course accepting the consequences? Such an approach would not have violated the spirit of the overall march and might have demonstrated the nonviolence is not a passive acceptance of the status quo.

Larry Ingle
Chattanooga Meeting

An Investment in Hope — The Friends International Center in Ramallah, Palestine

by Tony Bing (SwannanoaValley)

When the Ramallah Friends Meeting House was rededicated in March of 2005 (a hundred years to the day when it was constructed), its renovation represented the culmination of successful fundraising efforts among Friends, primarily from Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings, to secure the \$170,000 necessary for its restoration.

The Steering Committee that led this effort has now turned their attention to raising funds to support the annual maintenance of the meeting house and annex, not only as a place of worship, but also as a center for community building, reconciliation and peacemaking. The vision statement behind the fundraising reads as follows:

The Friends International Center in Ramallah exists to unite in one place:

- 1) *a space for sacred worship in the manner of Friends to which all are welcome;*
- 2) *a safe and supportive environment in which residents of Ramallah can come together to work towards a better future in an atmosphere of faith and hope; and*
- 3) *a vehicle through which Friends and other people of goodwill from outside Ramallah can connect with and provide support to those in the region who are striving to build a future of peace and justice.*

To these ends, the International Friends Center in Ramallah will offer a ministry of hospitality; create an

atmosphere of care and respect in which positive, civic and civil discourse can be pursued; and be a witness to hope and reconciliation in a region where despair and violence have too often reigned. In all this we seek to express the deepest values and highest aspirations of the Quaker faith.

As a member of the Steering Committee, I want to invite fellow members of SAYMA to support a new fund drive to secure the annual amount necessary to complete this vision. We are appealing to all monthly meetings and individuals to think about including the Ramallah Friends Meetings in their yearly budgets. Such a contribution will support a Program Coordinator, a ministry of hospitality, the operating costs, and programs for the community. My own meeting has included the Friends International Center in its budget. We need to raise fifty to sixty thousand dollars a year, which should not be too burdensome if we reach out to Quakers throughout the country.

If you would like a pledge form please write or email me, Tony Bing, at 524 Rhododendron Ave., Black Mountain, NC 28711, email tonyb@earlham.edu, or send your contributions directly to Friends International Center in Ramallah Fund Raising c/o Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1515 Cherry St. Philadelphia, PA 19102. After I return at the beginning of November from the olive harvest in Bethlehem I would be happy to talk to any meeting or individual about this project. Phone me at 828-664-0092 or Thom Jeavons at 215-241-7210.

News and Announcements from Wider Quaker Organizations

Friends Committee on National Legislation 2005 Annual Meeting will be held November 10-13 at the Georgetown University Conference Center in Washington, DC. The theme is “Proclaiming Our Prophetic Witness.” The keynote speaker will be Representative Lynn Woolsey. In addition to business sessions, workshops, worship, and tours of the newly renovated FCNL office, programs include “Iraq: Report from the Front Lines” and “FCNL Five Year Communication Strategy.” For more info: (202) 547-6000 or www.fcnl.org



Friends World Committee for Consultation announces the **2006 QUAKER YOUTH PILGRIMAGE** will take place in the Midwestern United States, July 14-August 10, 2006. The Section of the Americas is seeking 14 young Friends who will be ages 16-18 at the time of the pilgrimage, and two adult facilitators. For more information contact FWCC Section of the Americas, 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215)241-7250, QYP@fwccamericas.org. The due date for applications for adult leaders is December 15, 2005; due date for pilgrim applicants is January 15, 2006. *A PILGRIMAGE BEGINS A LIFETIME OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH*



Grants Available to Friends Working with Katrina

To Friends Everywhere:

The AFSC is not ordinarily a first responder to disasters in the US. However, we found ourselves deeply moved by the suffering of the people left behind to fend for themselves as Hurricane Katrina bore down on the Gulf Coast. The aftermath of the storm revealed the most shocking and poorly handled disaster in US history, with government failures on every level. It showed clearly what many of us already knew: US economic policy has completely eviscerated the social safety net needed for the poor. The politics of race have been thrown into sharp relief.



