

Among Friends

Fall/Winter 2005

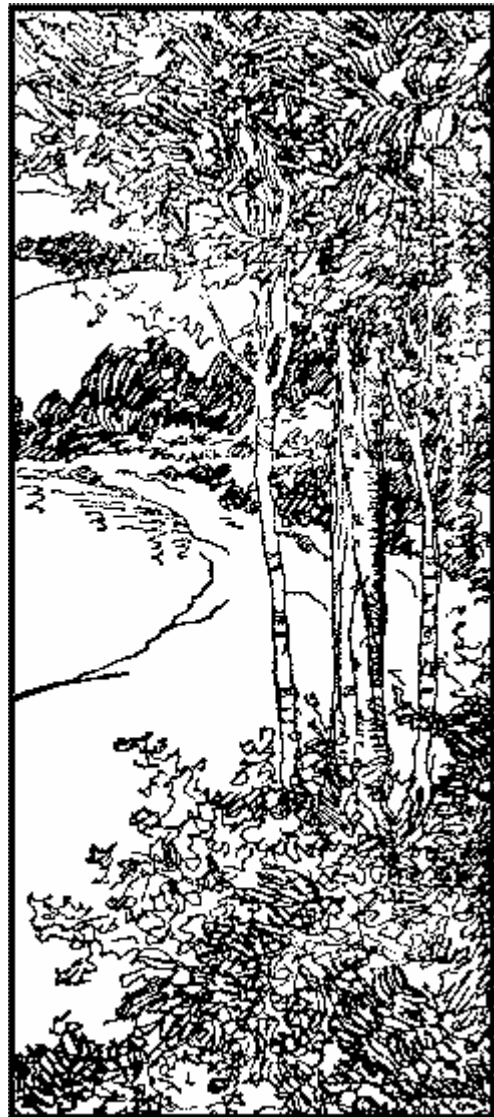
After Summer

Crunchy, golden leaves
Heavens shrouded with grey clouds
Departing sunshine.

Icy wind fingers
Barren tree limbs reaching out
To snowbirds aloft.

Yellow buds unfurl
Soft murmuring winds embrace
Bracts opening wide.

—*Angeline Reeks,*
Upper Fox Valley Quaker Meeting



Published by Illinois Yearly Meeting

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 spring issue 2006 need to be in the hands of the editor NO LATER THAN April 20, 2006. 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:

We are living in difficult times — “with grey clouds, Departing sunshine” — as the poem on the cover relates. But as the “winds embrace, Bracts opening wide” so Friends are seen reaching out. Read of the many ways that people have been responding in these difficult times.

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

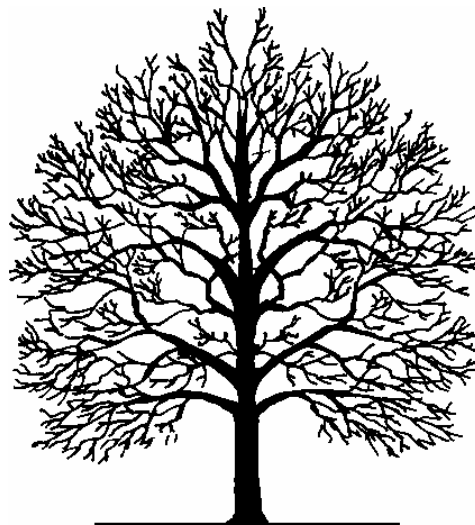


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New IYM Field Secretary

By Roxy Jacobs, Duneland Meeting



Maurine Pyle, of Lake Forest Friends Meeting began her duties as the new field secretary for Illinois Yearly Meeting on August 1 of this year. Maurine just completed her service as IYM Clerk. Sue Davison, Downers Grove

Friends Meeting, has begun serving as the new clerk of IYM. Friends gathered for the 2005 summer sessions in McNabb approved Maurine's appointment and warmly welcomed her.

Maurine is well known to 57th St. Friends. In the fall of 2003, Maurine served the Meeting by facilitating a series of deep conversations for 57th St. Friends and Western Yearly Meeting Friends. Through her gentle leadership and the deeply centered work of the Friends who labored together, many openings were discovered.

In her 1998 Plummer Lecture, Maurine said, "I am still amazed at what can be accomplished when we simply accept others as they are. My secret and most powerful method, though, has always been loving the people I work with."

Maurine replaces Roxy Jacobs of Duneland Friends Meeting who has served Illinois Yearly Meeting as their field secretary for the past five years. Roxy was moved to lay her position down in order to spend more time with family, in particular her grandchildren.

Maurine Pyle has been accepted as a Vail Leadership Scholar to Pendle Hill, the Quaker retreat center in Philadelphia, for the winter quarter of 2006. She will be studying the Book of John and attending other short courses from January 6-March 18. She wishes to express her deep gratitude to Lake Forest Friends Meeting for their generous financial support which enabled her to receive the scholarship and travel to Pendle Hill.

Help Wanted! From You!

By Cathy Garra, Development Committee

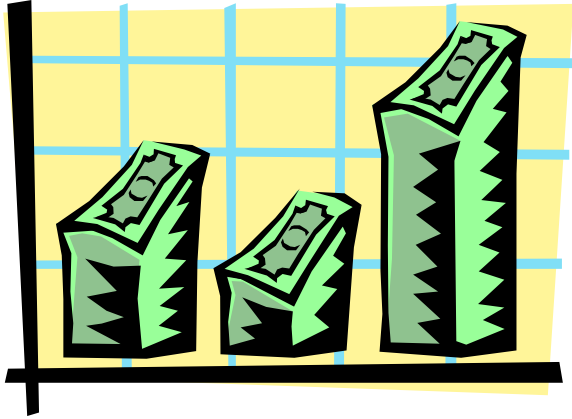
We have reached the second stage of our Three Part Vision for the future of IYM, as we celebrate the conclusion of the first stage of restoring our meetinghouse. Now we are focusing on making full use of our existing facilities to improve our campground. We will have a variety of sleeping and indoor spaces for families, younger Friends and Clear Creek Meeting. As approved at last summer's business session we will:

- Recycle the dormitory into simple cabins in the campground
- Retain an interim restroom and shower house west of the meetinghouse
- Relocate, remodel and reuse the junior yearly meetinghouse in the campground.

This will provide us with new options for sleeping by next summer and serve our yearly meeting community and guests for many years to come. It will also clear our southwest vista for stage three of our vision -- new buildings for year-round use.

All of this takes a commitment of time and money from IYM Friends.

- We have a group hard at work on planning the details of the campground improvements and securing fair bids and agreements from contractors.
- Friends are continuing to give generously to



make our facilities work happen. Financial updates are provided at Continuing Committee meetings, but we estimate that this phase will cost *at least* \$200,000 beyond the cost of the concluded meetinghouse restoration.

- Gifts of all sizes can make this happen, just as it has for our restoration. However, timing is critical. We need to have enough in-hand this winter to proceed with confidence this spring. A fall or year-end gift to IYM's Property Improvement Fund can make this happen. Please also consider a commitment to joining in with a set amount per day, week or month toward the effort in the New Year. A manageable amount can add up nicely. If you have questions or special plans, a member of the Development Committee can help.
- A special challenge fund has been established by an IYM family to match eligible gifts of \$500 or more, given at one time, from monthly meetings or individuals. Please see the following announcement for details. As of the end of September, we have received about half of the eligible gifts. This is a chance to make a difference!

Checks payable to Illinois Yearly Meeting, earmarked for the Property Improvement Fund, go to Roger Laughlin, our treasurer. IYM can also accept gifts of appreciated stock. Please ask Roger how to proceed. (Please see p.1 of the Minute Book, or the following announcement

for Roger's address and telephone.)

IYM Matching Challenge Gift

Illinois Yearly Meeting Friends have a chance to make a big difference in realizing our dreams of better physical facilities and improving our sleeping options on site. A generous IYM family has pledged to match gifts of \$500.00 or more to the Illinois Yearly Meeting's Property Improvement Fund (PIF), up to a total of \$50,000.

Gifts must be received (not just promised) between the start of the 2005 annual session and June 30, 2006, the end of our fiscal year.

Each single gift must be at least \$500. Gifts are made to the Property Improvement Fund, which covers our major improvements, not routine maintenance.

For example, a \$500 gift from ABC Monthly Meeting becomes \$1,000 realized by Illinois Yearly Meeting. A gift of \$2,000 from the Fell-Fox family becomes \$4,000 and so on.

Roger Laughlin serves as the IYM Treasurer. Please send your check, payable to "Illinois Yearly Meeting" with a note for "PIF" to: Roger Laughlin, 107 North Parkway, Prospect Heights, IL 60070.

IYM can also accept direct gifts of appreciated stock. Please call Roger (847/577-9496) to ask how to proceed.

