




OHIO VALLEY YEARLY MEETING NEWSLETTER

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Quaker Quill 

October 2004

Telling Our Stories of Faith Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting 184th Annual Session July 28 - August 1, 2004 Wilmington College

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. All the believers were one in heart and mind. (Acts 4:31-32)

To Friends Everywhere,

The Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting met at Wilmington College in Ohio for our 184th sessions. This year we have challenged ourselves with the theme, "Telling Our Stories of Faith."

There is risk in sharing stories of faith. In doing so, some among us have had the courage to strip themselves of all pretence. Their words testify to ongoing, divine revelation. Through careful listening, we have come to better understand the diverse ways in which we experience God. Our spirits are quickened by these bold words.

Our stories included descriptions of life-long spiritual growth and of sudden moments of radical transformation. We were humbled by examples of the courage that faithful living can require and strengthened by reports of God's gifts showering down.

These stories remind us that faithful living is possible.

It is tempting to rest easy in the stories of our past, but we cannot allow ourselves that comfort. This year's business meetings have challenged us to apply these lessons to our present and our future together. We are seriously considering how to pay for the work of the yearly meeting in an equitable and spiritually-based manner. We are in the midst of re-writing our book of discipline. Perhaps most difficult, we are beginning to address the incongruity of monthly meetings that lack the vitality to gather weekly for worship. These have not been easy issues for us to confront and we still have much to do.

The wider society of which we are a part also challenges us. We cannot pretend that we are a people apart. As citizens of the United States, we share responsibility for the violence done in our name. Adopting minutes does not relieve us of that responsibility. We are called to live out new stories of faith, witnessing to our beliefs and modeling a society that does justice, loves mercy, and walks humbly with our God.

Quaker Quill is published three times a year in February, June, and October by the Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of the month prior to each publication month. Editor: Barbaric Hill, 6921 Stonington Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45230; (513)232-5348 (bhill@one.net)

OVYM officers for 2002-2003:

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct 7-11 Quaker Earthcare Witness annual meeting. Burlington Meeting House, Burlington, NJ
- Oct 9-10 Joint Quarterly Meeting. Happy Hollow Camp, IN
- Oct 22-23 The Ministry of Writing: an annual colloquium. Earlham School of Religion, Richmond, IN
- Nov 11-14 FCNL annual meeting. Washington, DC
- June 16-19, 2005 Friends Association for Higher Education conference. Haverford College, Haverford, PA

Teen Service Trip

James Taylor (JT), teen secretary

The Teen Service project was revived after a hiatus of several years. 12 teens and four adults spent a week at the Appalachian South Folklife Center, near Pipestem, West Virginia. The Center is a camp for local, low income kids and a retreat center. They facilitate service projects to help support their programs. Their work over the years with civil rights, the labor movement and environmental issues is in harmony with many of core values of Friends.

The work crew scraped and painted an historic house in Hinton, owned by Ruth Bennett, whose husband was recently moved into a nursing home with Alzheimer's disease. Rain and a side trip interrupted the work but as the week was ending, the teens took ownership of finishing the project and the results were beautiful. Everyone was saddened by the sight of and stories about mountaintop removal for coal in Boone County. The Center provided two musical evenings and a speaker from National Parks. We shared the facilities with a group of Franciscan teens from Chicago. The teens are enthusiastic about returning to the Folklife Center in the future. The cost of this trip has put some strain on the budget so we will be reviewing financial issues before the next service trip is planned.

Clerk's Page

I am continually struck by how God's presence is magnified when people of faith gather. Although private times for reading, reflection, and prayer are a part of my daily spiritual practice, it is when in prayerful community with others that Spirit becomes truly touchable for me. I felt very blessed to be a part of our most recent yearly meeting sessions. It is my hope for those of you unable to attend that in reading the Epistle you will sense God's presence ministering to each of us as we heard from others how God was at work in their lives...healing, transforming, calling, supporting. It is my hope that we will continue to share with one another throughout the year. We are given many such opportunities to do so...committee meetings, business meetings, quarterly meetings, and even times of fellowship. Paul's words aptly remind us why we should seek each other out.

