

# New York Yearly Meeting Religious Society of Friends

## *InfoShare*

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### Fall Sessions—Everyone Invited to Participate Register Now!

Fall Sessions for 2011 will be held November 11–13 at the Doane Stuart School in Rensselaer, NY (Saturday), and at Powell House in Old Chatham, NY (Friday evening and Sunday morning).

At Fall and Spring Sessions, Friends carry on the business of the Yearly Meeting between our annual sessions at Silver Bay. The attendance and involvement of Friends from all monthly meetings ensures that the wisdom of a variety of Friends will be brought to our business sessions, and that the decisions made there will be reported back to the meetings.

Information and the registration form are at <http://bit.ly/oSl8o8>.

**Registration:** You may register in two ways: Fill out the registration form at <http://bit.ly/oSl8o8>, save it with a new name, and e-mail it to Helen Garay Toppins at [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org) or fill out the form and send it by postal mail to NYYM, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003. You may pay your registrations fees by using PayPal on the Web site. If you use PayPal please add a \$3.00 service charge. You may also mail your check to NYYM.

### Peace Concerns Coordinator Returns to Republic of Georgia

Greta Mickey, Central Finger Lakes Meeting

I will be leaving the US on Monday, October 10 to fly to the Republic of Georgia (officially just "Georgia," known to her people as Sakartvelo). I will be there for three weeks, traveling with my elder, cofacilitator, and companion, Turtle MacDermott. During that time we will sojourn with the Tbilisi Friends Worship Group (Quakers), do three three-day Alternatives to Violence Project workshops, meet with officials from the bureau of prisons and orphanages, meet with the president and assemblies of the governments in exile of both South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and be a presenter at the Youth Forum's International Gathering in Georgia called "We Do Not Have Time for Silence." I will be blogging throughout the trip at [gemjourneytopeace.blogspot.com](http://gemjourneytopeace.blogspot.com). I ask that you please hold me in prayer as I do this work.

## FWCC Seeks General Secretary

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) is looking for a Friend to serve as general secretary in the World Office in London, beginning on an agreed-upon date in 2012.

The four primary areas of work are connections and communications among Friends, Quaker United Nations work, ecumenical work through Christian world communions, and office administration. The position entails extensive international travel, speaking to Friends' groups of all sizes, networking, and a great deal of written communication.

Applications are due October 31, 2011. For further information see <http://bit.ly/nyS3vN>.

## Christopher Sammond's Travel Calendar September 16–November 30, 2011

### September

- 16–17      Attend Priorities Working Group, Poughkeepsie, NY
- 24            Attend Budget Saturday, Purchase, NY
- 25            Visit Cornwall MM at historic Smith's Clove Meetinghouse,  
                Cornwall, NY
- 25–26      Attend Friends Fiduciary—"Quaker Fundraising," Lancaster, PA
- 26– 28      Colead Superintendents and Secretaries retreat, Buckeystown,  
MD

### October

- 2–8            Serve as Friend in Residence, Earlham School of Religion,  
                Richmond, IN
- 12            Visit One in Christ Worship Group, New York, NY
- 16            Visit Alfred MM, Alfred, NY
- 18–20      Lead NYYM/NEYM Pastors' Retreat, Weekapaug, RI
- 30            Facilitate Simplicity retreat at Poughkeepsie MM, Poughkeepsie,  
NY

### November

- 11–13      Fall Sessions

**The Unimaginable Journey  
of an American Peacemaker**

A book talk with S. Brian Willson  
Wednesday, October 26, 2011, 7:30 p.m.  
15th Street Meetinghouse

S. Brian Willson's recent book *Blood on the Tracks* provides numerous examples of the types of personal, risk-taking, nonviolent actions he and others have taken in attempts to educate and effect political change.

The author served in the US Air Force from 1966 to 1970, including several months as a combat security officer in Vietnam. Later he became involved with Vietnam Veterans against the War and Veterans for Peace.

