

Interchange

Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

FROM THE CLERK

Spring is my favorite time of year. Many years ago, when I was living in the Boston area, but had just accepted a teaching position at Penn State, one of my new colleagues sent me a friendly note and wrote, “the crocuses are blooming.” That note – both the sentiment behind it and the image it contained – were Light to me.

I’ve grown very fond of primroses in recent years because they bloom first and last in my garden in a kind of perpetual spring. It’s early December as I write this and my yellow and white and red primroses are still in bloom. If we have a warm spell in February, they’ll bloom again.

Several years ago, for my mother-in-law’s 90th birthday, her niece’s family sent her a beautiful orchid in full, glorious bloom with six huge white flowers with deep purple centers. The accompanying instructions said to cut the stem back after it bloomed. When we did, it looked as if we had a 12-inch stick in a pot. Months went by and the stick began to grow. Then we had a longer stick in a pot. Finally the stick began to curve and along the curve appeared tiny buds – a two-foot high curving stick with buds – dare we hope? Yes, it bloomed – just as gloriously as before.

This year my mother-in-law celebrated her 95th birthday and once again the orchid is blooming.

It’s taken several years but now that orchid has become for me a symbol of hope. From what appears to be a dead, lifeless stick in a pot comes the most beautiful indoor flowers I have ever seen. At first I found the transformation hard to believe. Now I have come to expect it and tell others of it. “Just wait,” I say. “This stick will grow and the blooms will be unbelievable.”

So, too, do we humans bloom. When it seems most unlikely, when we feel dry and lifeless, the Spirit of Love in the Universe calls us forth and we bloom. Our bloom fades, we once again feel dead and lifeless, and once again the Spirit of Love seeks us out and calls us to bloom. Over and over again we are called to respond to the universe by blooming. Sometimes we think blooming comes about by what we do and how well we water ourselves. But the Gardener of our Souls tends us gently, lets us rest and recover, and then sits us in the

Light, which warms us and we grow.

Sometimes we grow subtly, like the stick of the orchid, we get longer but look unchanged. Sometimes our buds are visible and sometimes our blooms are big and glorious for all to see. Some years we get five blossoms on my mother-in-law’s orchid; sometimes six. This year, when I was showing the budding stick to Ed, a nursing assistant at Foxdale Village where she lives, he said he’d never noticed it before, though he’d been in her room many, many times. As we looked at the stick together and I pointed out the buds and urged him to keep an eye on the stick so he could see the blooms, he pointed out that this year there will be seven blooms.

Seven blooms. A 95th birthday for a beloved mother-in-law. Amidst the pain of memory loss and dementia are the blooms of her birthday orchid, the shared joy with Ed in the wonder of it all, and the gratitude of the universe.

May we bloom together as a Yearly Meeting. May we transform our individual sticks and stems into a gallery of blooming orchids. May we bend and curve to the Light. May we recognize each other’s buds and treat them with care. And, when we are spent, may we prune away the spent blossoms and rest until we are called to bloom again.

Happy Spring!

Lauri Perman

Think of My trees stripped of their beauty, pruned, cut, disfigured, bare, but through the ... seemingly dead branches flows silently, secretly, the spirit-life-sap, till, lo! with the sun of Spring comes new life, leaves, bud, blossom, fruit, but oh! fruit a thousand times better for the pruning.

Remember that you are in the hands of a Master-Gardener who makes no mistakes in pruning. Rejoice. Joy is the Spirit’s reaching out to say its thanks to Me. It is the new life-sap of the tree, reaching out to Me to find such beautiful expression later. So never cease to joy. Rejoice.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

EXCERPTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS OF PEACE & SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEES

Adelphi distributes annually \$10,000 to local non-Quaker charities and peace/civil rights advocacy groups. Adelphi published an ad in an Arabic language newspaper, signed by 55 Friends Meetings, stating that American Quakers oppose the war and the torture at Abu Graib and Guantanamo.

Alexandria distributed \$5,500 to Quaker organizations and community groups. A presentation for Adult Religious Education is provided monthly and a HIPP workshop was co-held with Children's Religious Education. Members met with delegates and senators regarding the Virginia. Death penalty and resumed vigils on the eve of state executions. An ad hoc committee on same gender issues was formed and the Same Gender Marriage Minute approved by the Meeting; it has been recommended that the ad hoc become a standing committee.

Baltimore, Homewood continues to respond to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. On-going Friday night peace vigils were organized. Homewood and Stony Run co-sponsored a public film series. Homewood co-sponsored a "Voices of Dissent" concert and presentations at Johns Hopkins U. Sharon Fried was an election observer in El Salvador with the Meeting's sanction. Stan Becker and Claire Twose organized a Tax Day Witness; over 1,000 fliers were handed out illustrating how much of the federal budget goes to war and war-related activities. Letters were sent to Congress expressing concern over the domestic and foreign policy impact of the Iraq war and to Gov. Ehrlich regarding the legality of same-sex marriages. Activities were hosted to ascertain FCNL priorities. Through a budget of \$30,000 and wicker basket collections, the committee supported Quaker activities promoting peace and justice at home and abroad. Monies that went to FUM:lugulu and FUM:Ramallah were re-directed to AIDS Africa and Ramallah Friends Meeting. Other recipients were U.S.Campaign to Ban Landmines, CeaseFire Maryland, Cloud Forest School (Costa Rica), Shepherd's Clinic, Quaker House (Fayetteville, NC), Casa de los Amigos (Mexico City), U. of Fondwa (Haiti), AIDS Interfaith Residential Services, and Manna House. David Green continues to deliver food to VIVA House.

