

New York Yearly Meeting Religious Society of Friends

InfoShare

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Editor, Paul Busby, paul@nyym.org

Fall Sessions Teen Program: Clerking, Light, and Process—How Teens Do Business

For JYM senior high clerks, 10th grade clerks, 9th grade clerks, **and all teens interested in Quaker business process.**

The Junior Yearly Meeting Committee has invited all the JYM teen clerks to attend Arthur Larrabee's Clerking workshop at Powell House February 26–28, 2010, and we want to give our teen clerks a good start on clerking at Fall Sessions before they go. Activities will include AVP exercises, PoHo games, and community service. Grades 7–12: Program will start Friday at 7:00 P.M. with pizza and conclude at lunch on Sunday with sleepovers in the Chatham-Summit meetinghouse Friday and Saturday nights. Events will include a service project, a panel on clerking, a clerking workshop, a teen business meeting, and AVP conflict resolution, plus a guided walk in the Great Swamp and Tales thereof, sardines, and s'mores around the campfire. The Fall Sessions–Spring Sessions Teen Program will pay the registration fee. All teens should mark or indicate "Teen Program" on the Fall Sessions registration form and pay for lunch and dinner on Saturday. If you plan to stay for lunch on Sunday, you should pay for that also. Bring a sleeping bag and warm clothes. Limit of 20 teens. Scholarships are available. E-mail Peter Close at woolmanj@aol.com with questions. Look for more details on the Facebook group "Clerking, Light, and Process at Fall Sessions 2009," where permission and health forms can be printed out.

The program schedule, which can be found at www.nyym.org/events/fallsess09/index.html#yps, is subject to change.

Still Time to Register for Fall Sessions

Fall Sessions will be November 13–15, 2009, at Seton Hall University and Chatham Summit Meeting in N.J. Details are in September *Spark* and on the NYYM Web site (*see* below). The early-registration deadline is October 17, after which the registration fee increases by \$5 per adult.

To register go to www.nyym.org/events/fallsess09/ or fill out the registration form in *Spark*.

Fall Sessions: Invitation Letter from NYYM Clerk

Beloved Friends—

“Friends, meet together and know each other in that which is eternal, which was before the world was.” —*George Fox*

Our Yearly Meeting is the gathering of the approximately 85 monthly meetings and worship groups in New York and parts of New Jersey and Connecticut that make up New York Yearly Meeting. “Yearly Meeting” also refers to the work done centrally on behalf of this membership, overseen by committees of Friends drawn from monthly meetings and worship groups. We gather for mutual encouragement through worship, work, and fellowship. We are strengthened by each individual who joins in the gathered meeting, by his or her measure of faithfulness and Truth, and we are diminished by every one who stays away.

Do you yearn to hear new voices, to join fellow seekers in the stream of Divine Power? Are you curious about how this larger body works, and how it can benefit from your participation?

On November 13–15 we will gather in New Jersey for our Fall Sessions. *Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate.*

Committees will meet on Saturday afternoon, and—continuing a recent change from former practice—the coordinating committees of the four sections (Ministry, Nurture, Witness, and General Services) will meet on Saturday evening. All of these meetings are open—follow your heart and join in!

Three meetings for worship with concern for business are scheduled—two for Saturday and one for Sunday morning. We anticipate considering the Yearly Meeting budget and our Summer Sessions gathering, and hearing from the general secretary. The Nominating Committee’s slate of candidates for service will also come forward for the body’s approval.

In an effort to improve our practice, will also experiment with a different practice for approving minutes: Rather than waiting until the end of each session to approve them, we will approve them as we go along.

Praying for ever deeper faithfulness and wholeness,
Heather M. Cook, clerk, New York Yearly Meeting; clerk@nyym.org

WCC Approves Policy on Sharing Fund Bequests

On July 22, 2009, NYYM's Witness Coordinating Committee approved a Policy for the Use and Investment of Bequests to the Sharing Fund, which will be presented at Fall Sessions for the information of the Body and to respond to any questions.

