

Interchange

Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

“CHANGE IS INEVITABLE. GROWTH IS OPTIONAL”

Tasha Walsh, Clerk of Interim Meeting

I recently saw a bumper sticker that read “Change is inevitable. Growth is optional” This speaks to what I see happening throughout Baltimore Yearly Meeting. We have Vision Implementation Recommendations that committees and local Meetings are considering. Many of our Meetings speak of getting older and smaller, others are expanding. We have a new Interim General Secretary and a new Youth Programs Manager. We continue to strive to articulate our *Faith and Practice*. We are increasing our focus on visiting each other’s local Meetings. We are changing the way the Yearly Meeting building in Sandy Spring is used to accommodate our evolving needs. We have working groups being laid down and new ones forming. As new clerks, the way Ken & I are approaching the roles we play is changing. There is discussion in some circles about changing our name from Baltimore Yearly Meeting to be less “Baltimore-centric.”

Baltimore Yearly Meeting is an evolving community of worship. We are changing, that is clear—but the question is, will growth be a part of the change? This year, at June Interim Meeting and at Annual Session, we approved the creation of two ad hoc committees, both aimed at helping our spiritual community assure that growth is a part of the change we are experience: the Healthy Organization and Purposeful Evolution (HOPE) Committee and the Growing Diverse Leadership Committee.

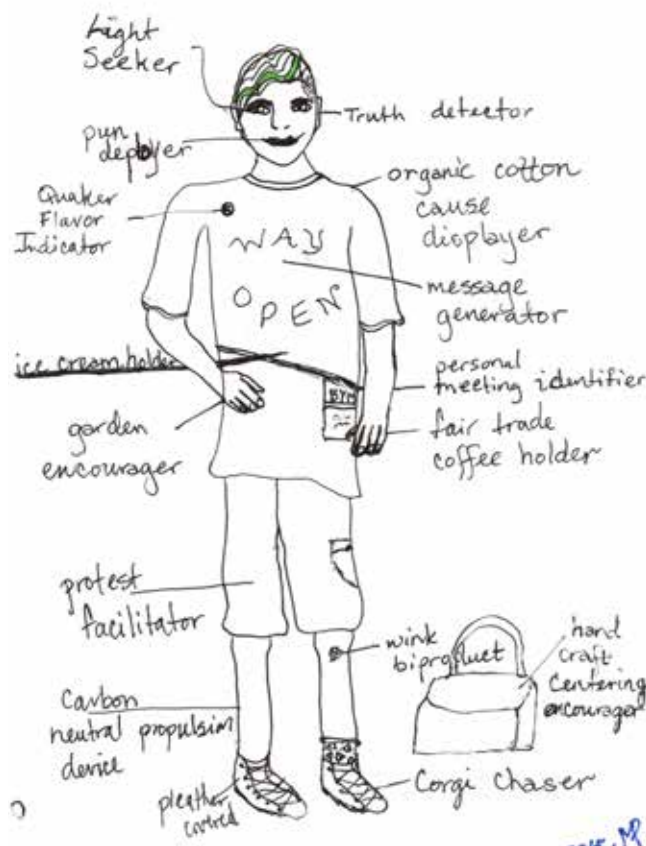
Broadly speaking, the Growing Diverse Leadership Program seeks to address two issues that have long perplexed the Religious Society of Friends and our Yearly Meeting. First, how can our society of Friends be more inclusive and welcoming to all and build multi-cultural community? Second, how can we encourage and sustain participation by younger Friends and support their development as leaders now and for the future? Many of our committees have been considering these questions for some time. We recently received grant funding to create an Outreach and Inclusion Coordinator to help address this in our camping programs and build connections with our youth programs and Meetings. The ad-hoc Growing Diverse Leadership Committee will help to address these questions throughout our Yearly Meeting community.

The health of our local Meetings and the Yearly Meeting as a whole is essential to our ability to minister and witness to our leadings. With many Meetings and committees engaged in identifying needs and supports to fulfill their part of our Vision, the issue of the organizational growth of the Yearly Meeting needs attention. There is a desire to move forward in a spirit-led, purposeful way as we strive to support the many needs and callings identified by our evolving organization. Questions of staffing and finance as well as if a stronger executive function within BYM is needed remain unanswered. To begin to address these issues, the Healthy

Organization and Purposeful Evolution (HOPE) Committee will continue to support the work identified and outlined in the ad hoc Vision Implementation Committee’s 2014 report. Specifically, the committee will explore and discern: What is the best organizational and governance structure to sustain a healthy organizational environment for our local Meetings and our Yearly Meeting? What is calling to us in the next 3-5 years? What make up of programs, staff, volunteer support will serve us best?

We are in an auspicious time. There is much potential and much to be done. If we are to thrive as a spiritual community alive in our testimonies, living in right relationship, and witnessing to our faith, we need to be intentional and discerning in how we move forward. Evolution is not fast, yet at the same time, it is ever moving. We will need to reach beyond our comfortable circles and ways of thinking, beyond our individual needs and desires, beyond our rich past and present perspective, to discern the way forward and bring into practice what our hope leads us to in the future.

