

# Interchange

Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE CLERK'S TABLE

*Betsy Meyer, Presiding Clerk*

How blessed I felt to sit at the Clerk's table during the 340<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of Baltimore Yearly Meeting! I could feel love and spiritual energy rising from the Friends gathered in the room, and I felt myself absorbing this energy and channeling it back to the gathering. While we conducted our worship with attention to business, the hand of the Divine showed itself in many small synchronicities. Months ago, I had picked out a reading from Allen Jay, an Indiana Friend who, over 100 years ago, wittily wrote about the futility of separations among Friends. When I put this reading on the agenda, I had no idea that it would follow a report about the potential for a modern separation among Indiana Friends. After this business session, one Friend in attendance immediately went to the bookstore and purchased Allen Jay's autobiography to send to a relative who is an Indiana Friend. Others held Indiana Friends in healing prayer. Little synchronicities like this reminded me that the Divine was present and at work among us.

I am in awe of the work that our Youth Programs Committee, Youth Secretary and Friendly Adult Presences do with our high-school-aged Friends. These Friends have created a program that teaches leadership experientially so that Young Friends feel ownership of and responsibility for their own program, while setting boundaries and keeping the Young Friends safe with plenty of adult presences. In their epistle presented this year, the Young Friends shared how they changed the registration requirements for their weekend conferences. Previously, preregistration had been encouraged, but it was not required. Then at one conference, many more Young Friends turned up than had been planned for, and there was not enough food for everyone. After this, the Young Friends themselves decided to require preregistration. These real-life lessons are preparing the next generation of leadership among Friends.

At Annual Session, the Stewardship & Finance Committee proposed

a new apportionment method, which some Friends liked while others could not approve it. Friends decided to invite each local Meeting in BYM to consider the proposal and send in comments. I see this as an opportunity for our whole community to engage in a conversation about how we share the responsibility for funding our programs and operations. Whatever the outcome, this conversation is an opportunity for all Friends to be involved in this important discernment. Information about apportionment will be sent out to each Meeting. Please participate in this process; we need your Light!

After a visioning process that included visits to almost all of the local Meetings, we adopted the following vision statement for Baltimore Yearly Meeting:

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. As Quakers, we seek to know and follow God's will for us as a gathered people, to speak the Truth that is revealed to us, and to listen to the Truth that is revealed to others.

We aspire to listen deeply and inclusively to each other, to actively welcome all, and to attend in joy and faith to the Inward Teacher, whom some call Light, some call Spirit, and some call Christ.

We aspire to teach and nourish Quaker ways of worship and service for this and future generations, to uphold and promote Quaker values, and to support Friends Meetings in our region.

We seek to expand opportunities for Friends to meet together and know each other in that which is eternal.

*Reflections continued from Page 1*



Throughout this issue of the *Interchange* are pictures taken and shared by Nony Dutton (Homewood) during Annual Session.

# FINDING COMMUNITY, BEING COMMUNITY

ANNUAL SESSION 2011

*Riley Robinson, General Secretary*

We all took our theme to heart at Annual Session this year. The spirit behind Moving Forward In Community: Welcoming the Divine, Welcoming Every Person was present in new ways, energizing us through the week. From the plenaries, workshops, interest groups and many other activities we heard about new perspectives on community, even in our own newly-approved Yearly Meeting vision statement. We came away with new thoughts, new motivations, new methods, and new joy. One Friend wrote:

I was very impressed with the spiritual worshipful way in which business was conducted. I will take home two phrases, "Peace is a dance, not a stance," and "We are not what our founders envisioned.

First-time attender Cynthia Merriwether DeVries  
(State College)

This first quotation refers to the report given about the work of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee on its work and its invitation to all of us to join in. You can read the report beginning on page 7.

The second quotation referred to the report of the General Secretary, Riley Robinson, in a talk that reflected on the importance of welcoming all who unite with Quaker principles and testimonies, however they might arrive here, in our vision of the Yearly Meeting. You can read the report in its entirety starting on page 8.

Community involves all ages, even the youngest of us, and so does Annual Session. We heard from Junior Yearly Meeting, who told us that their theme was "Open wide the door and let the light come in." They focused on opening themselves to the gifts in themselves and to the gifts in others. In the nursery, the children explored finding their gifts from family members and from tractors! The K-1st grade participants made Chinese lanterns and many other things. The 2nd and 3rd graders focused on habitat and made paper cranes. The 4th and 5th graders had a rocking and rolling class – exploring how to reach out. The Junior Young Friends focused on inclusion and held a sexuality workshop. June Confer, Coordinator of Morning Programs, said it is important to open wide the doors both in the family setting and for the children's activities at Yearly Meeting, or for any group with whom we are working. The goal is to answer that of God in every person within the group, but also to act in service to others. She indicated that it is important for the whole Yearly Meeting to interact with the young people of various ages and to embrace the gifts that the children bring.

Our plenary speakers offered us much. Miyo Moriuchi (previously of Warrington Meeting) created beautiful pictures of travels around the world with her words. Having grown up as a Quaker Asian-American in New Jersey, she didn't take any assumptions that people seemed to make about her for granted. Whether in Japan, India or Africa, this heightened her sensitivity to feelings of connectedness or separateness. At all times there were ways that people could, even literally reach out help her feel valued as a person - forever. Once, while riding on a train in a foreign county on a warm day, the woman seated next to her pulled Miyo's arm from the open window and held it. At that moment, a large tree branch scraped the side of the train next to her!

Campbell Plowden (State College) led us in group activities inspired through the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP). AVP began at the request of inmates at a prison in New York State for some Quakers to design a program to address and reduce violence in the prison. AVP workshops strive to improve the communication skills of workshop participants, encourage participants to affirm themselves and others and introduce creative approaches to conflict. People who participate in workshops often develop greater respect for themselves and others, demonstrate a greater willingness to share and trust, build greater confidence to handle stressful situations and relationships in non-violent ways, and experience a stronger sense of community. Exercises gently bring people out of their "normal" social space, invite group decision-making, and everybody can have FUN! We certainly did.

Philip Gulley is a writer and Quaker pastor from Indiana, and this year's Carey lecturer. He asked: "Must we believe in God to welcome God? I used to think so, but I'm not so sure anymore. For there are atheists and agnostics who embody the divine attributes more beautifully and fully than those who believe. Often, I have discovered the god the atheists don't believe in is the same god I don't believe in—a god whose love is so limited and narrow it excludes more people than it includes."

All of this nourished us, and we got work done, too! We welcomed two new local Meetings (Monongalia Monthly and Buckhannon Preparative), empowered ourselves to go ahead with a new pond at Shiloh Quaker Camp, and approved a new vision statement for the Yearly Meeting. Please be with us next year, July 30 - August 5, 2012 at Frostburg State University.

## PRESIDING CLERK'S REFLECTIONS

*Reflections continued from Page 1*

We seek to serve others in love, to share our gifts and resources, to reach out to those in need, both friends and strangers, and to witness in the world to our shared experience of the infinite love of God.

At the heart of the vision statement is the recognition that the Yearly Meeting is a worshiping and witnessing community rather than a mere confederation of Meetings. Our community includes all Friends from all Meetings, whether or not they attend Annual Session or other Yearly Meeting events. A new *ad hoc* committee will consider structures and staffing for carrying out this vision. Mean-

while, visits will continue, shepherded by the Presiding Clerk. In the process of visiting, we discovered that this old-fashioned form of communication among Friends continues to be valuable for maintaining community among us. If you feel a nudge to visit other Meetings within the Yearly Meeting, please contact me at [YMclerk@bym-rsf.org](mailto:YMclerk@bym-rsf.org). We will try to be sure that each of the local Meetings receives an official visit over the course of the next year.



## REDUCING THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF MAURY RIVER FRIENDS MEETING

*Daphne Raz, Maury River Friends Meeting*

The House and Grounds Committee facilitated a second hour this past winter that considered the report written by Eli Fishpaw on the energy use of the Meeting. It appears that there is a great deal of interest and concern regarding our use of resources.

It is agreed that the biggest energy use is caused by Friends commuting to the Meeting House. While some time in the future Maury River Friends may choose to relocate to a more centralized location, the present Meeting House is where Friends' community and worship are currently flowering, and there is no clear leading to relocate. Some good suggestions for carpooling or busing have been made, but since these are not directly associated with the building, House and Grounds has chosen to leave that organization to others.