You can find this policy online by clicking at www.nyym.org/witness. Copies are also available from the NYYM office on request.

Affordable, Accessible Summer Sessions

John Cooley, for Sessions Committee

Query: How can the yearly meeting make Summer Sessions more affordable and accessible?

If you have ideas or questions for Sessions Committee's Working Group on this query, and are able to share them before or after your time at Fall Sessions November 13–15, 2009, come visit members of the Working Group, who will be at Chatham-Summit meetinghouse Friday evening (Nov. 13) 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. and Sunday afternoon (Nov. 15) 1:30 to 3:00 P.M.

Look for our sign. Drop in and share if you can.

2010 Summer Sessions to Be a Week Earlier

Friends, Summer Sessions 2010 will be the third week in July (July 18–24). If you plan to attend (a very good idea!), please keep this in mind.

New Location for Elmira MM

Edward Dougherty, Elmira Meeting

The Quaker community in the Elmira area has been planning for a change in location for quite some time. Now our meetinghouse has been sold, and we are waiting for a closing date.

We are currently holding our meeting for worship Sundays at 1:30 P.M. in the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's building at 48 Hibbard Rd., Ext. North, off I-86 (Route 17), in Big Flats, N.Y. Directions are available at their Web site, www.uuonline.net.

Please join us if you can as we start this new phase in our communal journey. We want to alert all who may be interested, so feel free to pass this information along to others, too.

AFSC Faces the Future

Elizabeth Enloe, regional director, AFSC/NYMRO

AFSC's Mary Ellen McNish and Paul Lacey wrote to monthly meetings throughout the country on August 6, 2009, with a report of AFSC's response to the world's financial crisis. The update described the need to significantly downsize the organization, and how the AFSC was undertaking the daunting task of reducing costs from a \$47.9 million FY09 budget to a \$28.9 million projected FY10 budget including \$2.7 for transition costs. Of us was required salary reductions, unpaid furloughs, increases in co-payments for health benefits, reducing program and administrative expenses, ending or transitioning programs and projects, closing offices, and consolidating space. Painfully, layoffs became inevitable. The process stretched over a period of six or seven months. A voluntary separation opportunity was made available to all staff.

You can imagine how trying and painful the time has been. Decisions required choices no one wished to make—most often between and among good and essential works. The impact on constituents and long-term relations was real, and the lasting impact has yet to be determined. We hope to rebuild, and as we do so, we remain interested in the concerns of Friends in New York Yearly Meeting. We deeply appreciate the expressions of love and support that we have received, including those expressed in a worship sharing at Westbury Meeting recently in which AFSC was held in the Light.

We wish to share the impact on those programs most geographically related to New York Yearly Meeting.

Middle Atlantic Region (MAR): Five MAR programs, including the three programs operated in the Upper New York State Area (UNYSA), are being devolved. The remaining MAR programs face tough budget restrictions, and several full-time positions are being reduced to part-time. Five valued staff members who have been dedicated to helping AFSC advance the causes of peace and justice, including Cherylene "Twiggy" Billue and Linda Williams in Syracuse, have been laid off. Chrissie Rizzo, UNYSA Director, remains on staff until December 31, when the area office in Syracuse will be closed.

On September 5 the MAR Executive Committee minuted its “commitment to continue its relationship with and support for the UNYSA program committee and the projects it supports.” The two committees are discussing a way forward.

New York Metropolitan Regional Office (NYMRO): NYMRO’s Executive Committee struggled throughout the year to sustain as much program as possible. In the end it was decided to retain work in three programs at dramatically reduced operational levels, yet with a baseline of operations from which all three—Conflict Resolution, Healing and Transformative Justice, and Immigrant Rights—would succeed. We lost 12 staff members.