Anatomy of a Quaker



2015 JH

drawing by Janey Pugsley

Fall Family Camp Weekends 2015



Swing in this fall for some

Friends, Family, Fun and favorite camp activities at the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camps!

Family Camp Weekends at Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camp Properties offer us all a chance to come and enjoy our beautiful camp properties at a special time of year. Individuals and families are invited to come and enjoy the camps for a day or for the weekend. This fall, we will have a program coordinator at each weekend who will plan camp-type activities for Saturday and Sunday mornings, as well as Saturday afternoon and evening. These may include things like playing in the creek, a crafts project or hiking around one of the most precious places on earth. There will also be plenty of work projects to do! Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills the opportunity to enjoy some meaningful and satisfying work! We will enjoy meals together, have time to explore and even spend some time around a camp fire in the evening. Come and enjoy a camp experience, give the gift of your time, participate with children in activities and find yourself rejuvenated.

Fall 2015 Family Camp Weekends	
Opequon Quaker Camp	September 18 – 20, 2015
Shiloh Quaker Camp	October 9 – 11, 2015
Catoctin Quaker Camp	October 23 – 25, 2015

You DO NOT need to have any building or carpentry skills in order to help with work projects! We need all kinds of people to make contributions. You do need to have some energy and a willingness to get dirty, try new things, be flexible and enjoy the company of others who want to pitch in too. We need sweepers, painters, cooks, ditchers, and trail clearers as well as carpenters and handy people. All of us have contributions to make, so come on out and enjoy some physical activity and the company of Friends!

Family Camp Weekends are held on both **Saturday** and **Sunday**; you may come just **for the day** or you may **spend the night** on Saturday. Camp will also be open on Friday night but there will be no dinner served on Friday so make sure you eat before you arrive or bring something to share. We will provide breakfasts and lunches on Saturday and Sunday as well as the evening meal on Saturday night. **Bring bedding** (we do not always have enough suitable mattresses), flashlights, and anything else you may want. Cabins are generally available or you may bring a tent. Please visit this Website before you come to make sure everything is on schedule.

Friends of all ages are welcome.

Young people (0 to 18 years of age) should always bring their parents or a Friendly Adult Presence (FAP). Even though we will have an activities director, parents or FAPs will be responsible for supervising the young people under their care.

COST: To pay the costs of hiring an program coordinator and pay for some supplies, we will be asking participants to contribute according to their ability - \$25 - \$50 per person.

Please send an e-mail to davidhunter@bym-rsf.org if you plan to attend. We will need to know the names and ages of all members of your party, when you will be arriving and departing, and any dietary restriction you may have. More information is available at bymcamps.org/family-camp-weekends-Fall-2015/

BYM GREENING CAMPAIGN – OUR WITNESS TO THE WORLD

Catoctin Bath House Project

It is an exciting time at BYM. In the fall of 2016 we plan to begin construction of a new bath house at Camp Catoctin. By providing a safe, sustainable, and attractive environmentally sound new bath house, our community has an opportunity to strengthen, improve and enhance our camping program. This program continues to change lives.

The current bath houses at Catoctin were built in 1959. They have served Camp Catoctin and Baltimore Yearly Meeting well for the last 56 years. The time has come for a new bath house. Few would disagree that the current bath houses are in need of replacement. Many have described them as “disgusting,” “gross,” and “in desperate need of replacement.”

Our current bath houses:

1. Create health concerns for campers, staff and work grant volunteers.
2. Are moldy and damp-never fully drying due to a significant lack of ventilation and moisture. This can potentially create a ready environment for germs.
3. Are subject to ground settling, creating cracks which allow critters and mold to get into the building.
4. Continue to add stress to the current septic system, possibly requiring costly repair/replacement decision sooner rather than later.
5. Create a significant environmental impact.



Our new bath house will include:

1. Two family-style handicapped accessible bathrooms.
2. Nine modern style Clivus Multrum composting toilets, significantly lessening the load on the current septic system.



3. Two waterless urinals which also help with yearly winterization costs.
4. Needed ventilation and drain flow to prevent a mold problem.
5. Solar panels to heat the water.
6. Changing area for each shower stall.
7. Lots of cubbies for camper's supplies.
8. Two ADA compliant/family style units, making camp more accessible.
9. A single building instead of two, making for much easier maintenance.

The current 2015 cost to build the new Camp Catoctin Bath House shown below is \$297,000. Approximately one third of this is direct and indirect costs associated with the composting toilet system. We currently have **\$107,123.82** in pledges and gifts toward this project.

The existing bath houses have served the camp well for 56 years. Building a new structure will enable us to embrace our Witness to the World by reducing our carbon footprint by being more environmentally responsible at our Quaker Camps.

The time is now and the price tag is high. But if we work together we can continue to provide a life-changing experience for campers and all who are exposed to our extraordinary camps. Please join in and give now. Let's continue our journey to a Greener BYM. Let's Witness to the World.