"...that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine" Romans 1:12

Our first opportunity will be at a joint Quarterly Meeting to be held at Happy Hollow Children's Camp near Nashville, IND. Joint Quarterly Meetings are only held every two years! Going to miss this one, check the yearly meeting calendar on the web site (www.quaker.org/ovym/) for future announcements. Quarterly Meeting dates for both Whitewater and Miami Quarter are set at least one year in advance. Other opportunities abound. It was approved at Yearly Meeting Sessions that the Discipline Revision Committee might consider how to expand the committee so that more individuals from different monthly meetings might participate in the process. They will be bringing suggestions to Executive Committee and will be in contact with you during the coming year. Who in your meeting might be led to serve on this committee? Perhaps more importantly, whose gifts in your meeting might be lifted up and encouraged through participation. The Yearly Meeting is in need of your discernment and immediate responses. During the coming year you will continue to be asked to give further consideration to revisions to the Book of Discipline and to our process for collecting funds for yearly meeting expenses and ministries. As you respond, informed volunteers may be available to visit with you. Invite them to your meeting. A major portion of our budget goes towards funding the programs for our young people during Yearly Meeting Sessions and throughout the year. These committees would love to have you join them in their work. One project Peace and Social Concerns Committee will be working on is to help fulfill a request from Oxford MM that each

monthly meeting seek to educate their young people about the Friend's peace testimony and conscientious objector status as well as raise the awareness of us all about possible re-enactment of draft legislation. Advancement and Nurture Committee will continue to visit with meetings. Distributed at Yearly Meeting Sessions was a revised outreach pamphlet describing the monthly meetings in our yearly meeting. We encourage you to use the materials provided by these committees and enter into the conversations they stimulate.

As the incoming presiding clerk, I personally look forward to the opportunity given to me to be among you. I know that my faith grows and deepens each time I sit with one of you.

Virginia Wood

Children's Epistle

Nineteen young friends met at the 184th session of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting at Wilmington College in Wilmington Ohio from July 28th - August 1st, 2004 to consider the theme, "Telling Our Stories of Faith." The campus of the historic Quaker college was the background for a time of fellowship and deep spiritual learning.

When we arrived we shared our concerns regarding who might be president. We are concerned about young people dying in war. We are concerned for the children in Africa and the AIDS epidemic. We are concerned for the people in the nursing homes. This week we learned that in the past all Quakers didn't believe slavery was bad. We learned that Quakers used to think that art distracted your mind. We are glad to be Quakers now instead of then.

We want others to know that we think peace is easier to deal with than violence. It is easier to keep people alive than to kill them. We think you should always believe in God. God can help you find what you lose.

~The Children of OVYM

Middle Youth Epistle

Stand up and repent, ye sinners!

George Fox arrived for a visit with us, in the form of T. Canby Jones. In his old leather breeches and

shaggy, shaggy locks, he gave us a first-person account of George Fox's thoughts.

We visited the Peace Center and were disturbed by pictures of Japan after the atom bombs were dropped. Many people were killed, and others were horribly burned and mutated.

Gretchen Stone talked with us about her medical work in Sudan. We found it amazing that such small things could be so valuable when people have almost no possessions.

We volunteered one morning at Our Father's Kitchen. We sorted clothes, pulled weeds, and helped get ready for serving lunch. We were impressed by the way workers there treated the clients with respect and equality. They see God in each person the way we do.

We canoed down the Little Miami River. We picked up garbage and old tires, and one lost pair of glasses.

Crickets kept up a constant background song. We serenaded each other on the river. We all had nicknames, and had quite a bit of fun singing silly songs. We also decided that sleep might be important during Yearly Meeting.

We enjoyed each other's company, and want to plan more times together during the year. We would like to meet some of you who are reading this letter in other countries.

Teen Epistle

These past few days we have been given much to be thankful for. For example, we met new friends and were reunited with familiar faces.

We took an exciting, eventful, and exhausting canoe trip down the Little Miami River. We were inspired by its beauty to take it upon ourselves to leave it better than we found it by cleaning up the litter. A few of our number were refreshed by a quick plunge into the frigid current.