Baltimore, Stony Run sponsored two film series on issues of war and peace and social justice, a project that grew out of a called Meeting for Worship in response to distress over the Iraq war in which a Peace Actions

Minute was written. Some 1600 "War is not the answer" yard signs were printed and distributed through AFSC. A forum/workshop focused on "War prevention works: 50 Stories of people resolving conflicts." Copies of the documentary "Uncovered: the whole truth about the Iraq war" were given to the U.S. representatives and senators. A minute on truth telling and the importance of educating on peaceful alternatives to the current "defense" strategy was sent to BYM and over 200 Meetings. A Poets for Peace poetry reading raised \$189 for social justice projects. The January retreat clarified the importance of starting from our spiritual center and the committee affirmed that peace work has to remain spiritual practice and be joyful.

Bethesda hosted AFSC country representatives in Iraq at an evening meeting and met with Rep. Chris Van Hollen and Sen. Paul Sarbanes concerning the war in Iraq and the issue of torture, urging co-sponsorship of the SMART Security Platform for the 21st Century. Bethesda sponsored a talk by Joyce Ajlouni, head of Ramallah Friends Schools, Jim Matlack's report from the 2002 AFSC delegation to the region, and supported an evening forum by "Three Women from Jerusalem." Health care reform, FCNL priorities, voter registration, and the interfaith housing coalition walkathon received attention. The Center for Constitutional Rights was added to the groups receiving Peace and Justice Giving, and a budget was set to build Kenyan orphanage for children of AIDS victims.

Goose Creek sent winter clothing to the Rosebud People (Lakota Nation) in South Dakota, provided weekly Alternatives to Violence sessions at the Loudoun County Juvenile Detention Center (JDC), facilitated a "train the trainer" weekend for the Meeting and JDC employees, lobbied alternatives to the death penalty, organized sharing sessions and film presentations for the Meeting, provided funds for those affected by the Iraqi war and southeast Asian tsunami via AFSC, and gave to numerous groups.

Herndon wrote legislators during monthly potluck, collected bicycles for Pedals for Progress, assembled bag lunches for the homeless, lobbied state Legislature about the death penalty, sponsored a spare-change collection children forward to a charity of their choice, sold holiday ornaments to benefit the Medical Care for Children Partnership, and supported an interfaith work day and Habitat for Humanity.

Little Falls donated money to local assistance groups and Friends organizations. First Day education discus-

sions on peace topics included the Sudan crisis and Arundhati Roy, Indian author of *The God of Small Things*." Dr. Mahmud Thamer spoke on "Reflections of an Iraqi-American." The committee and elementary-school-aged Meeting members took part in the Heifer Project's "Read to Feed" Program. A "Sow the Seeds of Peace" sign was erected in front of the Meeting.

Maury River's renamed Peace and Justice Committee did civil disobedience at Rep. Goodlatte's Roanoke office, trying to defuse the Iraq war, and collected health and infant care kits and donated to AFSC for Iraq relief once the war started. The Meeting sent contributed to Codepink/Global Exchange for relief efforts with Fallujah refugees. Weekly contributions are collected for AFSC relief work in Iraq. The committee wrote Congress and the media supporting SMART legislation. They worked on voter registration. One committee member applied to be a member and peaceful presence on the local Selective Service Board. Members held a two-day workshop by Chuck Fager on the "Peace Testimony" and heard from AFSC-MAR director Mark Lancaster and Barbara Ginzburg, Bob and Susie Fetter on FCNL. Activities included protecting Moore's Creek Watershed in Rockbridge Co., promoting HIPP program, opposing the death penalty, helping the local food pantry, supporting YF's simple meals for Heifer Project, a booth at the local community festival and a lighted peace crane float in the Lexington holiday parade.

Midlothian Friends distributed \$17,530 in proceeds from their thrift shop to 13 charities and non-profits. A series of Quaker Forums were initiated on racial equality, Vote 2004, homophobia and modern day slavery. And an information table was organized on conscientious objection status for a community peace festival.

Patapsco provides monthly meals at a homeless shelter. Members also provide speakers from social justice/peace organizations and information from FCNL. Members are exploring participating in an emerging IAF organization and responses to potential reinstatement of a military draft.

Sandy Spring Peace Committee has joint oversight with Social Concerns for distribution of \$10,000 annually. The Peace Committee presents Peace Awards in memory of Lee Stern to deserving high school students in Montgomery County. Money is raised by an annual white elephant sale. The Committee hosted Malesi Kinaro of Kenya who spoke on behalf of African Great Lakes Initiative and Jean Zaru, Clerk of Ramallah Friends Meeting. Graham Johnson told about his visit to Bolivia and the Quaker Bolivia Link; Judith Simmons spoke of her Witness for Peace trip to Cuba.

Members main focus is providing discussion leaders on conscientious objection to the Meeting's YF's. Gini Floyd and Bette Hoover facilitated a workshop on non-violence and creating beloved community. Two networking days for BYM P&SC clerks were hosted. Donations are collected weekly for AFSC relief work in Iraq. A March 12 coffee house/concert featuring Richard Broadbent and Jesse Palidofsky will benefit Iraq relief.

[For the full texts and list of committee clerks contact Mary Ellen Atkinson, mewa42@aol.com.]

- Mary Ellen Atkinson

STUDENT LOANS AVAILABLE

The Educational Funding Resources Committee of BYM has funds for educational loans to qualified college and secondary school students. Loans can be up to \$5,000 per academic year, and no interest is charged while the student is in school. The application has several parts, so allow ample time to complete the form by the April 30, 2005 deadline. Application packages can be obtained from the Baltimore Yearly Meeting office, e-mail: geneklinger@bym-rsf.org, or mail: 17100 Quaker Lane, Sandy Spring, MD 20860. The Committee will meet to evaluate applications in May.

