

Interchange

Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

MEETING INDIGENOUS NEIGHBORS, PROMOTING VISIBILITY

On Oct 13 in Sandy Spring, MD, the Indian Affairs Committee hosted leaders of nearby tribes and Native American organizations and regional area residents of all ages for interactive learning. The event was unusual—neither a powwow nor a symposium—but rather a mix of panel discussions, photographic, art and map displays, and activities such as beading and social dances that encouraged people to learn as they were led. Our hearts were warmed by the comments of Native participants who felt respected and valued by the serious consideration of their concerns. We know we need to listen, perceive, connect, then act.

Attendees heard a variety of individual experiences. The roster of Native speakers included a community college dean, patent examiner, lobbyist, health service provider, anti-pipeline campaigns organizer, retired computer programmer, and former military officer. They talked about challenges for their communities but also about outstanding successes by Native Americans and answered questions. One person, poetically yet painfully, compared his search for early tribal history and cultural practices to an art conservator who discovers a painting under a painting; contemporary indigenous people’s past is covered by layers of European domination.

Indigenous Neighbors continued on page 4

VALLEY FRIENDS MEETING— CARBON NEUTRAL ON A FAITH BUDGET

On November 14, Valley Friends Meeting achieved (near) carbon neutrality for its Meeting House, an historic old church building in Dayton, Virginia.

The multi-step process began in April 2014 with consciousness-raising by a committee established to study climate destabilization. Drafting and refining our Minute on Climate Change over a four-month period and with the full Meeting’s input raised awareness and commitment to action. The Valley Friends Monthly Meeting’s Minute on Climate Change was approved by our Monthly Meeting in August 2014. The Minute subsequently appeared as an op-ed in Harrisonburg’s local newspaper, the Daily News-Record, informing the community of our intention and asking others to join with us.

In early 2015, an ad hoc Carbon-Reduction Committee began investigating strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of the Meeting House. Brainstorming, energy audits, and winnowing processes revealed a tantalizing possibility: reduction of our carbon footprint to net zero was feasible.

Carbon Neutral continued on page 9

GET READY FOR SUMMER 2019 ENROLLMENT BEGINS JANUARY 15

Camp Registration for BYM Camps, Catoctin, Opequon, Shiloh, and TA opens January 15th at 7pm for returning camp families and February 1st at 7am for new families. For more information, dates, rates, or to register see our website at:

bymcamps.org



A Note of Thanks



Dear Friends,

I started this journey as the BYM Development Director on February 1, 2014. It has been an extraordinary experience to be welcomed as a part of this vibrant and growing community. It has not been without challenges but I have always seen challenges not as obstacles but as opportunities for real growth. I have seen growth and change in these short five years.

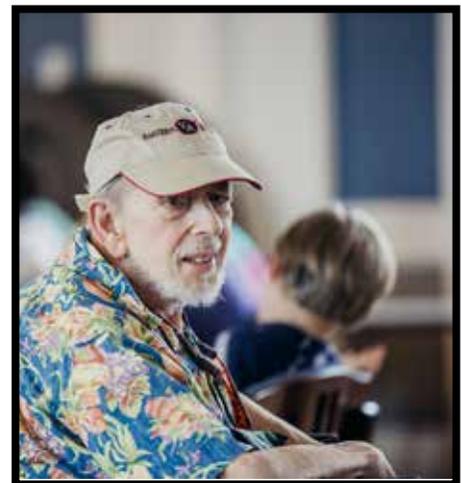
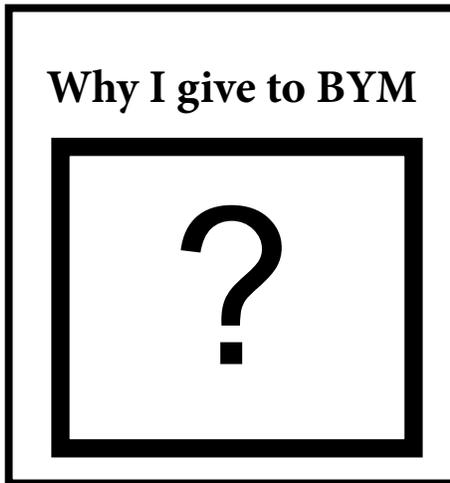
I would like to encourage you all to support the important work that BYM is doing. Support the ongoing work of STRIDE and Growing Diverse Leadership around Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Support the extraordinary work that the BYM Camping and Youth Programs are doing for young people within the Yearly Meeting and beyond. Support the staff and volunteers that make BYM function effectively in a world that needs faith communities like Friends. Support Friends who want to attend BYM Annual Session, BYM Spiritual Formation Retreats or BYM Women's Retreat but cannot afford to pay the registration fees. Support the work of growing and connecting local Meetings. There is much to do and many wonderful Friends to help make it happen.

Finally, thank you for traveling with me on this wonderful journey. I have a soft and comforting place in my heart for the BYM community, specifically for all of you.

Warmest Regards,
Ann Venable
BYM Development Director



I GIVE FOR YOU!!