The next day we were enlightened by an informative speech given by our man, J.T. He spoke to us about the meaning of the word "service." Our group also participated in spiritually developing workshops that day.

One of the most exciting things was our service trip, it involved breaking ground on a trail that will, with luck, eventually reach all the way to the Ohio River.

Overall, it was a week full of food, fellowship, and most of all FUN. We feel blessed to be included in the wonderful yearly meeting.

-The Teens of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting

Discipline Revision

Two sessions at the 2004 OVYM annual gathering were given over to matters relating to revision of the 1978 Book of Discipline. The first was a threshing session on a draft section of "Friends and the Earth: Living as Part of God's Creation." Friends commented from the floor and suggestions were noted by Discipline Revision Committee members (see Yearly Meeting Minutes, pp. 59-62). The second session was given over to discussion of a process whereby sections of the new Discipline seasoned over a period of years might receive provisional approval by the Yearly Meeting and be considered valid addenda to the Discipline until the entire new Discipline is presented for approval (see Yearly Meeting Minutes, pp.58, Recommendation 2.) The Yearly Meeting approved the committee's proposal.

At its September meeting the Discipline Committee discussed the work of the committee and monthly meetings for 2004-05. Paying attention to the comments and suggestions from the floor of the Yearly Meeting, the DRC worked on a third draft of the section, "Friends and the Earth." This will be sent to monthly meetings for further study and comment between October and January. In February, the committee will send monthly meetings a draft Table of Contents of the new Discipline. It requests comments and feed-back by mid-April. Several Friends have indicated that it is now time for us to study more closely the existing Book of Discipline and to discern where old materials need revision, where sections may stand, where new sections need to be added, and how new materials can best be integrated with old. Developing a detailed Table of Contents can be the starting point for this discernment.

The DRC was greatly encouraged by the participation of Friends at the two Yearly Meeting sessions and for the greater engagement of more Friends in the discipline revision project.

Lives That Speak: Stories of Twentieth-Century Quakers

A publication of the Religious Education Committee of FGC

It is always nice to use a publication that was written by someone you know. With *Lives That Speak* we can do just that! Many of the stories were written by Beth Parrish of Louisville MM or Barbara Robinson of Dayton MM. Designed for students in the 4th to 8th grade, the stories provide young people with models of courage, creativity, and caring. Each chapter has questions to ponder and follow up activities. The stories, however, stand alone as stories and have been found to be meaningful for adults and teens as well. Pick up a copy and enjoy.

Our Corporate Stories of Faith

Dear Friends,

At annual sessions this year, we shared stories of faith that showed the many ways God is present in our lives - guiding us, inspiring us, comforting us, even scaring us with the power of possibility. We told of extraordinary moments of understanding, a clear sense of direction given, and some very ordinary times of seeing a pattern repeated over the years. It was quite a beautiful experience to hear these stories from one another, and we are grateful to all who witnessed to the Living Christ.

In much the same way that we each have individual stories of faith, our monthly meetings have stories of their journeys in faith. What was the spark that got your

meeting started? Who was it that had the courage to put up a sign and say, "We will be here each Sunday, God willing"? Have you always met in your present location? What were some of the challenges you faced over the years? Was there a turning point in your meeting's life when you felt clearly led in a new direction? Has your membership grown? Declined? What would you like other Friends in Ohio Valley to remember about your meeting? These are some of the questions you might consider in writing a meeting history. Several of our meetings began writing histories a few years ago when we hoped to have a centennial celebration with Wilmington Yearly Meeting. When that committee was laid down, the momentum for writing the meeting histories stalled. We would like to encourage those meetings that have not completed their histories to pick up those pens again and see what story you can tell of your meeting's journey in faith. Imagine a five to ten page document, noting important dates and locations, and perhaps answering that old Quaker query - how does Truth prosper among us? Some meetings may want to stick poster paper on the walls and write out a meeting timeline together before one or two of your members begin composing the story. You might want to read through past state of society reports to refresh your memories. However it works best for your meeting, we would like to get your histories together by Spring.

