

Among Friends

Summer 2002

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- *Mary Lord Inspires FWCC*
- *Conscientious*
- *Objection Minutes/Proposals for IYM*
- *Envisioning changes for IYM site at McNabb*



Among Friends provides a forum about activities within the various meetings and worship groups which make up Illinois Yearly Meeting. It also provides pertinent information provided by Quaker organizations and by interested readers of our publication. Readers are reminded that signed articles and letters express the views of the writers, and not official positions of Illinois Yearly Meeting.

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Please read: All submissions for the Winter Issue 2002-2003 need to be in the hands of the editor NO LATER THAN October 20, 2002. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!

Informal articles about your meeting or worship group (NOT States of Society Reports), plus poetry, black ink artwork, and photos are encouraged and received with appreciation.

From the Editor:

Friends in Illinois Yearly Meeting continue to be fully engaged in a wide range of activities that use their talents.

- With the violent events of the world, Friends are speaking out for non-violent responses and creating ways for conscientious objection.
- With the FGC Gathering being held in Normal, Illinois starting on June 29, many IYM Friends have devoted their energies to make this event happen.
- With the 125 year old McNabb Meeting house and property needing attention, a group of dedicated Friends have focused on developing a vision for the property.
- With the need to make a difference, Friends continue to make meaningful communities.

Pray for peace and may we continue to grow,
Cindy Reynolds

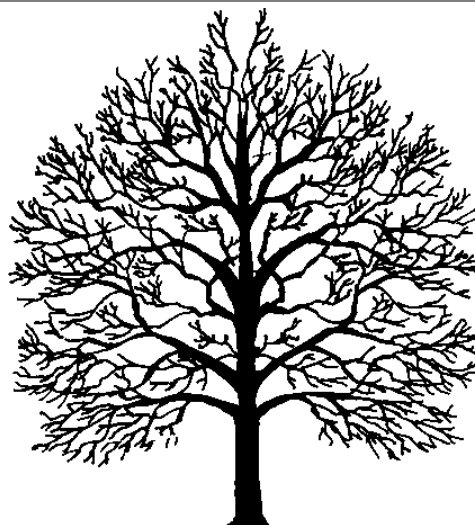


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FGC 2002 Gathering in Normal

Friends General Conference will hold the 2002 Gathering of Friends at Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois, June 29-July 6, 2002. The theme is "To Be Gathered Still."

"Our theme recognizes the 350th anniversary of George Fox's vision from Pendle Hill of a great people to be gathered," explains Gathering Committee co-clerk Paul Buckley, member of 57th Street Meeting in Chicago.

"Now, more than ever, we see that there are still so many who long to experience the Divine embrace," adds Peggy Spohr of Richmond, Indiana, who is also co-clerking the Gathering Committee.

The Gathering Community will be gathered in worship, from the opening meeting on Sunday morning through a closing meeting on Saturday, July 6. On Thursday evening, July 4, attendees will have an opportunity to experience some of the many forms worship can take as they participate in All-Gathering worship facilitated by Junior Gathering. A daily Bible half-hour, FLGC worship and the Silent Center will also be available.

John Punshon, noted British Friend, will offer reflections on the theme of the Gathering on Sunday evening, June 30. He will also offer a series of less formal afternoon sessions with interested Friends, reflecting on the nature and consequences of the traditional Quaker testimonies.

Monday evening, July 1, Quaker author Walter Wink will speak on "Nonviolence for the Violent." Friday evening will feature Mary Rose O'Reilley, author of *The Barn at the End of the World*.

Wednesday evening's traditional intergenera-

tional music event will this year highlight talented Friends from our Gathering community in a "Quilt of Quaker Musicians." Susan Stark will emcee the program, and promises a variety of performers, each adding color to the quilt.

On Thursday afternoon a special "Blessed are the Peacemakers" event is planned. A hearty panel of speakers will make formal presentations and then offer further opportunities for questions and discussion in smaller venues. The panel includes David Zarembka of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, sojourning in St. Louis, who is part of the Friends Peace Team of AFSC Great Lakes Region and will go to Burundi soon after the Gathering; Anne Eckert of Rock Valley Meeting in Illinois Yearly Meeting who will discuss a community center that was created and nurtured by that meeting; Jennifer Bing-Canar of Chicago AFSC office who will discuss her experiences in the Middle East and Landrum Boiling, former president of Earlham College who will speak from his experience as a peace negotiator in global concerns.