Up next the details of the Clivus Multrum Composting Toilets.



BOB RHUDY, INTERIM GENERAL SECRETARY, LOOKS FORWARD TO COMING YEAR

*Condensed from Bob Rhudy's Interim General Secretary's Report,
Annual Session, Frostburg State University, August 8, 2015*

Dear Friends,

I want to introduce myself, give you a brief overview of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and indicate what I hope to do while I'm with you in this position. I am honored to be given the opportunity to serve as your interim general secretary, following Riley Robinson's nearly nine years as our General Secretary. Thank you again, Riley, for your excellent service, and best wishes at Friends Committee for National Legislation.

As some of you know, former BYM Yearly Clerk Howard Fullerton served as Interim General Secretary for nearly ten months after Frank Massey's departure and before Riley began his service. I started half-time on July 1st, as I began a break from my private mediation and law practice, and I became full-time on August 1st.

I am an attorney, but much of my career over the past forty years has been spent managing, directing, practicing law, lobbying for, and consulting with a range of state and national nonprofit organizations. These organizations have primarily been engaged in civil rights, environmental and consumer protection, legal aid, and most recently mediation and conflict resolution.

I first attended Quaker Meetings in Iowa in the early 1970s, and became a member of Patapsco Friends Meeting in 2002. I became involved with BYM in 2005 as a member of the Criminal and Restorative Justice Committee; and in 2008 as a BYM appointee to Friends Committee on National Legislation. I have been a volunteer on Patapsco's prison visitation group to South Mountain Friends Fellowship, at Maryland Correctional Institution-Hagerstown, for the past ten years. I have served on the steering committee of Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform since its creation in June 2014 at the initiative of Annapolis Friends Meeting's Peace and Justice Committee, and I was a lobbyist for MAJR promoting incarceration reform legislation before the Maryland General Assembly during its 2015 session.

I was lead to consider undertaking this Interim General Secretary position because of my high regard for BYM, for its mission, vision, values, and for this community. From what I understood from last year's Vision Implementation Statement and other sources, I view the job at this time as an engaging challenge and exciting opportunity; and upon reading the job description, I thought that perhaps I had some part of the experiences and skills you were seeking. I was simultaneously delighted and somewhat daunted when I was offered and accepted the position as your Interim General Secretary.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting is a very unique organization. As much as Friends like simple, BYM is not a simple organization. I have been to at least some portion of most of our Annual Sessions since 2005, but I have a lot to learn. All of our excellent year-round staff and many of BYM's officers and committee leaders have been helping with my orientation and learning. I began my visits to Meetings around BYM in mid-July and I plan to visit with many of you over the next few months; and I have visited our camps at Catoctin, Shiloh and Opequon. I have also been reading lots of minutes, reports, budgets, policies, and procedures. This is not a simple organization.

I have sought to learn about our past, understand our present circumstances, and to begin thinking about our future during this time of exciting evolution. BYM is 344 years old! Many of us continue to worship in Meeting Houses build over 200 years ago with members whose Quaker origins go back to that early American history.

Our 2011 Vision Statement indicates that "Baltimore Yearly Meeting is a worshipping community, gathered in the presence of the Divine, affirming that of God in every person. The Yearly Meeting knits Friends from the Chesapeake to the Appalachians into the larger Religious Society of Friends."

BYM is a very active and productive organization. My report to the Annual Session and many of our committee, working group and staff reports highlight a small part of many recent and current activities involving our support to meeting services, intervisitation, religious education, camping, youth and young adult services, publications, retreats, workshops, peace and social justice and advocacy, governance, management, development, budget, stewardship, and other areas.

Today BYM numbers around 7,000 members and attenders from 42 Monthly Meetings with 53 locations in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. You have 25 committees and working groups served by hundreds of very active volunteers. BYM is affiliated with schools, retirement communities, assisted living and long-term care facilities, and a wilderness center; and we have representatives on and working relationships with Quaker organizations throughout the United States and around the world. We own or lease three camp properties in Maryland and Virginia, our office in Sandy Spring, and a large number of active and inactive Meeting Houses, cemeteries, and



Annual Session 2015 photo by Cy DeVries

other real estate throughout the region.

We currently have a year-round full and part-time staff of ten people, of which three have begun in their current positions since July 1st. We also have about 120 staff during the summer at our four camp programs used by over 700 campers and volunteers annually. We also expect to hire a new Outreach and Inclusion Coordinator this Fall to help increase diversity in our camp programs and youth leadership; and we look for improved uses of technology, better coordination and communication, and other ways to increase and improve our services throughout the region.

At the Annual Session last year, your Vision Implementation Committee report stated, “Our Yearly Meeting has wonderful resources—but we need to find ways to build on what we have, to integrate our knowledge, wisdom, and resources . . . to take us further in our journey of living as a community gathered in the Spirit.”