We sadly announce that as of October 1, 2009, the scope of our criminal-justice work based in Newark was greatly reduced. Our Prisoners Resource Center, a reentry project, closed after 25 years of providing counseling, referrals, and inspiration to individuals returning home after incarceration. For incarcerated individuals, the scope of the Prison Watch Project was reduced, and we will no longer be able to respond to all the letters and phone calls that ask our help to advocate on behalf of individuals. A small complement of staff will be in place, working in Newark and New York. They will maintain partnership relationships, offer AFSC perspectives to public discourse and policies, focus on practices of isolation and torture, and uplift programs of healing and transformation. AFSC maintains its commitment to people whose lives intersect with the criminal-justice system, through our newly evolved Healing and Transformative Justice Program, of which more word is forthcoming.

Our Immigrant Rights Program retains its legal representation, community organizing, public education, and advocacy elements, though at reduced levels and with threatened further cuts should additional funds not be found. Major attention to gun violence in New York City boroughs remains the focus of our Conflict Resolution Program, along with continued opportunities to partner with communities on the cost of war.

If you would like to learn more about AFSC’s work in the Middle Atlantic Region, please contact Mary Stover, interim regional director, at 410-323-4200 ext. 223 or mstover@afsc.org. For the New York Metropolitan Regional Office, please contact Elizabeth Enloe at 212-598-0950 or eenloe@afsc.org.

Soliciting Contributions for January 2010 Issue Of *Spark*

. . . we cannot love to live
if we cannot bear to die

William Penn, Some Fruits of Solitude, 1693

What say you, Friends, on these words of William Penn? What has been your experience with this part of life's continuum, dying and death? How have you helped or been helped during a time of letting go and bereavement—either yours or another's? Are you prepared? Can you bear to die? The theme of January 2010 *Spark* will be Death and Dying.

These are challenging words on a difficult subject for many of us. And yet we know that candor in our seeking and our self-expression, when shared tenderly, is what Friends welcome and find most powerful. Be yours an expression of profound sorrow, struggle, fear, faith, practical advice, humor—or any combination that is uniquely yours—these things we hope you will consider sharing in order that we may lift up each other, in the manner of Friends.

Perhaps you have encountered death, or lived through a dying, that has touched or changed you or your faith profoundly. Maybe you work or volunteer in a setting concerned with death and dying or have resources to share with Friends on the subject. It might be that your local or regional meeting has done significant work in this area. Or you may know people within the Yearly Meeting who might have something important to share.

If you find yourself saying “yes,” please contact NYYM Communications Committee member Robin Whitely at rlwhitely@comcast.net or 973-376-2392 to let her know to expect your contribution. Also copy NYYM staff Paul Busby paul@nyym.org and Helen Garay Toppins, office@nyym.org.

Article length: approximately 750–1,000 words. **Deadline: December 1, 2009**

Please understand that not every submission can be used and that the *Spark* editor reserves the right to make these decisions. Some articles that we do not have room for in *Spark* will be published in *InfoShare*.

Christopher Sammond's Travel Calendar

September 1 to November 31, 2009

September

- 1–8 Vacation
- 21–23 Superintendents and Secretaries Retreat, Powell House, Old Chatham, N.Y.
- 23–25 Emergency Called Meeting of FUM Board, Stony Point Retreat Center, Stony Point, N.Y.
- 25–27 Nightingales Singing Weekend, Mohawk Valley MM, Clinton, N.Y.

October

- 1 Meet with Heather Cook, clerk, NYYM, Burt House, Ithaca MM, Ithaca, NY
- 9 Meet with N.Y. State Department of Correctional Services, Albany N.Y.
- 10 Budget Saturday, Purchase MM, Purchase, N.Y.
- 15–16 FUM Board Meeting, Richmond IN
- 17 Consultation on Nurturing Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
- 25 Visit Chappaqua MM, Chappaqua, N.Y.