-Oliver Moles

FAITH & PRACTICE REVISION COMMITTEE

The Faith and Practice Revision Committee has been working for over two years to revise our current *Faith and Practice of Baltimore Yearly Meeting*. We are working on the Queries first and have finished the first four. Beginning with this issue of the Interchange, we will have one each issue.

The advices and queries are to be used together. You will notice that we have limited the number of queries for each of the advices. We felt that the advices should declare the intent of the topic rather than having as many queries as we have in the current edition of the *Faith and Practice*.

We ask that you read them as individuals. More important is that you have some discussion within your monthly meeting, either as a whole or in small groups. The corporate consensus is most valuable. When you are discussing each query, please remember that while each individual needs to respond according to how each is led, the queries are written for everyone, not just one individual.

Please send any suggestions to Sheila Bach, 7535 Mission Road, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425, 304.728.4820 or snbach@earthlink.net.

MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Advices

The heart of the life of the Religious Society of Friends is the Meeting for Worship. It calls for us to offer ourselves, body, mind, and soul for the doing of God's will.

Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influences of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms; it may be with or without words, but it must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). We recognize the value of silence, not as an end, but as a means toward the attainment of the end, which is communication with God, and fellowship with one another.

In all our Meetings for Worship, we gather in spirit of prayerful obedience to God, with a willingness to give as well as to receive. In speech or in silence, each person contributes to the Meeting. Worshiping God together, we strengthen one another, and our bodies and minds are refreshed in the Life of the Spirit. Our daily lives are linked with the Meeting for Worship, the Meeting for Worship with our daily lives.

Friends are encouraged to give adequate time for study, meditation and prayer, and other ways of preparing for worship, and to arrive at Meeting promptly with an open and expectant spirit. During the Meeting for Worship, some people may feel moved to speak, to share an insight, to pray, to praise. When we feel led to speak, we should do so, clearly and simply. When another speaks, we should listen with an open spirit, seeking the thought behind the words and holding the speaker in love. After a message has been given, Friends should have time to ponder its meaning and to search themselves before another speaks.

*North Pacific Yearly Meeting
Faith & Practice 1993*

Queries—For the Individual

How do I prepare my heart and mind for worship?
What do I do to prepare myself to receive the power of God's presence and love?

How does worship deepen my relationship with God and how is this inspiration carried over into my daily life?

How do I discern the source of my leading? How do I know when to speak?

Queries—For the Meeting

Do all other activities of our Meeting find their inspiration in worship and in what way do these activities, in turn, help to uphold the worshiping group?

How does the Meeting assure that there is time after Friends have spoken for the ministry to be absorbed by those for whom it was intended?

INWARD BOUND & ONWARD!

The world is in great need of healing. As spiritual healers we need to gather to deepen and strengthen our faith and our skills in order to bring peace and healing to the planet. We want to teach what we know, increase our knowledge, and mentor others. A time and a place are needed to both nurture and challenge ourselves as we work for peace. Now is the time. Let's choose a place.

These are thoughts spoken by Friends at initial organizing meetings to explore re-establishment of a day set aside for healing. Important learnings from Inward Bound were offered along with many fond memories of Barry Morley. We recalled the deep personal silence encouraged by Barry's daylong retreats and occasional weekend intensives. The possibility of time with a "healer" was a perk and many attributed their coming out as healers to those events. We recalled the corporate worship at the end of the day that sometimes included a fire circle. Building on this rich foundation, we agreed to move into the present moment as Spirit leads. Inward Bound becomes a time and place for healers to gather.

We will "self define" as healers - for all of us have gifts to offer and hurts that need healing. Monthly we will come together and share what we already know and, by doing so, we will know it more deeply. Our comfort zones will be challenged and our souls stirred as we recognize the incredible gifts we all possess that are so needed in a wounded world. And, in the safe space that is created, we will freely explore those comfort edges and move beyond them. A healers' circle will nurture us and nudge us to offer our gifts to a world desperately in need of healing. Thus is born a monthly Healers' Circle.

Participants will follow the principles of Friends. Since many of us are members or attenders of Sandy Spring Meeting, we see that as our base. We will outreach to other Meetings, put out the word via the BYM website and other appropriate places in the area. We are a work in process and wish to honor Spirit's movement through us in this process. Retreats will be co-led and decisions will be guided by a core group of healers.

Circles or healing days will also be held at the home of Robert True near Sandy Spring Meeting.

For further information, email Bette Hoover (dancinrainbow@earthlink.net) or call Janet Nichols (410-531-2993).

-Bette Hoover and Janet Nichols

LEE STERN PEACE AWARDS RIPPLE EFFECTS

Judith Simmons' description at a BYM Peace & Social Concerns gathering at Sandy Spring in September of the Lee Stern Peace Awards that Sandy Spring has made to graduating high school students for a decade resonated deeply with folks at Bethesda Friends Meeting. We had been seeking a way to enlarge the expression of Quaker values (especially peace) in public and make more local people aware of Bethesda Friends Meeting. This seemed the perfect vehicle.