IYM Site Changes On the Horizon

By Bill Howenstine

At its 2005 session, IYM approved the recommendations of the Site Envisioning and Building Committee to:

- dismantle the Dormitory and use the salvaged lumber to construct 6-8 summer cabins on a portion of the campground across the road;
- move the Junior Yearly Meetinghouse also across the road and remodel it especially for use by high school youth in the summer.



The recommendations were made, in part, to clear a site near our historic Meetinghouse for the construction of the new all-season “Peace House on the Prairie” (approved IYM 2004). At the same time these moves will provide much-needed indoor sleeping space during Yearly Meetings, beginning with the 2006 sessions.

Environmental sustainability and respect for historic uses were considerations contributing to the recommendation for “reincarnation” of the dormitory wood in the summer cabins. The placement of these structures, including the Jr. Yearly Meetinghouse, in the IYM campground will be made carefully so as not to usurp the choicest tent sites.

The Yearly Meeting approved the continuation of the ad hoc Site Envisioning and Building Committee another year in order to oversee this work, to develop a master plan for the IYM grounds, and to work with other IYM committees to develop “right organization” for future visioning, planning, and dreaming.

Look forward to a “new horizon” at IYM 2006!

Salt and Pepper: Seasoning for IYM Financial Requests

Sandy Huntley, IYM Finance Committee

New financial requests are a part of the growth and change of IYM. How to do this can be confusing. One concern is how to get money from the Yearly Meeting Budget for a worthy cause. The other is how to contribute money to a project for IYM. IYM Finance Committee suggests these approaches:

The recommended way to get a request for money into the budget is to let the finance committee and the clerk of IYM know in advance of the Yearly Meeting Session. Before doing this, especially for new items, it is suggested that you engage in a discernment process with your meeting or an interested committee of the Yearly Meeting to see if this is appropriate and the best way to approach the Yearly Meeting. Waiting until the yearly meeting Business Meeting session is *not* “right order.” The request will be taken up at the Finance Committee meeting at the annual session. We will consider such things as how much money we have available and how appropriate the request is. It helps if the Monthly Meeting or IYM committee has forwarded the request and it is in writing.

EXAMPLE: Friend Flossie received a letter from a former member of her meeting who moved to New Orleans. Flossie is shocked by the need of the meeting there. She wants to help and also feels that it would be nice if IYM

would also contribute. (The former member was active in IYM.) Friend Flossie goes to her meeting and they agree that this is an appropriate thing to do. They set up a fund in the local meeting and forward Friend Flossie's request to the clerk of IYM and to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee looks at the request and decides that there is an amount of money available for a "one-time" contribution. They recommend this action in the business meeting at the annual session. If the budget is especially tight the recommendation might be for other meetings and individuals to contribute to the fund of the local meeting.

Sometimes Friends get enthusiastic about raising or contributing money for a project.

We would like to remind Friends that it is more appropriate to send the project through an appropriate IYM committee first. That project can be brought to the consideration of the business session for approval. Unsolicited funds for a specific project leave IYM with the difficult issue of what to do with the money if or when the project is deemed unworkable. Earmarked funds for a project that does not exist, however well intentioned, can pose a real challenge and cause everyone distress. IYM has a policy of reserving the right to return these funds or redirect them to established funds or projects, with the consent of the donor. Funds earmarked to a current project have a more satisfactory result.

The Finance Committee does not wish to dampen spontaneous and heartfelt generosity but feels ill equipped to engage in this kind of discernment process by itself, especially at the Yearly Meeting Session.

Blue River Quarterly Makes Plans for IYM 2006

By Margaret Katranides, St. Louis Meeting

Blue River is responsible for site prep, maintenance and clean-up for 2006. The

coordinators identified are:

Overall: Margaret Katranides

Site Prep: Jeannie Marvin, Grayce Mesner, Bob Wixom

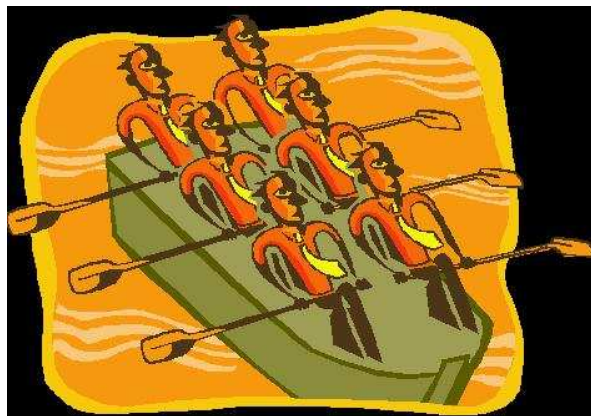
Food during Site Prep: Dawn Rubbert

Purchasing: Beth Schobernd

Housekeeping: David Finke

Clean-up: Diane and Mike Dennis

We plan to hold site prep from Saturday 7/22/06



through Wednesday 7/26/06, to allow participation both by folks who can come on the weekend, and by folks who travel far and would rather wait until nearer the date of the sessions to show up. Meals will be provided from Saturday noon through Wednesday breakfast.

We encourage Friends to consider what part of this time they can be present, expecting a warm glow of fellowship as well as the satisfaction of a job well done. Tasks available will cover the gamut of skill and strength, so no one should feel that their contribution is not needed -- young and old, whether physically strong, old and wily, or simply patient and willing, will all find a place.

Meeting Reports:

Clear Creek

By Jeannie Marvin

The Hindis of India express their spiritual lives with in the banks of their rivers. The Quaker practice of centered silence often feels like one of these rivers.

Most of the time our spiritual river at Clear Creek flows calmly and steadily.

However, during our Monthly First Day School the rapid and lively energy of children creates a faster moving current. It is within this current, that interrupts our sleepy path, that we experience spiritual movement, clarity and grace.

The children are a force of life. When we open to being in their presence, we are forced to grow. They are the sunlight whose warmth encourages us out of our adult cocoon.

So we gather around a picnic bench or tree, give them crafts so that they may express their connection to God or Spirit, a bulletin board to answer a question within their own time frame and after lunch activities so that we may all join in



celebrating wind and open sky.

They give us a break from being too serious, too intent on contemplating our navels. It is their laughter that shakes the molecules in the air, sending cobwebs from our brains and transforming the air around them into an awakening.

Our fears are often the material of dams and blocks within our spiritual rivers. It only takes one child whose persistent energy reminds us daily to keep moving beyond our fears --for their sake and for ours.

Downer's Grove

By Sue Styer

Our New Meetinghouse committee has been working with the architects to complete the design of our new building. We will soon be ready to seek bids from the builders. We have raised over half of the funds needed for the construction. One nearly painless way that we raised capital was last year's Fall Festival and silent auction. There were many crafts, baked goods and antiques (and near-antiques) available for bidding. Games for children, snacks, and the Jones Family String Band and Square Dance Players rounded out the day. We also participated in the Downers Grove Heritage Fest in

June, and although we didn't raise a lot of money, we spread the word about Quakers in the western suburbs. We also find that participating in these kinds of activities are fun and help build fellowship in our meeting.

Another way we built fellowship was through the workshop in May on vocal ministry by Benjamin Lloyd of Haverford Meeting. There were exercises for us to do to help us build trust, and discussions on how to discern the Inner Voice. Those who speak too quickly in meeting were encouraged to be more discerning, while those who rarely speak were encouraged to be more

open to leadings.

There were several comings and goings at Downers Grove. We said goodbye to James Baker on his return to his native Canada last spring, after being with us for over 10 years. He plans to spend lots of time with his family, especially his three grandchildren. We also said goodbye to Martha Davis and Jonathan Thron in July. They moved to New Mexico for job opportunities. Martha is an avid gardener and faces a new climate to test her skills. Donna Sprinkle and her daughter, Heather, moved to North Carolina to be near family. In June, we held a reception to honor our high school graduates, Bridget Anderson, Emily Ostergaard, and Hannah White. We welcomed our newest members, Deborah and Isabel Davison, and Lorraine Bartnik this fall.

And finally, Betty Clegg shared with us a message carried to a Washington, DC, antiwar rally by former DGFM members Dale and Marion Hess: When Jesus said, "Love you enemies," I think he probably meant, "Don't kill them."

Evanston

By Bob Dixon-Kolar

Anticipation, joy, delight, and gratitude—these were the emotions felt by so many Evanston Friends on returning home for worship at our newly renovated Meetinghouse. After four months as Sunday guests of the Music Institute of Chicago, worshipers arrived at Meeting, welcomed by the new sweeping staircase that leads up to the main entrance. At the rise of Meeting, those of us who had not been in the building since work began, surveyed the impressive, lovely changes throughout, often stopping to admire the details, the craftsman's care with crown molding and trim. Joan Pine, whose coordinating role in this renewal project was so critical to its success, commends and thanks the architect and contractors for their fine, consci-

entious work. She also thanks the many Friends—and friends of Friends—who have shared their insights, resources, guidance, and skills in the planning and fulfillment of this renovation project. Joan offers this blessing: "May the renewal of our historic old building help it to remain a place of peace, love, transformation, and service for generations to come. Welcome home."