November

- 13–15 Fall Sessions, South Orange and Chatham, N.J.
- 20–22 Spiritual Nurture Working Group–sponsored retreat, Powell House, Old Chatham, N.Y.

Eating Well While Helping Others

The public is invited to a delicious home-cooked buffet dinner at the Scarsdale Friends Meetinghouse, Saturday evening, October 24, 2009. Not only will those attending eat very well, but the dinner also gives everyone the opportunity to enjoy fabulous gourmet dishes while helping people at four homeless shelters in the area.

Tickets are \$20 (\$10 for children) and can be reserved by phone or email. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. at the newly-renovated Friends meetinghouse on Popham Road, just west of Rte. 22 in front of Scarsdale Village Hall.

Each year Scarsdale Quakers work to raise money to purchase warm necessities (socks, underwear, wool hats, flannel nightgowns, etc.) for

about 135 residents of Open Arms, Samaritan House, Project Trust, and Fessenden House.

This first annual dinner event takes place on national "Make a Difference Day." By enjoying the three-course buffet, everyone will be able to "make a difference" in the lives of many homeless people. Some former residents of Open Arms will also attend, and may share their experiences to show how caring people can make a difference in these difficult economic times.

The "Friendly Fare" will include an array of creative salads and breads; American and international main courses, and side dishes such as roast turkey, lasagna, and Tex-Mex casserole; and a sumptuous variety of mouthwatering pastries and desserts. Vegetarian and kosher dishes are included within all of the three courses.

For further information or a ride to the event, please contact Susan Weisfeld, 914-779-8354; sweisfeld@juno.com. For tickets call: 914-722-6788 or e-mail: juandempsey@yahoo.com.

Spirit-Led Discernment: Retreat at Purchase Meeting

All Friends are invited to a day-long retreat with Deborah Fisch & Beckey Phipps, Saturday, November 7, 2009, from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. at the Purchase Friends Meetinghouse. This retreat is for both newcomers and seasoned Friends!

Listening is at the heart of Quaker spirituality. Learning to listen for the voice of God is a life-long endeavor, because God communicates and guides with words that are not words, with sounds that are not ordinary sounds—in an interior, submerged landscape. Learning to distinguish between Divine Guidance and our utterly human desires and motivations is foundational to discernment in Friends' faith and practice. In community we help each other to develop, use, and share this gift of discernment. As we seek to discern how we are led as meetings, how we are to go forward in faith together, our tradition and experience have shown us that we can hear God when we give over our willing and striving.

This retreat is under the care of the Purchase Quarter Ministry & Counsel. Friends from neighboring regions are welcome to attend.

To register or receive more information, please contact Deb Wood at 914-922-1553 or dnbwood@aol.com. Childcare will be available. Registration by **October 24** is required for those requesting childcare.

Directions to the Purchase Meetinghouse can be found at www.purchasemeeting.org

Feeding the Fire: Growing in Relationship with God

A series of Powell House retreats sponsored by NYYM's Spiritual Nurture Working Group

If your heart yearns for a deeper relationship with the Divine and a hunger to live in the Power that transforms us and our world, the retreats in this series may speak to you. There will be space to turn more fully to God, to open and ground and deepen your relationship with the Divine, and to discern how you are being called to live a new life with and for others.

As we offer ourselves into relationship with the Spirit, we will explore the ways we are called to be in full relationship with each other; in other words, how to live faithfully in community, allowing the gifts we have been given to be used to build up our community, the body of Christ. Here is the schedule of the first four retreats at the time of publication:

Yearning for God, November 20–22, 2009

Faithfulness, January 22–24, 2010

Prayer, Apr 30–May 2, 2010

Trusting in the Slow Work of God, October 29–31, 2010

Other retreats in the series of seven will invite us to reflect on living in community; living in the power; and spreading the fire. If you have questions about the retreats or the working group, contact the working group's coclerks, Anne Pomeroy, 845-384-6090 or 845- 399-5158 or Lu Harper, 585-359-0425 or 585-732-4779.