I understand that I will be an ex officio member of BYM’s new Healthy Organization and Purposeful Evolution (HOPE) Committee that will be undertaking a continuing organizational review and making recommendations to support our continuing this journey. I think it is part of my role to meet with you and to work with your officers, committees, and members to help discern how this journey takes us; to help formulate some improved pathways for the journey; to focus on how your staff (including your next general secretary) can best serve you; and on how we can best nurture, organize, manage and support our staff in helping fulfill your mission and vision.



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This is an exciting time to be working for and participating with BYM. I invite all of us to embrace this time and these opportunities. Let us join together in this spiritual community, following our leadings from our Inner Light, from our Christ Within, to do right action in our Meetings, our communities, and in the world.

I appreciate the many warm welcomes you’ve given me since I started in this position.. On behalf of myself and on behalf of your staff, thank you for all your care and support. I look forward to my time with you as your Interim General Secretary.

QUAKER ARTISTS

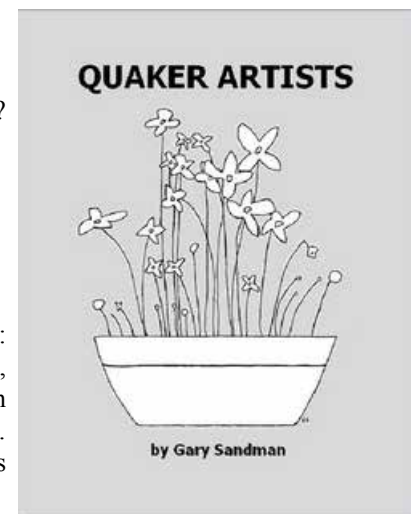
DID YOU KNOW

- *that Judi Dench, Anne Tyler and James Michener were Quakers?
- *that Joan Baez, Ben Kingsley and F. Murray Abrahams have attended Friends Meeting?
- *that Dave Matthews, Bonnie Raitt and James Dean were raised Quakers?
- *that Popeye the Quaker Man, a Quaker Tapestry and Quaker stained glass exists?
- *that Bolivian Friends, Rwandan Friends and Chinese Friends art exists?
- *that Ben Franklin and Walt Whitman were influenced by Friends?
- *that William Penn and Margaret Fell wrote poetry?

The second edition of the book *Quaker Artists* contains the stories of the above artists and more: 286 reviews in all, a history of Friends, a history of Quaker art, study questions, artist’s queries, 44 reproductions of the artists’ works, 51 illustrations, a bibliography, an alphabetical index and an artist’s index. The period covered is 1659 to 2015. Friends from 18 different countries are included. Poets, painters, dancers, musicians, films and 13 other categories are included. (It is three times the size of the first edition!)

Quaker Artists is an entertaining and celebratory read in itself but it has other uses, too: as a resource for study groups, a reference for libraries and a curriculum for First Day Schools.

Gary Sandman, a member of Roanoke Meeting in Roanoke, Virginia, is the author of the second edition of *Quaker Artists*. To purchase, send check or money order to 214 Summit Way SW, Roanoke VA 24014, garysandman@cox.net. Paperback, 287 pages. Price: \$20



YOUTH PROGRAMS WELCOMES JOSSIE DOWLING!

BYM is happy to announce that Jossie Dowling has taken over Alison Duncan's position as Youth Programs Manager after serving this past year as the Junior Young Friends Program Assistant. Jossie began her new position at Annual Session 2015 after working as a Trip Manager at Teen Adventure a month prior. Jossie came to Quakerism through the Yearly Meeting's camping program, which she has been engaged in for 17 years. She was an active member of Young Friends in high school which lead her to attend Guilford College and participate in the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program. After a 3-year career in Conflict Resolution in Maryland, she moved to Philadelphia to serve a year with Quaker Voluntary Service. Jossie is excited to share her love of community building, fun, and spiritual enrichment to support BYM's Youth Programs. She is blessed to have the opportunity to serve the community that had the greatest impact on her life and hope to foster that same joy and love in the current and future Young Friends.



Please save the dates for the following weekends:

Junior Young Friends

- October 3-4 at Goose Creek Friends Meeting
- December 5-6 at Stony Run Monthly Meeting
- March 19-20 (location to be announced)
- May 13-15 at Shiloh Quaker Camp

Young Friends

- September 25-27 at Adelphi Friends Meeting
- November 27-29 (location to be announced)
- February 12-14th (location to be announced)
- April (dates and location to be announced)
- May 27-29 (location to be announced)

Let's get ready for another great year of fun and fellowship for our youth. BYM's youth conferences are an opportunity for middle school aged Junior Young Friends (JYF) and high school aged Young Friends (YF) to build community with one another on weekends throughout the year. Games, workshops, worship, and business meeting enrich our conferences in the spirit of Friends and build strong relationships established on caring, trust and love.