Joli McCathran, Sandy Spring's Secretary, facilitates communications with the schools. She advised us to ask the career guidance office in local high schools for names and addresses of contacts. Joli sent them a cover letter and scholarship award guidelines, asking them to nominate a student who had advanced the cause of peace, usually through the peer mediation program. Those named could site their nominations on their college application forms, perhaps a bigger benefit than the \$100 which accompanies the award. In turn, the Meeting has an opportunity at the school spring awards ceremony to introduce peaceful approaches to conflict by reading the award certificate, which includes a brief biography of Lee Stern and his work with Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Alternatives to Violence Program. Sandy Spring presents the award in 10 high schools in Montgomery County, Maryland. A special fund-raising event produces the money each year.

Both Bethesda's Advancement & Outreach Committee and Peace & Social Justice Committee heartily endorsed the proposal which was then approved by Meeting for Business. Bethesda will make awards at three public high schools and is exploring additional possibilities with DC public schools and the AFSC/DC HIPP program. The meeting so enthusiastically supported the effort that the money was in hand without additional fundraising.

Committee members at a BYM Advancement & Outreach meeting in January asked Bethesda to share these ripple effects with other Meetings. For further information, contact Joli McCathran at office@sandypring.org (301-774-9792) or Jane Meleney Coe at bethesdafm@igc.org (301-320-5083)

- Joli McCathran and Jane Meleney Coe

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Have you taught First Day School (FDS) at your monthly meeting, to any age group, six times in the past year? If so, RE committee has a \$100 scholarship towards BYM summer sessions waiting for you! Just be

one of the first 15 people to send in the FDS teacher scholarship application. We want you to come to BYM sessions and participate in workshops, interest groups and discussions with other FDS teachers. If you have thought about teaching FDS and never tried, we have suggestions to get you started. We learn so much by sharing experiences with one another! Michael Gibson, current FGC RE Coordinator, is our Friendly Religious Education Consultant. He has taught FDS to many age groups and will offer workshops, interest groups, and consult with individuals about all aspects of Friends RE.

-Sarah Buchanan-Wollaston

WORKING GROUP ON RACISM AMONG FRIENDS

To the accompaniment of helicopters overhead monitoring movements of demonstrators and inaugural ball attendees, about 40 of us gathered the evening of January 20 to remember and be inspired by the life of Friend Bayard Rustin. Producer/director Bennett Singer presented the video he helped create, "Brother Outsider," documenting Bayard Rustin's life.

A gay African-American Quaker from Chester, Pennsylvania, Bayard Rustin followed his leadings to federal prison in World War II for refusing to cooperate with the draft, to India to learn the principles of nonviolence, and to Montgomery, Alabama, to tutor Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King on those principles. In 1963, with more than 20 years of organizing experience behind him, he brought his unique skills to the crowning glory of his civil rights career—organizing the historic March on Washington, the biggest protest America had ever witnessed.

The Quaker Arts Committee of 15th Street Meeting in New York, where Bayard Rustin worshipped, conceived of showing the video as an inaugural event. The venue was the Provisions Library Resource Center for Activism and Arts on Connecticut Avenue, NW, three blocks from Friends Meeting of Washington.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Working Group on Racism Among Friends provided guides for leading discussions and flyers offering for sale CD's, tapes and books from the Bayard Rustin Fund. The Working Group arranged for Barbara Nnoka of Friends Meeting of Washington, a colleague of Bayard Rustin when she worked for FCNL and AFSC, to be one of three panelists discussing his life. Lawrence Guyot, a Mississippi civil rights activist and former field secretary for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was also on the panel. The third panelist, Bennett Singer, had also collaborated on the PBS series *Eyes on the Prize: America's*

Civil Rights Years and Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement.

Meetings interested in borrowing a copy of "Brother Outsider," a selection of the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, should call Jane Coe at (301) 320-5083.

-David Ethridge

A GREAT PRIVILEGE AND A DEEP CONCERN

On Inauguration Day, January 20, 2005, we had the privilege of volunteering with the AFSC exhibit, *Eyes Wide Open*, which shows the human cost of the Iraq war. The graphic visual display of rows of combat boots (1,370 pairs on that day) filling all the pews in the very large sanctuary of the National City Christian Church and civilian shoes of all sizes and shapes lining the perimeter was an overwhelming silent testimony to the deaths of so many victims of US foreign policy in Iraq.

Part of our volunteer assignment was handing out fliers to people on the street inviting them to visit the exhibit. We wanted to share this information with the people in line for the parade checkpoints as well as the protesters at nearby McPherson Square. But what a difference in the two groups of people!

The protesters were having a good time with laughter and conversation even though they were against the current administration and its policies. They took our fliers and struck up conversations about having seen the exhibit in other cities or thanking us for letting us know so they could come see it after their current activities were over. The folks in line for the Republican events or the inauguration parade route averted their eyes and ignored our presence. On rare occasions they would say "no thank you," or (even more rarely) take the flier. They were not talking with each other, their faces and eyes were anxious and frowning. These were the people who supported the current status quo. Their guy had won. Where was their joy and exultation? Why did they look so frightened and closed on their way to what should be a celebration of the victory of their values?

Their fear was frightening on several levels—it was contagious and chilled us when we were in its presence, it appeared to keep them from being in touch with their surroundings and reacting with humanity to those surroundings, whether the people standing in line with them or us. It seemed like an impervious wall separating them from the support of their community and the joy of human interaction. I was reminded in a very profound way of FDR's statement, "All we have to fear is fear itself."

This fear, running rampant among a significant number of citizens of the country, is dangerous to the future of our civil society, for it renders people paralyzed and incapable of observing, thinking about their observations, and making informed decisions. It keeps them in thrall to anyone who promises to keep the status quo by any means necessary, for they fear the loss of what they think is privilege and comfort.