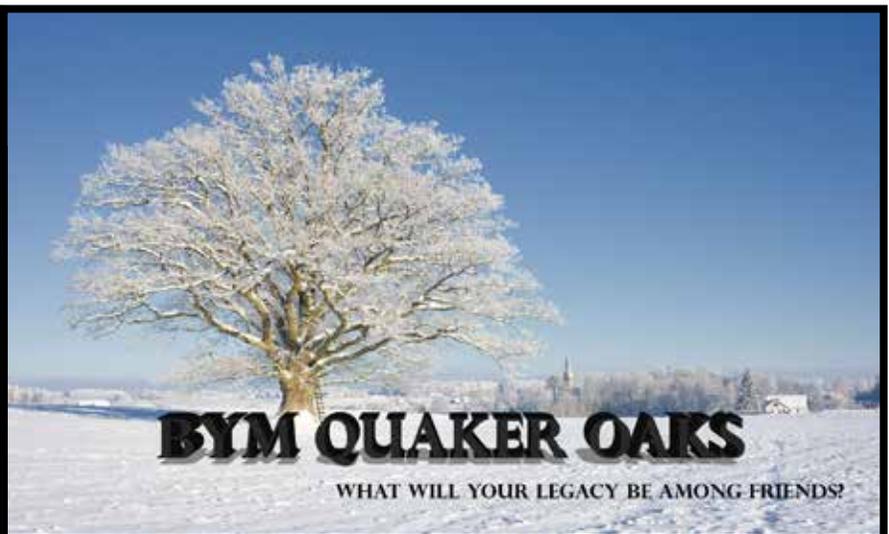


AND FOR YOU!!

Create a lasting legacy and become a BYM Quaker Oak today.

- Name BYM in your will or trust.
- Gift from your retirement.
- Gifts of stock or appreciated assets.
- Gift of life insurance.
- Invest in a Charitable Gift Annuity.
- Create a Charitable Trust.

<http://www.bymrsf.plannedgiving.org/>



PREPARE FOR ANNUAL SESSION 2019!

BYM 2019 Annual Session
Hood College, Frederick, MD
July 29—August 4, 2019

Families Take Note: JYM Children Attend Free!

Quaker Testimonies as Tools for the Journey

"We Friends have some precious tools and insights to help create the conditions for peace, stop the destruction of God's natural environment, and enable the growth of a just society"
Patience A. Schenck, *Answering the Call to Heal the World*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 383, 2017

- **Marcelle Martin**, pre-session retreat leader, a member of Swarthmore (Pa.) Meeting, is a writer, teacher, workshop leader, and author of *Our Life Is Love: The Quaker Spiritual Journey*.



- Tuesday evening plenary presented by **Patti Nesbitt**. Patti is a graduate of the School of the Spirit, and is called to strengthen the Quaker community through intervisitation. She has traveled extensively in the ministry both internationally and in this country. She is a member of Sandy Spring Meeting.

- Wednesday afternoon Plenary led by **Young Adult Friends**, who will share their work to address racism in our community, including strategies they learned working as a BYM Change group this year.

- SATURDAY NIGHT (not Friday night) Carey Lecture presented by **Eileen Flanagan**. Eileen is a Quaker author, activist and teacher. For five years, she served as board chair of Earth Quaker Action Team, which successfully pressured one of the largest banks in the US to stop financing mountaintop removal coal mining. She is a member of Chestnut Hill Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.



Registration opens at the end of April

PLAN NOW TO BE THERE!



Counter Protesters at Unite the Right Rally

WANT TO LEAD A WORKSHOP AT ANNUAL SESSION?

If you, or a committee you are part of, wants to lead a workshop, please submit this form (www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/workshop-prop.html) not later than February 22. Workshops are held Thursday, Friday, and Saturday afternoons, and typically cover a range of topics that relate to the theme of Annual Session, and other topics of interest to Friends. Interest group times are also available for those that want to converse with others on a topic, without the preparation needed for a full workshop. Interest group requests can be taken any time before or during Annual Session.

HEALING CENTER COORDINATOR NEEDED

The Healing Center at Annual Session has offered a valuable time and space to BYM Friends to experience rest and healing thru various modalities offered by volunteer practitioners. If you might serve as a coordinator for Annual Session 2019, or can recommend someone who might serve, please contact Barb Platt, Program Committee Clerk, jrbp47quaker@gmail.com. Thank you.

SPEAKER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANNUAL SESSION 2020

SOUGHT

Program Committee is already at work on Annual Session 2020. We are always open to and looking for speaker suggestions. These may be BYM Friends, perhaps not known to many of us, or others from around the Quaker world. Please send your suggestion(s), including why you are recommending this person, to Barb Platt, Program Committee clerk, jrbp47quaker@gmail.com. Please include contact information if you have it. Thank you!

GUESTS WELCOMED TO PISCATAWAY LAND AT EVENT

Indigenous Neighbors continued from page 1

Other Highlights

Guests were greeted by signs saying “You are on Piscataway land.” The opening ceremony was held outdoors. Hope Butler representing Tribal Chair Natalie Standingontherock Proctor (Cedarville Piscataway Band) and Tribal Chair Francis Gray (Piscataway Conoy) gave remarks. Michael Nephew (Eastern Band Cherokee) sang and BYM General Secretary Ned Stowe gave a welcome and encouraged a moment of silence. Afterwards, Rico Newman (Choctico Piscataway) offered “smudging,” a ritual cleansing, to those who wanted to participate. Inside, talks and cultural presentations provided a variety of learning experiences for all ages.

Clan Mother Crystal Proctor and Hope Butler from the Piscataway Mobile Museum explained the meaning of the dances they demonstrated and the regalia they wore. Their Copper Kettle also made authentic Native food. The American Indian Society of DC sold the always popular fry bread. Nine vendors showcased crafts such as weaving and jewelry making. The Baltimore American Indian Center and Lifelines had information tables.