The Meeting House poses particular issues for reducing energy use, as it is only used for a few hours each week. This means that major investments in infrastructure would only yield a slight decrease in energy consumption. The Committee feels that we have decreased energy use to what is plausible for comfort standards, making extensive use of thermostats and timers. We then have begun looking at electricity production, and quickly determined that neither wind nor water generation are suitable for our situation. There are, however, at least two households in Rockbridge County, including the residence of Mel Leasure, where photovoltaic systems have been hooked up to the grid and are producing electricity. Electricity that is not immediately consumed by the household is absorbed by BARC Electric Co-Op and a credit is then created to be used during periods of high consumption. This eliminates the need for storage of the electricity on site, which is a problematic endeavor. House and Grounds then turned to Eli again, this time to consider the photovoltaic potential at the Maury River Meeting House.

Eli determined that the property has suitable locations for a solar array. This would be somewhere in front of the Meeting House, either close to the power line or on the creek edge near the shed. A 2.15 kw system is 30 feet long and would supply rough half of the Meeting's

annual usage. The length can be doubled or another row can be installed above it to double production. If we chose to install one

unit, a second one could be added on later. Figuring the cost of this array is complicated. We recognize that there are several concerns about this site, including aesthetics, play area, right of way, and security. We consider these to be additional costs of the system. Other variables include the system size and the cost for installation. Hiring a contractor doubles the price of installation, while hiring local talent may or may not be an option. The federal government currently offers a 30% tax credit for renewable energy, however, this does not apply to non-profit organizations. We would need the advice of an accountant or tax lawyer to begin to access this support.

Paying for a photovoltaic array would be a challenge for Maury River Friends Meeting and would require some creative solutions. It is possible that a loan to the Meeting could be paid off with the money that we are currently paying to BARC for their coal generated electricity. While it might take 30 years for the photovoltaic system to pay for itself at current prices, it is likely that the cost of energy will continue to rise, making our system increasingly economically neutral or viable. Other cost benefits of a photovoltaic system include withdrawal of support for mountain top removal and the resultant environmental degradation, as well as a public witness of this Meeting to our deep spiritual concern for our planet. House and Grounds suggests that photovoltaic electricity generation could in the end be found to be economically advantageous or at least cost neutral.



## BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING FRIENDLY SING-IN HYMNS, HARMONIES...AND MORE!

The first Sing-in in April 2011 was a success! Over 50 Friends participated for all or part of the day. This second Sing-in will offer another opportunity for a time of celebration and community-building through song. We will offer a sampling of styles, including spiritual hymns, heavenly harmonies, Sacred Harp, and more. Both shy and sure singers are welcome! This gathering is not about bringing strong singers together—it's about joining our voices together in a community singing with love.

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 29, 2011, 9:30 AM – 5 PM**  
**STONY RUN FRIENDS MEETING**  
**5116 NORTH CHARLES ST., BALTIMORE, MARYLAND**

Sponsored by the Advancement and Outreach Committee  
If you have a copy of Rise Up Singing, please bring it!

For additional details and directions, see <https://sites.google.com/site/bymfriendlysingin/>

If you wish to be added to the e-mail distribution list for future singing events, or if you want guidance in planning a Sing-in at your Monthly Meeting, send an email to [bymfriendlysingin@gmail.com](mailto:bymfriendlysingin@gmail.com)

## FRIENDS THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE GROWS WITH SUPPORT OF FRIENDS

*Ann Riggs, Principal*

In 2009, as I was preparing to begin my term as principal of Friends Theological College in Kaimosi, Kenya, I identified four areas of practical focus for my time in Africa. I hoped to strengthen and nurture the college's programs in peace, HIV/AIDS, the environment, and hope for social and economic development. As college principal (a British-style usage for the equivalent of college president), of course I have many tasks. But I am thrilled to report that, with the help of Baltimore and other North American Friends, in the past two years we have been able to strengthen these important areas of the college's program.

Wilmington (Ohio) Monthly Meeting has provided funds for two greenhouses. Income from these facilities is creating an endowment to support the continuing work with Africa Great Lakes Initiative of Friends Peace Teams (AGLI), and Bethesda Friend David Zaremka, to bring AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project) and mediation training to campus. The college's librarian, Fred Amwoka, has emerged as a valued facilitator in conflict areas beyond the immediate college area.

With support from the Missions Committee of Indiana Yearly Meeting, the college chaplain, Pamela Igesa, is taking a master's degree in Community Care and HIV/AIDS.

We have two substantial projects related to the environment. Right Sharing of World Resources and Friends from Iowa Yearly Meeting have assisted us to start a small-scale manufacturing project. Providing bio-mass cooking fuel briquettes and the equipment and training to manufacture these helps the college and local groups of widows in urgent need of income and protects Kenya's forests. When I taught ethics at Earlham School of Religion in past years, I always assigned the same term paper focus: a theological consideration of Kenyan Wangari Maathai's Nobel Prize-winning Green Belt Movement. Making non-deforesting cooking fuel is a "natural" interest for me.

Individuals, families and meetings in Great Plains Yearly Meeting and at Annapolis Friends Meeting are supporting the college in



*Oscar Lugusa (right) and Nick Obaga of Friends Theological College* moving toward a goal of 60% solar electricity on campus. We are only in the beginning stages of the project. But already, in addition to providing more environmentally-sound energy, solar electricity is saving us money. As a result I have been able to assign two bachelor's degree students to work in the principal's office a portion of each week. Oscar Lugusa will assist me with communications, and Nick Obaga is investigating how FTC might be able to offer support and assistance to Turkana Friends and to refugees in the UN- and church-sponsored refugee camps in the drought-stricken Turkana region of Northern Kenya.

Finally, gifts from the United Society of Friends Women have sent faculty member Margaret Amudavi through a master's program in development studies.

My appointment, which was at first for a single year, and then a second year, has now had three more years added to it. Baltimore Friends have been generous in support and encouragement as my time at Friends Theological College (FTC) has extended. At the June 2011 Interim Meeting, to enable continued support, Baltimore Yearly Meeting designated me as an Embraced Friend. Thanks so much for all support and encouragement, Friends.

### KENDAL COMMUNITIES COMES TO METRO WASHINGTON

*Ted & Ria Hawkins, Annapolis Friends Meeting*

In June, the Kendal Corporation, Quaker pioneers in housing for the elderly, affiliated with Collington Episcopal Lifecare Community. While this does not make Collington a Quaker community, it has added a strong Quaker element. Collington residents belong to many different faith groups, and include a small group of Quakers who worship together twice a month.

With Kendal's federal style governance model, Collington gets the best of both worlds. Collington will continue as an independently owned and operated not-for-profit organization governed by its own volunteer Board of Directors. Kendal will provide support services to Collington in the areas of operations, finances, technology, planning, and marketing. For more information, contact [www.collington.com](http://www.collington.com).

### LUNCH WITH FRIENDS AT BROADMEAD RETIRMENT COMMUNITY

*Donna Smith, Gunpowder Friends Meeting*

Quaker Lunch brings together 20 to 35 Friends and friends of Friends from Broadmead and around the area for an hour of fellowship over lunch. This event takes place on third Thursdays of each month (except for Dec. & Jan.). You are welcome to gather with us on third Thursdays, 12:00, in the Holly Terrace dining room at Broadmead, cost of lunch \$5.50.

After many years of coordinating Quaker Lunch with Marjorie Scott, Karolyn Huffman is passing on the arrangements to Donna Smith and Bob and Susie Fetter. If you will be joining the group for Quaker Lunch, (or if you have questions or want directions) please contact Donna Smith by the previous Tuesday (443-578-8206 or cell 410-409-7958 or [ddscrs@mindspring.com](mailto:ddscrs@mindspring.com)) We need to let Food Service know how many are coming.

## ADELPHI YOUNG FRIENDS TRAVEL TO MEXICO

*Ray Lane, Adelphi Friends Meeting*

Some Young Friends, one of their parents and one of their First Day School teachers joined a neighborhood service trip to build houses with the Mexican service organization, Esperanza. The neighborhood group began organizing in January for the trip which was July 15 to 23, 2011. The first task was fundraising. Individual letters requesting donations, a share of the profits one night at a local restaurant, a Mexican Dinner cooked by the teens held at the Adelphi meetinghouse and a grant from the Adelphi Meeting Peace and Social Concerns Committee accumulated more than was needed.

The funds went to pay for airline tickets, food for the week and a \$300 donation for each participant to the Esperanza loan fund, which Mexican families borrow from to buy the building materials. The next task was preparation. The group met once a month to coordinate purchase of airline tickets, to learn how to work as a group and to study the social and cultural background of the neighborhood where we would be working. The town of La Gloria where Esperanza is located and other small towns in the hills above Tijuana are deeply affected by the Macheladoras (US owned factories that have sprung up since NAFTA) and by the continuous stream of immigrants moving North and deportees moving South. We did research and played role-playing games to gain a better understanding of these issues.