The folks who accepted our invitation to visit the exhibit also participated in a candlelight vigil on the steps of the church that evening. The steps that had looked so large when we first climbed them earlier that day only accommodated the boots from Alaska through Colorado. "Women in Black" held a silent vigil for much of the afternoon on the steps. Throughout the evening, as candles flickered beside each pair of boots, Gold Star Mothers and other family members of fallen soldiers gave heartbreaking speeches. Members of Veterans against the Iraq War and Fellowship of Reconciliation were also present. Volunteers read the names of all the soldiers who had died, interspersed with the names of as many Iraqis as the exhibit researchers had been able to find.

This traveling AFSC witness for peace requires an enormous amount of hard work, energy, and money and we admire the dedication of those who are making it possible. It is a powerful action coming from the Quaker belief in the power of love to overcome fear, hate, and violence. We encourage anyone who feels so led to offer to help with this exhibit. Volunteers for a variety of jobs are needed, publicity; unpacking, displaying, and packing up again, selling t-shirts, bracelets and books. Twenty more stops are scheduled between now and mid-April. (Details on www.afsc.org)

- Pat Long and Leada Dietz

DRAFT COUNSELING TRAINING

Friday, May 6: 7:30 p.m.

Free information session

General public welcome (Mandatory for training participants)

Saturday, May 7: 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Training

Cost of Training: \$50

For more information and a registration application, e-mail draft.counseling@gmail.com or call Bronna Zlochiver at (301) 260-0108 or Mary Ellen Atkinson at (410) 992-3255.

MONTHLY MEETING NEWS

ADELPHI

Adelphi is evaluating why our camping weekends at Camp Catocin (May and September) have not been well attended recently, and deciding whether to lay down or re-invigorate these weekends that once drew many.

Friends Community School will break ground for its new building in Greenbelt in July 2005. Construction hopefully will take a year.

Safe Haven, a moveable shelter for homeless men, will take place at Adelphi for a week at the end of February. Many folks from the Meeting pitch in. The men sleep on cots in the Meeting House and leave after breakfast for their jobs, returning just before dinner.

Our Meeting House seems to be bursting at the seams some First Day mornings! Some times it is difficult to find a seat until the children leave for First Day School. Newcomers continue to check us out and ask about Quakerism. We are blessed with this enthusiasm, although we struggle to find ways to integrate newcomers into our Meeting and not leave them lost in the crowd.

Our most recent Clerk, Pam Tyng, is retiring. Pam and Art are moving to Williamsburg, Virginia and will be missed.

BALTIMORE, STONY RUN

Deaths: John Lamb on November 26, 2004; Margaret Randol on December 18, 2004.

Marriage and Ceremonies of Commitment: Julia Barss & Ashley Gordon McColgan, September 11, 2004; Deborah Feaster & Sears, December 6, 2003; Mary Stuart & Michael Weinrich, January 2, 2004.

CHARLOTTESVILLE

Friends in Charlottesville saw the winter in at a gala Christmas potluck party hosted by Tandem Friends School, sharing food and song and getting better acquainted with our region's most thriving new Quakerly institution. During First Month more than two dozen of us participated as food providers, meal servers, and overnight volunteers with a coalition of local congregations, the PACEM project, taking turns providing sustenance, shelter, and fellowship for 40 men in our community who had nowhere to live. Partnering with the First Baptist Church, our Meeting formed connections we hope to foster further. In anticipation of the real spring thaw, our Peace Committee took the lead planning for Third Month a Charlottesville "youth summit" on militarization, the draft, and conscientious alternatives.

An instructive half-year's tinkering with the timing and format of Business Meetings has left us much where we began: a "bite and a breather" after noontime rise of our second Worship session on the first First Day of the month. The process has shown the importance of thinking freshly about what's right in our customary practices, and what's just rite or rote.

Soon, much that is physically familiar at our Meetinghouse will collapse and be transformed, as plans are drawn and funds raised for demolition and reconstruction of the back portion of the former residence where we meet. Expect to hear more as we determine our shape.

Finally, speaking of space in three dimensions, we are gratified to note that the new year finds us with recorded membership at 125—a perfect cube.

DEER CREEK

Nearly 100 attenders of BYM Summer Interim Meeting met in Deer Creek Friends' new Meetinghouse addition in June. Proceeds from July's 7th Annual Blueberry Festival paid off our building construction loan. Please note July 16, 2005 as when Little Falls and Deer Creek Friends co-host this popular festival at Deer Creek. The Festival featuring fresh berries, baked goods and live auction will benefit Harford Friends School, due to open in its Deer Creek temporary quarters in September. More than 50 families attended the November and January Harford Friends School Open House. Interviews of prospective students and teachers have begun. In October, a Friendly attender completed the painting of the original Meetinghouse (inside and out) as a gift to Deer Creek.

This fall, adults and children studied aspects of Quakerism and devoted one lesson a month to the Queries. Both groups enjoyed periodic intergenerational activities such as depicting a personal view of the Testimonies in drawing or collage that was then compiled in book form and distributed to members. In September Deer Creek welcomed the community to its annual Barn Dance at Harriett and Richard Holloway's farm; proceeds went to Harford Habitat for Humanity. In October our children assembled "care kits" for the Sudan, and Deer Creek hosted a well-attended pre-election community breakfast featuring presentations by representatives of the two major political parties. Two talented Deer Creek Friends wrote or revised brochures for our visitors' literature rack: *A Brief History of Deer Creek Friends Meeting* by James E. Pickard, and *An Introduction to Friends for Visitors and New Members* compiled by our three-in-one committee, Peace, Advancement, and Unity with Nature.