Also, be sure to check Powell House's calendar at www.powellhouse.org for details and other PoHo events.

Retreat: Yearning for God

Planning Subcommittee, NYYM Spiritual Nurture Working Group

Next Sunday, please look around the meeting room. Do you see someone who is hungry for connection with Spirit, who seems to be opening to a deeper level of the Spirit, in whom the Light is breaking through in a new way? Perhaps there is a Friend whose heart yearns for a deeper relationship with the Divine, one who hungers to live in the Power that transforms us and our world?

These are the Friends we most hope will find a way to attend Yearning for

God, facilitated by Barbarajene Williams, a retreat at Powell House November 20–22, 2009. Please encourage members or attenders to attend this retreat and the subsequent ones in the Feeding the Fire series, a follow-up to the Drawing Out Gifts series of 2006–2008.

We all can use support on our spiritual journey. That is why we ask for your discerning help. We know from the Gifts series that individual encouragement opened the way for many Friends to attend. Please encourage Friends to take advantage of this opportunity to grow in the Spirit, and offer support, both financial and spiritual, to those Friends who would best benefit from them.

In faithfulness, Mary Kay Glazer, Kenn Harper, Lu Harper, Anne Pomeroy, Christopher Sammond

Christopher to Present Pendle Hill Lecture

Christopher Sammond, NYYM's general secretary, will present "Fire in the Storm: Jesus as Lover, Healer, and Persistent Invitation" at Pendle Hill December 1, 2009, at 7:30 P.M. This lecture is part of a Pendle Hill series, "Who Do You Say That I Am?" held Tuesdays from October 13 to December 8.

Christopher will also be coleading the Pendle Hill retreat described in the following article.

Pendle Hill Retreat: Who Is Jesus to Me?

Christopher Sammond and Colin Saxton (superintendent of Northwest Yearly Meeting) will lead a workshop/retreat at Pendle Hill, December 4–6, 2009, entitled "Who is Jesus to Me?" Information can be found at www.pendlehill.org/workshops/fall-2009/180-who-is-jesus-to-me.

Through sharing personal stories, worship, and reflection, participants will explore what it means to "walk in Christ." This retreat will center on experience, primarily on the relational question "Who is Jesus to me?" rather than on more abstract theological questions about the "what" or "why" of Jesus. This retreat is for those who know themselves to be Christ-centered Friends, those opening to that experience, and those drawn to the retreat despite resistance to a Christian orientation. (The leaders hope this means everyone.)

Questions that have life for Christopher and Colin at this time, which will

likely inform much of the retreat:

- What experiences of Christ have I had?
- What is Jesus doing in me now?
- What is Jesus doing in us now?
- What does it mean to be "in Christ?"
- How does this experience feel in your body?
- What practices nurture this experience?
- Are there blocks/barriers you regularly experience?

They also anticipate exploring a Christian/Quaker vision of relationship with Christ that is more than a mechanical transaction, more than a name/label we claim as a religious identity...but rather an ongoing/transforming encounter with the incarnate God. This will touch on areas such as:

- Convincement
- The Lamb's War
- Practicing the Presence
- Coming to the Light

For information on Pendle Hill and its events, contact Pendle Hill, 338 Plush Mill Rd., Wallingford PA 19086-6023; 800-742-3150; info@pendlehill.org; www.pendlehill.org.

Epistle from Friends in the Spirit of Christ

Eighth Month 30, 2009

To Friends everywhere, and to all who seek love, joy, hope, and meaning in life:

We, a group of Friends gathering at Powell House in Old Chatham, N.Y., for a weekend entitled "Following Jesus in Community," send our loving greetings to you. We've come from places ranging from Maine to Virginia and Ohio and from a variety of Quaker traditions. We have shared our personal experiences of the love of the living Jesus Christ and have been buoyed and stirred by Christ's healing and forgiving presence among us this weekend. We want to invite you into the joy, hope, and love we have known here.