Krystin Schmidt will be collecting these documents

for us, so please send your histories to her when they are ready. Thanks to those five or six meetings who have already submitted their stories -- they are wonderful and inspiring reading!

With love,
Peggy Spohr,
Clerk
Advancement
and Nurture
Committee

A good End cannot sanctifie evil Means; nor must we ever do Evil, that Good may come of it.... It is as great Presumption to send our Passions upon God's Errands, as it is to palliate them with God's Name.... We are too ready to retaliate, rather than forgive, or gain by Love and Information. And yet we could hurt no Man that we believe loves us. Let us then try what Love will do: For if Men did once see we Love them, we should soon find they would not harm us. Force may subdue, but Love gains: And he that forgives first, wins the Laurel.

William Penn,
Some Fruits of Solitude, 1693.

QUARTERLY MEETING NEWS

Joint Quarterly Meeting

**October 9-10, 2004
Happy Hollow Children's
Camp
Nashville, Indiana**

Note: All times are Indiana Time (EST)

Saturday, October 9

Arrive at Happy Hollow as early as 10:00am for committee meetings

Noon - 1:00 Registration

1:00 - 2:30 AVP and Make Peace presentation by Stanley Zarowin: "The

Alternatives to Violence Program/The Make Peace Program"

3:00 - 5:00 Miami & Whitewater Qtrs. Each meet for business

5:30 - 6:30 Dinner

6:30 - 7:00 Free time

7:00 - 9:00 Intergenerational Get-acquainted Activity and Contra Dance

Sunday, October 10

8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast

10:00 - 11:00 Meeting for Worship

11:00 - 12:00 Free time

12:00 Lunch

2:00 Depart

A program is planned for the children, middle youth and teens 9:00 - 10:00

The cabins are clean and have comfortable mattresses, but you will need to bring your own bedding and towels. Also bring flashlight, toiletries, raingear, musical instruments and (if you can) a snack to share Saturday evening (such as a dozen cookies).

Registration due September 25, to Vernon Cherrett, 712 North CR 500 West, New Castle, IN 47362; or e-mail to: vcherrett@hotmail.com

If you have questions, call Vernon Cherrett at 765/533-6565 or Diann Herzog at 765/778-7143.

Whitewater Minute on Yearly Meeting Assessment

During the 2004 sessions a minute was brought forward from Whitewater Quarterly Meeting calling for a replacement of the current OVYM assessment process based on membership numbers with a mutual covenanting process like that used in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. After significant discussion, the Clerk read the following minute expressing the sense of the meeting, which Friends approved:

Friends discern the necessity of evaluating our process of attending to our financial needs. Friends express clarity that being stewards of our finances is a spiritual process. We have heard a minute brought to us from Whitewater Quarterly Meeting. Because several monthly meetings feel that they have not had adequate time for seasoning, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends ask that this minute and concern be returned to our quarterly and monthly meetings for further prayerful seasoning so that in 2005 Yearly Meeting sessions we may discern what God requires of us.

Minute on Yearly Meeting assessment from Whitewater Quarter Meeting minutes from 4-17-04:

The Spirit is not reasonable, but challenging! We are not giving to the Yearly Meeting budget, but to accomplishing the work that God has called upon us to do corporately.

Beginning with the 2005/2006 fiscal year, we recommend that each monthly meeting within Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting covenant with the Yearly Meeting over the size of its financial contribution to the work of the Yearly Meeting. In order to accomplish this, we suggest that the Budget and Finance Committee prepare a preliminary budget for the 2005/2006 fiscal year in the spring of 2005. We suggest this

preliminary budget be shared with all OVYM monthly meetings. Monthly meetings would then be asked to discern by June 2005 how much they would covenant with the Yearly Meeting to contribute. This would then allow the Budget and Finance Committee to compile these amounts and prepare a revised budget based upon the covenanted contributions in time for the 2005 OVYM session.

Asking the monthly meetings to consider how much to contribute to the Yearly Meeting and how to allocate the funds will bring new Friends to join in considering what we are called to accomplish together. We therefore further call on OVYM to consider how to best involve the monthly meetings and all our members in the Yearly Meeting budgeting process.

