

We also witnessed other living cultural traditions, such as the cult shrine of San Simon where sacrifices of eggs, cigars and liquor are offered. Apparently Maximon was a popular hero sanctified by the Catholic Church to encourage more indigenous people into the religious fold, but the popular devotion to this character was later perceived as un-Christian, and the church eventually renamed him Judas and cast him out. Today his shrine is lined with plaques of thanks for his blessings, and he is worshipped in what could be called a “New-Age Mayan” style.

There is a family collective of weavers and other artisans at San Antonio Aguas Calientes, where visitors can see clothing and food prepared in traditional ways. Our tour group was treated to a mock wedding ceremony to illustrate the marriage gifts and the use of the textiles. Dawn and Mark Amos (of Southern Illinois Meeting) played the novia/novio (nueva esposa/esposo), and Nancy Wallace and David Shiner (of Lake Forest Meeting) played the in-laws. When the skirts alone comprise fifteen feet of fabric, you gain a new respect for the indigenous way of life.



Many collections of Friends photos from these tours and the FWCC annual meeting are visible at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/GuatemalaPhotos>. The Guatemalan Friends

Scholarship/Loan Program is a highly effective way to help some very needy and worthy students, who then go on to help their families, neighbors, and communities.

Guatemala Hosts FWCC Annual Meeting

By Nancy Wallace

Buenos Dias! The FWCC Annual Meeting of the Section of the Americas was held in Guatemala in March of this year. Local Guatemalan Friends created a loving, warm environment for everyone present to get to know each other better. There are challenges in holding a meeting of this size in Central America since there are few venues large enough. There are also difficulties with food and other amenities that seem normal to first-world Friends, such as hot water and clean water. The country is very, very poor and still suffering from a spate of recent civil wars, but that didn't stop them from bestowing us with all sorts of blessings. Friends met, worshiped, worked, learned and played together for four days.

Business sessions were ably clerked by our own Elizabeth Mertic. Representatives from all over the Americas held the Section in worshipful Light as we transacted our business. As we labored over the budget (what Quaker organization has enough money?), Treasurer Cathy Habschmidt said, “Some people think expenses are bad. I have a different view. If we are faithful in discerning the work we are called to do, then our expenses are a witness to the power of the God working in the world. This is our ministry. This is how FWCC is working for God's Kingdom here on earth. It is a blessing to do this work, and therefore to incur these expenses.” Budgeting for Friends is the discernment process that helps us guide our finances toward our witness to our faith. Another quote was to the effect that “we are not here for business meeting and to discuss finances, but to

speak God's message to God's people."

At the last business session, there was much discussion about whether FWCC should have a minute regarding compulsory military service, an issue raised by Iowa Conservative Yearly Meeting. Generally, in group discussions, North American Friends tend to dominate the discussion. This discussion was significant because Bolivian Friends spoke to the issue (and appreciated being specifically asked for their opinions) but also added that they are dealing with a specific situation in their country. Older Friends refused to do military service and have been penalized with lower paying jobs and discrimination because of their choices. Young Friends feel that they want to do service so that they can advance. They see the older Friends' non-participation stance as leaving Friends poor and discriminated. This is a problem for Bolivian Friends, and they welcomed the discussion of the issue.

A good deal of time was devoted to hearing from various Friends, especially those doing good work in Latin America. One moving report came from the Friends from Costa Rica. They are quite concerned both about their meetings (which are unprogrammed but not part of a Yearly Meeting) and their country in general. There is great pressure on the Costa Rican government to pass the Free Trade Treaty, but if they pass it they won't be able to stop guns coming in from their neighbors. Police in Costa Rica don't carry guns and the country has had no organized militia for 60 years (unlike what we witnessed in Antigua, Guatemala, with armed police and security guards at all the banks and high-end stores), but the Free Trade Treaty stipulates national laws take second place to regional ones. Passage of the treaty would therefore take away the Costa Ricans' ability to maintain their peace.

Dudzile Mtshazo from South Africa, Clerk of FWCC, added yet more international flavor to the Annual Meeting. I was strongly moved by

her description of coming to Friends in her mid-twenties, 28 years ago. She was cynical about religion and God at the time, but a friend said she must come to this meeting because it was so different from others. So she relented and did attend. She was amazed that a room full of people in apartheid South Africa didn't care about the color of her skin. She spoke of justice and love with great power.