Lake Forest

By Pam Kuhn

Community reminds us that we are called to love, for community is a product of love in action and not of simple self-interest. Parker Palmer

After laboring off and on for two years, in May 2005 Lake Forest Friends Meeting formed a Minute on child membership. In this time, we discovered the importance of articulating the Meeting's responsibility for the education and nurturing of our children on membership matters and clearness committees especially during the Middle School years. We also established a plan to meet individually with all high school students so that we may get to know

"May the renewal of our historic old building help it to remain a place of peace, love, transformation, and service for generations to come. Welcome home." — Evanston

them better before they go off on their own. During this meeting, we make sure that the young adult understands the membership process. We recognize that at times the membership process may need to be adjusted to suit individual needs.

Now after by a request from our Finance Committee, we feel led to examine our practice of giving. Starting on August 28, we have met twice monthly in threshing sessions called "Reflections on Giving". We are guided by queries such as, "What is the nature of giving and what does it mean individually and corpo-

rately?" The threshing sessions have been well attended and we have brought thoughts and ideas to the Light that have led to a deeper understanding of financial matters. From this depth, we now see the need to have a "Listening Project" so that each Friend may individually consider, speak, and be listened to concerning reflections on giving.

In addition to the threshing sessions, Lake Forest has continued with our many small groups within the Meeting. The Bible study group, which meets weekly, has taken up the study of the Gospel of John. Our discussion group, which meets before Meeting for Worship, has been reading two Pendle Hill Pamphlets, *Creeds and Quakers* by Robert Griswald and *Living in Virtue, Declaring Against War* by Steve Smith.

The First Day School started off the year with a dramatization of the book, *Old Turtle* by Robert Wood. Janet Means Underhill played the old turtle while the children took on the roles of the animals, wind, rain, etc. The adults enjoyed being the audience. One week, the kids made cards and filled baskets for a family misplaced by Hurricane Katrina. First Day School will continue the year studying Quaker values.

We have few bits of exciting member/attender news.

- September brought a new baby to our Meeting, Graeme Lewis Cunningham, son of Dreiske Arnold and "Michael" Cunningham.
- In October 2005, Michael Terrien received the "Blessed are the Peacemakers" award from the World Council of Churches "for inspiring, courageous and faithful efforts to build a just and peaceful world." Michael was nominated through the efforts of Janice Domaniuk and Tom Paxson. To learn more about Play for Peace visit www.playforpeace.org. Michael is the Executive Director of Play-for-Peace, an international organization that

brings together children in conflict using cooperative play.

Oak Park

By Will Rutt

The Oak Park Friends Meeting has begun to work with other community members in military anti-recruitment efforts at three west suburban Chicago high schools. Leafleting at the schools, equal time information tables in the schools, and support of student peace groups already existing in one of the schools are some of the anticipated tactics. We hope to provide assistance to students and their parents in opting out of military recruitment activities. Great assistance from the Chicago office of American Friends Service Committee has been of benefit.

Anyone who lives in the west suburban area of Chicagoland is invited to join in our group. For further information you may call me at 708 484 9728 or e-mail me at willrutt@sbcglobal.net.

Rolla Intergenerational First Day School For The Small Meeting

By Jane Driber*

Like most small meetings with just a few children, Rolla (MO) Friends Meeting struggled to provide the children with a comprehensive and consistent First Day School. For years we tried different methods without much success. Attendance and support were sporadic; materials were limited; and the persons teaching were relatively inexperienced in the Religious Society of Friends.

Then one fateful day in 1998, the meeting decided to have a William Penn Day. All the members contributed to this in their own way—one person giving a short history, others enacting the story, another leading us in song, another presenting a related craft activity, and so on. The end result was an intergenerational en-

terprise that we all enjoyed, and I wondered if such would also work for our First Day School. I asked the members if we could set aside the last First Day of every month when we have potluck to be Intergenerational First Day. They were fully supportive, and this became a regular event.

The advantages were soon apparent. Intergenerational First Day School (IFDS) began to create community among us. The regularly scheduled IFDS at the end of the month improved attendance of children. Parents, grandparents and guardians knew exactly when a First Day School would be offered at our meeting. And through IFDS we not only learned about Quakers, we learned about each other through discussion and activities. The group was able to contribute to the children's understanding and knowledge more than one person alone. But most of all we were learning together. The members of our meeting had been raised in our religious traditions; so, the knowledge gained was valuable to the adults as well.

I also found that preparing for an IFDS once a month was much more manageable. The task of preparing for an IFDS was more of a spiritual journey than a burden. The added enthusiasm, participation and support of the meeting inspired me.

Having a fixed general agenda for the IFDS made planning much easier. The following general format was developed:

- Silent Worship (15 min)
- Introduction to the lesson or to basic principles (5 min)
- Story or lesson (10-20 min)
- Related activity or discussion (10-20 min)
- Songs (5 min)
- Closing with circle and holding hands.

This agenda is conducive to children's learning, because no one part goes on for too long, and everyone knows the pattern, creating a tradition and security. Another advantage was simplification for planning. Each lesson was supplemented by a handout, often with a picture illustrating the lesson, and it was followed by, or integrated with, a related activity. That could be a game, art or craftwork, cooking, brainstorming, awareness activities, a demonstration, role-playing, problem-solving, etc.

The activities were from the books listed below. These can all be ordered from the FGC Bookstore (except *The Friendly Seed* and *Color Me Quaker*, now out of print, but available on loan from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library).

They teach us about ourselves and each other, build character and community, and provide opportunity to develop ability to solve problems and express ourselves.

We found it to be helpful to have a set of ground rules, based on our goals and needs and reviewed briefly at the

start of each session. These included the following:

- Everyone is invited to share knowledge, insights and observations, keeping them simple out of respect for the younger members.
- Ask questions rather than tell.
- Everyone is free to pass or decline.
- The activity or the lesson or the rules may be changed by agreement.

When very young children are present who would not be able to understand the activities, they can be kept in the group by providing pictures from *Color Me Quaker* (S. Combs, FUM Press, 1987) or providing balls of clay for creative activities, or giving them helping roles. When the agenda is finished, they will appreci-

“The task of preparing for an intergenerational first day school was more of a spiritual journey than a burden.” — Rolla

ate being given an opportunity to show what they did. In a case where adults with serious physical limitations are present, it will be necessary to select activities that would be appropriate for them.

In the realm of ministry, there were service projects that we took on. Some came from Yearly Meeting regarding how we could help people in other countries. Sometimes we sent health, food and first-aid kits to people in need. We took food to friends and Friends when they were sick. We sent greeting cards and letters to public servants to promote social change. Sometimes these could be coordinated with a lesson, or simply in response to a need.

Resources

- For Quaker history: *Procession of Friends* (by D. Newman, FUM Press, 1992). *George Fox and the Valiant Sixty* (E. Vipont, Quaker Press of FGC, 1997), and *Quakers on the Move* (FGC Relig. Ed. Committee, Quaker Press of FGC, 1996) The last one was especially helpful, because it includes exercises and suggestions and was written for children to understand.
- For Friends practices, *The Friendly Seed* (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1983) and *Opening Doors to Quaker Worship* (Religious Ed. Committee of FGC, 1994).
- For meditation, *Meditating with Children* (Integral Yoga Publications, 1995) and some of the exercises in *Opening Doors to Quaker Worship* (see above).
- For teaching Bible stories, *Jesus, Who Was He?* (Mary Snyder, Quaker Press of FGC, 1991) and, of course, the Bible itself.
- *Teaching Queries* (by Sally Farneth and Elinor Briggs, PYM, 1995) was used to teach the Queries, and for prayer we used *Opening Doors to Quaker Worship* and *Friendly Seed*. However, the best teacher of prayer was the example of the adult members and how they talked to God.

Of course, there are other books that could be

very useful. See *Quaker Books* (the FGC Bookstore catalog, www.quakerbooks.org) and the catalog of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library (<http://library.pym.org>).

(*) Edited by Scott Searles, to whom correspondence may be addressed at 7709 N. Chesley Dr., Columbia, MO 65202, or ssearles@coin.org. (Article is a contribution from Religious Education Committee, Illinois Yearly Meeting.)