History of Discussion:

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Budgeting Process

1. The Budget and Finance Committee prepares a budget detailing the anticipated expenses of the Yearly Meeting for the coming year. This budget includes expected expenditures, contributions to other organizations, and anticipated inflows and outflows from yearly meeting funds (e.g., the Teen Program Fund).
2. The total budgeted expenses are divided by the total number of members in the yearly meeting to get a per-member assessment amount. "Members" includes everyone on the membership roles, including children and non-resident members, but not including attenders. Monthly meetings which have a joint affiliation with another yearly meeting have their actual count divided in half.
3. The budget is presented to the yearly meeting for review and approval. If changes are made, the per-member assessment is re-computed.
4. The member count for each meeting is multiplied by the per-member assessment amount to get the total assessment expected from that monthly meeting.

The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting covenanted process:

At the beginning of the budget cycle, the Budget Committee reviews the various requests for funds and produces a preliminary budget. The preliminary budget is compared to the current budget and the growth rate (or reduction) is computed.

1. Each monthly meeting is informed what things are funded in the preliminary budget and how much the total budget is. Each monthly meeting is also reminded of how much it contributed to the yearly meeting in the current year.
2. Meetings individually determine how much they can contribute and enter into a covenant with the yearly meeting to do so.
3. The Budget Committee accumulates the covenanted amounts and adjusts the budget accordingly.
4. The revised budget is presented to the yearly meeting for review, revision, and approval.
5. Inevitably, unforeseen events occur which prevent some monthly meetings from contributing as much as they had planned. When this will be the case, the monthly meeting informs the yearly meeting and this information is shared with the other monthly meetings.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is much larger than Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting and the PYM budget is considerably larger than OVYM's. As a result, the amount of effort required to share information is much higher and the risks are greater. Even so, although this process has been in place since 1997, there has only been one year in which there was an overall shortfall. When individual meetings have been unable to contribute as much as they anticipated, other meetings have been able to increase contributions to make up the difference. In a recent series of surveys of PYM members, the covenanted process was judged to be a success. Approval for the process was high among officers and staff, yearly meeting committee members, and among a sample of monthly meeting members who did not have a direct role in the yearly meeting.

MONTHLY MEETING NEWS

Bloomington Meeting

– Terry Reynolds, correspondent

This summer Bloomington Friends' were happy to have our meetinghouse used on weekdays by nineteen Harmony School preschoolers, while their own building was being renovated. Our new playground equipment was installed in time for their use, and received their gleeful approval. Our own children also enjoy the new outdoor play area.

Our newly formed Earthcare Witness Committee has certified our property as a National Wildlife Federation backyard wildlife habitat area. They are also using questionnaires to assess energy usage and conservation practices at the meetinghouse. Members of this committee manned a booth at Bloomington's annual Simply Living Fair. They are also leading a new study group on voluntary simplicity. This eight week course was created by the Northwest Earth Institute in Portland, OR.

A new adult discussion group on Quaker spirituality will begin this fall. Those attending will explore classic Quaker writings. We also held an extended query discussion on the topic "Reflections on Our Meeting for Worship: Silence and Speaking."

We learned more about distant Friends by hosting visits from Julie Harlow of Friends House Moscow and Joseph Andugu of Friends World Committee for Consultation.

We said good-by to Bob and Stephanie Bocnan when they moved to Maine, and we welcomed Bruce and Julia Pearson from Woodland, NC. We also welcomed Audrey Mills Spence, who transferred her membership to Bloomington from Muncie, IN.

Requests were made and approved to transfer the associate memberships of Elizabeth Huber and Thomas Schutt to full memberships. Miles and Dylan Evans, sons of Joanna and Michael Evans, were approved for associate membership.

Our annual fall retreat was recently held on the theme of sharing our spiritual practices and gifts.

A record number of Bloomington Friends attended OVYM this year.