As always, worship sharing is one of my favorite parts of any Quaker gathering. The queries were based upon I Corinthians, Chapter 12, Verses 4-11, relating to our understanding of divine gifts: what they are, how are they received, what their purpose is.

There were 15-20 Young Adult Friends present as representatives to FWCC from all over the Section of the Americas. These included our young IYM representative to FWCC, Greg Woods. All of them had attended the World Gathering of Young Friends (WGYF) in Lancaster, England, last summer, and are now very committed to the wider Quaker Fellowship. The WGYF was, according to them, a festival of love and harmony. They acknowledged their religious and cultural differences, but they felt that while the differences were greater than the similarities, the love that each brought and took from the gathering was most important.

The Friends services that we attended in Chiquimula, the town where the annual meeting was held, are much noisier than our meeting in Illinois, which is not surprising given their evangelical bent. Still, they were delightful and loving people, and their enthusiasm was contagious.

There was much discussion about the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage, which will be visiting Illinois Yearly Meeting this summer. I hope that all of us enjoy the interaction with Young High School Friends from all over the world. It is a bit like having FWCC come to us. Enjoy!

Associated Committee of Friends on Indian Affairs

By Grayce Mesner

In the summer 2005 issue of *Among Friends*, I reported that Angela Hopkins was going to become the new director of the MOWA Choctaw Friends Center in Alabama. She was going to develop a community ministry, not a church. A letter I received in March stated that this plan had fallen through, that Angela had not complied with some of the requirements set forth in the agreement. As I did not attend the annual meeting, I do not know what the situation is in Alabama.

Please don't stop collecting the Campbell Soup labels or Boxtops for Education, though! If there is no longer a need at the MOWA Choctaw Center, I will be sending them to the Wichita Friends School in Wichita, KS.

The *Indian Progress* is the official newsletter of the ACFIA. It is published three times a year. If you would like to be added to their mailing list, send your request in writing to ACFIA, P.O. Box 2326, Richmond, IN 47375. You can also download it at www.acfiacquaker.org

Olney Friends School

By Grayce Mesner

The seniors are counting down the days until Commencement, June 3. With only 13 students in the Class of 2006, they have collectively received acceptances at over 30 different colleges and universities. The list includes three Quaker colleges, Earlham, Guilford, and Haverford as well as a host of other excellent schools as close by as Oberlin and as far afield as Lewis and Clark. Those who have made final choices are headed to Earlham, Lewis and Clark, Beloit and the Art Institute of Boston.

There are teachers who are looking ahead to summer professional development activities. Jeff Basler, the humanities and ESL teacher will be heading to Greece to take part in a 4-week

program sponsored by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. His wife Chris Basler, humanities and garden teacher, has been awarded fellowships to attend two seminars for teachers of American history given by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Angela George and Molly Watters, Spanish teachers, will both be spending time in teaching programs in Spain this summer.

During their Five-Day Intensives in February there was quite a variety of activities in which the students took part. A few of those were: Five students and two staff journeyed to Pittsburgh where they visited the Thomas Merton Center (learned about a current project to send books to prisoners and helped with mailings and helped at the thrift store) and they worked with the AFSC Eyes Wide Open exhibit, polishing shoes and boots. Others stayed on campus and taught a class of photographers who took pictures at night. Five students braved sub-freezing temperatures and deep snow on a camping trip to the Grayson Highlands in southwest Virginia. Another group formed a rock band (The Slippable Offense) whose goal was to create a musical performance that was informed by structural, socio-historical, and technical aspects of rock'n'roll.

For more information about Olney, call 740-425-3655 or email:

mainoffice@olneyfriends.org or visit their website at www.olneyfriends.org.

My View From Pendle Hill

By Maurine Pyle

At the center of Pendle Hill, the Quaker retreat center which I attended during the winter months, is a hillock where I could sit overlooking the passing scene. I saw so many different kinds of people -- Quaker, Unitarian, Methodist, Baptist, Korean, Japanese, Brazilian, Serbian, Australian Aboriginal, and British. From my perch I learned that Pendle Hill is a gathering place for diverse religions, ethnicities and cul-

tures. I was deeply enriched by my new learning experiences with all of these companions.

