

New York Yearly Meeting  
Religious Society of Friends

**InfoShare**

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**Clarification**

In the past few weeks the clerks of monthly meetings have received a letter from a Friend in New York City. This is not an official letter from a committee of NYYM or from the office of NYYM. It does contain some misstatements and could promote some misunderstandings among Friends. The following may help clarify at least some of the data referred to in that letter.

Please consider the actual job description of the general secretary, which has been printed in *Spark*, was included on the Web site last year, and was reported again at Representative Meeting in April 2005. It includes the following provisions:

1. Visit monthly, quarterly, and regional meetings, seeking to connect our distant meetings with one another through sharing concerns and ministry.
2. Support and nurture emerging worship groups.
3. Work closely with the Clerk of the Yearly Meeting and serve ex-officio as a member of the Liaison Committee for the purpose of nurturing the life of the Yearly Meeting community.
4. In conjunction with the Yearly Meeting Clerk, maintain a liaison with wider Friends' groups. When necessary and appropriate, interpret the Religious Society of Friends to the wider community in statements and actions, including speaking to the press, which articulate our historic peace testimony and are in keeping with *Faith and Practice*, other Friends' testimonies, and relevant Yearly Meeting minutes. Whenever possible, reference should be made to these sources.
5. Supervise and evaluate the work of the Administrative Secretary. The General Secretary will be ultimately responsible for the overall good functioning of the Yearly Meeting office.

Please note that this job description does not require a New York City residence. This "requirement" was strongly discouraged by Friends who wished the general secretary to be more centrally located. There is also no mention of the need for on-site supervision of the staff three days per week; this would be incompatible with the primary goal of more visitation, especially on weekends.

Another misconception concerns the funding of the Sharing Fund overhead from the

Witness section of the Operating Budget. The assessment of administrative charges against Sharing Fund receipts was discontinued within the past few years because staff time and bookkeeping services were deemed to be the responsibility of the entire Yearly Meeting. The result was that all the income of the Sharing Fund would now be available for Witness program activities. As it stands, only postage, stationery, and printed materials are budgeted in the Witness section. The costs of staff time and bookkeeping services for the Sharing Fund are included in these expense lines for the entire Yearly Meeting, and are reflected as a small part of the totals shown in the General Services section of the budget.

Among the issues that are now being addressed by Yearly Meeting committees and staff are the search for other possible locations for Yearly Meeting sessions, a study of staff time allocations, and a more comprehensive visitation program. Many meetings have, in fact, increased their membership within the past few years. Meanwhile, NYYM is always looking for more Friends who have the time and energy to volunteer their skills in a variety of ways.

Advancement Committee funds are used for other activities besides scholarship aid to attend summer sessions. A full report may be found in the NYYM *Yearbook*; funds from the Trustees are reported on page 5 of every Treasurer's report; the year-end 2003 figures may be found on page 37 of the 2004 *Yearbook* and at [www.nyyym.org/committees/treasurer/](http://www.nyyym.org/committees/treasurer/).

Peace,

*Paula R. McClure, clerk*

*General Services Coordinating Committee*

### **Grants from Witness CC**

Once again Witness Coordinating Committee is offering monthly meetings small grants to further meetings' witness activities. In the past we have enabled meetings to buy back war toys, show peace films in the community, and create peace bumper stickers. We have also enabled individuals working under the care of their meeting to buy books for incarcerated girls, work with Hispanic veterans, and teach peace circles to preschoolers. Our grants are modest and will be given out as funds are available throughout the year, beginning in August.

To apply, please send no more than a one-page description of the project to Susan Bingham, with a minute of endorsement from your meeting, by July 15, 2005.

You may email it to Susan at [smbjoyous@earthlink.net](mailto:smbjoyous@earthlink.net) or send it via postal mail to Susan Bingham, WCC financial clerk, c/o NYYM office, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003.

## **Young Adult Concerns Committee**

The Young Adult Concerns Committee of NYYM is active once again! After a year of enthusiastic restructuring, the committee is planning a week full of events for the Circle of Young Friends at the 2005 Yearly Meeting at Silver Bay. We welcome and encourage young adult Friends to participate in the activities of the week such as game night, canoeing, and the Fun(d) Fair as well attend committee business meetings to discuss plans for events (i.e. conferences, fundraisers, etc.) for the future. We are looking forward to an exciting year with many more to follow! Questions, comments, or actions and words of support can be sent to the committee at [cyf\\_yacc@hotmail.com](mailto:cyf_yacc@hotmail.com) or to Alex Tsocanos (YACC/CYF clerk) at [RUOK14@aol.com](mailto:RUOK14@aol.com).