American Indian Society member making fry bread

will not allow themselves to be ignored or treated as a remnant of the past.

The event was held at Sandy Spring Friends School. Eight students from there made a presentation on how sports teams and fans degrade Indians and why the student government decided to ban the R word {redskins} from campus. This was an atypical program component.

When non-Native institutions bring in Native storytellers, flute players, guest speakers, and experts to educate or entertain, interactive communication is rare. In this case, the Native American participants could hear and respond. Tara Houska, co-founder of Not Your Mascots, applauded the way SSFS students had taken action and encouraged advocacy on Indian child welfare.

Aftermath

Michael Nephew, former president of the American Indian Society, emailed this about the event: “I had an absolutely fabulous time. You lined up a great set of speakers for your panel. I [also] was impressed by the students that I got to listen to. I wished I could have heard all of them. Great job to all involved in arranging this.”

A film festival, that highlighted Native Americans from 8 to 80, illustrated the surprisingly broad world of Native humor as well as current issues. The most popular light-hearted video was made by kids in Alaska; it shows multiple members of their rural community spelling out the words of the Hallelujah Chorus as the music soars. Adults viewed some films with heartening scenes of Native families living a satisfying life and others documenting profound injustices and continuing exploitation. Audience members were particularly interested in female leaders and those who had taken environmental or political action. Such heroes made clear that indigenous people

Event activities went on simultaneously. Some attendees said they appreciated having choices while others would have liked undivided attention given to the dancers or speakers. There were requests for a future all-day event. The Rappahannock, Monocan, and Chickahominy tribes would probably participate if one were held in Virginia.

Since the goal was community involvement, it was gratifying that afterwards Olney theatre representatives requested assistance with diversity, inclusion, land acknowledgment statements, and even casting.

PASTORAL CARE WORKING GROUP

Baltimore Yearly Meeting, at our June 2018 Interim Meeting, approved the creation of a Pastoral Care Working Group (PCWG) to be held under the care of the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee. The PCWG is currently forming, and we are excited to ask if Friends in BYM are led to join us. Because this is a working group, and not a committee, Friends may serve with the PCWG while holding membership in another BYM committee, or may feel led to serve with no other committee membership.

The PCWG's mission is to support the growth of healthy Meetings by supporting the work of local Meetings's own pastoral care committees. As a first step, the PCWG, as outlined in its charge, will proactively "develop and identify resources for use within Meeting communities. Resources might include readings, workshops, or other learning opportunities for individuals in the local Meeting or for the Meeting as a whole. Resources might also come in the

form of experienced individuals (from within or without BYM or the Religious Society of Friends) who can provide direct support or counsel to local Meetings. The PCWG might also host learning or networking opportunities on pastoral care issues at BYM Annual Session or other times throughout the year."

The Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee will continue to work closely with BYM leadership to directly serve local Meetings in times of "challenge or crisis", though it may call on the PCWG for helpful resources.

Please contact Windy Cooler, Liaison to the Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee from the PCWG, for more information and to discern whether joining this new working group may be part of your calling in BYM. Windy can be reached best through emailing her at WindyCooler@gmail.com.

THE JOYS OF TRAVEL MINISTRY

Intervisitation Working Group

In thinking about having a leading, having fun is not the first thing that usually comes to mind, although it does suggest that we are on the right path. That is the experience that many Friends who travel in the ministry have, with some claiming that it is “wonderful” as well as challenging, centering, fulfilling, validating, and transforming. It helps to be relaxed with some of the unpredictability of traveling—which is easier when companioned by an elder who can share holding the adventure and the purpose in the Light with us.

Traveling in the ministry is a Quaker tradition that goes back to the beginning, when the spread of Quaker practice was wholly dependent on preachers who carried God’s word to other communities and countries. Today, more and more Friends feel a divine leading to share in this ministry, though most are less evangelical. FUM, FWCC, and BYM all have intervisitation programs. Our working group has 15 active participants who gather for spirited meetings 4 times a year. In 2018, our group traveled to at least 13 different Meetings, 18 Yearly Meetings, and 4 other countries. We also hosted Friends from 8 Yearly Meetings at Annual Session.

Listen to the comments we shared at our last meeting: “There was an ongoing Divine Love expressed.” “As the ministry bubbled up, we recognized it in ourselves and others, with a willingness to embrace it.” “Sharing ministry about saying ‘I love you’ rippled throughout the week and broke down unspoken walls that had divided us for years.” “We found many ways to connect, in spite of differences. The Ministry of Presence was the center of all our connections.” “I felt the power of being called to this, similar to the way Fox wrote about the power of God coming over him.”

Friends, does getting to know more of our wider Quaker family speak to you? Please email us intervisitation@bym-rsf.org to explore if this is for you. We can support travelers even if you don’t come to meetings. We also welcome invitations to visit within BYM. We hope to hear from you!

We want to lift up our traveling ministers who will be overseas this Spring with requests to hold them in the Light: Meg Boyd Meyer and Arthur Meyer now at Ramallah Friends School; Georgia Fuller returning to Kenya; Adrian Bishop and Rosalie Dance going back to Belize; Karie Firoozmand traveling to Costa Rica; and Patti Nesbitt and Michael Conklin returning to New Zealand and Australia.



WORKING GROUP ON TRANSGENDER AND NON-BINARY CONCERNS

At Annual Session 2018, BYM approved a minute recognizing that of God in our non-binary and transgender brothers and sisters, celebrating their presence in our Meetings, and making a commitment to support them and to advocate for their human and civil rights in the broader world.