What did we all have in common? Pendle Hill is a watering hole for mystically oriented people of many faiths and cultures. Although we usually think of it as a place for Quaker mystics, I learned of many others who had also visited there. Henry Nouwen, the well-known Catholic writer, lived at Pendle Hill for a while as well as Ham Sok Hun, a famous Korean mystic and poet. Our Quaker heritage has always been universalist, and thus offers an invitation to the diversity of world culture.

In the quiet surroundings of beautiful trees, an actual arboretum, I was able to center my soul in contemplation. Each morning I blessed the sun arising, and in the evening said good-bye as it set in the west. I felt that I was living on a tiny island of peace in the midst of a too-hurried world. Sitting still for three months gave me a good seat from which to consider my life and the lives of others. Peace kept filling my empty bowl. As Meister Eckhart said, "How can I fill your bowl lest you empty it?"

The pattern of life at Pendle Hill is slow yet it is full, too. I studied with Sally Palmer learning how to allow my inner artist to emerge in a paper and bookmaking class. From Chris Ravndal's class I came to a new understanding of the Book of John and how a multiplicity of interpretations of scripture can be encouraged. In between classes I played in the art studio, attended short courses and learned from my fellow students. Interest groups formed led by students such as a writing group and a dream group offered each week. It was a rich learning environment in which prayer was the predominant action.

Every morning starts with meeting for worship in the Barn, our meeting room. I usually arrived early to pray in silence with a few others. We were like the shammus, who comes early to open and prepare the place for worship in syna-

gogues. Our meeting for worship times were often dotted by song, sometimes in Portuguese or Korean. It did not matter if we knew what the words meant because we understood them with our hearts. One favorite singer of mine was a young Korean woman who would sing, "Lord, we are just little human beings."

John Calvi, the Quaker healer, came at the end to lead a workshop called "Restoration," which was centered on bodywork. We learned how to "lay on hands" through massaging feet, head, faces and gentle body massage. John also offered me his wisdom about my spiritual path encouraging me to go forward in a peaceful way without too much action. His wisdom is helping me as I reenter the world of busy-ness. Pendle Hill is state of mind -- contemplation in action. I will hold onto what I learned there and share it with others. Upon arriving there I told the community that I had been sent as a gift to them from Illinois Yearly Meeting and Lake Forest Meeting. As I was leaving, Dean Niyonu Spann and Interim Director Ken Jacobsen affirmed that my gifts of leadership had been helpful to Pendle Hill.

Friends Association for Higher Education

By Bob Wixom

Friends Association for Higher Education (FAHE) will meet at George School in Pennsylvania on June 22-26 with the theme, *Deepening Our Root — Spreading Our Branches*.

I attended last year's 25th annual meeting at Haverford College, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on June 16-19, 2005. Some 200 Friends attended the conference, which had the theme *Centering on the Edge — Intellect, Spirit and Action*. Each day began with worship, either program or unprogrammed. FAHE is unique among Friends organizations in having for many years the participation of members from Friends General Conference, Friends United

Meeting, Conservative Friends and Evangelical Friends.

The FAHE program consisted of ten plenary sessions and 43 workshops/interest groups divided among eight blocks of time. Obviously, one person could not participate in all presentations, nor report here for IYM on all aspects.

Most Friends know about the practice of witnessing for our beliefs. One plenary focused on a new aspect for me, namely “Witnessing through Scholarship” with a focus on three members of Haverford College’s Philosophy Department, namely Rufus Jones, Thomas Kelly and Douglas Steere. These three touched the lives of many students in their classes, but also Friends in their home meetings, yearly meetings around the world. They wrote many religious books that are widely read and respected. Less well known is their devotion to scholarly work as part of their witness to their faith. Paraphrasing Rufus Jones (1863-1948), he focused on the “universal mystical experience; religion is a personal meeting with God; religion is a quest or a movement of spirit free of creeds, forms and authoritarian.” Rufus wrote, “...New fresh truth emerges out of ancient experience; it does not drop like a shooting star from the distant skies. The great prophets in all ages have lived close to the people; they have lived in the great currents of life... due to their double union with men and God.” Having heard Rufus Jones in my youth, I can also attest to his warm images, his love and use of poetry and profound scholarship.