For each conference, Junior Young Friends should arrive at 10am on Saturday, while Young Friends should arrive after 7pm on Friday night. All events end at 12 noon (or the rise of Meeting) on Sunday. For each conference, youth need their Registration form, Medical Form, and payment if not already submitted. Participants should bring a sleeping bag, pad, pillow, clothes, toiletries, and anything they think will help build community: games, music, sports equipment. For the first conference of the new school year everyone must submit a Medical form, which we will keep for the whole school year. After that, youth who have already turned in a Medical form only need registration forms.

Registration is required one week in advance of each JYF con, and TWO weeks in advance of each YF con. If not per-registered, participants will be placed on a waiting list, and register as space permits. JYF Cons cost \$40; YF Con cost \$50 for pre-registered participants and \$60 for participants that have not per-registered. Financial aid is available upon request. To register for a conference: mail a registration form, medical form, and check made out to BYM to the office or register online at the Yearly Meeting website, yf.bym-rsf.net, and Junior Young Friends website, bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/jyfs.

BYM WOMEN'S RETREAT JANUARY 29-31, 2016

The BYM Women's Retreat will be held in a new location in 2016: Pearlstone Retreat Center in Reisterstown, MD, is about 45 minutes west of Baltimore and an hour from Washington. The Pearlstone location offers a number of benefits, especially in relation to accessibility and safety (covered walkways, elevators, etc.), as well as comfortable accommodations, plenty of meeting rooms, and excellent food. Scholarships will be available. Stay tuned for additional details! Come to Pearlstone on January 29-31, 2016, and see for yourself!



This year's theme is

Lighten Up: Sharing Love, Light, and Laughter

Find us on Facebook - BYM Women's Retreat

Follow us on Twitter - @BYMWRetreat

And see us on the Web: bymwomensretreat.org



BYM & FGC invite you to Grow Your Meeting!



**The *Grow Our Meetings* Workshop:
Nurturing our meetings' health, vitality,
and connection to Spirit.**

Saturday, October 10th, 2015

10am – 6pm

***Valley Friends Meeting in Dayton,
Virginia***

The *Grow Our Meetings* workshop empowers teams of Friends to create programs and opportunities within their home meetings that focus on three important components of growth: inreach, outreach, and welcoming newcomers.

The one-day event incorporates:

- training and experiential activities
- worship sharing
- discussions
- discernment and planning
- opportunities for collaboration
- a takeaway toolkit

Your meeting's team will leave ready to make a plan for inviting growth and vitality into the life of the meeting.

This *Grow Our Meetings* workshop is co-sponsored by Friends General Conference and Baltimore Yearly Meeting. The fee for the workshop is \$100 per meeting for a team (maximum 3 Friends) and includes a resource toolkit for each participant, lunch, and dinner. The October 10th event is open to teams from meetings within Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Learn More: www.fgcquaker.org/grow-our-meetings

Register a team from your meeting: www.fgcquaker.org/GOMBYM

Questions? Contact: Rachel Ernst Stahlhut rachels@fgcquaker.org

BEGINNING TO ANSWER THE CALL FROM INDIAN COUNTRY

“Imagine sitting in a crowded sports arena with tens of thousands of people shouting a racial slur. Would you speak out? Get up and leave? Sadly, when it comes to offensive stereotypes and offensive words about Native people, too many people don’t notice at all. We know that people who support these teams aren’t personally racist. But that doesn’t make the imagery less offensive or damaging.” Kevin Grover, director National Museum of the American Indian

“Can’t the average American understand that it is not an honor to have our culture stolen, mimicked and insulted by fanatical football and baseball fans? [We] are tired of fighting racism under the guise of ignorance. Find yourself an Indian and walk up to him or her and say, ‘Hey, Redskin’ and see how honored they are.” Tim Giago, founder Native American Journalists Association

BYM Action

Watching a baseball game, have you seen Cleveland’s Chief Wahoo logo or Atlanta Brave fans do the tomahawk chop? Are you aware that research shows mascots have negative effects for both Native and non-Native students? Have you learned that the Oxford American dictionary says r***** is a contemptuous word. Did you know Indians have been protesting that team name since at least 1972?

Friends seek to respond to the needs, interests, and desires of Indigenous peoples. Quakers established our BYM Indian Affairs Committee in 1795 for reasons of justice and friendship. One contemporary concern is particularly relevant in our geographic area, since Indian organizations want help in influencing the Washington, D.C. professional football team owner. In 2014, BYM adopted a Minute that called upon the team and the league to change the name of the team to one that does not demean or misrepresent anyone’s ethnicity or culture and to create a non-stereotypical team logo.

The Indian Affairs Committee pointed out that the National Football League’s Rule Book prohibits “using abusive, threatening or insulting language” and “using baiting or taunting acts or words that engender ill will.” Yet, the NFL has violated its core principles by



BYM Camps 2015

allowing the DC team to continue to use this objectionable name and sell related merchandise, even in the wake of legal action.

This word has encouraged fans to don war paint and feathers and sanctioned demeaning halftime theatrics. Whether the performance is idealized or comical, reducing human beings to mere mascots is belittling, inviting and allowing disrespect to Native peoples and their cultures. The National Collegiate Athletic Association changed its policy, but the NFL continues to violate the fundamental principles of integrity and respect embodied in its own rules.