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee was asked to suggest steps that Meetings can take in support of the minute. The Yearly Meeting agreed that a Working Group on Transgender and Non-Binary Concerns be formed under the care of Peace and Social Concerns. The Working Group first got together in October.

The rights of non-binary and transgender individuals are far from secure. After signs of progress in past years, the protection of the basic human rights of marginalized people abruptly became much more difficult in the United States with the inauguration of the Trump administration. The administration has proposed policies that would allow transgender individuals to serve in the armed forces only if they serve as their biological sex (also known as “gender assigned at birth”) and that federal prisons essentially ignore the declared gender identity of inmates. The administration also has revoked federal support of transgender individuals in schools and places of employment, and has refused to recognize the authentic gender identity of those transgender persons seeking gender-specific federal jobs. These policies do not reflect the current scientific and medical thinking regarding gender, nor do they conform to the International Declaration of Human Rights. And they are simply inhumane.

The Working Group feels that the Meetings have a role to assist and support transgender and non-binary people, including influencing changes to our national laws. We are working to pull together resources that Meetings can use to inform this work, but we need more help. Specifically, we need broader representation from Meetings. Expressions of interest can be sent to transgender@bym-rsf.org.

BYM APPORTIONMENT MEETINGS

You are invited to find out more about BYM’s budget and the role of apportionments—the money that your Meeting and others send to BYM. The Stewardship and Finance Committee will present a first proposal of Monthly Meeting Apportionments for 2020 as well as a rough draft of the 2020 Yearly Meeting Budget. We also will answer any questions about the simplified procedure for calculating apportionment amounts recently adopted by BYM. (You may find it helpful to review your own Meeting’s completed Apportionment form before you come.) Please come, ask questions, and give feedback to the Stewardship and Finance Committee. These annual apportionment meetings are also an excellent opportunity to learn more about how other Meetings handle their finances and to discuss common issues.

To facilitate attendance, we will host two meetings, one toward the north and one to the south. The first meeting will be hosted by Little Falls Meeting on April 6, 2019. The second meeting will likely be the following weekend, location TBD. Friends will gather beginning at 9:30 am for coffee and snacks. The Apportionment Meeting will begin at 10:00 and is expected to conclude by noon. Questions or for more information, contact the Yearly Meeting office at 301-774-7663.

Spring Family Camp Weekends 2019

Join us for a weekend of fun, friends and fellowship!

Family Camp Weekends at Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camp Properties offer us all a chance to enjoy our beautiful camp properties at a special time of year. Individuals and families are invited to spend the day or the weekend at camp. Each weekend will have a program coordinator 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, crafts projects 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.



Spring 2018 Family Camp Weekends

Shiloh Quaker Camp	April 26 – 28, 2019
Catoctin Quaker Camp	May 10 – 12, 2019
Opequon Quaker Camp	May 17 - 19, 2019

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!

FAITH AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE

The new standing Faith and Practice Committee has begun to meet. As a committee, we have agreed that we will use a multi-modal approach to communicate with the Yearly Meeting on an ongoing basis, including the *Interchange*, regular reports to Interim Meeting and Annual Session, updates to the website, and communications directly to Meeting Clerks and the committee’s Annual Report.

We see our work being done in pieces, and proposing pieces for review throughout the year. First of all, we are working to make pdf copies available (on the BYM website) of both the 1988 (revised

2001) approved *Faith and Practice* and the 2013 *Faith and Practice* Draft/Resource document. Much great work was accomplished by the previous committees, and we see our charge as one that will bring to you updated versions for your consideration throughout the years.

Questions and concerns should come to us via Meetings, committees, and Interim or Yearly Meeting sessions. We will be meeting monthly, mostly via phone, but in person at Interim Meetings. Please send questions to fandp@bym-rsf.org. Likewise, we will occasionally send questions to Meetings and committees to review portions in a timely fashion so that we can move forward.

FRIENDS UNITED MEETING

Georgia E. Fuller, Langley Hill

FUM launched a fabulous on-line bookstore! (friends-united-meeting.myshopify.com): The store has Quaker writings—both early and contemporary—and books on peace and nonviolence from Fox to Gandhi and from Ramallah’s Jean Zaru to Bethesda’s Dave Zarembka. The catalogue includes old classics from Howard Thurman and new books like *Following Jesus Without Embarrassing God*. Religious Ed committees will find books and workbooks for adults, youth, and children.

Kenyan Friends talk about challenges, not difficulties: Are we up to the challenge of Christian African Friends? Quaker Christianity became rooted in Kenyan soil over 3 generations ago. For many US Friends, when we think of Christianity we think the Spanish Inquisition, the Salem Witch Trials, and the current pedophile scandals in the Roman Church. For many Kenyans, Quaker Christianity means hospitals, schools, and opportunities for women’s leadership through

the United Society of Friends Women International. Kenyans not burdened by Western controversies like predestination v. free will.

Over 40% of the world’s Quakers live in East Africa. They will be the dominant influence on the future of Friends for the 21st century. At Annual Session, I challenged us to begin discerning what part we want to play in the future of Quakerism. Now is the time to gather data for our discernment. We can begin by periodically checking the FUM website www.friendsunitedmeeting.org. In addition, we can sign up for the weekly and monthly e-news at the website’s contact page. www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/contact-us.html. We can think about attending the next Triennial meetings in Kisumu, Kenya, July 12-18, 2020.