St. Louis: Reaches Out to Aid American Indian Victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

By Debra Penna-Fredericks (October 2005)

After learning about the plight of the Houma Indian tribe, many of whose tribal members were devastated by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, St. Louis Religious Society of Friends Meeting and Oxford, Mississippi Friends Meeting reached out to the St. Louis community to send bedding and money to aid the southeastern tribe. With the collections in hand, Debra Penna-Fredericks and Candy Boyd from the St. Louis Friends Meeting went down to the bayou country to deliver them and to offer aid to the Houma this past weekend.

Upon reaching the impacted area, the St. Louis relief volunteers witnessed first hand what hurricane damage really means. The Houma are primarily located in bayou areas, south of New Orleans, especially concentrated in Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Jefferson, LaFourche, and Terrebonne Parishes. Tribal communities in St. Bernard and Plaquemines were more than 90% destroyed, often leaving only a few pieces of wood or a small memento, such as a plate, to represent what had once been the home of one of the Houma families. St. Bernard only opened to its previous residents this past Sunday and some communities still are not open to their former citizens. Most, if not all, of the homes left in those hardest hit areas will likely be condemned and require rebuilding. Dulac, in Ter-



A volunteer Houma tribal member and Candy Boyd of Saint Louis work on stocking and cleaning the shelves in the Houma Relief Center.

rebonne Parish, a community along the bayou that houses many of the famous bayou shrimpers, suffered primarily from severe flood damage. There are large boats that were moved from somewhere in the bayou onto land 200 yards or more from the normal water line. Many of the boats, the livelihood of most of these people, were destroyed by the rough waters that tossed them about like toys. Now they sit upside down and at 90 degree angles in the water, looking eerily as if they were left behind years earlier in a ghost town.

Dulac residents spoke of staying in the Community Center to stay safe from the floods, as they normally might during a hurricane and high water problems, and then being forced to evacuate because the water level rose to 5 feet inside the center. An amazing thing about these bayou residents is that they all told their tales with a smile and a gentle voice, glad to have their lives, family and their friends nearby.

Indeed, St. Louis Friends volunteer workers, Candy Boyd and Debra Penna-Fredericks learned that the Houma simply did not complain about their plight despite the noticeable lack of publicity and the lack of assistance from federal and large agencies. When the volunteers first arrived, they were greeted with smiles and felt

welcome immediately. They were ready to get right to work, but instead found themselves being introduced around by their gracious hosts. But there was no lack of work to do, they soon learned, and they quickly found themselves busy helping in the Houma Relief Center, an old store that has been closed for years and has now been set up by the Tribal community in order to help their members survive. The Relief Center was stocked with donated goods from other small organizations as well as donations from other Indian tribes and one or two corporations. After the arrival of the donations this past weekend, the Houma Relief Center has run out of storage room, with overflow being stored at the home of the Tribal Chief, Brenda Robicheaux and her husband, Mike Robichaux, known fondly by the tribal members as "Dr. Mike".

Candy and Debra worked at the Relief Center helping to sort the donations, stock the shelves, greet people and help tribal members find necessities when they arrived. In addition, the St. Louis volunteers spent time going through part of the hardest hit area and passing out water to the people who had returned to their broken and flood-ruined homes. This work gave the volunteers the opportunity to meet the tribal members and learn about their beautiful spirits as the volunteers heard the heartwarming and heartbreaking stories of these people who lost everything except their spirits and loved ones. They learned about the people who were living with several families in one house because the families who had moved in had lost their homes completely and the house in which the people were living was still intact, missing only parts of the roof or maybe some walls and floors. Sometimes the people lived in tents inside the houses to protect them from the elements. The volunteers learned that those who were lucky lost only shingles and needed roof repairs. Those lucky tribal members were especially generous to their other members who needed more help. And the Friendly St. Louisians learned that the Houma were truly self-sufficient. They are a people who were ac-

customed to taking care of themselves and it showed in the work they had already done since the hurricanes. They had cleaned their yards and started cleaning the moldy muck from their flooded homes in the communities where the water had already gone down. Some of them had even taken the moldy walls and flooring out of their homes, anxious to begin the repairs.

Among the more heartwarming experiences for the St. Louisians were the occasions when the volunteers saw the children and dogs playing out in the flood damaged yards. It was such a solid reminder that life simply continues, no matter how hard things get. The Houma will survive; there is no question about that. But sadness also hangs over this tribe because there are 3,500 tribal members still unaccounted for. Though the St. Louis relief volunteers rarely saw anything but smiles on the tired faces of the Houma, they did see tears well up in the eyes of the tribal members if the topic of the missing people came up. The missing are thought — hoped — to be in shelters among other hurricane evacuees. But many of the missing tribal members do not speak English and the Red Cross just arrived at Raceland, Louisiana to begin working with the Tribal Chief this past weekend and so the true fate of the lost will not be known for a long time.

Debra and Candy from St. Louis Friends will be holding the Houma in the Light (a Quaker way of prayer) while the Houma await word of the fate of their missing tribal members. The St. Louis women also learned that the Houma is a people not accustomed to asking for help. The volunteers observed that the primary need now would be money and volunteers to help the Houma clean up and rebuild their communities. Most of the tribal members were self-employed, living in impoverished conditions without insurance, and they will need aid from others if their lives will be rebuilt. Many lived as shrimpers and lost their boats, their only livelihood, as well as their homes.

This tribe has a long history in America and the Friendly St. Louisians are hopeful that others in America will reach out to them to help keep them together in the southeast where they have lived for generations so we can preserve our American history.

A citizen of Dulac just came up with an inexpensive means of raising their homes to avoid future floods in order to continue living where their fathers and grandfathers before them lived and there is now hope that the people along the bayou will be able to have their homes raised or have new homes built on the raised platforms.

In response to the plight of the people impacted by the recent hurricanes and in recognition of the likelihood of future disasters to other communities, the Friends Meeting in St. Louis has set up a Disaster Response Committee. See end of following story for contacts and information.



Houma Indian Relief Volunteers Pegleg George Crader and Debra Penna-Fredericks show that all it takes is a smile and a warm heart to volunteer at the Houma Relief Center.

American Indians Largely Ignored and Misunderstood by FEMA and the Red Cross

By Debra Penna-Fredericks, St. Louis Meeting (October 2005)

After American Indians were hard hit and, in some cases, devastated by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, their cries for help to FEMA and other major national agencies went unanswered for as long as a month in some areas and have still been unanswered in other areas that are home to the Houma Nation Indian tribe.

The Red Cross and Salvation Army did respond with help in the Dulac Community Center, a place that serves one of the numerous hard hit areas, about 2 weeks ago. But it wasn't until this past Saturday, October 9, that the Red Cross and FEMA set up an official office in Raceland, LA, home to the Houma Relief Center and Tribal Chief, Brenda Robichaux, to begin aiding more of the tribal members and begin taking applications to help the Houma people rebuild their lives.



Boat washed up on land.

Even with the newly set up office in Raceland, many difficulties still face the Houma Indians whose lives do not meet the bureaucracy of the FEMA. Among other things, such agencies have been stubborn about insisting that the Indians fill out applications on their own. However, due to laws in Louisiana preventing most Indians from obtaining education until just a few decades ago, many of the Indians are incapable of



It soon became difficult to tell the communities from the sea.

filling out their own applications. In addition, many of the Indians do not speak English and so need help from interpreters when filling out the applications. The agencies also overlook the fact that these people who are spread out along the bayou have lost everything, including their vehicles, in the hurricanes, so getting to offices far away may present difficulties.

But these are resilient people and they are finding ways to help themselves. Tribal Chief Brenda Robichaux is working hard to find creative ways to help meet the needs of her people despite these challenges. The Houma, which was the Indian tribe most impacted by the hurricanes, primarily live along the bayous along the peninsulas south of New Orleans, scattered throughout the Louisiana parishes of Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Jefferson, LaFourche, and Terrebonne. As a result, 3,500 tribal members were devastated by direct wind damage, losing everything, with an estimated 1,000 homes completely gone. Another 3,500 were affected by unusually high flood water from the bayou and flood damage due to the levee breaks. Many of these remaining homes will be condemned due to the damage they sustained.

The Houma is one of at least four Indian tribes in the southeast that were impacted by the hurricanes and other tribes have reported experiencing similarly slow response by FEMA and national relief agencies. They have been receiving most of their aid from other Indian tribes and grass roots efforts, such as that of the St. Louis

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), who, with donations from other St. Louisians and Friends from Oxford, MS, responded to the Houma this past weekend by sending a load of bedding, monetary contributions, and two volunteer relief workers. A variety of groups have sent many generous donations, which have been gratefully accepted by the tribes. The greatest need is for monetary donations in the foreseeable future. Many of the tribal members were fishermen who lost their boats as well as their homes and will have difficulty paying for the repairs on their homes or replacing their homes. Most are currently in shelters, or living with other families; some have gone back to flood-damaged homes because their shelters closed. All are helping one another and themselves with beautiful smiles on their faces. As a volunteer nurse reported, one flood victim said, "I ain't got no stress. I wake up in the mornin' with this smile on my face, and I go to bed at night with this smile on my face." Such is the wonderful attitude of the Houma.