BYMIAC Award to Student Leaders

Sandy Spring Friends School held its usual assembly on Martin Luther King’s birthday but this year the topic was “From Selma to FedEx Field” and several speakers were respected American Indian leaders. Similarities between the R word and the N word was one topic discussed. Several months later, as an act of conscience, the student government took the step of prohibiting the R word on campus, suggesting that students cover up the disparaging word on apparel.

The school community embraced the consciousness-raising effort to stop the unthinking and casual use of the “R” word. However, after newspapers reported the decision, a number of football fans and first amendment rights supporters objected vigorously, some vilifying the student leaders Taylor Gunter and Haley Crim in ugly ways. Yet, they had exhibited initiative, resolution, and valor as they sought to actualize the school motto “Let Your Lives Speak.”

On April 14, 2015, Clerk of the student government, Taylor Gunter, was presented with a plaque by the Indian Affairs Committee, represented by Kit Mason (Adelphi), Pat Powers and Roger Wolcott (Sandy Spring), and Sue Marcus (Alexandria). It was inscribed: “In recognition of the ethical stand taken supporting respect for American Indians by forbidding a disparaging sports team name to be spoken or to appear on campus.”

Personal Action

Emotions run high about sports team names, mascots, and fan ‘traditions,’ yet one can take a principled stand even if it will be controversial. Young people can be role models for adults. We invite Friends to look to their own lives for ways to encourage respect for



Annual Session 2015 photo by Cy DeVries

Indigenous peoples.

Consider talking to businesses that prominently display the DC team name about your discomfort. (Businesses recently responded to public pressure to stop displaying and selling the confederate flag.) Consider speaking up when a friend or colleague wears Indian-related team merchandise, using it as a teachable moment to say, “I’ve come to understand that such logos or symbols or words are offensive to many Native Americans.” Remind them of non-disparaging names such as the Baltimore Ravens or Philadelphia Eagles and mascots such as the University of Maryland terrapins that both Native and non-Native people can happily support. We don’t have to just go along with the crowd.



Annual Session 2015 photo by Cy DeVries

THE ANCIENT MYSTERY OF POWHATAN QUAKERS

Few people alive today know that the Powhatan hamlet of Fine Creek was a center of Quaker life in what was once part of Goochland County; then a part of Cumberland County with its formation in 1749; and finally a part of Powhatan County with that county’s formation in 1777. The Fine Creek area was first developed in 1735 by John Pleasants Sr., a member of a prominent and early Virginia Quaker family. He built a gristmill at Lees Landing Road (Rt. 641) and Huguenot Trail (Rt. 711) along the lower falls of Fine Creek. Within a decade a small rural hamlet emerged next to the gristmill with several stores, a cooper’s shop, a blacksmith shop, a small cheese factory, a postal station, and a ferry that provided access across the James River to the northern part of Goochland County.

We know from the historical Quaker record that White Oak Swamp Monthly Meeting (aka. Henrico Monthly Meeting) allowed a “particular” (or subordinate) Quaker Meeting, Fine Creek Meeting, to be created in the area in 1746. At that time in Quaker history a new meeting would not have been allowed by the “monthly” (parent) meeting if there were not a good number of Quakers willing to support its ongoing existence. Quaker discipline was strict then and not the laissez-faire culture of liberal Quakerism today. Quakers were required to attend worship every “First Day” (Sunday) at the local meetinghouse if they were to remain Quakers. So, we know that a ready-made and active membership would have been

available to provide ongoing support for the new meeting.

White Oak Swamp Monthly Meeting had a dozen or so Quaker meetings under its care during the eighteenth century. Fine Creek Meeting was just one of these, along with its “sister” meeting of Richmond Friends Meeting. Had Fine Creek meeting survived the ravages of history, today it would be 49 years older than Richmond Friends Meeting.

Powhatan County archives do indicate that Fine Creek Quakers were active abolitionists. James Pleasants of Fine Creek (brother of John Pleasants Sr. who was instrumental in developing the gristmill at Fine Creek) began emancipating his slaves around 1800 along with Fine Creek Quakers John Pleasants Jr. and Jonathan Pleasants, both sons of John Pleasants Sr. No doubt they were prompted to do so by a unanimous decision by all Virginia Quakers in 1800 to “disown” (the term then used to revoke Quaker membership) any Quaker who refused to emancipate their slaves. All Virginia Quakers had been asked to begin doing so since the mid 1770’s. County and historical records demonstrate a concerted effort by Fine Creek Quakers to systematically work towards this end. It wasn’t until 1804, however, that the county finally began providing newly freed blacks their certificates of freedom.

Fine Creek Meeting existed from 1746 until 1780 – some 34 years. Yet, there is much mystery surrounding the meeting. At that time in Quaker history, once a meeting was in existence for more than a few years, there was pressure as well as support to build a permanent meetinghouse. Also, Fine Creek meeting was nurtured by the Pleasants family – one of the wealthiest families in Virginia. So, the circumstantial evidence would suggest that a meetinghouse existed somewhere in the Fine Creek area of Powhatan.