For informal and in-depth challenging discussions, invite Georgia Fuller to your area (but not in March or April when she will be in Belize and Kenya). georgiafuller@gmail.com.

FMW FRIENDS COUNTER-PROTEST UNITE THE RIGHT RALLY

Debbie Churchman, Friends Meeting of Washington

In late July 2018, we started to receive a leading regarding the “Unite the Right” rally. The rally was organized by Jason Kessler, one of the co-organizers of the 2017 event in Charlottesville. Kessler wanted to come to DC to mark the anniversary of that event. The National Park Service had approved his rally at Lafayette Square. Numerous groups of counter-protesters had also applied to be there at the same time. It looked like the makings of a hornet’s nest, and scared the bejeezus out of us. And yet, here was this leading...

Various meetings were held at the Monthly and Yearly Meeting level, testing the leading. Friends were generally supportive at Friends Meeting of Washington, though things quickly devolved into a hilarious discussion about what color t-shirts we should wear to help the police distinguish our group. (We settled on Quaker gray.) The interest group at Annual Session was discouraging. As one attendee gently put it, “I don’t see asking Quakers to sit in worship while surrounded by violent, screaming white supremacists to be a recipe for success.” She had a point. We came away thinking this idea was probably nuts, and dangerous besides. How irresponsible were we being? How naïve? And yet, here was this leading...

At the interest group, a member of Charlottesville spoke eloquently about her Meeting’s actions on that horrible weekend. They’d worked with an interfaith group that was holding services in a public park, and taken their turn by holding a Meeting for Worship (they went after the Buddhists). She said it helped the Meeting to identify and stand up for their values, and served as a connecting point for them in the wider Charlottesville interfaith community. We kept thinking that Quakers have a real gift for the world. It’s our style of worship, which is open to all, and opening to all. It felt right that we should use our gift in this way. So we put out the call to area Meetings, and waited.

We then discovered that several communities of faith were planning actions that day, most of them far away from Lafayette Park. We decided that, in addition to our action at Lafayette, we would send some folks to the action at Freedom Plaza. We hoped that one or two people would head there, and if we were really lucky, maybe we could get 10 or even 15 people to come with us to Lafayette.

Praying about this, it came to me very strongly that I was responsible only for catching the leading—I was not in charge of the response. My only job was to follow the leading. And then Friends stepped up—we started to get calls from people coming from as far as Roanoke, Virginia and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. People took on tasks. Things moved forward.

On the day of the rally, we made one last announcement. Then a slew of people descended, wanting Love Thy Neighbor pins and directions, ready to roll. Barbara Briggs scooped up 17 people and took off for Freedom Plaza, carrying our Quakers for Equality banner.

Just before 3 pm, folks started streaming into the Meeting House, wearing their good Quaker gray and ready to participate. Everyone buddied up, exchanging phone numbers. We kept putting out chairs, and printing more “buddy sheets” for friends to fill out. By the end, the Assembly Room was jammed. Even more people waited

for us down at the park with Barbara’s group, which had moved to Lafayette. J.E. McNeil gave her excellent training, cutting it short when we heard that the Unite the Right rally folks decided to show up an hour early.

We took off, holding our Love Thy Neighbor/No Exceptions banner. As we approached the park, a group of black-clad, black-flagged people were marching and shouting obscenities. I assumed they were the alt-right. Turns out, it was Antifa, who are supposedly with the Progressives.

The park had been divided, with a sad, small group of 30 to 50 white nationalists huddled in the southeast corner and literally thousands of counter-protesters occupying the northern half. We wandered in, sat down, and started our worship, as some Friends held our banners. Soon, we became this island of calm in the midst of anger. People took pictures and asked questions. Some sidled over and stood nearby; some sat down with us and sank into the nourishing silence. An African American woman came over to hug us, telling us over and over that we just need more love. Thunder rumbled, and a gentle rain started to fall. Friends prayed. It was so, so beautiful. Finally, we decided that Meeting was ready to close. We shook hands, and sang all the verses to Amazing Grace. People around us joined in. It was glorious.

In all, we had more than 80 people there from at least six Meetings. We showed up on people’s Facebook pages and Twitter accounts, with one person calling us “the most peaceful protest at the park.” We got tons of likes—a significant number from folks in the alt right (go figure). In some ways, it felt like the most evangelical thing we’d ever done.

We floated off, some on to other things and some back to the Meeting for some soup and a gentle debrief. The folks from Philadelphia and Roanoke had a 3 hour drive to get home, so we didn’t stay too long. Everyone pitched in with the clean-up.

It was still light out when we left. And it was Light within.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RETREAT

ON FEBRUARY 23, 2019

Please join us for a day focused on *Teaching Friends across the Generations: a Day for Sharing our Wisdom and Inspiring One Another* held at Frederick Meeting House, February 23 from 10-3:30pm, with a snow date of April 13th.

The morning will focus on what we have found most meaningful and successful in our individual Meetings. We will share with each other our most successful lessons and programmatic approaches and have time to hear from a couple of our elder teachers. In the afternoon we will brainstorm ideas about some common challenges we face, (eg, unpredictable attendance, honoring differences in children while keeping the group together, shrinking and inconsistent attendance, establishing a nurturing and constructive environment for teachers/teacher recruitment.)

We will close by exploring and developing an idea from our RE discussion/listening groups: Learning Boxes for Teaching Across the Generations. This would involve developing "Learning Boxes" or resource packets which would contain lesson plans, book recommendations, etc. for each age group-from preschool to adult RE. Each Learning Box would focus on one particular theme or topic, such as simplicity or compassion. All members of the Meeting would concurrently study some aspect of the same theme, giving an opportunity for increased intergenerational cohesion and interaction.