In 1987, while engaged in a protest against shipment of US weapons to Central America, he was part of a Veterans Peace Action team that blocked railroad tracks at the Concord, CA, Naval Weapons Station. A train struck the veterans, and Willson was run over, losing both legs below the knee while suffering a severe skull fracture. He now walks with prostheses.

He has participated in lengthy fasts, actions of nonviolent civil disobedience, and tax refusal.

*Blood on the Tracks* will be available for purchase and signing.

Fifteenth Street meetinghouse is at 15 Rutherford Pl., 15th St. between 2nd and 3rd Aves., in Manhattan.

For further information call 718-768-3420 or e-mail [nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org](mailto:nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org).

This event is sponsored by New York Quarterly Meeting and New York City War Tax Resisters.

**Quaker Earthcare Witness Gathering**

The next Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) gathering, October 20–22, 2011, will be at the Cenacle Centre in Chicago. The focus of the gathering will be food and biodiversity. Come and get involved. Find out about earthcare actions and resources and take the information back to your Meetings. Grants are available to young Friends. Details can be found at [quakerearthcare.org](http://quakerearthcare.org) or contact Anne Mitchell, [anne@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:anne@quakerearthcare.org).

**Third Annual Queens Interfaith Unity Walk**  
A community walk Visiting Flushing houses of worship  
Sunday October 30, 2011

Gathering Time: 1:00 p.m.; Starting Time: 1:30 p.m.

Starting at: Sikh Center of Flushing, 38-17 Parsons Blvd, the walk will include the Sikh Center,\* Temple Gates of Prayer, Masjid Hazrat Abu Bakr,\* Tzu Chi Foundation, and the Flushing Quaker meetinghouse.

This community event is cosponsored by Flushing Jewish Community Council, Flushing Quakers, Free Synagogue of Flushing, Muslim Consultative Network, Muslim Progressive Traditionalist Alliance, Pax Christi Metro New York and Pax Christi Queens, Queens Counseling Services of Foundation for Religion and Mental Health, Sikh Center of Flushing, Turning Point for Women and Families, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Queens, and Women for Afghan Women, in coordination with diverse churches, mosques, synagogues, gurudwaras, and temples of Flushing.

Lunch available at the Sikh Center before the walk; refreshments served at the Flushing Quaker meetinghouse after.

All faiths welcome!

For more information contact: 212-420-0250 or [nypaxchristi@igc.org](mailto:nypaxchristi@igc.org).

\*Please note: at the Sikh Center and Masjid Hazrat Abu Bakr, you will have to remove your shoes. (You might want to wear footwear that is easy to slip on and off.)

**Activist Training to Stop “Fracking”**

Brooklyn Meetinghouse  
110 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn  
Saturday, November 12, 2011  
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Efforts over many months to maintain a ban on hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) in NY State have fallen on legislators’ deaf ears. Petitions, phone calls and the clear majority of NYS residents against fracking have not made an impression. Now, permitting is underway to bring fracked gas from many geographical areas into NYC through a high-pressure gas pipeline.

This situation calls for new ideas and approaches. To that end, a one-day training to help develop and carry out a campaign to end hydraulic

fracturing and advocate a sane energy future will take place. The event is sponsored by Friends in Unity with Nature.

The training is open to all Friends, and to non-Friends by invitation. Attendance is free, but we will accept donations to cover the cost of the training and use of the meetinghouse.

We will aim for goals that are specific and within our capacity. The focus will be on generating a long-term, multi-faceted campaign that escalates over time until our goal is reached, rather than on one action alone.

The training will be facilitated by Daniel Hunter, a training elder with Training for Change. For his full bio, please go to <http://bit.ly/nMPHLc>.

This is an important opportunity to approach creatively an issue that many Friends are passionate about.

Participants will receive advance reading material, so please register as soon as possible.

To register and for further information, contact: Angela Manno, 970-275-1525, [amanno@angelamanno.com](mailto:amanno@angelamanno.com).

### **Powell House Caregivers Weekend**

November 18–20, 2011

Are you doing more than you used to in order to keep a loved one safe and in the community? Are you visiting, calling, concerned, accompanying to the doctor's, picking up groceries, worried about a loved one's driving? You are a caregiver and this weekend is for you.