*photo by Robert Duncan*

Finally the day came; we were off to Tijuana. The team-building paid off as we moved from plane to van to trolley to foot-bridge over the border and finally to the Esperanza bus without lagging or separating. After a day of rest

we rode the bus to the job site. The homeowner, her sister and two daughters were waiting for us with broad smiles, but our faces weren't so bright as we stared from the pile of building material up a long flight of uneven stairs to the place where the cement addition was to be built. The teenagers don't know how to worry about hard work so they just dug right in. Before we knew it we were passing heavy five gallon buckets of sloppy wet cement one after another from the mixer on the street to the new floor 20 feet above. Our group was so strong and enthusiastic that the director of Esperanza, Eduardo, sent us to another job where the volunteers were all adults.

After we arrived at the site, he stopped the bucket line, pulled out the tired volunteers and replaced them with our crew. Then he said, "Fill the buckets fuller, we need to move cement faster if this floor is going to be set properly." The tired volunteers got a rest and the camaraderie with the other group that shared the living space at Esperanza with us made the week even more fun.

The greatest reward came at the end of the week when Eduardo organizes a sharing circle on the job site. All the volunteers, the Esperanza staff and the families who have worked side by side with us and cooked lunch for us all week have a time to individually express to the group what it meant to work on this home or have people generously contribute to the home they will live in. The sharing this year was particularly special because one of the adult women from our group is fluent in Spanish. During the week, when she took a break from shoveling or passing buckets, she carried on a conversation with the women of the family (the men are off at work so we never see them). Based on the rapport she gained we were drawn closer to our hosts and they felt more comfortable with us. After one of the local women shared deeply from her heart, Eduardo said to me on the side, "She has never spoken to an American group before." We returned to our homes in Maryland enriched by the experience and committed to continue doing all we could to raise living standards and build the neighborhood of the world.

## SHILOH POND SUCCESS: WE CAN DIG IT!

*Robinne Gray, Development Director*

At Annual Session 2010, Baltimore Yearly Meeting began the mini-campaign to raise funds to build a pond at Shiloh Quaker Camp. Fantastic news—following Annual Session 2011, we have now received **over \$85,000 in gifts and pledges!** Fundraising for this project has taken several forms and involved the efforts of many Friends, Quaker Meetings, and Camp families. Special appeal letters, support from local Meetings, sales of the Camp Cookbook, seats on the Teen Adventure shuttle bus, camp volunteers making phonathon calls, our first-ever eBay quilt auction, and a young Friend giving finger-puppet performances for \$1 each have all contributed to the total raised.



*Annual Session photo by Nony Dutton*

A warm thanks to all who have lent their support to this important investment in our program and property. Special thanks are due to Allen Fetter, who is contributing his professional expertise to the site work at Shiloh, and to Chrissie Devinney, who sewed and donated the beautiful *Fire at the Center* quilt that was auctioned on eBay, contributing \$1,280 to the pond. Site work at Shiloh is slated to begin after Labor Day.

Now we're within a stone's throw of the estimated total project cost, and we're optimistic that we can raise the entire \$90,000 for the project by the end of the calendar year. It's not too late to make a gift in support of Shiloh Pond! It's easy to do online at <http://bymcamps.org/donations.htm>. As always, you may send a check to the BYM office at any time.

## COMMITTEE NEWS

### FAITH AND PRACTICE REVISION

The current 2011 draft of our Faith & Practice includes many new and revised sections. The brief history has been rephrased to incorporate a sense of the faith and practice of early Friends. New sections on Quaker Testimonies and Quaker Communities have been drafted. We have, with help, worked diligently on the section on Marriage and Divorce. You will find many other additions and modifications that extend last year's draft and incorporate many of your comments and suggestions.

We anticipate completing our work on the following schedule:

- We will integrate all comments on the 2011 draft received by February 1, 2012.
- The edition of 2012 will be, in essence, the last full draft for review.
- We will seek approval for the new Faith and Practice in 2013.

### INTERVISITATION

The Intervisitation Program traveled to Wilmington, Ohio this summer for the Friends United Meeting Triennial. The theme of *Transforming Lives* was based in Paul's message to the Romans in 12: 2 - "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you discern the will of God --- what is good and acceptable and perfect." In that spirit the Intervisitation Program has begun discernment on its future.

During the Triennial sessions and workshop many Friends from around the globe offered gratitude and encouragement for our "ministry of presence" over the last six years. Many Friends asked that we invite them to our annual training on preparing for and traveling with BYM's Intervisitation Program. They expressed a desire to learn how to carry out a similar visitation among Yearly and Monthly Meetings.

During Annual Session we welcomed and hosted six visitors from FUM Yearly Meetings: Tongaren YM, Kenya; North Carolina YM; Great Plains YM; and New York YM. BYM travelers visited in Iowa YM, Indiana YM, and North Carolina (FUM) YM. Each evening, Baltimore Yearly Meeting Friends, travelers, and guests gathered in the Intervisitation Lounge for sharing, fellowship, and snacks after the evening program. Our workshop on Spiritual Hospitality as a way of *Welcoming the Divine* was well attended with about 20 Friends. Throughout these times together we listened deeply to Friends reflections and guidance regarding the future of the Program; attempting to discern the will of God. By the end of the week we were clear that we needed a called meeting for additional prayerful discernment. Please reflect on the summary of thoughts gathered from our times together this summer (<http://tinyurl.com/3l6mjl7>) and join us on October 1 at Adelphi Friends Meeting!

### PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

For the next year, we have laid out some goals for nurturing Social Justice work between and among the BYM community and also reaching beyond ourselves. There will be some activities that people can participate in, and these will be announced as they are developed. We also will be adding a regular submission to *Interchange* on specific topics and ways Friends can get involved. With this

edition, we are starting with Prison Ministry. Historically, Friends have been very involved in Prison Ministry with an eye towards prisoner re-integration into society. There are a few programs locally that people can get involved in, each with varying levels of commitment.

**Alternatives to Violence (AVP):** Training to become an AVP facilitator involves taking the 3 levels of workshops. (Basic, Second Level, and Training for Trainers) Community members can take workshops in an institution, which is a great place, especially if there is thought of working in the institution. Nancy Hutchinson of Annapolis Friends Meeting is one of the Mid-Atlantic AVP Representatives, and can be contacted at 301-668-8213 or [nhutchins471@comcast.net](mailto:nhutchins471@comcast.net) for more information. She would be glad to forward inquiries to specific prison programs. In addition, there will be an annual Regional AVP Gathering on Nov. 12 at Stony Run Meeting. For more information, go to <http://www.avpusa.org/>.

**Re-entry Mediation:** Community Mediation Maryland coordinates community mediation centers across the state. Trained mediators provide services for an inmate and one or more people from their family or community to help ease the transition back to the community. Mediators have taken a 50-hour mediation training, plus some additional hours for this particular program. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer mediator, should contact CMM at [www.MDMediation.org](http://www.MDMediation.org) or 410-553-0206.

**Prison Pen-Pal Program:** Run by members of Sandy Spring Meeting's Prison Committee. Many of the more than 2 million prisoners have little or no contact with family or friends. A word from the outside is a ray of sunshine, even from a stranger. All correspondence is passed through Sandy Spring Friends Meeting, so home addresses are kept confidential. This is a great way to reach out with little effort. For information, please contact Jack Fogarty ([jfogarty9@verizon.net](mailto:jfogarty9@verizon.net)), Mike Bucci ([bucci114@starpower.net](mailto:bucci114@starpower.net)) or John Worley ([worley.john@gmail.com](mailto:worley.john@gmail.com)).

### QUAKER EARTHCARE WITNESS

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) encourages all Friends with an interest in environmental sustainability to attend QEW's Annual Meeting, with Marcia Cleveland, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Molly Anderson, College of the Atlantic, and Laurel Ross, Chicago Wilderness, as speakers. The gathering will be October 20 to 23rd in Chicago, Illinois. The theme this year is *Food and Biodiversity*, with a focus on global and local issues. To help Young Adult Friends attend, QEW is offering special financial support in the form of scholarships. For more information about this exciting program, and to apply for funds - please go to the QEW website: [www.quakerearthcare.org](http://www.quakerearthcare.org) - and follow the links.

### WORKING GROUP ON RACISM

The BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) will meet at Friends Meeting of Washington on Saturday, Sept. 17 and Saturday, Oct. 15, from 10:00 am until approximately 1:00 pm. Note that the WGR's November meeting, on Nov. 19, will take place at Sandy Spring Friends Meeting following the visit to the Sandy Spring Slave Museum. New participants are welcome at all of our meetings.

## PEACE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS STEPS INTO THE NEW YEAR

Reported by Brad Ogilvie (abridged), Clerk, Peace & Social Concerns  
 “Peace” is a dance, not a stance. We can easily dance among ourselves, but when we also learn to dance joyfully with people we may not know, and with whom we may not agree, we are bringing greater peace. To joyfully seek that of God in all things is to see all people and things as dance partners.