St. Louis Friends will send more relief teams in the future, including two long weekends in October. If you are interested in volunteering, please call 314-647-0193 or e-mail quakersresponse@yahoo.com. Tax deductible donations may be sent to St. Louis Friends Meeting, 1001 Park, St. Louis, MO 63104. Please make the check payable to "St. Louis Friends" and write "Houma-Disaster Response" in the memo. Every penny of this fund goes to the effort to rebuild the Houma Nation, with no money for overhead or administrative costs. For more information about the Houma and to make direct donations to the tribe, go to www.unitedhoumanation.org.

South Bend Friends

By Marjorie Kinsey

South Bend Friends have an expanded space. No, we are still at the Charles Martin Youth Center and set up for Meeting for Worship in the enormous general purpose room, but we have rented a larger space for our official occupancy of the Center. The space has greatly re-

lieved the crunch on our lively First Day School. Activities for three age groups can go on at once in the new rooms.

We still look with wonder and joy at the explosion of energy that is the First Day School and are ever grateful for the faithfulness and inventiveness of several parents which keeps the children involved, happy and learning. We are also joyfully receiving

new members and attenders. Seasoned younger Quakers have arrived this year from both coasts. But other interested folk have sought us because of reading about Quakers or remembering long ago experiences. They have found us through our telephone answering machine and through our web site.

Indeed, South Bend Friends are becoming electronically attached with a web page at Quaker.org and a Yahoo group for our own mailings. We are grateful to those members who have used their technological expertise to bring us closer together.

Other programs are providing opportunities for fellowship and discussion as well as learning about Quakerism. For one, a librarian has come forth from our midst to catalogue and order what had been our ever-shrinking number of books. We now have an accessible library shelf and check out system as well as an active acquisitions and gifts initiative. Among other activities has been a group working on our response to Katrina victims and considering our relations to the myriad of international emergencies.

And we also have opportunities to gain perspective on Quakerism though study together. Over the summer two groups began reading Barclay's Apology. Member Tom Slaughter, history professor at Notre Dame, is writing a book on John Woolman which we will be able to read and discuss in draft form. Quakerism 101 and other programs are in the wings.

Urbana-Champaign Meeting

By Mariellen Gilpin

Urbana-Champaign Friends continue to benefit from having our new spiritual home, with increased attendance by newcomers to the Society of Friends. Michael Phillips and Jacqueline Waters have become new members of the meeting, and got married under our care October 1.

Friends turned out in droves for the marriage and merrymaking.

Evan Carter Ching has joined his parents, Kory Lawson Ching and Cynthia Carter Ching, and his big brother Connor Lawson Ching. His parents say Evan is a much more laid-back baby than Connor was, so much so that it has been a big relief to see Evan become more 'assertive' in recent weeks.

We received an unexpected gift of \$5,000 from the estate of Gardiner Stillwell. We used the gift to pay down some of our mortgage—only \$20,000 (more or less) to go. Gardiner's gift will save us \$3,400 in interest alone. We'd like to put in some library shelves, because our library is now stacked on blocks and boards and needs a permanent home. But we're expecting high heating bills this winter, and so we are urging one another to be frugal.

The IYM Dream Gathering, Part II, was held at our meetinghouse on September 17. We cooked for 20-30 Friends, and five showed up! We assured one another that where there are five Friends, there will be six opinions, but we still managed to finish in a timely fashion after an intimate little meeting. After worship the next day we invited Friends for a bodacious potluck with the leftovers—and there were still leftovers to carry home with us afterwards!

Roy and Carolyn Treadway came in June to present a workshop on nuclear power, and our meeting put together two carloads of Friends to attend and speak at a Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearing about a second nuclear power plant at Clinton, IL—both Bloomington-Normal and Champaign-Urbana are downwind from Clinton. We think the NRC has its own methods of crowd control: they held the hearing at 7:00 on a work night, and then dimmed the lights for about an hour while they showed a Powerpoint presentation. When they turned up the lights at the end, most of the Clinton folks had gone home to bed and didn't hear the actual

discussion of the pros and cons of nuclear power.

Cecile Nyiramana's presentation at the meeting-house drew a small crowd of both Friends and people from other churches, even though we had very little advance notice. We will try to get the word out sooner next time, if African Great Lakes Initiative-Friends Peace Teams will let us know sooner. The assemblage was very moved by Cecile's story of genocide and forgiveness. Keep 'em coming to Urbana-Champaign, David Zarembka!

We commemorated the 60th anniversary of the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by inviting other churches to participate. Six churches helped with planning the event, and 17 churches and religious groups, along with the Physics Department and the Center on Disarmament and Arms Control at the University, co-sponsored a talk by an expert on nuclear terrorism. A few days later almost a hundred people gathered at a local church to view the film on Sadako, a little girl who died of leukemia as a result of fallout from the bombings, then fold paper cranes and decorate peace lanterns. The evening ended with a procession to a nearby park to float the peace lanterns in a fountain. The peace lanterns left the group in a reflective frame of mind at the conclusion of the Hiroshima Day events.

The Tuesday evening study group read several Pendle Hill pamphlets over the summer, and this fall has begun reading Brent Bill's *Holy Silence: The Gift of Quaker Spirituality*. When the little Baptist congregation leaves our premises for their own worship space in a few weeks, study group plans to have a spiritual journeys series on Sundays at 9:30, before worship begins at 11:00. We look forward to hearing one another's stories of our journeys toward God.

The November *What Canst Thou Say?* (WCTS) issue on God's Humor involved contributions from a number of Illinois Friends: Chris Johns created cartoons, and Michael Phillips, Jean

Mayes, Mariellen Gilpin, and Maurine Pyle contributed brief articles. It seemed that most of the articles were examples of an intimate relationship with God, in which the humor was brief and often poignant. This issue was largely the work of Judy Lumb, the WCTS editor who writes from Belize. For the February issue we will catch up on some of our backlog of articles waiting for a theme — the theme will evolve from the content. The May issue will contain Friends' stories about Jesus' life and power and presence among us today.

We look forward to having tea with Maurine Pyle, IYM's new Field Secretary, at our new meetinghouse on the weekend of November 4-5. We expect to have a Family Worship on October 30, and there will be a Christmas Eve hymn sing with Brenda Koenig and Drew Phillips leading the singing. Stay tuned.

Project Lakota:

Report from Pine Ridge

By Pam Timme, Oak Park Meeting

Carrie Melin, my daughter Christina and I had the privilege of spending the first part of August volunteering for Project Lakota at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Once again, I would like to thank Oak Park Friends Meeting for contributing to our travel expenses.

Project Lakota was started in 2000 by Candy Boyd, Greg Woods and Candy's daughter, Maya Suffern. Its purpose is to raise funds to buy materials for housing construction and rehabilitation for the Lakota Nation (at the Pine Ridge Reservation) and to provide scholarship money for volunteers traveling to Pine Ridge. It is under the care of the St. Louis Friends Meeting.

Some of the not-for-profit organizations Project Lakota has worked with include Self-Help Housing (Partnership for Housing), Tiwahe Tipi

Okolakiciye Tiospaye (Family Home Organization), and Habitat for Humanity. Self-Help Housing is a program in which the families who will live in the homes help to build them. The houses in this program are built in a construction lot on the reservation, and when finished are moved to their final location. Tiwahe Tipi is a tiospaye (family group/clan) housing cooperative to build log cabins in and around the town of Oglala. Habitat for Humanity is on the reservation and builds a house approximately every three years. Project Lakota also works with individuals not connected with the above organizations that have housing needs.

My lasting impression from this trip was of the sense of continuation of the Lakota Nation and culture in the face of over a century of disasters and oppression. I heard some people speaking Lakota in their everyday lives, saw them taking pride in and participating in traditional dancing, singing and drumming at the pow wow, saw traditional prayers being given, and listened to humorous remarks, ghost/spirit stories and family history stories.