Clear Creek Meeting

– Erica Pearson, correspondent

Clear Creek welcomed many new Quaker students to Earlham College and the Earlham School of Religion with a big potluck on Friday, August 27. Ministry and Oversight has been sponsoring a series of extended discussions of our meeting identity, including our collective inward and outward journey, and our relationship with the Earlham College and Richmond communities. We have also instituted a monthly after-meeting worship sharing opportunity on the OVYM query for the month. Our newsletter format has changed, enabling us to publish news of Friends far and near, and pieces on our personal affirmations of faith, and our reasons for coming to meeting. New and returning members are bringing welcome wisdom, energy and spiritual depth to enrich the life of our meeting.

Community Meeting

– Deborah Jordan, correspondent

Community Friends celebrated the end of the school year in early June with a pancake breakfast. Friends in Unity with Nature flipped the pancakes, and the rest of us enjoyed a delicious meal. Breakfast was followed by worship out-of-doors in the Meetinghouse yard.

Our young people learned to use summer time in fun, in work and in sharing with others. A new program, Youth Ministry to Seniors, was initiated. In this program, our young people were hired by elderly Friends and others needing assistance to do chores such as yard work, sorting material in attics and basements, and many other small chores. Three of our young people participated in an Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting work camp in West Virginia. Two adults and three youth (Shannon McKelvey Isaacs, Nora Hartsock and Chris Morriss) joined nine other OVYM teens in West Virginia where they caulked, scraped and painted a house for a lady who had been busy caring for her husband with Alzheimer's disease. These teens learned lessons on working together, managing finances, preparing meals and cleaning up after themselves. Additionally, they participated in

sessions on Appalachian culture, values and music, and they learned about the environmental effects of mining in West Virginia.

It was with great excitement that in July we welcomed 14 adults and children into membership (new and transfer members). We celebrated our new members with a welcoming swim party at the Clinton Hills Swim Club. Much fun and food was enjoyed by all.

Many people from our Meeting enjoyed the sessions of OVYM at Wilmington College in late July and early August. This fall our thoughts turn to the November elections, and many of us will be participating in activities to support our candidates and urging F(I)riends to vote.

Dayton Meeting

- David Wood, correspondent

During the summer, we said goodbye to Jana Schroeder and Leslie Liszak, to Linda Lyman and Marty Walton, and to Julie Scarpelli. Linda and Marty have moved to Maine, while Leslie and Jana have moved to Richmond and have asked to have their memberships transferred to Clear Creek. Julie has left for Otterbein college near Columbus. We look forward to seeing Jana and Leslie when they attend our retreat at Quaker Hill later in September, and Julie has promised to be back for our traditional Christmas play. We had a total of nine people from our meeting attend all or part of yearly meeting sessions in Wilmington, well over half our average attendance. Tom Applegates book, *Living the Dream With Coach Gate*, describing his experiences as basketball coach at Dunbar High School has now been published. We continue to take a larger role in preparing and serving meals at St. Vincents, a homeless shelter which is attempting to keep up with the growing number of homeless persons in Dayton. At the same time, our strengths are being tested through serious illnesses of several of our members.

Eastern Hills Meeting

- Darlene Palmer, correspondent

Ministry & Counsel has been busy meeting at Mt. Storm Park. Perhaps this has caused a "brainSTORM" of ideas, several of which have been

implimented over the summer! First Sundays are for shared religious insight, presented by one Friend at the beginning of Meeting for Worship. Wilson Palmer shared his spiritual ideas in June. He read some meaningful passages about mystical experiences.

In July, Footie Lund did an autobiographical review of her religious development, interspersed with chosen hymns. This has given us an opportunity to know each other better.

Each First Day the Clerk invites worshipers to share after thoughts at the end of Meeting for Worship. These are thoughts that may not have risen to the level of messages during Worship. They are followed by introductions and announcements, as is our usual format.

Dan Coppock was nominated by Eastern Hills as a member who exemplified the theme of WYM sessions, "Workers Together With Him." We wanted to recognize Dan as a faithful Quaker, leader in our Club Quaker teen group, and high school graduate. He will be missed when he leaves for Earlham College in the fall.