We also recognize that the greatest marks left by Friends in the

world—from influencing the ideals of our country, to the abolition movement, to voting rights for women—have often been the work, passions and leadings of individuals, not committees. What these individuals shared was a fire and a passion that could not be extinguished. Knowing their objectives would not be achieved in their lifetime, they remained undeterred in working towards how they envisioned the world should be. Quakerism was often the source and inspiration of their work, and what emboldened them to take leaps of faith, to speak their truths, and as a result, the world is better.

Peace continued on page 9

## YOUTH PROGRAMS NURTURE GROWTH

Alison Duncan, Youth Secretary

Junior and Young Friends conferences are an opportunity for teens to live with each other in a Quaker Community. Junior Young Friends explore an idea of their choosing—this year it is *Insecurity*. Young Friends take responsibility for their community - the shopping and cooking, program, inclusion of new friends, and spirit of the weekend. In doing so, they learn self-reliance and how to take care of others.

Their words speak volumes about how this program affects their understanding of...

### Quakerism

Being in a community where Quaker testimonies are lived out in every interaction shows me that they are not just lofty ideas, they are livable.

### Who they are

YFs has helped me develop a clear sense of who I am right now. I am socially, emotionally, and spiritually more developed, happier, and more stable because of the community that I experience with Young Friends.

### What they can do

My experience in YF has helped me take responsibility for my choices and my actions because I know my thoughts and feelings have value. This has given me

the confidence I need to new situations because now I have deep knowledge of my inner-strength.

Friendly Adult Presences are resources for the Junior and Young Friends over the weekend. **There will be a ‘FAP’ training November 5th at Tandem Friends School** in Charlottesville, VA from 9am to 4pm (bring a bag lunch); email me to register. Please consider attending, and advertise it widely. We hope to have another one in the spring in the northern part of the Yearly Meeting.

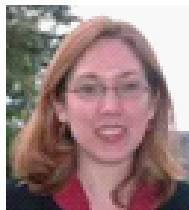
This year, pre-registration will be required TWO WEEKS in advance of each conference. After that, Friends will be placed on a waiting list, and registered as space permits. Also new this year, the cost for a pre-registered Young Friend is \$50, while the cost for a Young Friend who registers within two weeks of the conference will be \$60. Junior Young Friends conferences still cost \$40. Financial aid is available upon request.

### 2011-12 Youth Program Schedule

Sept 23-25 YF at Adelphi	Oct 15-16 JYF at <i>unknown</i>
Nov 5 FAP training at Tandem FS	Nov 25-27 YF at Sandy Spring
Dec 3-4 JYF at Frederick	Feb 10-12 YF at <i>Homewood?</i>
Mar 10-11 JYF at Stony Run	Mar 30-Apr 1 YF <i>Bus Trip</i>
Apr <i>TBD</i> Parent’s weekend	May 11-13 JYF at Opequon
May 25-27 YF at Annapolis	

## PULLING TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF OUR YEARLY MEETING

Robinne Gray, Development Director



The Shiloh Pond mini-campaign is a wonderful example of what Friends in our Yearly Meeting can do when we all pull together in support of something we recognize as important. The success of the pond effort was hardly a foregone conclusion, and it took many people working and coordinating on many fronts to raise the necessary funds.

Friends set out to do on a larger scale each year as we collectively create, present, approve, and fund our Yearly Meeting budget. The dictum from pastor Jim Wallis that “a budget is a moral document” has become well-known in both religious and political circles, as it speaks to what many of us know deep down: that how we earn, spend, save, and give our money tells us a lot about who we are. As Friends, we are committed to corporate witness and good process in our financial affairs; we approve our budget as a whole, and fund it as a whole.

As donors, many of us respond favorably to something tangible, like a pond or a cabin or a roof, and the generosity Friends have directed to the Shiloh Pond has greatly bolstered the Yearly Meeting’s capital coffers; however, there remains a great need for the general operating support that funds all of the other facets of our Yearly Meeting.

The calendar year is also our fiscal year, and gifts received throughout the fall and into the holiday season make a critical difference in BYM’s financial health. Direct giving to Baltimore Yearly Meeting has been trending steadily upward over the past few years as prior donors increase their gifts and new Friends begin to make gifts.

Friends will receive two more mail appeals in this period: a fall letter focused on the BYM Quaker Camps, and a year-end letter that celebrates our work together over the past year and looks forward to what we hope to accomplish in the year ahead. We ask all Friends to remember and generously support our Yearly Meeting – our Camps, Youth Programs, adult programming, committee work, and more – as we each consider our year-end gift planning.

## GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT TO ANNUAL SESSION

*Reported by Riley Robinson*

When I was a kid we used to drive to Hartford, CT to go shopping at Christmas, always exciting. We would drive in from the east at dusk and as we'd enter the city we'd see the signs for the Charter Oak Bridge. This was the Charter Oak State, and the Charter Oak, as we learned every year in history class, was the huge old tree which had held in its trunk the Connecticut constitution charter, hidden from a new oppressive governor sent by the king in 1687. I was very fond of the notion of this protective tree that had lived for centuries and had held the collected wisdom that protected a community of people.

At this point we'd see in the skyline the pointed top of the tower of the Traveler's Insurance building, bathed in an otherworldly fluorescent glow. I knew that in their magazine ads, the words by the picture of that building always said, "The light that never fails." Then, too, our destination would come into view, the store that was the source of much Christmas cheer, an 11-story building. The sign atop it read in huge blue letters, "G Fox." I laugh as I think about these coincidences and their possible effect on my becoming a Quaker, but this child's mind picture actually does say a great deal about my vision of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Here is another image: It's the 1970s. After a candlelight Equal Rights vigil in Washington, some demonstrators arrive at the large, darkened brick townhouse on Capitol Hill where they are to spend the night. An elderly woman appears at the door and invites them into a room with a bust of Susan B. Anthony and paintings of suffragist leaders everywhere. Suddenly, the old woman begins ringing a large bell and shouting with enthusiasm, "They're here, they're here!" Elderly women in white nightgowns and nightcaps appear, all smiles. The host is none other than suffragist Alice Paul, daughter of Quakers and Swarthmore graduate, and author in 1923 of the Equal Rights Amendment. Said one of the guests, "If we'd been waiting fifty years for reinforcements, we'd be that happy too!"

In 1917 Alice was arrested at a women's suffrage demonstration at the White House, sent to jail and tortured for her beliefs. She kept on going. Alice acknowledged how much she had been shaped by her Quaker upbringing. From inside that cultural "tree" of Family and Friends in Moorestown, NJ came her Quaker-inspired vision of empowerment of women, and that vision empowered her. She carried it forward to a wider world and it grew to inspire the next generations. Within six months, President Wilson abruptly called for women's suffrage and two years later women had the vote.

I haven't put myself in harm's way like that. So my legacy probably won't turn out to be as strong and clear as hers, I suppose. Maybe I could just chill out. I like to think of the Yearly Meeting as a centuries-old oak that shades and protects. But really I know there is more to it than that. I know that every time I sit down to worship, close my eyes, and reach in to the dark center of that tree. Sometimes the queries are there; sometimes advices, or testimonies, or traditions. Sometimes when I don't find them, they come and find me. Sometimes my single, solitary mind catches just a glimmer of our vision. Our Yearly Meeting vision. I cannot see it all by myself. That's impossible. But as a Friend, it is for me to accept that it can be seen, just not by me alone. I am not confident that we can put it into words. I am not any more confident of that than I am of ever knowing the name of God. But I love us for trying, and we may be able together – we may have already – created in our statement a signpost that points us inward to the next right direction, that unlocks the next doorway to let the next Light in. We'll see.

Some Quaker organizations have some simple, grace-filled statements:

### **FGC Minute of Purpose**

*Friends General Conference is a Quaker organization in the unpro-*  
*General Secretary continued on page 10*

## CATOCTIN QUAKER CAMP SEEKS NEW DIRECTOR

After many years of service to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camps, especially as director of Catoctin Quaker Camp, Linda Garretson retired at the end of the 2011 camp season. As a result, Baltimore Yearly Meeting is seeking a Director (or Co-Directors) for Catoctin Quaker Camp. This is a part-time year round position, with full time responsibilities during the summer camping season.

This applicant will be responsible for every aspect of making sure Catoctin Quaker Camp is a continued success. The applicant should be spiritually grounded and familiar with how children can be transformed by experiencing the wilderness and community. The director should be able to teach skills that will lead counselors in creating opportunities for spiritual growth among their campers. He or she must be familiar with safe and appropriate low-impact wilderness practices and be able to teach them and evaluate their implementation by others. He or she should also be organized, possess good social skills and be able to manage crises effectively. Applicants with experience in the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping Program are especially encouraged to apply.