Background Information

The following is a very brief overview of the complex and tumultuous history of the Lakota (western Sioux) over the last 150 years. (For more detailed information, please see the book and movie list at the end of this report.) The Lakota people originally lived over a large territory which included portions of what today are North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, Colorado and Nebraska. They depended on the buffalo (tatanka), which roamed these plains, for food, shelter and clothing. The Black Hills, or Paha Sapa, which are sacred to the Lakota, were at the center of this land. In response to a successful military campaign by Lakota leader Red Cloud against western forts along the Bozeman Trail, the United States had promised much of this area to the Lakota in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. But, unfortunately for the Lakota, gold was discovered in the Black Hills in 1874 and the treaty was broken. A century

later, in 1980, the United States Supreme Court stated, "A more ripe and rank case of dishonorable dealings will never, in all probability, be found in our history." In addition to invasion of the Lakota's territory by miners, soldiers and settlers, the buffalo had nearly been exterminated. By 1893 it was estimated that there were only 300 buffalo left in North America out of an original estimate of at least 30 million. By 1876, the U.S. ordered all Lakota bands onto reservations. Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull led the resistance which culminated in the destruction of Custer's Seventh Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876. By the late 1880s some Lakota were living on reservations while others were attempting to live in their traditional manner. The "ghost dance" was being performed by many western tribes including the Lakota in hopes of returning America to its pre-European state; the government was trying to suppress this threat. In December 1890 a band of 350 men, women and children led by the elderly and ill Big Foot were on their way to Pine Ridge, seeking safety. They were intercepted and disarmed by U.S. soldiers near Wounded Knee Creek (now part of Pine Ridge Reservation), and most of them then massacred. The bodies were left to freeze in the snow for three days, and then buried in a mass grave. Black Elk, a Lakota holy man, said, "I did not know then how much was ended. When I look back now from the high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream."

From that time through part of the 20th century, many Lakota children were forced to go to schools where they were prohibited from speaking their language or practicing their religion. Religious ceremonies, such as the sun dance, were banned and other attempts at forced assimilation were made. In the early 1970s, a

civil war-like atmosphere developed on Pine Ridge Reservation. Two hundred AIM (American Indian Movement) members and traditionals, in protest against injustices, treaty violations, and the corrupt tribal council head, Dick Wilson, occupied the Wounded Knee site for over two months. They were surrounded and besieged by FBI agents, but their supporters slipped through ravines at night with food and supplies. For the next three years, there was much violence against AIM supporters on the reservation by Dick Wilson and his supporters, called "GOONS". Today, Pine Ridge Reservation includes the second poorest county (per capita income) in the country. (The poorest county is also in South Dakota, and is home to the Crow Creek Sioux Reservation.) There are high rates of unemployment, alcoholism, car accidents, suicide, diabetes, and infant mortality. Life expectancy is among the lowest in the Western Hemisphere. Housing is substandard and overcrowded.

Leonard Crow Dog, a Lakota spiritual leader and author of the book, *Crow Dog: Four Generations of Sioux Medicine Men*, said, "Whites say not to blame them, they aren't involved. It's their ancestors who did wrong. But they should be involved. They are living on our land. We are still third-class citizens. We are still invisible. Indians are in jail. Indians are starving. You should take some responsibility, not for what was, but for what *is*. We can't put all of you back on the *Mayflower*. So we've got to live with one another as best we can. I look upon my white friends who have for so long supported me as brothers and sisters. I don't look at the color of their skin. Many young wasichus have come to Crow Dog's Paradise, often staying for weeks or months. I feed them and give them shelter. There are many good, understanding white men and women. The only trouble is, there's not enough of them."

Our Experiences at Pine Ridge

Carrie, Christina and I left for South Dakota on Monday, August 1. It took us two days to drive

each way, we worked for seven days, and we took two days off to sightsee in the Badlands and the Black Hills. When we drove up to the campground, Candy welcomed us with a smile and the silent applause sign and we pitched camp before it got dark. The camp, on the shores of Lake Oglala, was very pretty. There was a shelter for supplies and cooking, a solar heated shower, two outhouses, and a canoe. There were connections for RVs up the hill from the tent area, and there were several RVs parked there most of the time we were there. The owner of the campground had four grandchildren who lived with their mother on the property. They came down to the campsite to visit us often, and were very cute and fun. Greg Woods and his friend Caleb Paul, from Earlham, joined us at the campground for a few days.

We arrived at Camp Oglala with a load of 34 backpacks and 2 boxes of school supplies courtesy of Illinois Yearly Meeting. Many individuals donated the items, and the kids at IYM packed the backpacks with school supplies as a service project. We brought most of the backpacks to Loneman School, which goes up to the 8th grade. We also gave some "little kid" backpacks to Ingrid One Feather, who teaches kindergarten. We saved four backpacks to give to the kids at the campground. They were very excited to get them.

We worked on two homes. The first was a log cabin. Our job was to scrape black mold off the outside walls with bleach and then caulk and paint the walls. Black mold has invaded the area in recent years, and can cause medical problems and even fatalities in infants, the elderly, and people with pulmonary problems or damaged immune systems. It was hot, dry, dusty work! The second house we worked on was part of the Self-Help Housing program. There were two houses on the construction site when we got there; one had just been completed and we got to watch it being towed away down the road toward its final destination. We worked

inside the second house, putting compound on drywall seams and around the window frames. It was a little cooler by then – down to the 80s. Since there was no bathroom or outhouse at the construction site, we drove about a mile to the Oglala Lakota College to use their facilities. The college was quite impressive – it had a small but beautifully done museum exhibit on the history of the Lakota.

And what did we do for fun? We went to the pow wow four evenings in a row. It was quite an experience. People brought their own chairs and sat in a large circle around the dance area. Drummers and singers provided the accompaniment for the wonderful dancing. The drumming circle gradually moved around the circle throughout the evening. There were food and craft booths surrounding the circle. There was also a rodeo and a skateboard contest elsewhere on the grounds.

We also went to the groundbreaking ceremonies for a casino expansion. A medicine man performed a ceremony, and we were all treated to a meal of buffalo and fry bread. We also had a good meal the night we were invited to the home of Mercy Iron Crow, whose home had been built through Self-Help Housing a few years ago. On another day we went to Wounded Knee, walking through the cemetery and the little museum with displays about both Wounded Knee I and II. We also went to the badlands that day, a Sunday, and ended the day on a remote high mesa called Sheep Table Mountain, where we had Meeting for Worship. From where we sat we could see the Black Hills in the distance, and rain falling, far away, in a circle all around us. On the last day we took a trip to the beautiful Black Hills, where we had the pleasure of seeing many buffalo and other wildlife.

If you would like to learn more about the Lakota people, the following is a list of books and movies I have either read or which have been recommended to me. I have put an asterisk next

to books and movies that I own; I would be happy to lend them out. (I would not recommend any of the movies for younger children, due to violence.)

Books

Black Elk Speaks,* as told through John G. Neihardt
Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West,* by Dee Brown
Crow Dog: Four Generations of Sioux Medicine Men,* by Leonard Crow Dog and Richard Erdoes
Lakota Woman,* by Mary Crow Dog
Mount Rushmore: An Icon Reconsidered, by Jesse Lerner
On the Rez, by Ian Frazier
Waterlily, by Ella Cara Deloria
 I also read a very interesting book about the most recent Native American group to live in the Chicago area, before their forced resettlement west of the Mississippi River in the 1830s – *The Potawatomis: Keepers of the Fire*,* by R. David Edmunds.

Movies

"Dances with Wolves", a fictional story of a Civil War soldier who joins a Lakota tribe.
 "Incident at Oglala",* a documentary about the Leonard Peltier case of the 1970s.
 "Skins", a fictional movie set in Pine Ridge about two close-knit brothers, one a tribal policeman and the other an alcoholic.
 "Thunderheart", a fictional treatment based on the real-life shooting of two FBI agents at Pine Ridge in the 1970s.

One of the books I read in preparation for the trip, *On the Rez*, by Ian Frazier, had an intriguing theory on the American ideal of equality: "Surrounded as we are today by pavement, we assume that Indians have had to adapt to us. For a long time much of the adapting went the other way. In the land of the free, Indians were the "original free": early America was European culture reset in an Indian frame. Europeans who survived here became a mixture of identities in which the Indian part was what made them American and different than they had been before. Influence is harder to document than corn and beans, but as Indian people today sometimes talk about the need to guard their culture carefully, so that it won't be stolen from them. But what is best (and worst) about any culture can be as contagious as a cold germ; the least contact passes it on. In colonial times, Indians were known for their disregard of titles

and for a deep egalitarianism that made them not necessarily defer even to the leading men of their tribes. The route this trait took as it passed from Indian to white was invisible. However the transfer happened, in a few generations it was complete; the American character had become thoroughly Indian in its outspokenness and all-around skepticism on the subject of who was and was not great. ...As surely as Indians gave the world corn and tobacco and potatoes, they gave it a revolutionary new idea of what a human being could be."

If you would like to find out more about volunteering or fundraising for Project Lakota, contact Candy Boyd at (314) 623-7829 or candyboydwrite@yahoo.com. Donations for Project Lakota can be sent to "Project Lakota, c/o Diana Pascoe, 7429 Brunswick Ave., St. Louis, Missouri, 63119. Please make checks payable to "St. Louis Meeting" and put "Project Lakota" in the memo line.