In June Nathan and Jeremy Coppock, Daniel Montgomery and Matthew Wispe joined eight other OVYM teens and four adults at the Appalachian Southern Folklife Center for a week of activities. The teens helped to repaint the home of a needy Appalachian resident and learned about the effects of strip mining on the West Virginia mountains and people living there. They returned home and put their experiences together as a PowerPoint presentation which they shared with the Meeting on August 18.

The Meeting appreciated an update from Patrick Nugent and his wife, Mary Kay Rehard, on their work in Kaimosi, Kenya. They are principals at the Friends Theological College which prepares Friends for pastoral ministry and Christian leadership in East Africa.

Lexington Meeting

- Kelly Feibes, correspondent

Our spring and summer were full of events and satisfying work. Potluck topics included Membership, Spiritual Quotations From Other Traditions (And What They Say To Quakers), It Takes a Spiritual Community to Raise a Child: Keeping Our Children Safe, and Right Sharing of the

World's Resources (RSWR) with guest speaker Roland Kreager. These "Spiritual Nurture" potlucks were, as usual, interspersed with "Social" potlucks. Several of the latter were held at Friends' homes. Additional educational opportunities included First-Hour discussions of Global Hunger, Debbie Ford's book "The Dark Side of the Light Chasers," and the PBS video "Alluena."

The Ministry and Worship Committee has planned a course called "The Quaker Experience --- Faith and Practice." It is designed to familiarize new LFM members and attenders with the faith and practice of Friends; to refresh the understanding of long-time members; and to provide an opportunity for spiritual growth, intellectual stimulation, and the sharing of knowledge about Quaker faith and practice. The course will cover six topics, and is intended to be permanent and ongoing, continuing and repeating as best fits other Meeting activities and the calendar.

The Care and Nurture Committee has been working on record-keeping, with new forms for attenders and members ready to be distributed and archived. Efforts are being made to clarify various definitions, such as "associate" members vs. "junior" members, membership of children and birthright members. The meanings of "under the care of the Meeting" and "in the manner of Friends" in the context of marriages were also discussed. The Committee has created a concerns box, which is meant as an alternate method for Friends to contact the Care and Nurture committee about any concerns they might have or to request a contact from a member of the committee.

The Outreach Committee has been very busy completing the website and preparing newcomer packets of pamphlets and articles. The Committee has also been planning an outreach event to be scheduled in October. This would include a morning adult education program, and an evening public event. The name of the event will be "Healing Meditations & Music for Body, Spirit & Mind".

The Religious Education Committee held a retreat that generated a curriculum outline for the coming year. The Committee analyzed its successes as well as areas that still need work, and found that this process helped bring up many new ideas as well.

We have experienced both gains and losses this season. Many of us were sorry to see Jessica Pilcher resign as our childcare provider for the smallest ones. She was much loved and appreciated. We were delighted to welcome Michelle Togami into the

Religious Society of Friends. We were all deeply saddened over the rapid decline and death of Twila Colley. Our love and sympathy go to her family Ed, Charlie, and Steve and to her friends.

Oxford Meeting

— Camilla Flintermann, correspondent

As usual during the summer, our attendance and activity has fluctuated. Now, heading into the fall, we are glad to welcome a few new attenders, even as we regret that several of our members have moved on.....to connect, we hope, with other Meetings in their new homes. Such is the life of a university meeting--and it seems that somehow new faces appear when familiar ones leave us.

We worked hard before OVYM to prepare a Minute on the need for Friends everywhere to focus more on educating young people about the peace testimony, and provide resources for those who wish to declare their CO position. We are pleased that the Peace & Social Concerns committee of the yearly meeting has taken this concern under their care, and is actively working to address it, starting with the Joint Quarterly meeting in October. We are also considering publication of a Minute of opposition to the draft itself.

Again we are supporting the local CROP walk, and working with other churches to raise money for hunger in Oxford, with the Third Annual Empty Bowls lunch, on Oct. 23rd.

We regret the closing of the AFSC's clothing center in Richmond, in part because we often took surplus clothing from the Family Resource Center here, which they were glad to contribute. Some of us took part in the 40th anniversary remembrance of the 1964 Freedom Summer, commemorating the civil rights volunteers who were trained here on the Western College Campus to do voter registration in the south, including 2 who were murdered in Mississippi.