To apply please send a resume and letter of interest along with three references to:

Jane Megginson, Camp Program Secretary  
Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camps  
413 S West End Avenue  
Lancaster PA 17603

Or e-mail a resume and letter of interest with three references to [jane@bymcamps.org](mailto:jane@bymcamps.org). If you have questions please contact Jane at 717-481-4870. Please apply by October 15, 2011. Our goal is to fill the position with a qualified candidate no later than December 15, 2011.



*Annual Session photo by Nony Dutton*

Copies of the complete job description are available at: <http://www.bymcamps.org/staff.htm>. Baltimore Yearly Meeting, as a spiritual community, seeks to welcome all in participation of programs and in employment. The Yearly Meeting is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate in hiring based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, age, or national origin.

## PEACE COMMITTEE SEEKS NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO DANCE

*Peace continued from page 7*

Within this Yearly Meeting, we know that there are many good things happening in the name of peace. Support for, and active involvement in, the works of African Great Lakes Initiative, the Zarembkas and Ann Riggs in east Africa; Bolivian Quakers; the work of the Intervisitation Committee and involvement with FUM are but a few. There are also the leadings of individuals within our Yearly Meeting, and some local Meetings that are doing wonderful works in their community. At the same time, we recognize that some PSC Committees struggle and may even be inactive. Just this week we heard, for example, that the Ad Hoc committee on gender and sexual diversity is laying itself down, and yet even in Friendly circles we hear people and things being called “gay” in a world where this kind of benign intent can do harm. So while a committee’s work may be done, there is still work to be done.

We recognize that all things are connected. Torture, hunger, and the fuel and energy we have all consumed to be here this week are connected. We cannot shy away from this fact, but should instead be willing to embrace it. A challenge for all of us is to take the learning, wisdom and passions we share to not only support the issues, causes and programs we care about and deem worthy, but to apply them in our daily lives so that in the communities where we live, eat, sleep and work, we can know that the world is ever so incrementally better for having had this day. Supporting programs and building relations in remote places – whether they be in prisons, in South America, on a Reservation, or in Africa – is necessary, but if we do not also expand our circle of dance partners in our own backyard joyfully seeking that of God in all, we are missing something. It is relationships – honest, genuine relationships that we live out every day – that bring unity to our global community.

As the Peace Testimony marks its 350th year, this committee will be looking for more opportunities to create more dancers and partners, seeking to nurture the leadings of some while creating opportunities for others to explore the world in new ways, with new lenses, learning new ways to engage or to simply re-contextualize the issues. Some examples of our work include:

- Prison Ministry. (see Committee Report on page 6)
- Gleaning.
- Torture.
- Workcamps.
- HIV/AIDS.
- National and International legislation.

It is our strong hope that Friends can find their piece of the puzzle – their gift, their voice, their leading – and to invite this committee to be a part of nurturing it and being nurtured by it. Ultimately we are seeking to move towards the day when there are no destructive barriers of “us” and “them”. We welcome people to attend our meetings with their ideas. We encourage folks to join us on September 10 for our annual Networking Day, as well as at William Penn House for our Sunday 9/11 potluck when we will be talking about what we can learn from this past decade that we can take into our future with meaning and purpose, rather than lamentation. We also ask that active PSC committees share with us their works.



*TA Bike image courtesy of Tasha Walsh*

## FWCC TO SEEKS TO DISCERN FRIENDS’ GLOBAL CHANGE WITNESS

*Barbara Williamson, Richmond Friends Meeting*

Friends around the world are responding to changes in the environment, climate, economy, society. These changes affect us all. They affect us at a practical level and at a spiritual level. Change also affects us all at a global level and in our local communities. Collectively these changes are called “Global Change.”

In response to an ever-growing concern about global change from Friends in many different countries, the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Central Executive Committee has embarked upon a program to discern Friends’ witness in relation to global change and its myriad facets. To aid its consideration of a response to this issue, the Central Executive Committee has decided to convene regional/local cluster gatherings to hear the voices of Friends impacted by global change. In-depth information on cluster gatherings is available at the FWCC web site.

Cluster gatherings are the first step for Friends to participate in the worldwide consultation process. Clusters are face-to-face meetings for Friends to engage in a process of discernment with prayer, listening, and sharing of stories and experiences around the theme of Global Change. FWCC views the Cluster Gathering as a time of worshipful discernment set aside for listening to each other and to God’s leading. This is a time for speaking out of prayer and from the heart, sharing our stories and our deep convictions.

It is FWCC’s challenge to hear everyone’s message, to seek the truth through discernment, and in doing so, find a compassionate and appropriate balance of perspectives and experiences. Results of the discernment process will be completed by the time of the Friends World Conference in Kenya in 2012. Friends can also follow the process on-line at the FWCC web site.

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) is working with FWCC in holding regional and local cluster gatherings in the United States, Canada, and Central America. David Miller, a Canadian active with both QEW and FWCC, has developed a model for holding these cluster gatherings and held a training session in Houston, Texas in October, 2010. Barbara Williamson was the representative from BYM at this training session. Since October, the model has been successfully used by many Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings in the United States and Canada.

The QEW Steering Committee and the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Unity With Nature Committee invite all local Meetings to participate in a cluster gathering. To have a facilitator join your meeting for the cluster gathering or for more information, please contact Barbara Williamson. (804-221-2358 or [bawmson1027@juno.com](mailto:bawmson1027@juno.com))

## GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

*General Secretary continued from page 8*  
grammed tradition of the Religious Society of Friends which primarily serves affiliated yearly and monthly meetings. It is our experience that:

- Faith is based on a direct experience of God.
- Our lives witness this experience individually and corporately.
- By answering that of God in everyone, we build and sustain inclusive community.

*FGC provides resources and opportunities that educate and invite members and attenders to experience, individually and corporately, God's living presence, and to discern and follow God's leadings. FGC reaches out to seekers and to other religious bodies inside and outside the wider Religious Society of Friends.*

### FWCC Mission

*Answering God's call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world.*

These are finished products with real resonance. But recently, I felt like I heard something that seemed as though it was on the way to a new vision, although no one said that at the time. I admired its unflinching gaze, but also its care. I would like to read some of it:

### FUM Triennial Session July 27-31, 2011

#### Closing Minute

- *As the winds of God's Spirit blow among us may we be moved...*
- *From an Historic Institution to a Spiritual Movement*
- *From Institutional Maintenance to Ministry and Mission*
- *From Adversarial Posturing to Strategic Positioning*
- *From Representing YMs to Equipping and Energizing YMs*
- *From Friends United Meeting membership as a Privilege to membership as Responsibility*
- *From Doing mission work on Behalf of Friends to Enabling Friends to Do mission work*
- *From a mindset of Scarcity to Abundance*
- *From attitudes of Fear and Mistrust to Freedom, Respect and Mutual Love.*

*There are any number of outreach programs and evangelistic techniques available to us. However, all these techniques will have little or no effect until we can tap into power of the Holy Spirit. That same Spirit prompted George Fox to climb to the top of Pendle Hill, where "the Lord let me see in what places he had a great people to be gathered." Friends, those places are right where you and I live. Those people are you, me, the members of our Monthly and Yearly Meetings, and our neighbors. In the power of the Holy Spirit, Friends United Meeting can spark a renewal; a global movement to "gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved, and obeyed as teacher and Lord."*

My wish today is not to squeeze the vision statement into some particular shape, which we all know I am not capable of truly doing, but to help reflect on "how do we know when we're getting close? How done we know what we're done?"

I do have one more image: It's a little over a month ago. I'm driving along the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay, well south of Annapolis. Sometimes, dodging in and out of bluffs and hollows covered in dense growth, it feels like I'm entering into a shadowy green tunnel and deep into history. I'm seeking the Yearly Meeting's historical homeland. Then at one turn I come upon an old Victorian farmhouse, at the next, some modern suburban houses, at the next a huge estate. There are historical markers by some of the estate sites. As I stop to look more closely, some of them use a term with which I feel discomfort. "Quaker Planter." As in tobacco? As in slaves? It's not that I'm really surprised. It's that I don't want to see these two words together on a historical marker, out in public. These are not what I have in mind when I think of Quaker outreach.

I drive on to Galesville, where the West River burial ground is located. The Meeting House is long gone, but Elizabeth Harris, Fox and Penn spoke here. Just after a thunderstorm, the sun's rays pierce down through water droplets on huge evergreen trees onto the bright green moss below. But the romance of history isn't quite working for me. Are these my people? Or the planters with whom I am uncomfortable? I realize that when these Friends looked toward the future of Quakerism, I am not what they had in mind. I imagine men in breeches, waistcoats and tricornered hats. "Friend, let me explain to thee what I mean by the term 'out gay man' . . . oh, my partner? He's African American. That's the way we live now." Something tells me that I'm not getting invited for dinner at the Big House.