For this retreat to be most productive, we need you. If you can't make it, please recruit someone from your Meeting to attend. For information or to register, please contact Ellen Arginteanu, at ellenandjules@protonmail.com or 814-206-6712.

The Religious Education Committee has exciting work to do. Would you join us?

Groups of people interested in Religious Education have met at Interim Meetings and at Annual Session 2018. These rich discussions generated ambitious and exciting goals for the committee"

- Develop a resource list including "must have books" online teaching resources, different curricula available
- Develop/ gather teaching packets with "ready to go lessons"
- Explore the idea of Learning Boxes- Learning Boxes for Teaching across the Generations- Is it possible and desirable to develop Learning Boxes or resource packets which would contain lesson plans, book recommendations, etc. for each age group- from preschool to adult RE. Each Learning Box would focus on one particular themes or topics, such as simplicity or compassion. All members of the Meeting would study some aspect of the same theme, concurrently, giving the opportunity for increased intergenerational cohesion and interaction.

Would you like to join us in working on these or other RE related goals? Contact your Nominating Committee representative or Ellen Arginteanu at ellenandjules@protonmail.com or 814-206-6712.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Spring Spiritual Formation Retreat will be held on May 17th-19th at the beautiful Shepherd's Spring Retreat Center in Sharpsburg, Maryland. The retreat offers time for personal reflection, sharing in spiritual friendship, singing, woodland walks, and wonderful meals. Join with Friends from across the Yearly Meeting as we journey together in our seeking and our friendship. More information will be shared via email and the BYM website later this winter, but in the meantime, mark your calendar. Registration will open later in the winter.

MILES WHITE BENEFICIAL SOCIETY ANNOUNCES EDUCATIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Miles White Beneficial Society, a charitable organization affiliated with the Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), is accepting applications for scholarships for college undergraduate students up to \$5000 as well as applications for grants up to \$5000 to non-profit 501(c)3 educational organizations in the Greater Baltimore Metropolitan area.

The application deadline for both is March 15, 2019.

Send written applications to:
William O. Miles, Secretary,
Miles White Beneficial Society
c/o Baltimore Monthly Meeting of Friends, Stony Run
5116 N. Charles Street
Baltimore MD 21210

Send electronic applications to: mileswhite@stonyrunfriends.org

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Preference for awarding scholarships shall be given to applications from the Greater Baltimore Metropolitan Area and to those with connections to Friends Meetings or their members within the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Full details about the application process is available at www.bym-rsf.org/events/othernews.html#miles.

GRANTS FOR EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Preference for awarding grants will be given to those organizations that are associated with the Society of Friends and that are providing educational opportunities, including books and instructional materials, for young people. Full details about the application process is available at www.bym-rsf.org/who_we_are/organizations/mileswhite/mileswhite.html#grants.

SPRING LOBBY WEEKEND COMING IN MARCH

FCNL's [Spring Lobby Weekend](#) is an annual advocacy event for students, and this year, this exciting event takes place in Washington, DC March 23-26, 2019.

This March we will be revisiting our immigration work started at last year's event, and we are excited to welcome 450 young adults to Washington, DC to tell their stories and make their voices heard!

This event will include three days of lobby trainings and speakers followed by one day of lobbying on Capitol Hill.

If you have any questions or are interested in recruiting young adults in your area, please contact Larissa@fcnl.org.



VALLEY FRIENDS FIND WAYS TO REDUCE CARBON FOOTPRINT

Carbon Neutral continued from page 1

In time, it became clear that our Monthly Meeting would implement carbon reduction in two-phases. Phase I: replace the ancient oil furnace with an energy efficient electric heat pump. Phase II: install a solar array on the south-facing roof sufficiently large to meet all electrical demands. Initial estimates ranged to \$80,000 for both phases, a substantial sum for our small Monthly Meeting. Nevertheless, the Meeting asked the ad hoc Committee to pursue a “way forward.”

Fundraising efforts involved members and attenders of our Monthly Meeting, reaching out to the local environmentally aware community, grant proposals, contributions by affinity groups, and Friendly loans. The highlight of our fund-raising outreach was a wonderful benefit concert attended by some 60 Friends and neighbors interested in carbon reduction.

Following successful fundraising and selecting of a mechanical contractor by competitive bid, Phase I, removing the old inefficient oil furnace and replacing it with a modern highly efficient electric heat pump, was completed in December 2016, reducing our carbon

footprint by 15,800 pounds of carbon dioxide annually.

Phase II, installing a solar panel array to supply the electrical demands of the Meeting House, seemed beyond our Monthly Meeting's financial reach until early 2017, when power-purchase agreements (PPAs) became available in our locale. Under PPAs, Valley Friends Meeting would incur no up-front costs while agreeing to purchase “green” solar energy at market-competitive rates from the provider.

Through a second competitive bid process, we selected a clean electricity provider. They installed our 10.54 KW array on October 31, 2018. Power generation commenced November 14, completing Phase II. With additional energy-efficiency modifications to the Meeting House at the completion of Phase II the total annual estimated reduction of carbon dioxide is 27,940 pounds.

Valley Friends Meeting has achieved what when we began with our Minute On Climate Change four years ago seemed impossible—carbon neutrality on a Faith budget! The Minute concludes with an invitation to “other faith communities, individuals, and groups...to join us...in this ongoing effort to heal the planet.” The bold request put the onus initially on Valley Friends Monthly Meeting to reduce our own carbon footprint.