Photo Essay of Project Lakota

By Ellen Baranowski,

Donating our van to Oglala Sioux Tribe Partnership for Housing, Inc.

In September 2005, Bobbi Trist and Ellen



Baranowski donated their 1992 Ford conversion van to the Oglala Sioux Tribe Partnership for

Housing, Inc. organization of the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The director of the organization, Emma "Pinky" Clifford, said the van was a wish come true. She said that the donation of the van makes it possible for her organization to provide "mobile office" credit counseling to Lakota families interested in pursuing home ownership. The reservation is vast with long distances (up to 150 miles) between rural communities and only about one-third of the families on the reservation have functional automobiles.

Candy Hamilton's House

Volunteers from Project Lakota worked to weatherproof and caulk the outside of this log cabin during the summer of 2005. Our hope is that a Lakota family will be able to move into



this house soon because housing like this that is in good condition and availability on the reservation is non-existent. The 980 square foot, three-bedroom, one bathroom house is selling for \$48,000; half the cost of building a comparable new home at today's construction prices. Even at this rock-bottom price, a Lakota family (average per capita income of less than \$5,000) will find it difficult to purchase the cabin. Your donations will enable Project Lakota help with the down payment or needed interior work.

Gerald and Ingrid One Feather's Log Home

Gerald One Feather and Richard Broken Nose started the tiospaye housing co-op in order to

help build stable and sustainable housing for Lakota families following devastating tornadoes



in 1998, which damaged or destroyed hundreds of homes in the Oglala Community. The only houses left standing in the wake of these tornadoes were log cabins. In the past 150 years since the Lakota have been forced to live on the reservation and alter their nomadic lifestyle, it has been the observation of the Oglala elders that log cabins provide the most stable and sustainable housing in the harsh weather of the high plains. Gerald One Feather shares this log home with his wife, handicapped son, and several other children and grandchildren. As a tribal elder, he also uses his home as a meeting place. Project Lakota provided much financial and volunteer support to bring this home from a dream to reality.

Linda Bull Bear's Quilts

Linda Bull Bear's Indian heritage goes back to the time when her grandfather visited Wash-



ington D.C. to plead for public schools on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Little Wound School in Kyle was named after him. Today Linda lives with her husband, Richard Broken Nose, and some of their children and grandchildren in this trailer in Oglala. Linda sews these beautiful quilt tops using designs created by her middle school daughter. Then Linda and another Lakota woman hand quilt the tops and bind the edges to finish the quilts. Linda learned to hand-quilt from her mother. We would like to encourage meetings to use one of these unique quilts to hold a quilt auction, or other fundraiser for Project Lakota and the log cabins.

Richard Broken Nose's Trailer

Richard Broken Nose is one of the few remaining traditional medicine men in the Oglala Lakota Community. The tiospaye housing co-op had chosen him and his family to receive the next log cabin, which will replace this trailer.



In addition to a large extended family, Richard also provides hospitality and housing to those who visit him for his healing arts from as far away as Canada. Unlike standard American doctors, traditional medicine men and women do not accept money for their services because they do not consider it spiritual to do so. Healing comes from the heart and spirit. The community and the world at large traditionally meet the needs of the healer. We respect Richard Broken Nose and his medicine man skills very much. His wisdom has been invaluable to Project Lakota and we would like to help the Oglala Community provide him and his family with a warm, safe home.

Reflections about Pine Ridge

By Greg Woods, Columbia Meeting

Each summer when I travel around the Pine Ridge Reservation I see a little more economic progress, a new house here or a new taco stand there. These would be very small details in most other areas of the country. Something that I wouldn't even notice. But on Pine Ridge these small details give me (and everybody else) a little more hope that things are finally changing for Pine Ridge. This summer as I passed by the Oglala Lakota College near the town of Kyle, I saw construction had begun on a new motel/restaurant/gift shop. When the construction is finished it will be the only (and quite possibly the first) motel on the reservation. Then just a little ways down the road I saw yet another new business -- a construction yard. To me these are bigger signs that things are improving economically for the people on Pine Ridge.

While there is more economic progress, Pine Ridge is still a place of great financial need. It is hard to state statistics on this, because the government census says that there are only 28,000 people living on Pine Ridge (this is a revised number because they agreed with the tribe that the last census figure was wrong), but I have heard that the population could be as high as 70,000. Regardless of the population count the number of people living below the poverty level is higher here than for the rest of the U.S and most parts of the Western Hemisphere. Last summer as I traveled around and interviewed people for a possible fund raising video, I heard stories of families living in trailer houses that were so poorly insulated that their children suffered from illnesses related to the cold conditions. In one instance a baby died due to the cold condition in the family's house. Also, I saw storm damage from several years ago that had never been fixed because the families didn't have the money for repairs. There are stories like these all across the reservation.

I am still appalled that in America people are

still dying due to inadequate housing/lack of housing, especially children. This past year has been especially hard for a lot of organization trying to help the housing crisis on Pine Ridge. Federal funding has been cut for many programs on the reservation, so that the government can continue funding the war in Iraq and in other places. Even though we are a small organization, Project Lakota tries to help replace a small fraction of the money lost from the cuts in Federal funding. We have helped several housing organizations including Partnership for Housing.

Other Reports:

Sustaining Peace: FWCC and Environmental Concerns Committee hold joint weekend

By Elizabeth Mertic

The sun shone on about 30 Friends from Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin when Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) co-sponsored with IYM's Environmental Concerns Committee a program called "Sustaining Peace" September 9-11, at the meetinghouse in McNabb. Our time together began with a meal of soup and bread on Friday evening followed by a campfire at which Bill Howenstine spoke about "The Bible and the Environment." We retired to our tents for a good sleep and awoke Saturday morning refreshed.

David Finke, Roxy Jacobs, Brad Laird and Roy Treadway each presented their interpretation of the theme of Sustaining Peace. Susan Lee Barton, FWCC Midwest region staff person, brought us up to date on the happenings in the Midwest as well as in the Americas. She called us to know FWCC more closely by inviting us to attend the Annual Meeting in Chiquimula, Guatemala in March 2006.

David Finke has posted his message online — go to the IYM website to download and read this thoughtful interpretation of what it means to live peacefully in our modern world.

We hope that the other three panelist's messages will also be made available online at a later time.

During the afternoon some of us traveled to a cemetery near the meetinghouse to see how native prairie plants are coming back to the open space now that the cemetery premises (burials discontinued) are no longer mowed. Others sought the familiar Friends cemetery where Benjamin Lundy is buried. A surprise awaited these adventurers: Friend Lundy made an appearance to tell his story.

After these field trips Friends were offered workshops where the morning speakers were available for discussion. Friends who stayed for the night made peace collages following a delicious meal. Some of us joined Clear Creek Friends for worship the next morning.

My Experience at World Gathering of Young Friends

By Greg Woods

Sometimes words escape me when I try to eloquently describe a powerful experience. I feel this about my experience at the World Gathering of Young Friends in Lancaster, England from August 16-24, 2005. Interactions with other Friends at the gathering have challenged me to be a better Friend, to speak my truth to others more, and to deepen my own spirituality.

My base group (a group that met together daily) was bilingual with both Spanish and English being spoken. The group included several Latin American Evangelical Quakers. They helped me to see the Bible in a new light. Where I grew up in mid-Missouri, most of my experience with the Bible came from evangelical Chris-

tians. Most of the evangelicals in my area use the Bible against people, to condemn them for their sins. This caused me not to read the Bible before. But during our base group sessions the Latin Americans Friends shared how the Bible helped reach God and they talked about their love of Jesus coming from this holy book. Since coming back from the conference I have started reading the Bible.

At the conference, the whole group worshipped together up to 5 hours a day. During these worship times, I realized I want more worship in my own life. In my regular life, sometimes I am just too busy even to take one hour a week for worship. Even though at Earlham there is an unprogrammed meeting on campus just a couple minutes walk from my room, I have only made it half dozen times during the last two years. I am going to change this, because I want my life to be more Spirit-led. Now, a lot of the time I just feel totally lost in the world.

During the whole conference I felt the loss of the Africans and Indian Friends who had their visas to England denied. During the first couple days, I was even angry about it. Immediately the conference took action with forming an ad-hoc committee to talk about this and after a week of planning they decided to hold another gathering in Kenya on Oct 20-24. Each section of the world, besides Africa, appointed two representatives to go to this gathering. The representatives for North America are Mark Sailor (Intermountain YM) and Holly Baldwin (New England YM).