Now the whole notion of 340 years is unreeling before me. The stiff Baltimore financiers and traders. The Ellicott city industrialists. The Pennsylvania orchardists. I see the Virginia farmers exiting by the thousands to the Midwest to slave-free lands. The mill owners. The educators, and the health care workers all around. Whatever has held us together for 340 years, though wars, marrying out of Meeting and arguments at Social Concerns Committee meetings?

Maybe Harris, Fox, Penn, the queries, advices, testimonies, and traditions really are all we have in common. Maybe that's what this vision statement points to. Maybe that is simply enough. Maybe I have to lose the expectations for other people. What is clear is that very different and unexpected people continue to be called over the centuries.

We may now be writing a vision statement that will lead us to future Friends whom we might not have in mind. We have been many different people over time. What we are is a people, each of whom has heard a call at some point in our lives to join this Religious Society of Friends.

The visit did clear something else up for me. The really big meetings took place down by the water's edge. The road down there is called Tent House Road. That's because everybody would stay in tents to hear Fox and Penn, so we really can use the slogan, "BYM – Camping for 340 Years."

Yes, we need to see if the statement is comfortable for us each one of us, but we need to see if it opens doors for the ones who come next, including those who we might not have in mind yet. In this week when we are contemplating the meaning of community, it's good to test with ourselves if our vision statement could "call out to the reinforcements."

## MEETING NEWS

### ABINGDON FRIENDS MEETING

Abingdon Friends is truly blessed to have a membership, at this point, of eleven convinced Friends. Four of which are transfers. We started out four years ago with one recorded Friend! We have twelve very regular attenders. First Days draw an average of 19 people. Of course, the number of committees has expanded. Committee work does bring us all into the care of the Meeting and Quaker outreach to the greater community. Also, we now have a First Day program for children. We are following FGC's outlines for religious education.

The town of Abingdon has many progressive citizens and our Peace and Social Action Committee feels that it is fertile ground in which Quaker ideals and actions may be of help. The convener of Peace and Social Action, Canny Poppen, is a well seasoned social justice advocate. Her husband Roger Golden, who sojourned with us, and still supports us, is also an experienced social justice worker has participated in this vital work.

The Meeting is sponsoring a six session showing of *The Jesus Seminars*. We are using DVDs that cover who Jesus was and what did he actually preach. A half hour discussion will follow the DVD showings. The first session begins September 12th.

Our Clerk, George Strawbridge, Recording Clerk Jamie Tubman, Recorder Nancy Hunter, and member Terry Walker (Finance and Stewardship Committee) attended a seminar on clerking at Stony Run Meeting the past February. Our Meeting is pleased that they attended this session, a great benefit for a new Meeting. The Meeting held five discussion this past winter covering the 2010 Draft Revisions of Faith and Practice. These were very uplifting and transformative occasions as most of the attendees were new to Friends ways and practice.

The Blue Ridge Association of Meetings here in southwest Virginia is a source of Friendly support for us and we hope we are to the other Meetings. Nothing formal, but there is hope that the forming of a Quarterly Meeting may be considered by area Friends. We encourage Meetings to feel free to instigate communications with us by adding us to your email lists or by sending us articles to us at PO Box 2022, Abingdon, VA 24212-2022. Our email address is [www.AbingdonFriends@gmail.com](mailto:www.AbingdonFriends@gmail.com).

### ADELPHI FRIENDS MEETING

The year has been eventful, as we rejoiced in three weddings under the care of Meeting, and a fourth wedding in the manner of Friends. We continued offering new attendees and the curious a primer of Quakerism called Q101, a look at the processes, testimonies and history of Friends. The six Wednesday evening sessions took place at Friends Community School, where new families and new children are being drawn to examine the mystery and joys of the RSF.

Too, this June the school and AFM celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of Friends Community School with Meeting for Worship, music, games, cake and much merriment with founders and families dating back to the days the school began in the meeting room of AFM. Jane Manning, FCS's first head, came all the way

from her retirement home in Maine to celebrate, and inaugurated a peace garden installed to honor her service.

Friends created ad hoc committees to support the tuition of one poor child at Haiti's oldest girls school. Some Friends acted to raised funds and purchase supplies to send to Haiti's needy population, while others sold Haitian coffee at meeting and elsewhere in support of rural Haitian communities. Another ad hoc committee was begun in search of a communal response by Adelphi Friends Meeting to the on-going tragedy in the Horn of Africa. David Zaremka of the African Great Lakes Project visited to share stories and sign copies of his new book on peacemaking in Africa.

Meeting continued its search for ways to upgrade, renovate, build or move Adelphi Friends Meeting in light of the physical needs of the buildings. A building fund was created, a search for experts and architects is being considered as the three-years-and-growing effort moves forward. Finally, stepping down following completion of his term of service is Meeting Clerk Chase Clement, who will be followed by Jade Eaton beginning January 1, 2012.

### BALTIMORE MONTHLY MEETING, STONY RUN

Stony Run has been both faced with pain and blessed with several opportunities to grow spiritually and as a community recently. The pain of unexpected serious illness and death of vibrant Friends has brought us together in worship and caring community support. We have found great solace in having small groups worship with Friends in declining health at their own homes. Many Friends have been contributing practical help where support has been needed.

On a note of joy without pain, we are blessed with the experience of opening the Meeting House on First Day afternoons to a congregation of Friends from Africa. Their music and prayers leave us with a sense of the beauty of variety in worshipping the one God. The Working Group on Newcomers and Welcoming has continued its work to identify those new to Meeting, to help them feel welcome to Stony Run, and to sponsor events with a welcoming and community-building focus. We have recently sponsored a Make a New F/friend Simple Lunch as well as a reading and discussion group.

### BETHESDA FRIENDS MEETING

We are preparing for a second year of Spiritual Formation this coming fall. Many of the participants from last year will be continuing



*Annual Session photo by Nony Dutton*



Annual Session photo by Nony Dutton

their Spiritual Friendship groups while new Spiritual groups are being formed. We are continuing a *What Do You Mean By...?* series. Last year we looked at Quaker jargon and this year will focus on Quaker Testimonies: SPICE [Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, and Equality]. Join us each month on the second First Day at 9:30!

## BLUE RIDGE GATHERING

Blue Ridge Gathering met on May 1 at Blacksburg Meeting, under grey and rainy skies. About 50 Friends, including 10 children, attended. Abingdon, Blacksburg, Floyd, Maury River and Roanoke Meetings were represented. Regrets came from Fancy Gap Fellowship of Friends as well as several individual Friends from participating Meetings, who wanted to attend but were unable to at the last moment. Schedule included Meeting for Worship; potluck; singing; and an informative program from Ellen Arginteanu of the Christian Peacemakers Teams. First Day School in the morning and child care in the afternoon was also offered. Blue Ridge Gathering Friends united in a minute asking participating Meetings to ask their respective Meetings for Business to appoint representatives to the Gathering to plan and publicize future Gatherings.

## CARLISE MEETING

Carlisle Friends are involved with studying and plans to purchase a new furnace and air conditioner for the Meeting House. We are grateful that the oil burner and the large window air conditioners that were part of our building when we purchased it in 1993 have continued to operate since we moved in. The decision to pursue this improvement was motivated both by our understanding that the current equipment is well beyond its life expectancy and by our desire to make our Meeting House much more energy efficient. The Property Committee is close to a decision among the three bids we have been given, seeking the wisest choice concerning both price and quality factors.

One of the highlights of recent months was our Christmas coffee house which included musical, dramatic reading, story and commentary offerings. In a more serious vein, we were stretched and deepened with a series of four meditative second hour sessions with music led by Ruth Fitz and sharing led by David Fitz of York Monthly Meeting. Friends started to fulfill our desire for more music in the meeting with Don Kovacs and Morgan Evans leading us in song. Friends have mentioned hoping this program continues. Carlisle Friends Don Kovacs and Sherri Harper McCombs and Sandy Grotzburg of Chambersburg Meeting (PYM) visited the St.

John's Episcopal Church in Carlisle to lead a lively discussion of the peace testimony.

## FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

During the first half of 2011, our Meeting has taken under its care the marriages and weddings of Mark Meinke and Frank Taylor; Justin Connor and Mohamad Olabi (a wedding that was bicultural, bilingual and ecumenical); Jorge Sanchez and Mimi (Margaret) Edwards; and Alex Painter and Sarah Apgar.