Our monthly Friends' "come-if-you-can" luncheon at local restaurants meets our social needs. Deer Creek Friends also found fun in changing our traditional Sunday night "Friendly Eights" to a more spontaneous "Friendly Friday" Pot-Luck Dinner for all without reservation(s)! Join us!

FREDERICK

Frederick approved an Allowed Meeting under its care for a group that has worshipped in Shepherdstown, WV for several years. After visitation and consideration through a clearness process, the Meeting joyfully approved this status and welcomes inter-visitation. One member of the group already is a member of Frederick Meeting; two others requested membership.

A workshop led by John Calvi is planned for March with hopes of promoting healing within our worship community. Meeting is developing policies that define its responsibility in the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual misconduct occurring on Meeting grounds or at designated Meeting events. Ministry and Counsel, Religious Education and Trustees are working on developing guidelines for support for and attendance of sex offenders.

Meeting identified a group who will follow the BYM process of responding to the FUM policy that discriminates against employing gays. We continue to plan for future growth of the Meeting with the guidance of an appointed task force. Several young attenders requested membership.

Births: Eliza Kellett on October 27, 2004 to Elizabeth Fetter and Paul Kellett

FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

Please visit Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) during our 75th anniversary year. FMW was incorporated on June 20, 1930. Our first Meeting for Worship was held on First Day, First Month 4, 1931. While many Friends were quite frank about a suitable place of worship for President Herbert Hoover, a deeper story comes from the search for unity among divided groups of Friends.

On First Day, June 5, 2005 children in First Day School will preform plays about our founding. On June 18-19 walking tours created with the Washington Historical Society will visit historical Quaker sites (i.e., the Irving Street Meeting House, Hoover House and the Walcott House on S street. Our June 25-26 program will address complex but intriguing negotiations involved with the proposed merging of the Washington Monthly Meeting of Friends (also known as the "Or-

thodox" Irving Street Meeting) and the "Hicksite" I Street Preparative Meeting of the Alexandria (VA) Monthly Meeting. Live and video presentations will discuss the background of the Meeting House and those who made it happen. On January 15, 2006 we will observe the 75th Anniversary of our first Meeting for Worship. We hope you will join us. For more information call 202 483-3310.

GOOSE CREEK

First Day school has introduced music as a performing art. Students have demonstrated their proficiencies on guitar and fiddle. The class made outdoor studies of field and stream as a "Natural Quiet at Goose Creek." See *Friends Journal* October 2004.

A series of studies of the latest ideas in science, presenting their value to spirituality begins in April. The text is *Awakening Universe, Emerging Personhood* by Mary Coelho.

Goose Creek discussed and found the consensus of the Meeting was to endorse the Earth Charter.

Births: Cloe Katherine and Ella Walker to Tracy Graham and Peter Sachs on January 5, 2005. **Deaths:** Wilhemina Hetzel on December 14, 2004; Robert L Booth on January, 13, 2005.

HERNDON

A Minute on the relationship with Friends United Meeting with concern over the current FUM policy was approved. It reads in part: "While Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Budget decisions should rightly be made in Yearly Meeting sessions, Herndon Friends Meeting recommends that BYM consider redirecting any remaining money designated for FUM in its 2004 budget, as well as the 2005 line item of \$17,000 designated to FUM, to a BYM fund for intervisitation among FUM meetings. As a way of supporting intervisitation among FUM yearly meetings, Herndon Friends will send the \$200 in its 2004 budget currently designated for FUM to BYM for the intervisitation fund."

A worship sharing group was started on the third First Day from 2:00 – 3:30 at Hunters Woods Fellowship House in Reston, home of member Cornelia Sparks.

Several Friendly Eight's discussion groups are underway. Topics include: the causes of war, aging and end-of-life issues, Quaker spirituality, and Quakers and science fiction.

NOTTINGHAM

Care of three meetinghouses is daunting and our small community struggles for balance in drawing on mem-

bers' gifts. No one felt burdened as we sang carols, felt the woodstove's warmth, and enjoyed cider and cookies in the 300-year-old East Nottingham meetinghouse.

PATAPSCO

Spearheaded by Susan Rose in response to a request from an inmate, a group formed to provide support to four inmates at the Hagerstown Prison who wished to hold Quaker Meeting and needed outside "sponsors." Two Friends go to Hagerstown each Saturday to worship with the inmates and discuss Quaker issues. Those participating feel they receive as much as they give.

Two other small groups meet regularly as a spiritual practice. A Bible Study Group meets every other Sunday evening at a member's home. Another spiritual centering group, which uses knitting to bring quiet focus into their daily lives and explore possibilities, meets weekly.

An Advancement & Outreach session on socially responsible investing will be given from 12:00-2:00 on February 20 at Mt. Hebron House. Guest presenter Howard Zuses will define socially responsible investing, discuss how and why to get involved, and address myths and realities about fund performance.

Five women from the Meeting went to BYM's Women's Retreat in late January and enjoyed the evening session and breakfast before the retreat was brought to a halt because of snow.

The Meeting struggles over the extent it should be involved in a community group focused on community building and holding politicians accountable and is mindful of the need to reach consensus.

RICHMOND

Early 2005 is a time of physical dislocation for us, yet we continued advocacy work during the Virginia General Assembly, serve our monthly meal at the Hull Street shelter, help young Friends with scholarships for BYM camping programs, and consider through Bible Workbench how these timeless stories "walk on earth" in our lives. We learn more about the meaning of embraced ministry and support the leading of Linda Heacock, who offers her skills in alternatives to violence to Friends Peace Teams in Africa. We respond to needs of an Afghan family resettled locally, and our youngest Friends raised funds for AFSC tsunami relief. Expansion and renovation of our religious education building is underway; completion is anticipated late March. We temporarily vacated our Kensington Avenue location and use a Seventh Day Adventist church.

