

**New York Yearly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends**

InfoShare

Volume 3

October 2004

Number 5

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Protecting Our Children

New York Yearly Meeting is beginning to work on policies and procedures to enhance the safety of our children in light of the grim reality of child sexual abuse. We are not doing this work in response to any incident in NYYM, but to ensure that such incidents are as unlikely as is humanly possible.

It is of course very difficult to confront the reality that something so heinous and devastating could happen in our community. Yet the unfortunate truth is that it has already happened in many Quaker contexts and that if we do to not address it forthrightly we are leaving our children at risk. We treasure our children and youth and need to do all that we can to protect them.

Many other Yearly Meetings and other Quaker institutions have been or are engaged in the same work. While for many of these Quaker groups (ourselves included) some of the impetus to take up this work came from the promptings of insurance companies, it is clear to those of us who have researched this unfortunate reality that concern for our children and youth far outweighs any concerns over liability. Creating policies and procedures is imperative for the safety and well being of our children, and certainly timely.

The clerk of the General Services Coordinating Committee has formed an ad hoc committee, composed of Friends from JYM, General Services CC, Personnel, Prisons, AVP, Trustees, NYYM staff, and Powell House. The general secretary is in the process of gathering sample policies and procedures from other organizations, Quaker and otherwise, and will be creating a rough draft of a document to serve as a starting point. These will be sent to members of the ad hoc committee to review and weigh prior to our first meeting.

Christopher Sammond, NYYM general secretary

George Fox and the roots of Quakerism

What does George Fox have in common with Moses, Buddha, and Yeshua? Join Friend Diane Bonner to explore the roots of Quakerism in the mirror of Joseph Campbell's Hero, Sunday, October 10, 2004, 1:00 P.M., at the Brooklyn meetinghouse, 110 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn.

NYC Peace Friends Called Meeting

There will be a called NYC Peace Friends meeting on Monday, Oct. 11, 2004, at Brooklyn Meeting. We will meet from 10:30 A.M. until 3:30 P.M. Please bring a brown bag lunch.

We will spend time looking back and looking ahead. Where is the Spirit leading us? For more information contact Helen Garay Toppins at hgfreesdom@earthlink.net

Artquake at Brooklyn

NYQM is holding Artquake at the Brooklyn Meetinghouse Saturday evening Oct. 16 and Sunday afternoon Oct. 17. Artquake is a celebration of performing, visual, and literary arts by Quaker artists and a chance for them to share their work and discuss how Quakerism informs their work. Saturday evening will feature 20- to 30-minute performances and discussions. Sunday will feature viewing of visual art and shorter performances (10 minutes).

Performing artists and people with questions may contact Martha Hyde, earmar@earthlink.net; 718-258-7698. Visual artists may contact Sue Palm, palmblumenthal@yahoo.com; 718 871-3275.

Martha Hyde, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting

Rededicating Quaker Cemetery in Queensbury

The Quaker Cemetery in Queensbury, N.Y. will be rededicated Oct. 24, 2004, at 2:00 P.M. The cemetery, at the intersection of Bay and Ridge Roads, has been encroached upon during several construction projects. Although individual remains were reinterred, local Friends feel a need to rededicate the entire burying ground.

This is also an opportunity to pay tribute to Abraham Wing and other the Quakers who originally settled this area. The gathering will be under the care of

Adirondack Friends Meeting and will include worship, sharing of a brief history concerning the local Quaker community, and remarks by local elected officials. For more information, please call Regina Haag, pastor of Adirondack Friends Meeting, at 518-793-3755.

Regina Haag

Pendle Hill Conference on Conscience and War

October 22–24, the Peace Network is hosting Rosa Packard (Purchase Meeting, Conscience and Peace Tax International) and Jim Hamilton (Wilton Meeting, GI Hotline) at Pendle Hill to help Friends and others explore their leadings with respect to war and militarism and how we are called to witness in our lives. This is partly a skill-building weekend and partly an examination of conscience. In what different ways can one engage in tax witness, for example? Information: Pendle Hill, 338 Plush Mill Rd. Wallingford PA 19086; 610-566-4507; 800-742--3150; bobbi@pendlehill.org; www.pendlehill.org.