Thomas Kelly (1893-1942) is well known as a serious mystic (*Testament of Devotion*), but he also loved to play jokes and played with his son on the floor with orange crates. He was profoundly troubled and expressed outrage of conditions by his visit to Nazi Germany in 1938. Later, he wrote, “...Religion must be able to enlist the whole of men – their spirit, their whole personality. Religion must bring unification within the individual and give direction to

groups. ...Religion means living and walking with God, experiencing the power and triumph of knowing Him – in short, living in the sense of the imminence of God.” Kelly in various ways has bridged the possible gap between the mystical experience and lay religion.

Douglas Steere (1901-1995), the third Haverford professor, lived a life of teaching students, spoken messages to the wide community of Friends and author of many religious books. He knew the classics of Christian devotion, but he also reached out to the philosophers, the theologians and the living saints to glean insights. His scholarship led to a penetrating analysis and comparisons of mystical experience. “...For awakening, training, bringing into full life and fruitfulness the everlasting life... is a task for the grace of God... Who would dare lay down any rules, for what by its very nature is beyond rules, for what astonishes, for what makes us all bow before its authenticity...?”

Ann Dalke, Professor of English, Bryn Mawr College, employed a variety of skills in her presentation: singing the spiritual *Wade in the Water* to emphasize going to the promised land; reading from the play, *Angel in Troubled Waters* to suggest the constancy of the sun, the moon and other areas of life; and a spiritual painting. *If you don't write, then you cannot revise. Creativity is both a private/personal process and a public-sharing process* in the classroom and wide areas of life.

Bob Wixom’s oral presentation on WWII C.O.’s in medical research experiments was received with appreciation. The above four talks were the highlights for this writer among many others presented.

Other contributions

Broadcasting A Challenge To Empire

By Steve Chase (submitted by David Finke)

Each Monday morning, I get up early and walk over to the student center at Keene State College. My destination is WKNH, the college radio station on the third floor. Once there, I unlock the studio door, dump my coat on a chair, write my name in the FCC log, and turn on the station's transmitter. I then start up the computer to download the Pacifica Radio Network's satellite signal and get the latest weather report up on another window. At about three minutes to eight, I click the mic's on button, read the WKNH sign-on statement, and give a quick weather update. By two minutes of eight, I say, "Good morning. I'm Steve Chase, one of the community volunteers bringing you Pacifica Radio's *Democracy Now!* news program with award-winning journalist Amy Goodman every weekday morning from 8 to 9am."

I then read a list of local underwriters of the program, cue up the satellite feed on the soundboard, and begin broadcasting *Democracy Now!* live from its studio in New York City to the citizens of Keene, New Hampshire.

I am just one of five community DJs in Keene who volunteer a bit of their time each week to make sure that our community has the opportunity to hear something besides the corporate-dominated media's take on the news. Now available on over 400 noncommercial radio stations across the country, *Democracy Now!* has become the largest and fastest growing media collaboration in community radio's history.

Each weekday, *Democracy Now!* provides hundreds of thousands of listeners around the nation with access to people and perspectives rarely heard in the corporate media, including independent and international journalists, ordinary people from around the world who are directly affected by U.S. foreign policy, grassroots leaders and peace activists, academics, and independent analysts. In addition, *Democracy Now!* hosts real debates between people who substantially disagree, such as between White House or Pentagon spokespeople on the one hand, and grassroots peace activists on the other.

The five of us who help broadcast *Democracy Now!* to the Keene community each have our own reasons. For me, it is one of the ways I make a public witness to the moral vision at the heart of my Quaker faith. At its very root, the

way of Jesus is a challenge to the way of empire, greed, lies, and violence. It is a prophetic conversion call to the way of peace, justice, truth-telling, and ecological stewardship. As Paul wrote to those of Jesus' followers who lived in the very belly of the Roman Empire, "Do not be

In his letter to the Romans, Paul also told the faithful "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice" to the Way of God instead of the Way of Empire. — Chase

conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable, and perfect."

While the corporate media and much of the government-controlled public media are so often conformed to the ways of the U.S. empire, Amy Goodman's *Democracy Now!* program refuses to conform to wars of aggression, military occupation, torture, secret police, corporate rule, social injustice, the death penalty, gross inequality, and ecological degradation. Like all good muckraking journalists of the past, Goodman seeks to uncover the truth as a means to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfort-

able.”