STATE COLLEGE

Members of the State College Friends Meeting remain active in meeting and community projects. Jules Arginteanu is the Meeting representative on the Interfaith Mission board. The mission staff coordinated relief efforts when a low-income trailer park was sold and those living had to move and helped when an apartment building in Bellefonte burned and left many renters homeless.

The Peace Vigil continues to demonstrate from 1:30 to 2:30 PM each Saturday at the main entrance to the Penn State University, from downtown State College. Participants receive complementary remarks from some passerby's; to many, the Federal Government took the wrong approach.

Advancement and Outreach is responsible for two monthly Friendly Forum programs. One is on Quaker history. The other will review *Heart of Christianity, Redeveloping a Life of Faith*, with Bruce Knox facilitating discussions.

Young Friends for Peace invited the Meeting members to a luncheon on December 5. The teens provided the meal and the money raised went to the Women's Resource Center for their holiday gift program.

Dean Tuttle continues to make available gift certificates from local grocery stores. Five percent of each card goes to support Meeting projects.

The Religious Education Committee sponsored an Inter-generational Breakfast in November. Students made simple decorations at the Community Festival of Trees. Younger children presented a Christmas Pageant at the rise of Meeting for Worship on 12/12.

Members attended Centre Quarterly Meeting on October 17, hosted by West Branch Meeting. Elizabeth Zimmerman spoke on healing.

VALLEY

Valley Friends celebrated Thanksgiving season with our annual Frugal Meal. We shared the event with a local Mennonite congregation. Funds raised from this simple meal were sent to Right Sharing of World Resources. Christmas festivities included caroling at the homes of some older Friends. Fellowship and refreshments finished off the evening. Our annual candle light sharing of Christmas reflections is a highlight of each year. This year, our young people shared their diverse talents with us. We look forward to the opportunities the new year brings.

WILLIAMSBURG

Our community is considering how best to ensure our children's safety and our response to discriminatory FUM policies. Like others, we are doing our annual self-examination in order to produce a state of the Meeting report—always an illuminating, useful process.

Births: Samuel Berry was born on 10/22/04 to Colin and Sue Berry; Tzipporah Jeter Harker was born on 10/21/04 to Shannon and Joseph Harker. **Deaths:** Curtis Williams on September 20, 2004.

YORK

York is indebted to Steve Baker, Dave Elkinton, Dave Burnet, and Rick Knaub for our new website: www.yorkfriendsmeeting.org. The site provides the Meeting's history, interactive communication and a "blog" for discussions.

Dave Burnet led three discussions on "Approaches to Peace and Non Violence for Modern Quakers." A discussion outline is on our website.

Several members active with People for Peace and Justice went to Washington D.C. on January 20 and were moved by AFSC's "Eyes Wide Open" exhibit.

The Meeting House was open for First Night. Many enjoyed music provided by Friends Fran and Ed Norton on the flute and harpsichord.

EXCERPTS FROM A SPEECH GIVEN BY YOUNG FRIEND, LINNEA MEIER, AT THE BALTIMORE COUNTER-INAUGURAL

As a high school student in the United States, I feel that youth have great cause to oppose the second inauguration of George Bush on this day.

Since his first inauguration in 2000, George Bush and his administration have taken it upon themselves to revamp education in America by creating generic niches into which our youth are expected to fit. We are assessed by a standard embodied in superficial, meaningless tests that are an insult to real education and learning. The administration has cut funding for Federal Pell Grants. These grants allow many students from low-income households to attend college. Simultaneously, funding for military recruiting in schools has been greatly increased. The result is the successful targeting of the lower socioeconomic stratum for military recruitment.

If President Bush wants to see a war, he should come to the Baltimore City schools, where the battleground is poverty and the weapon of mass destruction is the

standardization of education; where the collateral damage is the multitude of children left behind. We as youth want an America in which the student is not a statistic and the teacher is not a test proctor. We want an America in which young people do not have to choose between the drug trade and military service; one in which the working poor do not have to bear, more than the rest of us, the torment of the deaths of sons and daughters in a pointless war.

We are soon to have a Secretary of State who called the tsunami a wonderful opportunity for America to show its generosity to the rest of the world. Our next potential Attorney General is a man who condones the use of torture. Our President is leaving our children in the dust while telling them, Uncle Sam wants YOU to protect our economic interests at the price of human life.

And as a young person in America, I say we need to rise up and take action. From the bottom up and the inside out, let us reclaim our government for peace, for justice, and for equality. Thank you.

FRIENDS CONFERENCE ON RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY

Memorial Day Weekend: May 27-30, 2005
Lebanon Valley College, Annville PA

For over 60 years, *Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology* has gathered on Memorial Day Weekend to provide a respite for individuals of all spiritual and religious backgrounds who wish to delve more deeply into their inner world. FCRP is one of the oldest conferences in the U.S. dedicated to individual spiritual exploration with a focus on in-depth psychology, specifically Jungian psychology.

This year's Plenary Speaker will be Mary Watkins, a clinical psychologist schooled in Jungian and archetypal psychologies, who believes that much of the psychology we have relied on has failed to adequately understand and work with the interconnections between psyche, nature and culture. As a Friend, Mary's experience of Quaker worship and witness have guided her work in communities, and her work goes to the core of how the inner work of the spiritual journey reaches its completion with what we do in our communities and in the world.