Farmington-Scipio Fall Gathering

Farmington-Scipio Fall Gathering will be at Buttrick Hall in Fredonia on October 23. Currently we have a tentative plan to hear from the Hyde Family who will just be back from working in Kenya to help build an orphanage for 40 children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic. Approximately \$20,000 is needed for the reconstruction of a building that was started as a tourist hotel but not completed. You can contact Dale Jacobs, clerk of Orchard Park Meeting, for more information. The First Day school is working on fundraising too. Tentatively, the Hydies will speak in the morning, followed by soup and then business meeting from 1–4 P.M.

Draft and Conscientious Objector Training

October 29–31, 2004, there will be three training sessions in counseling for conscientious objection and the draft. These training sessions, conducted by Bill Galvin of the Center on Conscience & War, www.nisbco.org, will take place at the Brooklyn meetinghouse, 110 Schermerhorn St. at Boerum Place. The meetinghouse is readily accessible by public transportation. For directions by car & public transportation, see www.brooklynmeeting.org The meetinghouse is also wheelchair accessible.

All training sessions are open to any interested parties; no Quaker affiliation required.

The topics and starting times for each of the sessions is as follows:

- Friday 10/29: Training for Trainers. For those who are trained conscientious objection counselors and are interested in training others. (Depends on demand; no sign-ups as of this date.) Will start at 4:00 P.M. if there is interest expressed in advance.
- Saturday 10/30: Training for draft/conscientious objection counselors. High school youth as well as adults encouraged to participate. Starts 10:00 A.M.
- Sunday 10/31: Training for GI Rights counseling, intended primarily, but not exclusively, for those wishing to participate in GI Rights Hotline. Starts 1:00 P.M.

No meals provided; please bring your own to all sessions.

Registration: Please contact Naomi Paz Greenberg, naomipaz@nyc.rr.com. Include name and contact information. Early registration is encouraged.

Diversity Workshop at PoHo

Ernie & Vince Buscemi will present A Journey toward Wholeness: Racial and Ethnic Diversity at Powell House October 29–31, 2004.

This weekend will move us closer to God's purpose of enhancing racial and ethnic diversity in NYYM and its monthly meetings. All sessions will include worship, keeping Divine Love at the center of all we do. This will be a highly interactive workshop sharing action ideas and discussing their implementation in NYYM and monthly meetings. Saturday night will be A Celebration of Diversity, so bring a story, a song—something that speaks of your racial and ethnic background.

Ernie and Vince are members of Morningside Monthly Meeting. Both are active in work against racism.

The cost of the workshop is \$160 adults, \$80 children & teens (2–17), \$40 infants. For further information or to register: Powell House, 524 Pitt Hall Rd., Old Chatham NY 12136-3410; 518-794-8811; info@powellhouse.org; www.powellhouse.org.

War Tax Resistance Conference

Everyone interested in war tax resistance is invited to attend the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee's semiannual conference and meeting hosted by the Conscience, Militarism, and War Tax Concerns Working Group of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The gathering will be held Nov. 5–7, 2004, at Swarthmore Friends Meeting, 12 Whittier Pl., Swarthmore, PA. This will be a weekend of workshops and organizing discussions, with business meeting Sunday morning.

For information: NWTRCC , Box 150553, Brooklyn NY 11215; 718-768-3420; 800-269-7464; nwtrcc@nwtrcc.org; www.nwtrcc.org/swarthmeet.html.

Light behind the Walls: Prison Worship Groups

Light behind the Walls retreat will be held at Powell House Nov. 19–21, 2004. We will explore the status of our prison worship groups, related prison issues, and criminal justice concerns within New York Yearly Meeting. The weekend is sponsored by the NYYM Prisons Committee with special invitations to AVP, AFSC, the Black Concerns Committee, and the Latin American Concerns Committee.

Cost: \$128/person or \$80/person as a commuter. For further information contact Helen Garay Toppins, hgfreesdom@earthlink.net. To register: Powell House, 524 Pitt Hall Rd., Old Chatham NY 12136-3410; 518-794-8811; info@powellhouse.org; www.powellhouse.org.

AVP at Westbury

A Basic Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshop will be given at Westbury Friends meetinghouse, Friday evening, November 19, to Sunday afternoon, November 21, 2004. Westbury Friends is at 550 Post Ave, Westbury NY 11590

The Basic AVP workshop is an intensive, three-day learning experience that teaches interpersonal conflict resolution skills through a series of step-by-step processes. These experiences, in small groups and one-to-one interactions, build a sense of community and trust through exercises focusing on affirmation, communication, cooperation, and creative conflict resolution.