Where exactly was the Fine Creek meetinghouse located? Was it in the hamlet surrounding the gristmill; or, was it in the surrounding countryside? Why was the Fine Creek Meeting “laid down” after existing for 34 years? One can only hope that as ancient records become more searchable due to digitization, someone will be able to fill in the missing pieces to this local Quaker mystery. Maybe it will be YOU!



BYM Camps 2015

ANNAPOLIS FRIENDS MEETING

Annapolis Friends Meeting is planning a number of adult education programs this autumn, including *The Quincy Solution* (concerning domestic violence), *William Penn*, *What Is the Budget Process?* and *Aging in Place*. Every fifth First Day, Friends meet for worship sharing, with a special invitation to newer attenders (but all are encouraged to attend). Also with a special invitation to newer attenders, Friends meet for lunch every First Day except when there is potluck at the Whole Foods salad bar and buffet. We have found that the informality and flexibility of this venue works well.

BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

We have been fortunate to have many activities over the past few months that have fostered community life, helped to educate us about important issues, expressed our desire to be of service, and deepened our spiritual lives. Our Adult Religious Education Committee has sponsored a variety of sessions over the past few months – in several of them, we have heard about the spiritual journeys of some of our members; in others, we have covered topics from “The Power of Early Quakerism” to “Opening to Vocal Ministry” to “Building a Movement to End Jim Crow.” In April, we had our yearly perennial sale and Spring Fling, both of which raise money for the Ramallah Friends School; this year we were able to raise enough money for three scholarships for student to attend RFS. Our Advancement and Outreach Committee again offered a “Getting to Know You” session, in which we encourage both newcomers and long-time attenders/members to get to know one another and to reflect on questions about Quaker faith and practice. The series, “Experiment in Light,” continues to thrive, with meetings twice a month. In these meetings, members and attenders gather to use the guided meditation created by Rex Ambler in *Light to Live By*, an effort to reflect the experience of early Quakers as they sought guidance. We have a new monthly event, our Bethesda Friends Meeting book group, in which we read books on Quaker faith and practice, such as Kelly’s *Testament of Devotion*, as well as other current books addressing spiritual/historical/cultural issues, such as Reza Aslan’s *Zealot*, and David Brooks’ *The Road to Character*. Summaries of our discussions are posted, so that those unable to make a particular meeting are able to read something about the thoughts of those who were able to attend. Our Religious Education Committee has sponsored some wonderful sessions for the children, as well as the adults, called “Let your Life Speak,” in which we hear from individuals in our



Annual Session 2015 photo by Cy DeVries

Meeting about the way their careers reflected their Quaker values. Our Friendly 8’s groups – one for adults only and one for families, continue to meet for potluck dinners and discussions. In May, we had a service day at Wider Circle, a non-profit organization in Silver Spring which assists individuals and families transitioning from shelters to more stable living situations. We are blessed to have a community so rich in collaboration, cooperation, and exploration.

BLACKSBURG FRIENDS MEETING

Blacksburg Friends Meeting would like to welcome and celebrate the recent approval of two new members to our Meeting: Nicolaus Tideman and Estill Putney.

CHARLOTTESVILLE FRIENDS MEETING

Charlottesville Friends celebrated Earth Day, Quaker Style with a day of gathered spiritual focus on the Earth. Our base was the pavilion at Darden Towe Park where walks, hikes, water fun, games and quiet meditation were available at various times throughout the day followed by a simple shared meal, provided by our Peace and Social Concerns Committee, in the early evening.

The Meeting has completed one major repair project and another beautifying project at the meetinghouse. Several months ago mold was discovered in the kitchen walls, and inspection showed that the flat roof had been installed poorly so that water had been allowed to flow into the structure. After much difficult labor and weeks of being without a kitchen, the walls and roof were replaced, and we are mold free. At the same time, a beautiful memorial garden was constructed outside the meetinghouse with pergolas, benches and plantings. Thanks to the hard work of many Friends, both projects were completed efficiently and economically.



BYM Camps 2015 Park in Crozet.

HERNDON FRIENDS MEETING

Herndon Friends have formed an *ad hoc* committee on Greening the Meetinghouse and are in the process of gathering ideas.

In lieu of our usual August potluck, Jodi Beatty, Margaret Fisher, and Jonathan Rosenthal organized a Vegan Tasting Feast to give everyone a chance to try out a variety of plant-based offerings. We gathered before Meeting for Worship to share a breakfast of toast with various vegan margarines; granola and cereal with soy, almond, or cashew milk; tofu scramble; and coffee with soy creamer or milk. During meeting, the kids made chocolate and mint ice cream in ice cream maker balls that they rolled around. Lunch was served on trays to each table with tiny servings of Chipotle and Italian vegan sausages, General Tso's Seitan, zucchini with "hamburger" sauce, pizza, and open faced tomato sandwiches with Vegenaise. Chocolate cake with the ice cream made from coconut cream topped it all off, and each family went home with a small collection of popular vegan recipes.