NEWS FROM OUTSIDE OVYM

The Ministry of Writing

Earlham School of Religion presents an annual colloquium October 22-23, 2004. Keynote speaker will be Li-Young Lee, award-winning poet whose family fled the political turmoil in China in the 1950s and settled in Indonesia briefly where he was born. Persecuted for their Christian beliefs, they were subsequently forced to leave Indonesia and finally arrived in the United States.

A \$65 registration fee covers all colloquium events, including Friday night readings, all plenary sessions and workshops, Saturday continental breakfast and lunch and refreshments, and the reading/open mic Saturday night.

For more information, contact Rita Cummins, Earlham School of Religion, 1-800-432-1377, E-mail: cummiri@earlham.edu

Right Sharing of World Resources

Books recommended for adult forum/discussion groups:

1. *Climbing the Sycamore Tree: A Study on Choice and Simplicity* by Ann Hagmann, 2001. A "workbook" to be used by individuals or groups; activities, discussion questions, readings, and lessons closely tied to Scripture and Christian principles.
2. *Simpler Living, Compassionate Life*, edited by Michael Schut, 2001. Essays by Henri Nouwen, Richard Foster, Cecile Andrews, William Stringfellow, Wendell Berry and others others. Includes a study guide for groups and individuals.
3. *Radical Simplicity: Small Footprints on a Finite Earth* by Jim Merkel, 2003. Offers clear and practical advice on how to manifest simplicity; a life-changer.
4. *Your Money or Your Life* by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin, 1992. A classic; a study guide for groups is available in a companion workbook.

Quaker Earthcare Witness

The electrifying theme for this year's Quaker Earthcare Witness annual meeting is "Watts Up? Let's get down. Become an energy transformer ... ohmmm!!!" The aim of the gathering is to provide the alternative energy that Friends need to work for a sustainable future, and it will meet from October 7 to 11 in the Burlington Meeting House, Burlington, New Jersey.

Ned Stowe, energy lobbyist for Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), will give the keynote address on Friday, October 8. Ned leads FCNL's efforts in two of FCNL's legislative priority areas: to reduce U.S. oil dependence as a source of violent conflict, injustice, and environmental degradation; and to shift federal budget priorities away from military spending toward funding basic human needs at home and abroad.



Friends Committee on National Legislation

FCNL's 2004 Annual Meeting will be held November 11-14 at the Georgetown University Conference Center in Washington, DC and will focus on the theme "The Work of Spirit Led Friends." Participants will have an opportunity to take part in a lobby day on Wednesday, November 10 and to tour the new National Museum of the American Indian on Thursday morning.

Early bird registration for Annual Meeting ends October 15, 2004. Registration information and materials can be found at <http://www.fcnl.org/announce.htm>

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Friends World Committee for Consultation

Joseph Andugu, the new Associate Secretary in FWCC's London office, visited in the midwest in September and met with groups of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Friends in Bloomington, Richmond, and Cincinnati. Joseph's purpose in visiting the U.S. was to increase awareness of FWCC work, build relationships with U.S. Friends on behalf of FWCC, learn more about our culture and concerns, and support the work of the FWCC at the yearly meeting level.

Joseph explained that FWCC was formed in 1937 to facilitate the process of regular correspondence and visitation among the many groups of Friends around the world. Like other world religions, FWCC represents the entire world community of Friends and has consultative status at the United Nations with offices in New York and Geneva. Unlike other Quaker organizations such as FCNL and AFSC, FWCC consists of, exists for, and is exclusively supported by Quakers. Its financial condition is currently somewhat precarious and several emergency

cost-saving measures have recently been implemented.

Joseph's home is in Kenya where there are almost 140,000 Friends and 14 yearly meetings. While enrollment of Quakers in Great Britain and in the U.S. is dropping, Kenya's meetings are flourishing. Almost all of Kenya's Friends attend programmed worship; there is only one unprogrammed meeting located in the capitol, Nairobi. Like most of the Friends in developing countries, those in Kenya live in poor, rural areas.