In addition, our achievement of net-zero carbon also encouraged three Meeting households to install residential solar. Our Monthly Meeting's lowered utility costs have allowed us to “pay it forward” by financially supporting Give.Solar, another Harrisonburg community solarization initiative to provide carbon free solar electric power to local social service agencies.

But our work doesn't stop there. We hope to be not only an inspiration for others but also a resource to help other Meetings achieve net-zero carbon emissions. If Valley Friends Monthly Meeting can pull off this miracle (albeit with generous community support), your Meeting can too. Phase I and phase II are completed for us.

Our phase III is to fulfill the commitment of our Minute on Climate Change to help others become carbon neutral as well. Contact us at [Hello@ValleyFriends.org](mailto>Hello@ValleyFriends.org) to discuss this idea.



BALTIMORE MONTHLY MEETING, STONY RUN

We have a Spirit-led Parenting Group, meeting monthly, that shares readings and concerns. Kenyan Friends in our area hold a programmed meeting for worship at Stony Run once a month and hosted the All Kenyan Quaker Worship Experience, with attendance from throughout the US, in August. 18 people from Stony Run and Homewood are participating in our local Spiritual Formation Program this year. Our member Barbara Treasure has installed "PeaceFire" banners and flags on our front porch during the quarterly Baltimore Ceasefire weekends in 2018. Our annual Fall concert featured Warren Wolf and Wolfpack.

CHARLOTTESVILLE FRIENDS MEETING

As we end the year, we are preparing to host homeless women for two weeks in January. Our Junior Young Friends have been selling jars of cookie mix to raise money for grocery cards for hungry families. After months of discussion, we changed the name of Overseers Committee to Care and Clearness Committee. Our two worship sessions have been well-attended, and we enjoy learning together in the hour in-between as we share spiritual journeys, Quaker history, bible study, and other enlightening things. In October we had a retreat at Camp Shiloh where we told stories of our Meeting and individuals in it through our 80-year history. At the end of the weekend a song was composed. Here is the chorus which is sung to the tune of Red River Valley:

*We are Friends from the Charlottesville Meeting
You are welcome to share in our tale
Your are welcome to join us in witness
To the Light which we know will not fail*

HERNDON FRIENDS MEETING

At our November Meeting for Business, Herndon Friends united behind this minute: "In the interest of peace, and with a deep concern

for the living world, Herndon Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends encourages Friends to discuss how to extend their love and compassion to animals, and to consider their welfare when making food choices." We continue to hold monthly first hour discussions, including a lively one led by Meg Wallace on "How can we maintain relationships with those with whom we disagree?"

HOMWOOD FRIENDS MEETING

Autumn has been a very busy season for Homewood Friends, but one with spiritual deepening as well as visible progress in community building.

- Our recently formed Homewood Friends Outreach Team sponsored a weekly discussion on Quaker beliefs, worship, ministry, and spirit led activism in October that utilized the Quaker Speak videos to stimulate thought and discussion.
- In early November, Ministry and Counsel sponsored a wonderful day and a half spiritual retreat, "Opening to the Heart of Worship", facilitated by Christopher Sammond of New York Yearly Meeting. Attended by 28 members and attenders, the workshop focused us on how we prepare for worship, how we center down, how to listen to each other with our whole being-body, mind and spirit, and how we can open more to each other and to the Divine during worship.
- During late November and early December, the Meeting's Working Group on the Arts sponsored "Displaced People", an extraordinary collection of paintings of people from around the world by longtime attender and artist/film maker Exsul Van Helden. The exhibit in the Meeting's Dining Room, which opened on November 18th, has not only opened our eyes and stimulated discussion but brought visitors to our Meeting House.
- In early December, the Meeting's Green Organizing Action Team (GOAT) was notified that we were successful in obtaining a \$5,000 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to enable the Meeting to install a native plant and pollinator friendly garden

THE BYM WOMEN'S RETREAT EXPLORES

"WOMEN'S TREASURE: HONORING OUR TIME AND TALENTS"

This year's retreat for the women of BYM will be held on January 25-27, 2019. Once again, we will be at Pearlstone Retreat Center in Reisterstown, Maryland (near Baltimore).

Registration for the retreat remains open until January 7. After that date, everyone who registers will be placed on a wait list and will be able to attend only if someone cancels.

To register, go to: www.bym-rsf.org/events/yમેvents/women19.html

This year, we will explore the treasures within and among us. How do we become aware of our own gifts and talents? How do we choose to use and nourish them? Do we "prize our time"? How can we help each other grow in awareness of what we give, and what we receive, as we live in spiritual community? "District Community Playback Theater" will join us Saturday morning. This improvisational theatre troupe will explore our treasures and enact them in stories on the spot.

Workshop proposals are welcome. Please fill out the form here: womensretreat.bym-rsf.net/workshop-proposal/ Crafters are also encouraged to attend. Let us know you're coming with this form: womensretreat.bym-rsf.net/crafts/



FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO: WOMENSRETREAT.BYM-RSF.NET/

in spring 2019. Along with cisterns that are being installed in January to collect water coming off the roof, the Meeting House will be more able to manage storm water runoff. These improvements have been made possible by Homewood's participation in the One Water Partnership of 30 faith congregations in the Jones Falls watershed.

We would love to share our experiences with Friends interested in any of these activities.