HOPEWELL CENTRE MONTHLY MEETING

As usual, spring and summer are quickly over. And, as it is every end of summer, Homecoming was a glorious occasion, bringing old Friends back to our historic Hopewell Meeting House for a fun-filled day of catch-up and a delicious luncheon on our grounds. In July, we welcomed BYM visitors, Ann Venable, Ken Stockbridge and Bob Rhudy. After a presentation and a lively Q&A time, we were left feeling a greater connection to and understanding of the larger BYM community. And we loved those green shopping bags! Our members who attended this year's Annual Session returned, filled with a greater awareness of and dedication to living in right relationship with creation. Opequon campers stopped by for worship and to do what they most love to do – sing! And, as always, we loved listening. Our Spiritual Formation Group that began in September 2014, continued on into June. Every one of its ten participants said they benefited tremendously from their chosen spiritual practices; from reading selected books; and from personal sharing with their smaller groups. We are all ready to begin again this fall! We wish all BYM Meetings joy and bounty in the fall season.

LITTLE FALLS MEETING OF FRIENDS

We applaud the work of George and Tracey Waite, who initiated a project to replace the poles, hoops and backboards on the basketball courts at the Gilmore Homes in Baltimore city. While attending a picnic sponsored by the Friend of a Friend program of AFSC at the Gilmore Homes last summer, they noticed that the basketball courts were unusable. Despite the residents' requests to the city to repair them, no action had been taken. George, with the support of AFSC and the backing of the residents, completed repairs on two of the four poles and backboards. The remaining poles needed to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$5,000. Members of Little Falls, other meetings and families and friends generously donated funds to assure that this project came to fruition. Now, thanks to the work started by George and Tracey, residents of Gilmore Homes are playing basketball again. Our annual summer concert was held again this year on a beautiful July evening with nearly 300 friends and families attending. What could be more delightful than the music of Ken and Brad Kolodner, a pleasant summer breeze and ice cream with blueberry sauce! This event is our

gift to the community.

WEST BRANCH MONTHLY MEETING

The Meeting is pleased to announce the birth of a new member. Silas Clair McGary was born to Adam and Justine McGary on May 29, 2015. We are also saddened to report the passing of Richard A. Greendonner on May 20.

YORK FRIENDS MEETING

Keeping with the 2015 BYM Annual Session theme, Living into Right Relationship, York Meeting has concentrated recently on the following areas:

- Right relationship with Friends: Annual Meeting retreat was held in May to help Friends explore their relationship and understanding of the Meeting's vision. The first session focused on being Grounded in God, the second session focused on gratitude for fellow Friends and other parts of God's wonderful creation, and the third session focused on the Light within from whence cometh one's individual talents that were shared around a campfire.
- Right relationship with Children: As First Day School gains regular attenders from several families, the Meeting recognizes the need for dedicated First Day School space. Therefore a series of four monthly Threshing Sessions started in June to discern the Meeting's needs and desires for additional space. Donations can be forwarded to a dedicated Building Fund.
- Right relationship with the Earth: Midweek gathering, Seekers, participants have studied People and Permaculture by Looby Macnamara and learned about how right relationships with the Earth relate to one's right relationships with each other.
- Right relationship with the Climate: York Meeting has agreed to sign on in agreement with the statement, "Facing the Challenge of Climate Change", by Quaker Earthcare Witness, Quaker United Nations Office and FCNL.
- Right relationship with Bees: The beekeepers of the Meeting restarted the one hive that died over the harsh winter. The two hives on the Meetinghouse grounds are thriving and had a bountiful first harvest of honey in July.



Annual Session 2015 photo by Cy DeVries

Baltimore Yearly Meeting
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BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING UPCOMING EVENTS

SEE THE YEARLY MEETING WEBSITE FOR DETAILS AND OTHER EVENTS (BYM-RSF.ORG)

SEPTEMBER

- 18-20 – Family Camp Weekend at Opequon Quaker Camp
- 25-27 – Young Friends Conference at Adelphi Friends Meeting
- 27 – Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting at Gunpowder Friends Meeting

OCTOBER

- 3 – Clerks of Committee Workshop at Friends Meeting School
- 3-4 – Junior Young Friends Conference at Goose Creek Friends Meeting
- 23-25 – Family Camp Weekend at Catoctin Quaker Camp
- 10 – Grow Your Meeting Workshop at Valley Friends Meeting
- 9-11 – Family Camp Weekend at Shiloh Quaker Camp
- 25 – Friendly Sing-In at Gunpowder Friends Meeting

NOVEMBER

- 17 – Warrington Quarterly Meeting at Pipe Creek Friends Meeting
- 26-27 – Yearly Meeting Offices Closed
- 27-29 – Young Friends Conference

DECEMBER

- 5-6 – Junior Young Friends Conference at Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run

STAFF AND OFFICERS OF BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING

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