In his letter to the Romans, Paul also told the faithful “to present your bodies as a living sacrifice” to the Way of God instead of the Way of Empire. I try to live out this call each and every day, but my faith has never been severely challenged. Whereas Amy Goodman was attacked and almost killed by the US-backed Indonesian military for covering the Indonesian genocide against the East Timorese people for the Pacifica Radio Network, I only volunteer a few hours a week at a college radio station and kick in 100 bucks a year towards the annual Pacifica satellite fee to help expand the reach of Goodman’s program to Keene and its surrounding towns.

While my witness is not heroic, I still believe it is meaningful. There are hundreds of community and college radio stations that do not yet carry *Democracy Now!* — or any of the other programs available through the Pacifica Radio Network.

What if Quakers near such stations helped raise money for the stations to get connected to the Pacifica Radio Network satellite, or helped recruit and train the community volunteer DJs needed to broadcast *Democracy Now!* or helped write letters to the editor and put up posters to promote *Democracy Now!* in their communities? What if Meetings close to the stations that carry *Democracy Now!* also became financial underwriters of the program and put their name forward as public supporters of independent media in a time of war and empire?

Imagine the closed eyes that could be opened and the hardened hearts that could be melted. That’s what gets me up early every Monday morning.

Steve Chase is a member of the Keene Friends Meeting’s Outreach Committee and the volunteer Pacifica Programming Coordinator at WKNH, 91.3 FM. The *Democracy Now!* program can be heard online every weekday

morning from 8 to 9 am EST at www.wknh.org. For more information about *Democracy Now!* or the Pacifica Radio Network, write Steve at Steve_Chase@verizon.net.

For Your Visit to Philadelphia

By Bob Wixom

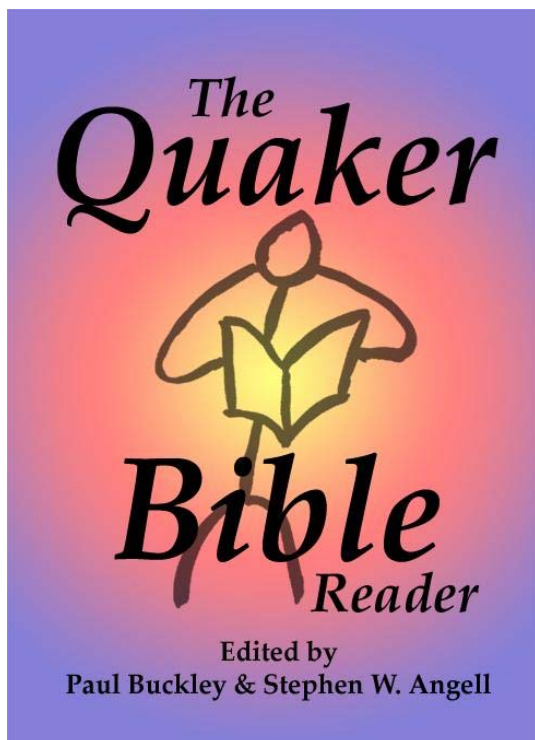
Philadelphia was settled in 1682 by William Penn and the Quakers. Many of the older Meeting Houses, historic sites, Quaker schools and three colleges and Quaker homes are open for you as a visitor on your next trip east. The streets are still on a north-south axis (numbered) and east-west axis (tree names) as laid by Penn’s surveyors. Will Penn still stands on top of City Hall at the intersection of the key streets, Broad St. and Market St. However, the original city has grown and grown; the original “City of Brotherly Love” has its modern share of slums, inner city violence, discrimination and ghettos. Many present-day residents are only vaguely aware of its origin; the stereotype of William Penn on the Quaker Oats box persists today in Philadelphia.

Thus to find your Quaker origins and history in Philadelphia, the modern visitor needs a guide. Such a guide is available; see “William Penn Tours” (by foot, car or public transportation); it was produced by the Quaker Information Center, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 (Peggy Morscheck, director). Write to Peggy for a copy in advance to effectively plan your visit through the maze of non-Quaker homes, suburbs, factories, shops, slums, stores and yes dozens of malls. Please see also your Meeting’s copy of *William Penn*, a concise pamphlet that summarizes dozens of pages from various Quaker history books.