Junior Gathering Young Friends will explore in the midst of worship, games, arts, music and much more. Theme groups for children entering grades 1 to 7 will offer an alternative to age based programming.

High Schoolers may expect to experience a loving spiritual community composed of friendship and zany antics. Adult Young Friends is a community that provides an intimate space within the Gathering for post high school age Friends to live and have fun together while exploring their spirituality and roles as adult Quakers.

Music making and singing will abound. Yoga, contra dancing, folk dancing, and other movement opportunities will occur throughout the Gathering. Friends' creativity will be displayed, performed and celebrated again this year in the



Lemonade Art Gallery. The Gathering Store will offer a unique collection of books, First Day School Materials, tapes, Gathering and FGC merchandise, and handcrafted consignment items.

Friends General Conference has financial support for Gathering attenders. Scholarships and workgrants are available to help make Gathering affordable. First time attenders scholarships match grants from monthly and yearly meetings. General scholarships assist families and individuals with the expenses of room/board and registration. Workgrant opportunities include staffing the Junior Gathering program, assisting at the information desk, helping with routine tasks or taking on a specialized assignment. Additional information is available from Liz Perch, Conference Coordinator at the address below. Friends are urged not to let cost issues keep them from considering attendance.

More information about the Gathering and FGC is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.fgcquaker.org/gathering/> (access to the World Wide Web is often available at your local library) or by contacting Friends General Conference at 1216 Arch Street, 2B, Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215)561-1700 or email (gathering@fgcquaker.org).

The Gathering of Friends is a program of Friends General Conference, which provides resources to help members and attenders of constituent meetings discover how God's Spirit is leading us individually and corporately and to follow that leading.

Meeting Reports: Clear Creek

By Grayce Mesner

The last *Among Friends* did not include a Clear Creek article. In fact, the last *Among Friends* did not include any of the articles I normally

write! That could have been due to the fact that Neil Mesner and I were married on September 9, 2001, and I evidently was not zeroing in on some of my other re-

sponsibilities! Neil (Central City Meeting, NE) and Grayce Hawthorn (Clear Creek) were married in a Quaker Ceremony at the Clear Creek



Meetinghouse under the care of both meetings. Over 100 friends and relatives joined us in this most special day. A big thank you goes to my two daughters, Sharon (and Peter) and Margie who were instrumental in making everything happen. Did I ever properly thank all of you who helped? Neil and I spend time at both of our homes, sometimes together, sometimes apart - no regular routine yet. I have joined the Central City, NE Friends Meeting, so now have joint membership.

Because of this traveling and because of caring for Mom who will be 97 this summer, I really have not been taking part in many Clear Creek activities. So, I'm not the person who should be writing this! The deadline is two days away, though, and I wouldn't think of asking someone else to write it at this late date. A group just got together last Sunday to write the State of Society in order to complete it before Blue River Quarterly Meeting.

Sunday was our Super Sunday - usually the third Sunday of the month. This day still includes monthly meeting, Meeting for Worship, and coffee hour. This time of year it includes four highway pick-ups also. On other Sundays we have discussion before Meeting for Worship. I have heard that Bill Mize is bringing/making soup every Sunday! I have also heard that Dick Ashdown is learning how to make soup under Bill's patient tutelage! Wow - that with all the maintenance chores Dick keeps up with!

Carol Bartles has worked really hard this spring preparing a survey for the Site Envisioning and Building (SEB - in case you're trying to keep track of all the Quaker alphabet names) Committee. She and others are working at keeping the Meetinghouse together, too - a large feat!

Jim and Carol Ray were instrumental at refurbishing the Clear Creek Room. Helping them were Dick Ashdown, Jeannie Marvin and Carol Bartles. Enjoy it when you come to IYM!

Gloria McMurray and her husband Jim moved to Montana, where Jim died last fall. We miss her motherly caring and guidance.