We experienced a divine covering that helped to reconcile us all, dissolving many anxieties some of us felt in gathering with strangers whose theological tendencies we did not know. Knowing that language and doctrinal notions have caused unnecessary divisions among people of faith,

we have no desire to add to these, but simply to stand with Jesus Christ at an open door, where He offers His light and love. We have found that these are available to everyone. We are eager to share the experiences that have liberated us from so many burdens and sorrows in hopes that you and others may know the same joy.

We intend to meet again within the year, and invite inquiries to: Friends in the Spirit of Christ, c/o Anna Obermayer, 599 Trumbulls Corners Rd., Newfield, NY 14867 (anna.e.obermayer@gmail.com).

In love,

Ann Armstrong (NEYM); Doug Armstrong (NEYM); Jim Atwell (NYYM); Susan Bailey (OYM); Connie Bair-Thompson (NEYM); Arthur Berk (NYYM, OYM); Peter Blood-Patterson (NEYM); Steve Chase (NEYM); Shayla Cody; Jim Contois (NEYM, NYYM); Ann Davidson (NYYM); Ann Dodd-Collins (NEYM); Roger Dreisbach-Williams (NYYM); Elizabeth Edminster (NYYM); John Edminster (NYYM); Ellen Flanders (NYYM); Dorothy Garner (NYYM); David Herendeen (NYYM); Seth Hinshaw (OYM); Raye Hodgson (OYM); Ruth Kinsey (NYYM); Herb Lape (NYYM); Rene Lape (attender, NYYM); Reb MacKenzie (NEYM, NYYM); Barbara Meli (NYYM); Salvatore Meli (NYYM); Kate Moss (NYYM); Anna Obermayer (NYYM); Christopher Sammond (NYYM); James Schultz (NYYM); Stella Schultz (NYYM); Susan Smith (OYM); Thomas Swain (PYM); Lillie Wilson (NEYM)

Key to Yearly Meeting Affiliation:
 NEYM = New England Yearly Meeting
 NYYM = New York Yearly Meeting
 OYM = Ohio Yearly Meeting
 PYM = Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Meetings Can Save on Friends United Press Books

Katie Terrell, communications editor, Friends United Meeting

Monthly meetings can now save 10% on orders of five or more books, or 20% on purchases of ten or more, from Friends United Press. Books can be all the same title or all different.

Friends United Press has more than 80 books in print—books that would be great for your monthly meeting library or for use in your adult Sunday First Day school or book study groups. Among the titles that include study guides are:

A Life of Search, by D. Elton Trueblood
Signs of Salvation, by Ben Richmond
A Sincere and Constant Love, edited by T. H. S. Wallace
Stepping in the Light, by Howard Macy

A Brief Memoir of Elizabeth Fry, edited by David Goff

And no Quaker library would be complete without these titles, which are also published by Friends United Press:

- *The Journal of George Fox*, edited by Rufus M. Jones
- *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, edited by Phillips P. Moulton
- *A Living Faith*, by Wilmer A. Cooper
- *A Peculiar People*, by Joseph John Gurney
- *Reminiscences of Levi Coffin*, edited by Ben Richmond

And don't forget these FUP titles, which inform Friends about Quaker mission work:

- *Enduring Hope: The Impact of the Ramallah Friends Schools*, by Patricia Edwards-Konic
- *Go into All the World: A Centennial Celebration of Friends in East Africa*, edited by Herbert & Beatrice Kimball
- *The Fairest Isle: History of Jamaica Friends*, by Mary Jones Langford

View our complete selection online at www.fum.org/shop. To receive your monthly meeting discount online, upon checkout enter coupon code: "FUM10" when ordering five or more books, or "FUM20" when purchasing ten or more books. Discounts can also be applied to phone orders: 800-537-8839. A free catalog is available upon request. Discounts do not apply to curriculum, prints, crafts, etc. For questions, e-mail friendspress@fum.org or write to FUP, 101 Quaker Hill Dr., Richmond IN 47374.