By putting Jungian psychology into dialogue with what she calls, "the psychologies of liberation" which came out of work in Central and South America, Africa, and Asia, Mary Watkins has found ways to join "inner work" with the spiritual call to witness of Friends.

Besides her lectures in plenaries, she promises to lead experiential exercises with active imagination, Utopic visioning, and dream theatre that will help us forge interconnections between psyche and culture and nature.

We hope you will join us for what promises to be a most challenging and timely conference. Conference information and on-line registration will be available April 1 at <http://fcrp.quaker.org>

CONSCRIPTION? CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION! LOBBY, MAY 16TH 2005

Washington, DC People of conscience speak out to make their voices heard in the halls of Congress against the reinstatement of the military draft. On May 16th, 2005 the Center on Conscience & War (CCW) and other organizations will hold a national lobby day against the military draft and for the rights of conscientious objectors to war. Participants will meet in the Methodist Building in Washington; others will lobby at their Congress members' district office.

There are increasing signs of the return of the military draft. U.S. Troops are stretched thin across the globe with commitments in over 200 countries. Many National Guard and Reserve units are in Iraq and Afghanistan, and with the continual rise in casualties; many say they will not reenlist. Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) is likely to reintroduce a conscription bill in the Congress. In the wake of another "national emergency" (i.e. invasion of another country) there will be more serious calls for the draft. J.E. McNeil, Executive Director of CCW said, "Due to the lack of knowledge of many young congressional staffers, we need to educate Congress about conscientious objection and how a draft is never a viable option." May 16th will be a day for voters to speak up and educate Congress about issues of conscience and put forth a strong voice against the draft.

Center on Conscience & War: The Center on Conscience & War (CCW), formerly the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO), was formed in 1940 by an association of religious bodies. CCW works to defend and extend the rights of conscientious objectors. The Center is committed to supporting all those who question participation in war, whether they are U.S. citizens, permanent residents, documented or undocumented immigrants—or citizens in other countries. Telephone: (202) 483-2220 or (800) 379-2679 tsitther@nisbco.org

FRIENDS AND SCOUTING

The Scout programs (both boy and girl) and the Campfire USA program encourage their young members in their religious faiths by offering awards appropriate to the specific faith. Each religion has their own requirements for their award. For Quakers, the Friends World Committee for Consultation sponsors the Friends and Scouting Committee, which set the requirements for the Friends awards. The "That of God" award is for Scouts fifth-grade-and-younger. The "Spirit of Truth" award is for sixth-graders and older.

The study and work necessary to earn these awards brings the young Friend to a greater understanding of Quaker history and beliefs. If you have a young Cub or Boy Scout, Brownie, Cadette or Campfire Kid, please call Jim Lehman, a Cubmaster, former Eagle Scout and member of Sandy Spring: (301) 774-7561.

-Jim Lehman

Annual Blueberry Festival

Benefit Harford Friends School

Saturday, July 16, 2005; 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Fresh berries, baked goods, 11:00 a.m. Live Auction

Deer Creek Friends Meeting

US Route 1 and Route 161, Darlington Maryland

410/457-9188

DEMENTIA SPECIAL CARE CENTER OPENS AT FRIENDS HOUSE

The New Dementia Special Care Center at Friends House will have opened by the time you read this. Features include looped walking pathways, designed to help dementia patients walk without becoming confused, and electronic bedside patient monitoring. The Center will feature a courtyard providing natural light and space for healing gardens and grow boxes. Official dedication is scheduled for May 14, at 3:00 p.m. in Thomas Hall at the Special Care Center.

Construction of the \$2 million project began over a year ago. The Center is part of a \$2.5 million Community of Caring Campaign conducted by Friends House, and made possible by resident and community donors to address the needs of our rapidly growing elderly population. The campaign will enhance the residence assistance fund, expand staff development and training, enhance the existing skilled nursing home, and convert part of the nursing home to assisted living.

For further information contact: Darryl Clemmer, Executive Director, Friends House Retirement Community, 17340 Quaker Lane, Sandy Spring, MD 20860. Phone: (301) 924-5100.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting
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Sandy Spring, MD 20860

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

- 2 Spring Yearly Meeting Day, Michael Cronin, Clerk of Interim Meeting
- 8–10 Shiloh Work Weekend, David Hunter
- 10 Centre Quarter, State College Meeting, Susan Williams, Clerk
- 15–17 Catoctin Work Weekend, David Hunter
- 22–24 Young Friends Conference, State College Meeting, Hope Braveheart, Youth Secretary
- 29–May 1 Opequon Work Weekend, David Hunter

May

- 6–8 Shiloh Work Weekend, David Hunter
- 15 Warrington Quarter, Frederick Meeting, Darah Kehnemuyi, Clerk
- 13–15 Shiloh Work Weekend, David Hunter
- 27–29 Young Friends Conference, Adelphi Meeting, Hope Braveheart, Youth Secretary

June

- 3–5 Junior Young Friends Conference, TBD, Hope Braveheart, Youth Secretary
- 5 Centre Quarter, State College Meeting, Susan Williams, Clerk
- 12 Chesapeake Quarter, Little Falls Meeting, John McKusick, Clerk
- 18 Summer Yearly Meeting Day, Michael Cronin, Clerk of Interim Meeting

July

- 2–9 FGC Gathering; VA Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia
- 13–17 FUM Triennials, Des Moines, Iowa
- 16 Blueberry Festival to benefit Harford Friends School, Deer Creek Meeting

August

- 1–7 BYM Annual Session, James Madison University, Lauri Perman, Clerk of Yearly Meeting