The Spiritual Friendship Group still meets once a month and they are sponsoring another retreat with Maureen Pyle. Another open house is also planned in June. Friendly Circle meets sporadically in the winter, but three of us met in April to plan our IYM responsibilities for 3-5 year olds. We are looking forward to it. (Our mainstay for babysitting, Mary McQuilkin, will not be able to help this year - that makes us sad! If anyone knows of people who would be good for this job, please let us know.)

Our collective activities that we support include Global Village in Peoria, local service groups, a woman in prison, paying for medicine that fami-

lies can't afford, AFSC projects and possibly many more that our individual members help out with.

Downers Grove Meeting

Lance Wilcox

Through winter and spring of 2001-2, DGFMM had its eyes turned both inward and outward in concern and hope.

In November the meeting hosted Martin Grundy and Deborah Fisch from FGC Traveling Ministries Program. Grundy and Fisch led members in a process of inner questioning and group discussion on what we sought in our spiritual and organizational development. As an outgrowth of their visit, the meeting developed small worship groups to supplement the regular Sunday meeting, allowing members an opportunity for more personal spiritual sharing.

Our continuing concern for our member Jim Sprinkle has led us through periods of suspense, hope, and anguish following the progress of his treatment for leukemia. A bone marrow transplant, delayed by the events of September 11, finally took place in October. Its effects, however, have been fluctuating and unstable to a distressing degree. We continue to hold the Sprinkles in the Light and long for Jim's recovery.

The progress on a new meeting house continues to go forward, with an architect currently drafting a design for the building to submit to the meeting for review. Social gatherings of note over winter and spring included the annual caroling with the Jones Family in December and a retirement party in March for a number of Friends who reached this milestone more or less in unison. Young members of the meeting spent part of winter studying the history and thought of Islam and visited the mosque in Villa Park. From there they have moved on to a study of the history of pacifism and the traditional peace

churches. Our usual activities each month include meeting for worship, daily meditation, moving with music, meeting for healing, adult and youth religious education, Bible study, and shared meals.

Since the September attacks, a great deal of concern has been focused on the progress of the war in Afghanistan. Concern over the prosecution of the war, the shifting of national resources from peaceful to military purposes, the compromising of civil liberties, the voices raised for intensified aggression in the Middle East, and the talk of using “tactical” nuclear weapons have prompted a variety of actions on the part of DGFm members. Several members took part in a rally for peace and civil liberties at the DuPage County Courthouse in November, while others participated in marches in Washington in late April. Though members differ on what our response should be to the attack in September, the semi-declared “war without end” fits but poorly with anyone’s notion of the Peaceable Kingdom.

Evanston Meeting of Friends

By Eleanor Johnson

In this, our 66th year as a meeting, we took a look at our past as we try to prepare for the future. We reflected on the changes in our meeting, including how we employed a series of pastoral secretaries until 1972; how the meeting room was set up with pews in rows with the Elders sitting on the facing bench; how we were originally affiliated only with Western Yearly Meeting. Now we rely on a committee structure of dedicated members and attenders and a live-in custodian; our current seating arrangement is in the form of an open square; and we are affiliated with both Western and Illinois Yearly Meetings. What do you suppose lies ahead?

Each month during the second hour discussion period under the care of Ministry and Counsel we have engaged in an exploration of our spiritual foundations. We have looked at where indi-

viduals’ beliefs converge and differ, the personal spiritual journey, identity as a Quaker, sources of spiritual authority and the nature of spiritual community. The Clerk of Western Yearly Meeting and the Clerk of Illinois Yearly Meeting have agreed to meet with us in May, at which time we will consider the question, “What are our responsibilities to the two Yearly Meetings to which we belong?”

At the request of the Meeting, the Peace and Social Concerns Committee prepared a working document on the Events of September 11 in Light of the Peace Testimony.

First Day School has had a good year. There were four classes, each with two teachers. The younger classes used the Jubilee Curriculum. The Junior High class learned about religion around the world. This spring they studied the lives and works of Jane Addams, William Penn, John Woolman and others. They are putting to-