Whether it's a parent, a partner, or a sib, increased responsibilities for their care can be hard on you, and you may be at a loss to know how to get the loved one's needs met, what services are available, or how to evaluate behaviors that are new.

This weekend you will have an opportunity to tell your story, ask questions, seek support, learn of resources, be among others who are on this same journey and who understand.

The Caregivers Weekend is cosponsored by Aging Resources Consultation and Help. It will feature outside resource people in addition to ARCH staff and ARCH Visitors.

For more information or to register: Powell House, 518-794-8811, [Sharon@powellhouse.org](mailto:Sharon@powellhouse.org), or [www.powellhouse.org](http://www.powellhouse.org).

### **Director of Friends Rural Service to Visit US**

Craig Barnett, director of Hlekweni Friends Rural Service in Zimbabwe ([www.hlekweni.org/](http://www.hlekweni.org/)), will be visiting the US in early November to talk about new directions at the training center and the continuing challenges it faces under the current regime. Founded in 1967 by Quakers Roy and Irene Henson, Hlekweni ("Place of Laughter") was the first interracial training center in segregated Rhodesia. Nearly 45 years later, it is still providing high-quality, affordable training in practical and vocational skills to the young women and men of Zimbabwe. Please contact Steve Brooks ([sbrooks@uab.edu](mailto:sbrooks@uab.edu)) of Washington, DC, Meeting for more information or to schedule a meeting with Craig.

### **New Home for Schenectady Friends**

Ruth M. Olmsted, coclerk, Schenectady Meeting

After a lengthy and prayerful search following the news that our hosts would be vacating the house/headquarters we were meeting in, Schenectady Friends feel very fortunate. We have landed in a place that feels very right. It's the former rectory of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church at 427 Franklin St., right in downtown Schenectady. The church property is now the home of the Schenectady Light Opera Company, an amateur musical-theater group entering its 85th season. They're looking for other community groups to use their space, and it's proving very comfortable so far. At our very first meeting for worship, we discovered a need to move the meeting time back one hour: in the warmer months, the Schenectady Greenmarket farmers market is only half a block away, and their live music starts at 10 a.m. So from May through October, we will worship at 9 a.m. We are planning an open house on the 25th of September, and hoping to draw visitors from the Greenmarket.

### **Construction at New Brunswick Meeting**

Jeffrey Aaron, New Brunswick Meeting

On Sunday, September 5, New Brunswick held a modest groundbreaking ceremony of sorts for our new addition, a single, larger meeting room than we now have available. Unfortunately, that September 5 was in 2010. And that was after many years of discernment. Despite an anticipated three months or so to completion, we ran into difficulties with our builder. We have engaged a second builder to complete the project, and we anticipate

completion later this fall or early winter. Fortunately, the foundation is in place, as well as the framing and the roof, so the balance can be completed regardless of cold weather. At this writing, we are awaiting delivery of the doors and windows.

Our current meeting room has a capacity of up to about 30 unless we arrange the chairs in classroom style, which is certainly not conducive to Quaker worship. We have at least once reached total capacity. An additional attender would have had to stand that morning, and that morning was many months ago. Our usual attendance level rarely exceeds approximately 20. Our new meeting room will hold up to 50 easily, and be a much quieter room by virtue of better insulation, better isolation from the rest of the building, which includes two rental apartments, and greater distance from the streets (we are on a corner). In addition, the new room will mean that First Day school can be held on the ground level, making all the regular meeting spaces fully accessible—a longtime goal. Over the years since we purchased this building more than 25 years ago, we have managed to make several significant modifications that enabled full accessibility to most of the facilities, with the sole exception of First Day school.

The old meeting spaces have been limited to the meeting room, the kitchen and bathroom, and the lobby, plus the finished basement, so that any committee meeting or potluck or other activity required rearrangement of the chairs in the meeting room, or use of the basement. It has also meant that First Day school has been held in the basement, which is small and not very inviting, as well as down a flight of stairs.