News from Quaker Youth Friends General Conference (FGC)

QUAKER YOUTH, SPIRITUALITY, AND SEXUALITY

How have you experienced an intersection between spirituality and sexuality in your life? What is your understanding of what faithful sexuality looks like? How do Quaker beliefs apply to our sexual identities and practices?

Spirituality and Sexuality is the theme for our blog series this fall on Quakeryouth.org. This month Micah Bales reflects on his beliefs and experiences as a Friend. We hope that many of you will blog or post your comments on this topic. If you are interested in contributing to the series,

please e-mail emilys@fgcquaker.org.

VIDEO: QUAKER HISTORY IN 10 EASY POINTS

At the FGC Gathering this year we had a reprise performance of the *Quaker History Skit in 10 Easy Points*. Watch the video at <http://www.fgcquaker.org/quaker-history-skit-fgc-gathering-2009>

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES INTERN

The World Council of Churches (WCC) will welcome five young people (aged 18–30) to serve as interns in its Geneva offices from February 2010 to January 2011. Interns bring valuable experiences to the WCC at the same time as they undertake several modules of ecumenical learning. See www.oikoumene.org/?id=3187

YOUNG ADULT DELEGATION TO ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

A delegation is being planned for next summer (2010) for young adult Friends from New England, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore Yearly Meetings to visit Israel and Palestine to meet with Quakers in Ramallah, the AFSC Youth Program. See www.pym.org/education/yaf.

SCHOOL FOR ETHICS AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP (SEGL), A SEMESTER PROGRAM

SEGL targets high-potential students who represent the rich geographic, socio-economic, and racial diversity of the United States, and it provides a specialized curriculum focusing on ethics, leadership, and international studies. Following their semester at SEGL, each student will return home with an action plan for creating an organization that confronts a local, national, or global challenge. See www.schoolforethics.org.

THE BRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL

Founded in 2000 by Brooklyn Friends School, the Bridge Film Festival is an annual celebration of Quaker ideals in action. Presenting value-based filmmaking by Friends-school students, grades 5–12, the festival is available online for classrooms worldwide. Genres include animation, documentaries, narratives, music videos, digital slideshows and public service announcements. See www.brooklynfriends.org/bridgefilmfestival.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

See www.fgcquaker.org/qy/employment.

For more information about any of these, contact Emily Stewart, Youth Ministries Coordinator, FGC, 1216 Arch St. #2B, Philadelphia PA 19107; 215-561-1700; emilys@fgcquaker.org.

William Penn House News

Yours, mine, and ours to do?

How do we discern what actions need to be taken to bring greater peace to the world? How do we open ourselves up to see the world as it is so we can discern what actions to take? How do we know when to take personal action versus collective action?

These are hard questions, with no easy answers. Too often, however, we as a society seem to make quick decisions and choose sides without exploring the depths of issues. Washington Quaker Workcamps and our other programs have increasingly put emphasis on looking holistically at the depth and breadth of issues, including their historical components. It is often uncomfortable, especially when we see our own complicity in the perpetuation of cycles. But if we are to be true to our commitment to breaking the cycles of violence, it is important that we do this.

This fall, starting with our potluck discussions, we will be putting greater effort into digging deeper into issues as we seek to promote peace and justice. We will also be hosting a workshop November 7 and 8 to look at queries about Quaker service (through workcamps) as a vital component not just of service but of understanding, reconciliation, and peacemaking. We welcome your presence and your ideas.

At our potluck October 18, 2009, we will show *Sour Milk and Honey*, a documentary that explores the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, and has been used as part of a conflict-resolution curriculum in DC public schools. Takoma Park resident Tarek Farouk Maassarani filmed this documentary that explores the conflict behind the headlines. Tarek is half-Muslim and half-Jewish, has lived in Africa and the Middle East, working on community development projects, HIV/AIDS and environmental education, gender and peace building initiatives, and documentary filmmaking. He currently lives in an intentional community with his family.