For further information on Philadelphia, please see Bob Wixom who was born and raised in Philadelphia and has visited 35 of the 61 Quaker historic sites described in the above brochure, plus 10-15 others not listed therein. The above

background is only part of the reasons that Bob has served as an amateur actor for William Penn at 8 different recent Quaker conferences, Meetings, and First Day classes. If you need William Penn at your Friends gatherings, contact me at 359 Crown Point, Columbia, MO 65203

The Quaker Bible Reader, a new book by Paul Buckley



Former IYM Clerk Paul Buckley has a new book, co-edited with Stephen Angell. *The Quaker Bible Reader* is a compilation of chapters by 13 Friends, from across the Quaker spectrum and around the world, each answering the question, “How does a Quaker read the Bible?” The authors draw on their experience of scripture, describes what they have found, and how they found it. Their goal is to encourage every Friend to engage the Bible, “not passively accepting someone else’s interpretation; not looking for ‘the good parts’ and skipping the

rest; not contorting scripture to support pre-determined ideas -- but entering into a dialog with the ancient book, exploring your own assumptions about God, and deepening your relationship with the divine.”

This is Paul’s third book in the last few years, joining *Twenty-First Century Penn*, a translation of five of William Penn’s most important theological works into modern English, and *Owning the Lord’s Prayer*, a study guide to the Lord’s Prayer.

Copies of all are available from the FGC bookstore at www.QuakerBooks.org

Peace Testimony

Peace Workshop Becoming a Reality

By Chuck Hutchcraft

In March, members of the Peace Resources Committee (PRC) gathered at a retreat center in Southern Illinois. The task we had set out for ourselves was to create a workshop on the Peace Testimony.

The genesis for the workshop arose, in part, as the committee pursued a vision for the Peace House on the Prairie and, in part, from desires expressed by IYM Friends during the Dream Gathering process.

But mainly it was spurred on by the war in Iraq and the sense that it is incumbent on Quakers to re-examine their relationship to the Peace Testimony and how it manifests in their lives.

It was our hope that we could offer the workshop to Meetings throughout Illinois Yearly meeting, and that the workshop draw Friends of all ages.

PRC owes a great debt to Breeze Richardson of 57th Street Meeting, who put together big chunks of what would become the workshop and made the rest of us think that we did a lot of work.

Looking back, we did do a lot of work by way of laying the foundation. In several meetings over the previous five months we prayerfully shared our understanding of the Peace Testimony and our hopes for the workshop.

The words of George Fox kept coming back to us, “What canst thou say?” It was our sense that the Peace Testimony is not a concept or statement cast in stone, but an awareness and understanding that will deepen and grow when nurtured by continual inward re-examination and spiritual endeavor, individually and collectively.

We tested the workshop by going through it ourselves. It took a better part of that Saturday. We found it, in many ways, to be a transformative experience.



Columbia Friends join vigil against Iraq War, 3rd anniversary of war.

A segment of the workshop will be offered each day of the annual session at McNabb. We will then offer the full workshop to Monthly Meetings upon request.

Tom Fox Continues to Influence World

By Cindy Reynolds

Langley Hill Friends Meeting, McLean, Virginia, was the spiritual home of Tom Fox, a member of the Christian Peacemakers Team International. Tom was held hostage and killed this past spring in Iraq.

One piece of Tom’s important work in Iraq was to try to help Iraqi families learn the whereabouts and safety of loved ones who they believe were being detained by the Iraq government or U.S./Coalition forces.

Langley Friends sent a letter to other Friends meetings asking them to contact their U.S.

Senators and Representatives to urge them to abandon current US/Coalition practices, and to routinely begin publishing names and locations of all detainees in their custody and to inform those in detention of the charges against them. Information about this initiative can be viewed at www.quaker.org/langleyhill.

St. Louis Meeting wrote a “Declaration of Peace” (see back page in this issue).

Springfield and Decatur Worship Groups sent letters to their representatives and I'm sure that many other meetings did also. Several members of Columbia Meeting participated in demonstrations.

Dawn Rubbert alerted us to a moving article by Bob Burnett, "Who Killed Tom Fox? Why and What's the Reason For?" That article can be seen at www.commondreams.org/views06/0322-33.htm.

