

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

InfoShare

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April Representative Meeting

New York Yearly Meeting's Representative Meeting will be at Chautauqua Institution April 16–18, 2004. Full information appears in March *Spark* and on the Web site at <http://www.nyym.org/spark/2004.3.shtml#rm>.

Events at Saratoga Meeting

Saratoga Monthly Meeting will host Northeastern Regional Meeting on Saturday, May 1. The program includes a report from Anita Paul and David Gerhan about their year in Botswana and their current project on behalf of the people there.

Saratoga and Easton will hold a joint meeting for worship on May 23 at 10 A.M. at the Saratoga meetinghouse on Route 32 in Stillwater. A potluck lunch will be followed by opportunities for discussion in small groups, then sharing with the larger group as the spirit leads. All are welcome.

For further information call 518-583-8838.

Claire Cafaro, Saratoga Monthly Meeting

Flushing Meeting Open House May 8

Flushing Monthly Meeting is sponsoring an open house Saturday, May 8, 2004, from 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., at the meetinghouse, 137-16 Northern Blvd. in Flushing, Queens. The rain date is May 15. Everyone is invited.

One purpose is to open our meetinghouse to the immigrant communities that have grown up around our meeting.

There will be games and activities for children. Please bring a picnic lunch (beverages will be provided) and lots of children.

Visit <http://www.nyym.org/flushing> for location of the meetinghouse and directions.

Naomi Paz Greenberg, Flushing Monthly Meeting

Scholarship Benefit Silent Auction at Wilton May 16–23

The Peace and Service Committee of Wilton Monthly Meeting will hold a silent auction from May 16–23 for the benefit of the Wilton Scholarship Fund, which supports Head Start children in Bridgeport, CT. We have been able to aid many families in the past, and we hope to be able to assist many more. Look for items in your attics or cellars that you no longer want but someone else might. Be creative in offering services—a week on your yacht in the Mediterranean, lessons in Sanskrit . . . whatever. We have already been promised a professional

singing lesson, a ten-speed bike, and a homemade-muffin-of-the-week offer.

Contact Virginia Auster at 203-846-9288 or email auster@localnet.com for information or a donation form.

Virginia Auster, Wilton Monthly Meeting

Hospitality to the Stranger in Rochester

Rochester Meeting has agreed to be a support congregation for Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN). According to its Web site, RAIHN is "a non-profit organization of faith communities [that] assists homeless families achieve sustainable independence by supporting them with resources of food, shelter, personalized case management and a broad network of caring volunteers."

Rochester Meeting will be paired with host Downtown United Presbyterian Church. Each congregation acts as host about once every three months. Host congregations provide overnight lodging and meals in a comfortable, safe private setting. Network programs offer 24-hour-a-day facilities and three meals a day while offering the support needed to help guests achieve independence. 70 percent of Network guests secure permanent housing.

Rima Segal, of Rochester Monthly Meeting, describes this as an exciting opportunity for Rochester Friends to provide a needed service.

Bulls Head-Oswego Approves Minute on Death Penalty

Bulls Head-Oswego Monthly Meeting approved the following minute on March 14, 2004:

"Bulls Head-Oswego Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) affirms its continued opposition to the death penalty. As Quakers, we believe in the sanctity of human life; that there is that of God in every human being; and in the potential of each human being to serve as an agent of Divine Will. Based on these beliefs, the deliberate taking of a human life is unacceptable, under any circumstance.

"State sanctioned murder, known as capital punishment, is an inconsistent and hypocritical way to show that killing is wrong.

"We urge all persons to press actively for the abolition of the death penalty and to do so as a part of a broader effort to ensure equal justice for all."

Karen Snare, clerk, Bulls Head -Oswego Monthly Meeting

Subcommittee on Conscientious Objection to Military Taxation

At Silver Bay in 2003, the NYYM Peace Concerns Committee agreed to form a subcommittee on conscientious objection to military taxation (COMT). The subcommittee exists to address the needs of meetings, committees, or individual members.

The Peace Committee requests that meetings collectively respond to the questions below. A written response would be of great value to us, in any form that you may wish to compose it. You may send your responses to the Yearly

Meeting office, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003.