All potlucks start at 6:30, with presentations at 7:30

Environmental Grant Received

William Penn House has received notification from the DC Department of Environment that we are a recipient of a grant to convert our coach house into a "green house," including a green roof and possibly more. Throughout the year, we will work with youth groups on both the skills-building and the education components of retrofitting environmentally. Middle school

students from Georgetown Day School will take on some of the construction work as their service project. The full plans for this exciting project are still being developed.

Check our Web site frequently for updates or to contact us. We are also active on Facebook and Twitter, so if you cannot join us physically, we welcome your presence on the internet. William Penn House, 515 E. Capitol St. SE, Washington DC 20003; 202-543-5560; info@williampennhouse.org; www.williampennhouse.org.

Deadline Extended for 2010 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage

Young Friends now have until November 30, 2009 to consider applying for FWCC's 2010 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage, which will be held in the Northwestern United States next summer. Please share this information with young Friends in your meeting! The price for the month-long pilgrimage is \$1,300; some scholarship funds are available. Check <http://fwccamericas.org/events/> for details.

The Quaker Youth Pilgrimage connects European young Friends with other 16- to 18-year-olds from the Section of the Americas. The extended deadline also applies to adults seeking to be leaders on this pilgrimage.

FWCC Searchable Database for Meetings

Friends World Committee for Consultation's (FWCC) Section of the Americas online searchable database for meetings, churches, and worship groups in the U.S. and Canada has now been enhanced with a visual, interactive Google map. Go to www.fwccamericas.org and just click on the map to find meetings, churches, and worship groups. If you want to know more about a meeting—what time worship starts, what branch of Friends it's part of, what languages Friends worship in—use this database.

Have fun zooming in and finding where Friends' meetings are concentrated!

Farmington Immigration Awareness Night Enlightens Many

Sally Soule, clerk, Farmington Meeting Peace and Social Concerns Committee

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee at Farmington Friends Meeting believes that our country's immigration problem needs to be better understood by its citizens. With comprehensive understanding, the effort to support reform laws reflecting justice and equality should be an easier task.

With those thoughts in mind and with a desire to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit, our committee has made immigration awareness our major theme. The culmination of a year's work in planning gave birth to our Breaking Bread and Barriers immigration awareness night on September 25, 2009 at Friends Meeting in Farmington, NY.

Brightly colored table cloths, bountiful bouquets, chips, salsa, and punch were set up to greet the 51 attendees from many faiths who traveled considerable distance to be with us. Our guests arrived with Mexican potluck dishes and donations of food, money, and clothes for the nearby migrant farmworkers of Wayne County. As we enjoyed our meal of delightful flavors, we heard narratives of the struggle and challenges in the lives of three immigrants living in the Sodus area of Wayne County, N.Y.

Later, with our plates filled with dessert, we listened to five panel members. Each member brought to light a separate understanding of the immigration dilemma. Our panel consisted of Sister Janet Korn of Parrish Support Ministries, John Teeple, a farm owner and employer of migrant workers, Peter Mares, director of La Casa, a home for migrant workers in Sodus, Assembly representative David Koons from the 135th district, and David Marion, the district director for Congress representative Eric Massa.

The panel finished the program by answering questions from the audience. We left the meeting with the thought that the main thrust for immigration reform is to change the present laws. According to the Friends Committee on National Legislation's July/August Newsletter, President Obama and a bipartisan group of congressional leaders hope to introduce and pass comprehensive immigration reform in or before 2010. When this happens, we as concerned citizens are urged to attend the town meetings in our local areas and let our voices be heard.

Yes, we can! Extraordinary acts of activism from faith groups and grassroots organizations can ignite the fire for change. We hope that our awareness night has been a spark.