The Ministry & Worship Committee received over 145 responses to a Spiritual State of the Meeting questionnaire that it posted on the Meeting's email list. The Committee prepared from those responses the most comprehensive Spiritual State of the Meeting report in recent memory. The Membership Committee has conducted a worship sharing session on the meaning of membership and contacted many non-resident members who have not in touch with the Meeting for some time.

Our First Day School is growing. During the 2010-2011 school year the First Day School and Child Care program served an estimated 83 children and 38 families compared to the previous school year when 62 children and 30 families were served.

The Property Committee has been leading community work days and working with contractors to improve our space. Nonprofit groups focusing primarily on human rights now share our refurbished space in Quaker House and Carriage House. These include the local AFSC program, Promundo, Tostan, the Peace Tax Fund and GreeneWorks. More costly changes to our property are being considered by the Capital Improvement Task Force, which is attempting to discern a plan on which the Meeting will unite and support financially to make our space handicapped accessible, green, free from water intrusion and more "user friendly."

## FREDERICK MONTHLY MEETING

Frederick Monthly Meeting Friends are beginning to gather again as the school year begins. Many of us spent time travelling to see relatives and friends and some of us participated in the wider Quaker community. It is these nurturing relationships which sustain us as many of us find challenges throughout the busy work of our lives. Some of us are blessed with being in the right space at the right time, doing the right work. Others of us question what we are doing. All in all our connections in the Spirit strengthen us individually and corporately.

In early July, a couple from our Meeting attended Friends General Conference in Iowa. Throughout the summer, many of our young people attended the Quaker camps. And, as is tradition, many of the parents participated in camp life as well, trading a week of service for tuition. But let's face it, if it weren't for the joy that adults feel in shared service with other Friends, they wouldn't be going back to cook, nurse, or maintain the camps! About twelve Frederick Friends attended Annual Session in Frostburg, for all or part of the week. There we gathered with other Friends to explore what it means to welcome others into our midst. This is a theme which touches a core at Frederick Monthly Meeting, and one which we hope to further explore. We are beginning to investigate ways to reach out to people in the community, and to Friends from whom we have not heard in awhile. On September 11, we hope to hold a worship

sharing session with others in our community.

We look forward to meeting with you whether it is at Yearly Meeting sponsored activities, or if you make your way to our Meeting.

### GOOSE CREEK FRIENDS MEETING

In June, we celebrated Book Sunday, an annual ritual in which each First Day School student receives a book from Meeting, teachers are thanked for their work during the school year, and everyone enjoys an ice cream social. Many of our kids attended BYM camps this summer, and we were happy to be able to make a donation towards the construction of the new pond at Shiloh.

On a beautiful August evening we held a potluck picnic on the lawn, and afterward hosted a showing of *The Last Hardware Store*. This new documentary film about the wonderfully old-fashioned Nichols Hardware Store in nearby Purcellville was produced by Goose Creek's Sarah Huntington. The late Ed Nichols, one of the proprietors of Nichols Hardware, was our treasurer for more than forty years.

### GUNPOWDER FRIENDS MEETING

Our First Day School families had a very successful and very wet camping experience on 13/14 Eighth Month. The inclement weather could not dampen the enthusiasm of either the children or the adults.

The Meeting has just completed installation of an induction hearing loop system, which hopefully will increase access to vocal ministry for those Friends with hearing aids. In the next few weeks we will be "tuning" the system to our Meeting Room so we can maximize its effectiveness. The new rectangular bench configuration continues to work well, and we will soon begin refurbishing those benches that require stabilization. In some cases the benches will need to be shortened somewhat to fit the new floor plan. We expect the bench work will take a few years to complete.

### HERNDON FRIENDS MEETING

Over the past six months, Herndon Friends Meeting has formed and implemented a Care Coordinating Committee to serve our members in need. The committee was a suggestion of Margaret Rogers, whose previous Meeting in Seattle, Washington, had a similar committee.

As needs arise—such as a member of the Meeting having back surgery or another having a broken leg—a coordinator on the Care Committee contacts the individual. This point person learns about the need and then reports back to the committee as a whole. Since we recognize that our small Meeting may not be able to meet every need that arises, the committee decides what arrangements can be coordinated. Once these actions are identified, members of the committee create a calendar on [Lotsahelpinghands.com](http://Lotsahelpinghands.com) so people can volunteer for tasks online. These tasks may be actions like cooking, cleaning, driving, or running errands. Individuals can also be contacted through e-mail for specific tasks not on the calendar. Although only a few months old, the Care Coordinating Committee has already matched needs with volunteers to help a couple of our Herndon Friends Meeting members.

### LITTLE FALLS FRIENDS MEETING



*Annual Session photo by Nony Dutton*

A Woodcut Prayer Flag Workshop will be held at Little Falls on Saturday, October 8 and Sunday, October 9 under the leadership of accomplished printmaker, Jules Burrowes. Jules is a member of that very artistic family that includes our own Louise Wheatley. She led a workshop in printmaking at the 2011 Quaker and the Arts Conference for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and most recently presented a demonstration on woodblock printing at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

The workshop will begin with a Meeting for Worship at which time attendees are allowed time to envision the image that their prayers bring to mind. Participants will create a 5"x7" image that speaks to their prayer in wood (or linoleum) and carve the relief image. The image will be printed on paper and then on cloth.

For more information about the workshop and how to participate, contact Alice Remsberg at [aremsberg@verizon.net](mailto:aremsberg@verizon.net).

### MIDLOTHIAN FRIENDS MEETING

Midlothian Meeting has two legally chartered charities under its care: The Thrifty Quaker and FriendShare. The Thrifty Quaker generates funds for mostly local causes by selling thrift items at a store in the heart of Midlothian village. Donations and sales have decreased significantly due to the economy. Despite this, during 2011 the Thrifty Quaker has been able to generate nearly \$10,000 for under-privileged children, animal rescue groups, homeless and poor families, and peace organizations; as well as provide free of charge clothing and household items to many people in need.

FriendShare is a type of community chest fund available to non-Quakers that provides one-time financial assistance to pay utility bills, clothing, medical services, housing costs, transportation, educational costs, and childcare. During 2011, FriendShare has provided \$7,500 to nearly 30 individuals in need. Fourteen of these were refugee children from the Congo who have settled in the Richmond area. The upcoming annual fund drive for FriendShare will be held again in November.

Over the last few years, Midlothian Friends Meeting has experienced a gradual decline in attendance at worship and Meeting events. In response, the Care and Community Committee has encouraged the formation of a number of Friendly Eights to help Friends become better acquainted. In October, the committee will be sponsoring an

event at the Clearing retreat center in Amelia County to provide a leisurely opportunity for Friends to join together in fun.

Finally, Midlothian Friends gathered on April 30 for the annual *Gathering for Clearness*. As a central part of this day, Friends shared a meal, held a worship sharing, and responded to a series of queries about the spiritual life of our community. Friends who attended found this to be an enriching day that deepened our sense of connection and spiritual community.

### PATUXENT FRIENDS MEETING

Patuxent Friends were happy to welcome visitors who made the drive to Southern Maryland to join us for Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting on Sixth month 12. Billed as *Worship, Fellowship and Fun*, the event was enjoyed by all. The beautiful day made a perfect setting as our clerk set up a tight rope and huge water slide outside for children of all ages! All-in-all, it was a perfect summer day to enjoy community.

Friends remain active in support of Project Echo, the homeless shelter in Prince Frederick. Our Meeting Clerk, Tim Keck, who serves on the Board of Directors for Project Echo, has taken the lead in a new event called Camp Out for Calvert. Participants, who raised sponsorship funds in support of the homeless shelter, experienced what it's like to be homeless by bringing their own tent or cardboard box, spending the night outdoors, and eating their own camp fire prepared meals. The experience included individuals, entire families, and youth groups. Other activities included group discussions to educate the youth on various avenues that lead to homelessness and musical entertainment around a camp fire. Several Friends participated in the event.

Friends recently completed a renovation of our Meeting House to make it more accessible. The central hallway was widened and the bathroom was remodeled to meet current code. Lack of fully accessible facilities has been a concern for years, and Friends are grateful to have found the energy and resources to accomplish this task.

### RICHMOND FRIENDS MEETING

This summer, Richmond Friends Meeting Adult Spiritual Education Committee sponsored a series of First Day classes entitled, *The Many Experiences and Expressions of Spirituality*. This series

allowed members and attenders to explore spirituality from other world religions and a wide range other areas. The series was a huge success and was very well attended. Class topics included: Nature as a Gateway to Mystical Moments; Spirituality in Poetry; Spirituality through Story; Discovering Your Own Spiritual Truth; Non-Theistic Spiritual Experience; Spirituality in Song.