1. Does your meeting or worship group include individuals who conscientiously object to the payment of taxes which are used for military purposes?
2. Does your meeting or worship group support these individuals spiritually or financially?
3. Does your meeting or worship group feel adequately informed about this issue?
4. What additional information about this form of witness would you like to receive?

We will assemble and combine all of the written responses we receive. We will send a copy of this compilation back to each of you. In this way, all of us may better understand the nature of this expression of conscience, and we will learn more about Friends throughout the Yearly Meeting who are making this personal and collective peace witness. We expect to complete the first compilation by May 31, 2004.

The subcommittee will be developing resource materials on this topic that will be available at Representative and Yearly Meetings. To request information about resources contact subcommittee convener, Beatrice Beguin.

John Randall, clerk, NYYM Peace Concerns Committee

National Guard Soldier Refuses to Return to Iraq

When he went home on leave last year after fighting in Iraq, Camilo Mejía realized that he could not return to the fighting. "I am saying no to war," he said recently. "I went to Iraq and was an instrument of violence, and now I have decided to become an instrument of peace." He has filed an application for conscientious objector status.

Camilo's mother, Maritza Castillo, said that Camilo is now being held at Ft. Stewart in Georgia. The army has charged him with desertion and plans to try him in a special court-martial, which could sentence him to one year in prison and a bad conduct discharge.

Maritza Castillo asks people to write two letters: one to her son, expressing support, and another to the commanding general asking that the army accept Camilo's conscientious objector application.

Camilo Mejía's address is Ssg. Mejía Camilo, A Company USAG MED-HOLD 865, Hase Rd., Ft. Stewart GA 31315. The commanding general's address is Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Commanding General, Ft. Stewart, 42 Wayne Pl., Ft. Stewart GA 31314.

Plowshares Peace Studies Collaborative at 3 Peace Colleges

The Plowshares Peace Studies Collaborative is a project of Earlham, Goshen, and Manchester Colleges. The founding denominations—the Quakers (Earlham College), the Mennonites (Goshen College), and the Church of the Brethren (Manchester College)—are known collectively as the historic peace churches.

The mission of the Plowshares Peace Studies Collaborative is "to be a beacon of

light in a world marked by violence, through: continuing the peacemaking traditions of the Society of Friends, Mennonite Church, and Church of the Brethren; creating opportunities for dialogue and for learning about peacemaking for undergraduate students; further strengthening the academic Peace Studies programs of the three colleges and creating models for others to emulate; establishing Peace House, an academic and experiential program in an urban setting through which students can learn about the roots of conflict and the strategies and methods of peacemaking; creating a national and international resource base for education in Peace Studies; and learning to collaborate together as three colleges, sharing resources, courses, faculty and students."

For information visit <http://plowsharesproject.org/> or contact one of the colleges. For Earlham: 801 National Rd. West, Richmond IN 47374-4095; 765-983-1200; <http://www.earlham.edu/>.

Peace and Conflict Studies Program in Austria

The European University Center for Peace Studies (EPU) in Stadtschlaining, Austria, offers an intensive course in peace and conflict studies. All the courses are taught in English.

The Program, established in 1991 by Dr. Gerald Mader, founder and president of the Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution, received the 1995 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education.

Topics include Introduction to Peace Studies, Cross-Cultural Communication, and a host of others.

Dates: spring term 2005, Feb. 27–May 22 (apply by Sept. 15, 2004); fall term 2005: Oct. 2–Dec. 21 (apply by March 15 2005).

Stadtschlaining is a beautiful, small and quiet medieval town with a 700-year-old castle hosting a peace museum, in the foothills of the Alps, between Vienna and Graz. Next to the castle is a famous peace library with 25,000 books and some films.

The costs are Euro 2,500 tuition plus Euro 1,200 room rent per semester, plus Euro 700 examination fee for the master of arts program. A few partial scholarships are available to students from developing countries.

Students from any discipline who are interested in peace and conflict resolution are invited to apply. A first university degree or equivalent professional experience is required.

Those who complete one semester obtain an advanced certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies. Those who complete two semesters and write a thesis obtain an master of arts in Peace and Conflict Studies.

For more information and to apply: see www.aspr.ac.at/welcome.htm.