**American Friends
Service Committee**
Quaker values in action

AFSC sent immediate financial aid through Board member Dick Steele to the Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston to provide food for the 27,000 people evacuated to the Astrodome. We are now conducting an assessment of where our support and help will be most needed, after which we will plan our future activities. During the initial days of the tragedy it was inspiring to receive hundreds of messages from Friends, Friends Meetings and Churches in the

US and around the world who wanted to help. AFSC has set up a special fund to provide financial support to Friends Meetings, Churches and organizations who want to reach out to aid the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

We are glad to be able to support Friends' initiatives in this way, as you help the people who continue to suffer through these traumatic events. Friend Rubye Braye from Wilmington, North Carolina, will be coordinating the effort for AFSC. For a grant application or any questions, please call her at (910) 681-0670.

Sincerely, Mary Ellen McNish, General Secretary

Conference Coordinator, Friends General Conference for Annual Gathering of Friends. Works with several committees, many volunteers, and university staff, requiring some weekend work, travel. Manages \$1 million budget; supervises two regular plus seasonal staff. Administers complex operations and logistics, solves problems, manages crises, consulting extensively with volunteer leadership. Should be active in Friends' meeting. Send resume to General Secretary, FGC, 1216 Arch Street, 2B, Philadelphia, PA, 19107, or bruceb@fgcquaker.org. Due date 01/20/06.



- WILLIAM
- PENN
- HOUSE

The Fall issue of Penn Notes reports that fifteen workcamps were held April through August and that next year will be the 40th anniversary of William Penn House. It also announces that a seminar, “Teachers of Peace: Educating for Peace and Social Change,” will be conducted October 20-23, 2005. For more info: (202) 543-5560, www.WmPennHouse.org, info@WmPennHouse.org

On Stuff Global and Local

An Announcement from the American Friends Service Committee

The collection and shipment of used clothing overseas to people in need has long been a cherished program of AFSC. For many of our loyal supporters and volunteers, it's been the primary connection to the organization. We treasure the more than 200 people who volunteer their time in the warehouse each month. But as relief and donation practices have changed in recent years, we have looked carefully at the program and its efficacy and have **decided to end foreign clothing shipments.**

Many countries now have altered their policies regarding used clothing imports and, indeed, most are even prohibiting such imports. They disrupt local economies, too often are subject to corruption, and the donated goods are not distributed to the intended recipients. In some instances, local textile and clothing manufacturing jobs have disappeared because of the enormous amounts of used articles available, thus "exporting poverty to Africa and parts of Latin America."

AFSC has found that even if governments allow importation of used clothes and other in-kind material aid, they are increasingly charging excessively high customs duty and taxes, making shipping costs prohibitively expensive. Along with other charities, we have learned that purchasing locally to support communities in crisis makes the most sense. It's timely and cost effective; items purchased often are more suitable to the local needs; and local economies are bolstered.

To reach this important decision, the Emergency and Material Assistance Program consulted over the last year with both AFSC programs abroad and also with Friends and supporters across the country. A clear consensus developed that we should cease overseas clothing shipments.

The Philadelphia warehouse will stop receiving donations of clothing on July 31, 2005, though our regional collection centers in Boston, High Point, NC, and San Francisco will continue to receive clothing and other donated goods for U.S. distribution.

As you may imagine, this decision was not reached lightly. AFSC's material assistance has a long (and interesting!) history—and we are especially aware of the thousands of people over the years who have supported this work with open hearts and generous spirit.

A Local, Personal Perspective and Response

By Susan Carlyle (New Moon WG)

For the past ten months, I have been organizing and helping to run my community's Thrift Store. It is part of the Barnardsville (NC) Family Resource Center and has been running off and on for many years. Lacking leadership and direction for the previous year, it had been sitting there collecting "stuff" in vast quantities.

I volunteered to sort some stuff in the building because someone else volunteered to take it and sell it at a flea market. I found mountains of plastic bags full of stuff. I began by standing in one place (I couldn't move, anyway) and just sorting four piles: men, women, children and jeans. It was a meditation time for me. I did this for five hours at a time, once a week. As the months went by, there were others who volunteered and helped, so our sorting system was refined to account for seasonal swings in clothing needs. We have, by now, made it income producing by opening up on two mornings a week for sales. We have supplied many community members with inexpensive clothing, furniture, and house wares as well as provided an outlet for the discarded items of others.