Nobel Peace Prize 2005

By Bob Wixon

Most Friends acknowledge the considerable overlap of concerns about the environment, peace, nuclear weapons and their proliferation. Some Friends may have seen last October's announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize, but many did not.

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which started in 1957, and its Director Mohamed ElBaradei (1997 to present).

The IAEA is known as the world's "nuclear watchdog." The Norwegian Nobel Committee said in its October announcement, "At a time when the threat of nuclear arms is again increasing, they wish to underline that this threat must be met through the broadest possible international cooperation. In the nuclear non-proliferation regime, it is the IAEA which controls that nuclear energy is not misused for military purposes, and the Director has stood out as an unafraid advocate of the new measures to strengthen that regime. At a time when disarmament efforts appear deadlocked, when there is danger that nuclear arms will spread both to state and to terrorists groups, and when nuclear power again appears to be playing an increasingly significant role, IAEA's work is of incalculable importance."

ElBaradei said, "Receiving the award strength-

ens our resolve at a time when we have a hard road ahead of us.I believe we are at a crossroads, and the global security system is dysfunctional. But I am an optimist. Peace is a process and the IAEA contributes to peace by building confidence and promoting development."

IAEA works with "nations and partners to promote secure and peaceful nuclear technologies by setting standards for nuclear safety, by promoting the exchange of atomic energy information and by nations' inspections to comply with the Nonproliferation Treaty." IAEA has a team of 2200 members from 90+ countries. When Washington in 2002-3 was saying that Saddam Hussein was reconstructing Iraq's illegal nuclear weapons program, ElBaradei told the UN Security Council that the documents alleging that Iraq was trying to buy yellow-cake (uranium ore) from Niger, were forgeries. ¹

¹Wurst, "Top Watchdog Takes (Nobel) Top Prize", *The Interdependent* (by United Nations Association - USA 3; #4, pp. 8-10 (Dec. 2005)

A Declaration of Peace

St. Louis Monthly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
February 12, 2006

At our spiritual roots, and from the earliest of times, we of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) have chosen nonviolent means of resolving conflict and achieving peace. We see that of God in every person, and so cannot kill or support the killing of others.

We believe that every conflict can be resolved nonviolently, when we gear our creative energies and resources towards finding peaceful solutions. We know from our own experience of worship that even the most divisive issues can be resolved when we listen for divine guidance. In the silence, new ways open before us that may not have been visible previously.

We have no enemies. We believe that every person has the potential for transformation. Peacemaking entails risking ourselves, overcoming our fears and crossing borders. In an era of an announced "war on terror," and so-called "pre-emptive war," we are not at war.

Nonviolence is an active process, which might take the form of dialogue with an opposing side, civil resistance against an unjust authority, or patient work through a system of law. Early intervention is needed for nonviolent methods to be most effective. Prejudice and bigotry, economic inequality, resource domination, and other injustices must be rooted out before they escalate into open hostility. Particular care must be taken after a conflict to rebuild infrastructure and to renew relationships to prevent future conflict.

Nonviolence does not always achieve justice in the short run. As in war, innocent people may suffer. Yet when nonviolent methods are most successful, they often go unnoticed, since conflict is averted. We will never know, for instance, if the quiet, persistent work of the African Great Lakes Initiative -- which has brought together survivors and perpetrators of genocide in dozens of trauma and healing workshops -- actually has prevented a renewal of violence in Rwanda and Burundi. We know that it has transformed individuals.

Modern warfare inflicts suffering on innocent victims who are considered "collateral damage;" it devastates infrastructure on which a civilian population depends; it poisons the environment, littering landmines, depleted uranium and other hazards which remain long after the battlefield has been returned to an agricultural field. Moreover, war trains people to be killers; it leaves psychological scars on those who have experienced suffering and on those who have inflicted it. It fundamentally breaks trust, fracturing relationships beyond repair.

Advocating the abolition of war may seem folly, or it may be visionary. Our forebears who set about to abolish the institution of slavery were mocked for their efforts. Yet they succeeded, first in abolishing it in our own Society, and then working with others to abolish it in our nation and world. Similarly, we are committed to rooting out violence in every facet of our lives: in our family relationships, our communities' response to crime, our stewardship of the earth, and our foreign policies. Our goal is to bring forth the peaceful kingdom of God here now on Earth.