Dietrich Fischer, scientific director, EPU

Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund

The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund advocates for U.S. federal legislation that would enable people opposed to war to have their federal income taxes directed to a special fund that could be used only for nonmilitary purposes. This fund would be called the Peace Tax Fund, and the bill in Congress is called the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act, H.R. 2037. Four members of Congress representing New York State have cosponsored this bill: Maurice Hinchey, Major Owens, Charles Rangel, and Edolphus Towns. Two New Jersey representatives, Donald Payne and Rush Holt, are sponsors.

Friends throughout NYYM are asked to formulate a statement of support from your meeting and to hold a forum to educate people about the issue.

In New York City, councilmember Bill Perkins (representing Harlem and the Columbia University area, district 9) is planning to introduce a resolution of support for the Peace Tax Fund bill in the New York City Council. He has been successful in getting resolutions passed against the war in Iraq and against the Patriot Act. He is working with the NYC Peace Tax Fund Working Group, composed of members of Riverside Church, Morningside Monthly Meeting, and Episcopal Peace Fellowship, as well as the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund.

Friends in New York City are asked to educate your councilmember about the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill and ask her/him to support the resolution.

Information: National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, 2121 Decatur Pl. NW, Washington DC 20008; 202-483-3751; toll-free: 888-PEACETAX; Fax: 202-986-0667; info@peacetaxfund.org; <http://www.peacetaxfund.org/>.

NYC Peace Tax Fund working group, c/o Riverside Church, Social Justice Committee, 490 Riverside Drive, New York NY 10027; 212-870-6853; peacetax@hotmail.com.

PoHo Youth Trip to Honduras

The Powell House Youth Program will take a group of 10 youths and adults to Honduras from August 19–29, 2004, for a service-learning trip. Group leaders will be Maria Arias (Brooklyn Meeting) and Chris DeRoller and Mike Clark (Old Chatham Meeting & Powell House). Participants should be 16 years old and have attended a youth conference with Mike and Chris.

The youth will build Justa-style eco-stoves in the kitchens of Honduran families and plant trees. They will learn and work side by side with the family members under the guidance of technicians from the Agencia de Desarrollo Hondureno (Honduran Development Agency). They will spend a day planting fruit and firewood trees in the deforested hills of the Cuenca de Guacerique, an important source of drinking water for Tegucigalpa.

About 80% of Hondurans cook with firewood. The eco-stove saves at least half of the amount of wood and removes the smoke from the kitchen. (Smoke from cooking fires causes numerous health problems for the women and children who spend time in the kitchen.) The stoves are made from locally available materials and cost about \$50 per stove. A description of the stove project can

be found at the Web site www.treeswaterpeople.org/Justa.htm.

The intent of the trip is to work with people in order to share their daily lives and to develop an awareness of the deep connections between us. The youths will get a realistic view of the hardships and the joys of poor families in Central America. They will observe the current problems and the hopes for the future. The work projects will show how small contributions by dedicated people can make big differences in the lives of others.

The group also plans to hike in La Tigra National Park, a mountain cloud-forest preserve, and to visit Isla El Tigre, a volcanic island in the Gulf of Fonseca on the Pacific Ocean. The group will travel primarily on local buses and walk a lot in order to know the country in a slower, closer way.

The cost of trip will be between \$1,000 and \$1,200. That will include the plane ticket from New York City (and back), food, lodging, transportation in Honduras, park entrance fees, program costs, tools, airport exit fees, and a donation to the project in Honduras.

We would like to receive registrations by April 15 to have time to get all vaccinations, documents, and plane tickets. We cannot accept registrations after May 1, 2004.

For more information contact Chris and Mike at the Powell House Youth Program, 524 Pitt Hall Rd, Old Chatham NY 12136; 518-794-8811; chrisandmike@powellhouse.org

CFS to Hire Teacher

Connecticut Friends School seeks candidates for middle school math and science head teacher for 2004–2005. The teacher will teach 5th through 8th grade classes, team-teaching with a veteran colleague who is responsible for the English Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum.

Information about Connecticut Friends School is available at www.ctfriendsschool.org. Interested candidates should send a cover letter that includes a statement of educational philosophy, a résumé, a list of references, and a phone number where you can be reached, by May 1, 2004. Electronic submission is encouraged to director@ctfriendsschool.org, but if mailed, please send to Kim Tsocanos, head of school, Connecticut Friends School, 317-A New Canaan Rd., Wilton CT 06897.

Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology

For nearly sixty years, Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology has gathered on Memorial Day Weekend to provide a respite for individuals of all spiritual and religious backgrounds who wish to delve more deeply into their inner world. The conference is dedicated to individual spiritual exploration with a focus on in-depth psychology, specifically Jungian psychology.

The 2004 conference will be May 28–31 at Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Penn. The topic is Trauma and the Soul, led by Donald E. Kalsched.

Like Quakers, C.G. Jung believed there is that of the divine in each of us. At birth, a splinter of the Godhead enters into our time-and-space reality—and into each human personality. Through suffering—a trial by fire—each Divine Spark is forged into a human soul. Divinity becomes incarnated.

Donald E. Kalsched is a clinical psychologist and Jungian analyst. His book *The Inner World of Trauma: Archetypal Defenses of the Personal Spirit* is in its fourth printing. He has lectured widely and serves on the faculty of the C.G. Jung Institute in New York City and is dean of Jungian Studies at the Westchester Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in Bedford Hills, N.Y. For information and registration visit <http://www.quaker.org/fcrp/>.

Quaker Television/Radio Project Envisioned

The Arts Committee of 15th Street Monthly Meeting is working on plans for a Quaker television/radio project. The project could consist of a series of programs intended to be educational for new and old Friends and those unfamiliar with Quakers. We welcome ideas for content and format, and we seek Friends interested in volunteering time or in other ways helping to make this idea a reality. Programs would be broadcast on public-access channels in different regions and would be available for lending libraries on videotape or DVD.

For information: QuakerTelevision, 48-18 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City NY. 11101; 212-388-7999; quakertelevision@yahoo.com.

Robert Baldrige, clerk, 15th Street Meeting Arts Committee

TV-Turnoff Week

Quakers sometimes have mixed-to-negative feelings about television. TV-Turnoff Network, formerly TV-Free America, is sponsoring the 10th annual TV-Turnoff Week April 19–25, 2004. TV-Turnoff Network is "a nonprofit organization that encourages children and adults to watch much less television in order to promote healthier lives and communities." In addition to TV-Turnoff Week, they sponsor More Reading, Less TV, a grammar-school program that encourages children to read rather than watch television. For more information: <http://www.tvturnoff.org>.

According to an article in the April 2004 issue of the journal *Pediatrics*, "Early television exposure is associated with attentional problems at age 7. Efforts to limit television viewing in early childhood may be warranted, and additional research is needed."

A Joyful Noise

It's not too soon to begin thinking of warmer days to come, and a week at Silver Bay on Lake George July 25–31. If you like to sing as an expression of the Spirit, here is something to look forward to. We plan to revive the choir. We would like to know in advance at least some of the people who want to participate. The music will be stimulating, and we hope that many will join. No extensive experience is necessary, although (given the limited time available) some sight-reading ability is needed. We will also need a good accompanist.

If you are interested, please let us know. Respond to Tom Rothschild, tomr@tnrmediate.com, or send ordinary mail to the Yearly Meeting office.

Tom Rothschild, Brooklyn Monthly Meeting

Leaders Needed at Religious Educators Institute

Children need your help. August 19–22, 2004, Friends General Conference will facilitate a Religious Educators Institute (REI) at Camp Asbury in Silver Lake, N.Y. (See article in March *Spark*.) Participants will come from across the country for workshops, interest groups, and inspirational plenary sessions. Topics will interest Quaker parents and educators who work with children or adults. FGC needs someone to lead the children's program (for approximately 20 children ages 1–12) and someone to lead an interest group demonstrating ways to use nature in First Day school. If you are interested, please contact Robin Wells at 828-277-3477 or david-robinwells@att.net.

What's Coming Up in May *Spark*

The May *Spark* will be full of important news for the Yearly Meeting. Silver Bay information, registration, and schedule at a glance will in this issue, along with reports from April Representative Meeting. We'll have an article from a young adult who participated in a workcamp in Mexico, news about AFSC's work with detained immigrants, and much more.

If you've moved recently, **make sure the NYYM office has your new address**, so you'll receive *Spark* on time. Send changes of address to office@nyym.org or mail them to NYYM, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003.