I wonder what we should do as American Quakers, when our fellow Quakers from the third world cannot attend worldwide gatherings. It isn't a worldwide gathering when we have overrepresentation by American and European Quakers and under representation from Africa and India. Next March there will be the FWCC Section of Americas Annual Meeting in Guatemala. Maybe this could be the beginning of a solidarity movement with our Friends in the third world: If you can't come to us, then we

will come to you.

At the end of the gathering I realized I wanted to work with high school age youth more and deepen my spirituality and help others on their spiritual journey.

Thanks to all that helped to make it possible for Ruth and me to go to the gathering. Also the money that was donated will help the two Lugari YM representatives go to the gathering in Kenya.

Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs

By Grayce H. Mesner, Clear Creek

The first summer camp held at Mesquakie Friends Center in Iowa drew 26 campers from the Mesquakie settlement in Iowa and the Ojibwa settlement in Canada. The directors, Victor and Brenda White, were pleased with the camp's first year in that location. The Quivering Arrow Camp, held on the grounds of Council House Friends Center in Oklahoma had around 30 campers from Kickapoo, Council House, Hominy and Wyandotte.

The Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs (ACFIA) has a new Executive Secretary since Keith Kendall stepped down. Chuck Townsend expects to primarily keep communication between the Executive Committee and the Center Directors and secondly to meet regularly with the Center Directors. Besides that, he hopes to keep yearly meetings and monthly meetings informed of the ACFIA work. If your meeting would like him to come and share the work of ACFIA, contact him at chucktii@earthlink.net. His job is also to raise funds for the ongoing missions activity. So it is hoped that not only will he inform the people he visits, but also a monetary response is a result.

Their income continues to be less than current

expenses. With the worker salaries averaging slightly over \$10,500 per year it is critical that they maintain their health insurance, and as we all know that has been increasing. Monthly meetings could also add ACFIA into their budgets and give an annual amount or have a fund raising event once a year to benefit this branch of the Quaker organization. Donations to ACFIA may be sent to P.O. Box 2326, Richmond, IN 47375.

As I reported in the summer 2005 report, the spring annual meeting will be near Highpoint, NC from March 30-Apr. 1. I will not be planning to attend, but if there is someone who could, who has family out there to visit, or has been looking for an excuse to head east let me know!! You can get more information about ACFIA at www.acfiaquaker.org.

Olney Friends School

By Grayce H. Mesner, Clear Creek

This school year there are 57 students who attend the Olney Friends School at Barnesville, OH. This includes 16 international students from Rwanda, Ecuador, China, Serbia, Vietnam, Japan, Uganda, Poland and Korea.

The school's publication *The Olney Current* just marked the 100th year of print. This alumni magazine started out to promote the school and encourage ways to improve it. It also served as a voice for Ohio Yearly Meeting, publishing numerous articles about Conservative Quaker ideals. It was a good record of the Ohio Yearly Meeting history through the early 1950's. Eventually the publication became the alumni news outlet and has become the "family letter" for the school's graduates.

The classes at Olney offer diverse and interesting studies. The senior humanities class is reading and discussing Plato's *Republic*, reenacting the parable of the cave. The junior humanities is studying archeology and its uses in the investigation of the Neolithic Revolution

which witnessed the transition of Homosapiens from hunter-gatherers to farmers. The sophomore humanities class is studying Native Americans before European contact. Members of the Peace Studies class attended "Courage to be Non-Violent", a conference in Indianapolis, sponsored by the Mennonites, Bretherens and Quakers.

Art classes include ceramics, photography and drawing. The garden class traveled to the Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACEnet) in Athens, Ohio, where they prepared their garden fresh vegetables for salsa. They canned a total of 165 jars of hot and "not so hot" salsa which was then available for purchase at the Olney Homecoming on October 15, 2005.

The fall sports season options are running, coed soccer and coed field hockey. The soccer team is again (Sept. 30) traveling to Scattergood Friends School in West Branch, IA, for their annual game. The team, with Leonard Guindon, is again staying at our IYM meetinghouse Friday night as they travel to Iowa.

For more information about Olney activities, use their website at www.olneyfriends.org since it is becoming a primary source of information about the school.

Personal thoughts:

Right Sharing Daily

By Noel B. Pavlovic, Duneland

A few years ago, it occurred to me that I could think about right sharing on a daily basis and save money to contribute to Right Sharing at the same time. My simple idea was to label an old peanut butter jar with the words "Right Sharing". At the end of the day, if I have change in my pocket, I put it in the jar. The jar is placed on a central and prominent chest of drawers in the house. At the end of the year around Christmas time the whole family makes a trip to the

bank to have the accumulated change counted. We then contribute that sum to Right Sharing. We can decide then if we want to augment the accumulated change to contribute more. The total sum collected usually is in the range of \$20 to \$30. This right sharing jar is also a daily reminder of our wealth, right sharing, and the needs of others. It has been such an easy idea to implement that now we have a second jar labeled "IYM Wind Mill" thanks to Chip Rorem!

Can Friends Acknowledge "Sacred Places?"

By Joan Pine, Evanston Friends Meeting

As Monthly Meetings change the location of their worship or the appearance of their Meetinghouses, and as Yearly Meeting plans a new configuration of buildings in McNabb, the term "sacred space" is sometimes heard. Is this a concept that Quakers can embrace, or does it counter the teachings of our forbearers that all of God's creation is to be revered? A personal meditation on these questions is shared below.

The notion of sacred places has a venerable beginning. It is recorded first in the Hebrew Bible in Genesis 26:23, in which Isaac is described placing a pillar of rock at a site where God spoke to him. Then in Genesis 28:16-22, following the story of Jacob's wrestling with the angel, we read the beautiful words, "Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place--and I did not know it!' And he was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.'" The scene ends with Jacob setting up a pillar, changing the name of the place to Bethel (holy place), and promising God a tithe in return for God's care and sustenance.

Jacob's words describe the emotions of many of us who have experienced a powerful sense of Divine Presence. Because we are creatures on a physical plane, the experience must come to us

in a physical setting — whether it be in front of a sunset or starry sky, inside a church or Friends Meeting, at a McNabb dormitory, or Pendle Hill in England or Pennsylvania. When that happens, we want to preserve the experience in our memory. Marking the place (whether physically or in our hearts) as sacred because of what happened to us there helps us do that. We can never return to that place without a recollection that it was where we felt close to God. And that recollection may help us open ourselves to the Divine more readily when we are in that physical location again.

It is clear from the passage that Jacob did not confuse the place with God; he did not worship Bethel, but he called it a holy place because he found God there. Neither do I think anyone views Pendle Hill to be a manifestation of God nor that any Friend believes the same of IYM's deteriorating dormitory. So it is my view that to call a place sacred is not to worship the place but to name it as a location where a special or powerful experience of the Divine occurred for you or for someone else. I suspect that Pendle Hill in England was such a place for George Fox (and remains so for many Quakers) whether or not the word "sacred" was used.

As a balance and a corollary we have many accounts in Scripture of Divine encounters in a variety of forms and locations: the burning bush to Moses; the still small voice to Elijah hiding in the mouth of the cave during an earthquake, fire, and wind storm; a figure "high and lifted up" to Isaiah in the temple; the stranger walking with the grieving disciples on the road to Emmaus -- to name a few. (If we knew today where any of these places were, I suspect we would want to mark them.)

The people of Israel went so far as to build a temple to house the ark of the covenant, but even Solomon in dedicating the building prayed, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I

have built!" (I Kings 8:27) Thus, God is neither synonymous with sacred spaces nor limited to them.

When the woman at the well asked Jesus where one ought to worship, Jesus did not respond directly but instead turned the subject to the nature of worship: "God is spirit, and those who worship God must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24) I take that to mean that the "where" doesn't matter because the Spirit blows where it will. I find a similar message in Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish virgins. The lesson is that we must always be ready with our lamps lit (i.e., with eyes open and hearts attuned) because we never know when or where the Divine may speak to us. Nevertheless, it must occur in some physical place, and when it does, that space may seem to us to be sacred ground.

I understand how our Quaker and Puritan ancestors were offended by the ostentation of stained glass windows and other artifacts in houses of worship, the reliance on images, the misuse of icons, and the emphasis on form rather than substance. Obviously, they could (and had to) worship in many places and settings. But I wonder if there was no one of them who ever returned to a place of encounter with the Divine in the hope or expectation that some real sense of that Presence might still linger there or might more easily recur?

Perhaps we have reached the rocky road of semantics again. "Sacred" may have different connotations among us, just as we have discovered that the word "marriage" does. Perhaps "sacred place" is too strong a term to describe the Baptist church in La Grange where I was baptized as a twelve-year-old -- the beginning of a spiritual journey that brought me at last to Friends. I would not worship there today. But whenever I visit a friend who now lives across the street from the place, I am reminded that it continues to carry a special meaning for me that I can't describe in any other words.