Although the construction process has been very difficult and far more expensive than anticipated because of the problems with the first contractor, we see the light at the end of the tunnel, and that light is not too distant. As Friends, we are accustomed to holding that L/light in our hearts and minds! When our project is clearly approaching the end, and we have a completion date to announce, we will gratefully welcome Friends who care to join us at our opening, and we will have a better facility to offer to the local and Rutgers University communities as well, which we hope will increase our exposure and outreach. We look forward to sharing our good news with all our Yearly Meeting Friends.

## Meeting for Discernment

### March 3, 2012, Ithaca Meeting

The 2012 winter session of Meetings for Discernment will be held at Ithaca Friends Meeting on Saturday, March 3, 2012.

Meetings for Discernment are a time when Friends from all parts of the Yearly Meeting come together for extended worship to discern the presence and movement of God, Spirit, Light—in our hearts, in the lives of our meetings, and in the life of the Yearly Meeting as a whole. To encourage a broad presence from throughout the Yearly Meeting, local meetings and worship groups name appointees from their meetings to attend, but Meetings for Discernment are open to all. Worship is held during morning and afternoon periods, with a break for lunch.

Meetings for Discernment offer Friends a time for deep reflection and spiritual connection and serve as a means for the Yearly Meeting to discern what is rising up among us that may not be apparent through our usual process of committees and attending to business.

Planning has commenced, and registration details will be available soon. In the event of inclement weather, an alternate date of March 17 has been reserved.

For further details contact Jeff Hitchcock, [jeffhitchcock@euroamerican.org](mailto:jeffhitchcock@euroamerican.org).

## Upcoming Powell House Youth Events

It must be fall, because there are nuts all over the place at the Powell House youth program. We have been harvesting and eating the wild grapes, autumn olive berries, and other goodies from the woods around us during youth conferences. And we are looking for **more** youth to join into the upcoming events. For more information call or e-mail the youth directors—Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark—at 518-794-8811 extension 13 or [chrisandmike@powellhouse.org](mailto:chrisandmike@powellhouse.org). You may register at [www.powellhouse.org](http://www.powellhouse.org) or go there to print off a registration form to send by US mail.

### **October 28–30: Worlds Beyond, grades 9 to 12**

Extra sensory perception (ESP). Ghosts. Dreams that come true. Déjà vu. Have you had strange or unexplainable personal experiences? Weird things happen? What roles do our cultures and individual perception have in saying what is normal? Sign up for this weekend...or we will teleport you here anyway.



### **November 4–6: JCT 2011, grades 9 to 12**

JCT stands for junior counselor training and this is our “work-your-heart-out” conference. Free time is nearly nonexistent. Sessions are long and grueling. If you’re responsible and fun loving, believe in the “idea” of PoHo, and would like to become a JC, join us this weekend.

### **November 18–20: Celebration Creation, grades 4 & 5**

The holidays are just around the corner. It’s easy to forget in the middle of homework, at the end of the semester, when the days are short and the skies often gray, that the world really is a beautiful place and that life is good. Great games, fabulous food, awesome attenders will all be included in the revelry.

### **December 2–4: Simply Present, grades 6 to 8**

Life can get pretty crazy especially this time of year. Sometimes it’s important to just be present where you are and enjoy the folks you’re with. We’ll practice the art of being present and the art of making presents. We’ll unwrap ourselves from the layers of schoolwork, sports obligations, relationships, and other stuff we take on, and we’ll see what gifts we find at our core.

### **December 16–18: WinterSong 2011, grades 8 to 12**

Mystical. Magical. Incredible. Real. Join us as we gather to celebrate our amazing community and fill both houses with Light and Love.

Here are the tentative dates for winter and spring youth conferences. They may change, so check the next brochure or the Web site.

January 20–22: 4 & 5

January 27–29: 6 to 8

February 3–5: 9 to 12

March 9–11: 4 & 5

March 16–18: 6 to 8

March 23–25: 9 to 12

April 6–8: Work Weekend

April 27–29: Women’s Intergenerational