From the beginning, I was overwhelmed by the mountains of clothing both inside and that which appeared regularly on the doorstep outside. In a corner of North Carolina that is considered pretty much a "have not" place, there was so much stuff that no one wanted anymore. I was depressed that there was just so much stuff to deal with. I meditated on many things: our consumer culture, our culture of gift giving, and then, on our culture of "throw away."

Over time, I have taken truck loads of stuff that we cannot sell to the Asheville Buncombe County Christian Ministries. They do additional sorting and shipping to centers all across the US. They also have an arrangement with a rag dealer who buys rags from them by the bale full for reprocessing and recycling for some other uses. We bagged up coats for the Asheville Rescue Mission for their winter coat distribution and we opened our doors wide to any New Orleans refugees. We give to shelters and to anyone who has a cause that requires the stuff that we have. We still have much more than we can handle.

I have had teaching moments with my co-workers about recycling and the land fill. I told them about the American Friends Service Committee and their cessation of overseas clothing shipments. Although they do not always understand me, they look upon me as the ultimate recycler. It's rare that we take anything to the dumpster outside, now. I really don't care how much money we make, I just want this stuff to find a home nearby, and stay out of the landfill. I've met many people in Barnardsville whom I never would have met otherwise. It's been an interesting experience -- one of constant mindfulness.

News and Announcements of SAYMA and SAYMA Friends

From the Fall Representative Meeting at

Nashville: Jonah McDonald is doing a bike pilgrimage — a 450 mile journey down the Natchez Trace — to raise money for the victims of Katrina (see details at www.friendlypilgrim.com). The funds he raises will go to the AFSC-SERO response....Canton Friends Worship Group (from outside of Atlanta) was officially welcomed to SAYMA. Roy Taylor is Canton's contact person....Elaine Ruscetta (Atlanta) sent a letter thanking Friends for "the immense emotional support given to me to help prepare [for] the gathering. It was truly a blessing to have the opportunity to attend the World Gathering of Young Friends"....the Planning Committee announced the theme of YM 2006: "Testimonies from Creation: Savoring S.P.I.C.E. in all life." (*SPICE: Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality*. — ed.)

YM Name Change Threshing Session Summary

Many Friends feel connected to the name SAYMA — that it represents them well, is indicative of our origins, and includes "association" — a unique connection that is still meaningful to some.

Other Friends feel that we have geographically outgrown the name, and that it does not truthfully nor simply represent who we are. The name change raises underlying issues, such as the concern that geographic growth is unmanageable — stretching us too thin to be a nurturing community, and that firmer boundaries may be necessary. The name may then be used as a defining "boundary." Another issue is that the current name may represent a geographic power disparity within the Yearly Meeting that makes "outlying" Meetings feel marginalized (though no one from "outlying" Meetings expressed this).

Many Friends feel this was an issue that demanded more energy from us than its importance required, and that there were many more priorities that we should be addressing instead — and thus we should lay this aside at this time.

Friends asked, "What is God's will here?" and "Is there a better name?" Friends were invited to hold this name change in the light. The concern about the name change will be brought to Yearly Meeting in 2006 to be held by the wider body of Friends.

Friends In Deed

Here is a story of Friends helping Friends.

Chris and Olga Ahrens from Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting were driving home from south Florida this past spring. When they got to Columbia, SC, Chris could go no further. Ollie's vision is impaired and so she was unable to drive. She thought there was a Friends Meeting in Columbia, so, with some assistance, she looked for them in the telephone directory. She reached Harry Rogers of the Columbia Meeting and then he got her hooked up with Gita Larson also of the meeting. The Columbia Friends worked together quickly to get Chris into the hospital and Ollie to a Friend's home for overnight hospitality.

After a couple of days, Chris and Ollie's son arrived from Illinois to get the Ahrens back home to Black Mountain. Many thanks for the kindness and caring of Columbia Friends.

— SVFM newsletter editor, Susan Carlyle

Workshop Offering: Clerking and Seeking Unity

The workshop, **Clerking and Seeking Unity**, focuses on how we work together to improve our meetings for worship with attention to business. Bill Holland and Mary Ann Downey are willing to lead this workshop (a version of the one that they've offered at yearly meeting) for your monthly meeting. They can also offer the workshop that they've led for Atlanta Meeting and the FGC Gathering on **Facilitating Sustainable Agreements** to help Friends and others in your community use the values and tools of our process outside the meeting setting.

For more info, contact Mary Ann Downey at madowney@mindspring.com