LITTLE FALLS FRIENDS MEETING

We mourn the loss of two members of our Meeting, Ruth Sutherland at age 91 and Barbara (Bobbie) Sieben in her 96th year. Both were residents of Broadmead but had maintained their ties with Little Falls. Ruth had been Clerk and First day teacher. Bobbie served as Recording Clerk of the Meeting for many years. Both were active members of numerous committees. They will be missed. In the glow of candlelight with music provided by our own Sidney Zimmerman on the harp, we will be bringing the spirit of the season into the Meeting House with our annual Christmas eve Meeting for Worship at 6 p.m. on December 24th. We are once again providing a book to each 4th grade student in one of our county schools. The books are carefully selected, wrapped, and presented by members of the Meeting.

PATAPSCO FRIENDS MEETING

Patapsco recently welcomed another returning citizen who was a member of the South Mountain Fellowship at the Hagerstown, Maryland correctional center. Only one member remains at the correctional center, which has been downsizing, so our role is now corresponding with members transferred to other institutions and helping them transition when they come home (a joyful responsibility). Perry is now housed and working, and we have welcomed our friend and his young son at Patapsco. Another returning citizen, Gabe, also received permission to travel within Maryland and was welcomed to the Meeting. In November we celebrated the birthday of a third friend, Andre—his second birthday at the Meeting. We continue to learn from these Friends and are grateful to have them join us in worship when they can. We are finding that the first couple of weeks are critical for returning citizens, and transition plans made by the correctional centers vary in quality. If people are able to get the support they need for this critical transition, research shows that the likelihood of recidivism is greatly reduced. We also continue to be enlightened by a series of presentations by members on Quaker "luminaries." Recently, many of us heard for the first time about Landrum Bolling, a truly remarkable Quaker whose quiet diplomacy was placed in the service of Mideast peace. He died this year at the age of 104 after an active life that included courageous service as a war correspondent and helping to found the Earlham School of Religion. You can find a handout on his life on our website: patapsco.bym-rsf.net/files/2018/12/Landrum-Bolling.pdf



Protesters from FMW at the Unite the Right Event

WEST BRANCH MONTHLY MEETING

West Branch appreciates Walter Fry's travel to Cuba with FUM. He has shown us that we need to appreciate all of the privileges we have here in the US. Although many Cubans are poor they have a great love of life. We participated in the Jesse Tree this year. It is a combination of the local school and an interdenominational effort to provide clothing, necessities, and gifts to under privileged children in our school district. Often coats, boots, and shoes, are provided by the program and with the community providing individual gifts. Thirty four fruit baskets were packed and delivered by the Meeting after a potluck lunch on December 2nd. It is an effort that everyone enjoys. Trunk or treat at our local park was well attended with our Meeting receiving an award for our station. On a serious note, several of our members are dealing with serious health issues. We continue to hold them in prayer. We continue to support our members, friends, and community with prayers, gifts, and donations. Many have much, many more have less.

YORK FRIENDS MEETING

"As peacemakers, Quakers hold that attitudes of justice and compassion are basic. By lighting a candle in our own hearts, we can overcome the darkness together." These words were spoken by York clerk Susan Hunter at the York County Vigil Against Hate on October 29, 2018. The interfaith vigil was held to support our local Jewish community as a response to the shootings at the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue. Friends were active as attenders and presenters, and opened the Meeting House as a gathering place to plan.

The Meeting House was dressed and ready for the holidays at the annual hanging of the greens in early December. Friends came out to decorate and to participate in our "Nutcrackers, Antique Ornaments and Greens Sale" during downtown York's First Friday, an event well attended by the community. Holiday plans also include Christmas Eve worship and an open house and concert on New Year's Eve.

York was blessed to welcome over a hundred middle schoolers as part of their York city field trip. Students stopped in to learn about Friends past and present and their influential role as a Quaker presence in York since 1766. Coming in small groups throughout the day, students were treated to the stories of simplicity, peace and stewardship that have unfolded over our Meeting's 252 year history.

Baltimore Yearly Meeting
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Address service requested

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Interchange via e-mail?
Send your current e-mail 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

BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING UPCOMING EVENTS

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

JANUARY

- 1 – Yearly Meeting Offices Closed
- 1 – Sing in the New Year at Gunpowder Friends Meeting
- 4 – 6 – Young Adult Friends Conference at the House of Legends
- 11 – 12 – Junior Young Friends Conference at Baltimore Monthly Meeting, Stony Run
- 19 – Change Group Training at Frederick Friends Meeting
- 21 – Yearly Meeting Offices Closed
- 25 – 37 – Women’s Retreat at Pearlstone Retreat Center

FEBRUARY

- 17 – Warrington Quarterly Meeting at York Friends Meeting
- 18 – Yearly Meeting Offices Closed
- 22 – 24 – Young Friends Conference at Sandy Spring Friends Meeting
- 23 – Religious Education Retreat at Frederick Friends Meeting
- 24 – Chesapeake Quarterly Meeting at Patapsco Friends Meeting

MARCH

- 3 – Nottingham Quarterly Meeting at Nottingham Monthly Meeting
- 23 – Third Month Interim Meeting at Annapolis Friends Meeting

STAFF AND OFFICERS OF BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING

Kenneth “Ken” Stockbridge	Presiding Clerk ymclerk@bym-rsf.org	Ann Venable	Development Director development@bym-rsf.org
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Thomas “Tom” Hill	Treasurer treasurer@bym-rsf.org	David Hunter	Camp Property Manager davidhunter@bym-rsf.org
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