The Meeting celebrated the graduations of three high school seniors: Ashton Bressler, Matt Moliterno, and Dale Wolf. Our best to these fine Young Friends. A new Haugh! Oscar Paz Haugh was born on June 14 and the precious baby was delivered just in the nick of time by his father, Scott, along Interstate 64!! Our very best wishes to Oscar, big sister, Rubi, Rosana and Scott Haugh. Beth Stanford and Jay Tubb were married under the care of the Meeting on July 9. Congratulations!

### SANDY SPRING FRIENDS MEETING

After several months of listening sessions and seasoning, the Meeting has approved a Minute on Same Gender Marriage. Friends regard marriage as religious in nature, being a solemn covenant made between two people in the presence of God. We apply the Procedure for Marriage under the care of Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends to all couples, regardless of sex or gender.

### VALLEY FRIENDS MEETING

Valley Friends are appreciating the sound panels that were erected in our Meeting Room. Older folk have remarked about the improvement in being able to hear spoken messages. We were happy to have the Teen Adventure group from Camp Shiloh spend a night at the Meeting. Our book group and circle of trust group continue to meet for a soup supper Wednesday evenings. The Buddhist Meditation group gathers on Thursday evenings except for the month of August. We were able to aid two students from Kenya attend Eastern Mennonite University's Summer Peace Building Institute this year. We enjoyed having some of the participants join us for worship. Two of our members work with JMU's Land Mine Action program and we enjoyed meeting and visiting with several of the attendees from various countries dealing with disarming land mines during a social gathering for the group. The heat of the past two months has encouraged holding Meeting for Worship out of doors under a large oak tree in our neighbor's yard on first days. This chance to worship closer to nature has been a pleasure.

### YORK MONTHLY MEETING

Homelessness - how is it defined? How many people in our local community are really affected? On May 4, Chris Fitz of Lancaster Friends Meeting (PYM) made a presentation at York Meeting as part of his 8-day 7-county Homeless Horizons Bicycle Tour sponsored by Brethren Housing Authority ([www.bha-pa.org](http://www.bha-pa.org)). The goal was to increase awareness of homelessness. More than 1 in 3 homeless people are under age 18 and 4 in 10 of these children are under age 6. Families with children comprise one of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population today. Homeless families who are "doubled up"—sleeping in cars and friends' living rooms—account for an untold majority of the homeless. These statistics are taken from [www.familypromise.org/fastfacts](http://www.familypromise.org/fastfacts). Unfortunately attendance at this presentation was low but it is an important topic that York Meeting has had to deal with several times in our backyard.



Annual Session photo by Nony Dutton

How can you help? 1. Talk to someone who is homeless and listen to what they need. 2. Donate time and financial resources to local homeless service providers. Investing in homeless services can save public expenditures more than \$1000 per person/year. 3. Write to political representatives about investing in homeless services now which saves us all money down the road.

A Quaker Meeting House filled to overflowing with ministry in song for a whole day? “This is a day that the Lord hath made.” Over 70 people poured into our Meeting House from all over the East Coast to join in the chorus of Sacred Harp Shape Note singers. York Meeting has hosted this gathering on the last Saturday in April annually for three years. The beautiful harmonies truly rang out.

On July 31, God blessed us with a sensational sunny summer day to have our Annual Homecoming Picnic. About 30 Friends, including two children, joined us for Meeting for Worship and a smorgasbord of taste bud tempting foods. Michael Molz started the afternoon entertainment with some guitar picking followed by a Shape Note quartet, songs by Ruth Fitz and a sprinkling of jokes by and for kids of all ages.

During worship sharing we have meditated on the topics of “What makes worship worshipful for you?”, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* by John Paul Lederach, and more recently, we have started to reflect on Quaker testimonies to deepen our understanding and appreciation of Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the Faith and Practice Revision Committee for all their work.



Shiloh Quaker Camp photo by Jenifer Morris

## BYM WELCOMES TWO NEW MEETINGS!

*Riley Robinson, General Secretary*

Baltimore Yearly Meeting welcomed Monongalia Monthly Meeting and Buckhannon Preparative Meeting under its care at Annual Session this summer. At least seven Friends from the Meetings were present at some or all of Annual Session. These two Meetings were previously members of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, and the Yearly Meeting is excited to have them join our community.

Monongalia Monthly Meeting is located in Morgantown, West Virginia. Like many local Meetings—such as Blacksburg, Charlottesville, State College, and Williamsburg—it’s in a university town, the home of West Virginia University. As well, like several of our Meetings, it’s in the midst of the Appalachian’s beautiful geography and rich culture. The Meeting owns its Meeting House, located in a quiet neighborhood that allows for plenty of light. The Meeting House can even accommodate an overnight stay for visitors! Friends gather weekly on First Day at 11:00 am in silent worship, followed by the sharing of thoughts that have not fully risen to be shared during Worship. Second hour discussions and potlucks are held. In their process of considering joining the Yearly Meeting, they took time to study the Yearly Meeting’s Faith and Practice and other publications. Buckhannon Preparative Meeting meets at the Meditation Chapel at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon. Meeting for Worship is held on the second and fourth First Days at 10:00 am.

Monongalia and Buckhannon join the growing Shepherdstown Preparative Meeting as Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s presence in

West Virginia. Most members and attenders are involved in wider community activities in a number of counties in West Virginia and Southwestern Pennsylvania. They come together as a Meeting to support and nurture one another. Monongalia participates in an annual statewide gathering of West Virginia Meetings from various Yearly Meetings and associations. This year they will be hosting the gathering on October 8 and 9.

We thank Monongalia and Buckhannon Friends for being so welcoming and helpful in the process of our getting to know each other. We all look forward to visting with them more in the future.



Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
17100 Quaker Lane  
Sandy Spring, MD 20860  
Address service requested

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage BLK-RT  
STD MAIL  
**PAID**  
Sandy Spring, MD  
Permit No. 10112

Do you want to receive the  
*Interchange* via email?  
Send your current email address to:  
admin@bym-rsf.org

---

## YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO US

Have you moved, or has any of your contact information changed? Please send any updates to [admin@bym-rsf.org](mailto:admin@bym-rsf.org)

---

## BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING UPCOMING EVENTS

SEE THE YEARLY MEETING WEBSITE FOR DETAILS AND OTHER EVENTS ([BYM-RSF.ORG](http://BYM-RSF.ORG))

### SEPTEMBER

- 16-18 – BYM Camping Alumni Weekend at Catocin Quaker Camp
- 17 – Saturday – Langley Hill Friends Meeting 50th Anniversary Celebration
- 24-25 – Friends Service Weekend at Shiloh Quaker Camp
- 25 – Saturday – Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting at Homewood Friends Meeting
- 25 – Saturday – Alexandria Friends Meeting Homecoming at Woodlawn Meeting House

### OCTOBER

- 1-2 – Friends Service Weekend at Opequon Quaker Camp
- 8-9 – Friends Service Weekend at Catocin Quaker Camp
- 8-9 – Quakerism and the Planet Gathering at Monongalia Friends Meeting
- 22 – Saturday – BYM Interim Meeting at Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run
- 29 – Saturday – BYM Friendly Sing-In at Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run
- 29-30 – Friends Service Weekend at Opequon Quaker Camp

### NOVEMBER

- 19 – Saturday – BYM Working Group on Racism trip to Sandy Spring Slave Museum

### JANUARY

- 27-29 – BYM Women's Retreat

## STAFF AND OFFICERS OF BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING

Elizabeth "Betsy" Meyer	Presiding Clerk <a href="mailto:ymclerk@bym-rsf.org">ymclerk@bym-rsf.org</a>	Robinne Gray	Development Director <a href="mailto:rgray@bym-rsf.org">rgray@bym-rsf.org</a>
Riley Robinson	General Secretary <a href="mailto:gensec@bym-rsf.org">gensec@bym-rsf.org</a>	Jane Megginson	Camp Program Secretary <a href="mailto:janemegginson@bym-rsf.org">janemegginson@bym-rsf.org</a>
Margaret "Meg" Meyer	Clerk of Interim Meeting <a href="mailto:imclerk@bym-rsf.org">imclerk@bym-rsf.org</a>	David Hunter	Camp Property Manager <a href="mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsf.org">davidhunter@bym-rsf.org</a>
Marion Ballard	Treasurer <a href="mailto:marionballard@comcast.net">marionballard@comcast.net</a>	Alison Duncan	Youth Secretary <a href="mailto:youthsec@bym-rsf.org">youthsec@bym-rsf.org</a>
Margo Lehman	Comptroller <a href="mailto:comptroller@bym-rsf.org">comptroller@bym-rsf.org</a>	Wayne Finegar	Administrative Assistant <a href="mailto:admin@bym-rsf.org">admin@bym-rsf.org</a>