The cost of the workshop is \$45 per person. Make checks payable to Westbury Monthly Meeting, marked "AVP Workshop." Meals are included in the

registration fee.

To register please call Daisy Palmer 516-333-7173.

AVP at Poughkeepsie Meeting

Poughkeepsie Meeting's Peace and Service Committee is sponsoring an AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project) workshop on the weekend of January 7–9, 2005, at Oakwood Friends School. Participation is limited to 20 applicants. The Schedule will be from 7 P.M.–10 P.M. Friday, from 9 A.M.–9 P.M. Saturday, and from 9 A.M.–3 P.M. on Sunday. For further information please contact Robert Martin at Oakwood, 845-462-4200.

Meetings and Miracles with Rubye Braye

Rubye Braye, inspired and inspiring Yearly Meeting speaker at Silver Bay in 2003, will be returning to New York the weekend of March 18–20, 2005, to lead a Powell House retreat for small meetings and worship groups entitled "Reconnecting with God: Abounding Miracles and Meetings." The goal will be to help all make their meetings "miraculous, wonderful places to be for all ages."

The weekend begins with dinner at 7 P.M. on Friday and concludes with lunch on Sunday. The cost is \$120 for adults, \$80 for children and teens (2–17), and \$40 for infants. Childcare can be arranged with three weeks' notice. For more information, or to register, call Powell House at 518-794-8811 or go to www.powellhouse.org.

Bolivian Quaker Education Fund

The Bolivian Quaker Education Fund (BQEF) is very active. We had a board meeting in early June, and in the following six weeks I had displays at four Friends gatherings. Several meetings in the U.S. and the United Kingdom have provided financial support.

On August 1 Vickey Kaiser (Fredonia Meeting) began working half-time as communications coordinator of BQEF. On September 1 BQEF submitted its first grant proposal, a request for a substantial portion of the cost of installing computer labs in the three Quaker secondary schools in Bolivia. A second proposal went out on September 14, and several more are in the works.

In the pipeline are other important steps. One is a Web site for BQEF, being

developed by Andro Gagné of Rochester Meeting. Another is a new brochure, being developed by Shelley Cochran, also of Rochester Meeting. A third is an article in an upcoming issue of the newsletter of the Friends Association for Higher Education. Others are a fall newsletter and further grant applications, being coordinated by Vickey and me, and a trip to Bolivia in late October to coordinate first-hand planning for the next steps. More exciting: I have begun a list of people who might like to accompany me to Bolivia in August or October of 2005 and get to meet Bolivian Quakers in person. Let me know if you would like to be added to that list (with your preference between August and October).

I hope that by the end of October you will be able to visit us at www.bqef.org. For information on BQEF and how you can help: 11253 Boston Road, East Concord NY 14055-9711.

—*Newton Garver, president, BQEF*

Downtown Meeting in Manhattan

On the last day of September NYQM's outdoor meeting gathered in the northwest corner of Manhattan's Battery Park for the last time in 2004. We hope to return next May to this beautiful spot near the Labyrinth of Contemplation under the cedar trees looking out over the sailboats and the Statue of Liberty.

An average of six people has met for worship each Thursday. Both in 2003 and 2004, we held a special memorial service for the tragedy of 9/11/01. This year, on the same night we met to hold in the Light those who died in the World Trade Center, there were candlelight vigils in several places for the 1,000 U.S. soldiers who have died in Iraq.

For more information go to www.downtownmeeting.org or call Sally Campbell at 212-787-3903.

PoHo Youth Learning and Service Trip to Honduras

The learning and service trip to Honduras marked our 80th conference (wow!). And it was a most awesome and amazing 80th conference. It was a dream come true. We felt completely supported in our efforts by Powell House staff, parents, kids, New York Yearly Meeting, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, Old Chatham Monthly Meeting, South Berkshire Monthly Meeting, and others here

in the States. We felt completely welcomed and held by our host community, the development agency, the families we worked with, and numerous others in Honduras. We built 10 stoves and financed an 11th, planted a couple dozen trees, and donated six sets of tools. All of our luggage made it there and back again, no passports were lost nor money stolen, and we were treated to a double rainbow our last full day in country. We even broke even thanks to donations from the Latin American Concerns Committee, Witness Coordinating Committee, Marti and Joe DeRoller, and Bob Stone (a friend of the Staabs).

Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark, PoHo youth coordinators