## **Silver Bay**

Everyone is encouraged to attend this year's Yearly Meeting sessions. This is a wonderful opportunity for worship, relaxation, and fellowship in the beautiful setting on Lake George. In addition to the adult programs, there are programs for young people, infants through high school. Please join us!

Full information is in May *Spark* and on the Web at [www.nyyym.org/silverbay](http://www.nyyym.org/silverbay).

### **Get Your Silver Bay Registrations In!**

Registrations for Yearly Meeting sessions at Silver Bay are coming in fast. As this is written, we have received more than 350! Please send your registration form, with the appropriate fee, to the Yearly Meeting as quickly as you can. All the information about Silver Bay, along with registration forms, is in the May *Spark* and on the Web site at <http://www.nyyym.org/silverbay>. The direct links for registration forms are: for adults, <http://www.nyyym.org/silverbay/regfrm05.pdf>; for JYMers, <http://www.nyyym.org/silverbay/jymregfrm05.pdf>.

### **Items for the Agenda at Silver Bay**

If you have agenda items for the business sessions, contact Ann Davidson or Beatrice Beguin for Ministry and Counsel; Paula McClure for General Services; Melanie-Claire Mallison for Nurture; Anita Paul for Witness; or Linda Chidsey, NYYM clerk. All these Friends are listed in the *Yearbook*. You may also contact the Yearly Meeting office, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003; 212-673-5750; [office@nyym.org](mailto:office@nyym.org).

### **Summer InfoShare**

The Summer 2005 issue of *InfoShare* is also the last day's Silver Bay *Minute*— the one Friends take home with them. It will be hand delivered to monthly meeting newsletter editors, posted on meeting bulletin boards, and shared with meeting committees. This provides you with a great opportunity to share information about your meeting, your worship group, or your committee.

To have your news included, please make sure to e-mail it to Paul Busby, paul@nyym.org (preferred) or mail it to Paul c/o the Yearly Meeting office, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York NY 10003, before July 10.

### **Downtown Manhattan Meeting Resumes Worship**

June is here, and Downtown Manhattan Outdoor Meeting is again gathering every Thursday night from 6–7 P.M. Meetings for worship are held from June through September at the northwest corner of Battery Park, north of the labyrinth, which in turn is just north of Castle Clinton (circular building).

Anyone interested in attending or convening the outdoor meetings may visit [www.downtownmeeting.org](http://www.downtownmeeting.org), for directions, information, meeting dates, and the ability to sign up to convene on line. Friends may also contact Sally Campbell, 212-787-3903; [scampfriend@earthlink.net](mailto:scampfriend@earthlink.net).

Friends are asked to bring a light chair or cushion, and if possible an extra one for someone who does not have one.

### **Director Needed for Ridgewood Friends Nursery School**

Friends Neighborhood Nursery School (FNNS), one of the oldest nursery schools in Bergen County, N.J., is under the care of Ridgewood Friends Meeting. This half-day school includes classes for 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds. The director serves as the administrator of the school and is asked to provide spiritually grounded leadership to FNNS. Hours are flexible and follow an academic calendar. Starting date: immediately for September 2005 school year.

Interested candidates please respond to Adrianna Coe, 201 930-0631; fax 201-930-1080.

### **Summer 2005 Internship at AFSC**

The Conflict Resolution Program (CRP) of the American Friends Service Committee seeks an intern with interests in **conflict resolution and community building** to develop a tool kit to be used by those interested in initiating community dialogues with CRP support. CRP develops projects to engage people in dialogue who are facing divisive conflicts in their communities. The aim is to support people in conflict by introducing more peaceful,

constructive approaches to conflict, and to develop their skills for using such approaches.

We will provide substantive work, a committed mentor, and a comprehensive orientation to the work of AFSC. Based on the needs and interests of the CRP and the intern, the intern will be expected to work from 10–21 hours per week with a total of 84–168 hours during the summer. We can offer a stipend of \$1,000 to \$2,000 depending on the number of hours and work negotiated.

AFSC/NYMRO also has internships available in:

- Response to military recruitment
- Criminal justice work
- History project
- Administrative project

For application packet, contact [NYMRORecruit@afsc.org](mailto:NYMRORecruit@afsc.org) or write AFSC Internships, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York, NY 10003; 212-598-0950. —*Anne E. Wright*

### **Summer Picnics at McCutchen**

McCutchen Friends Home, in N. Plainfield, N.J., is having summer picnics once a month, at noon on a Thursday. On June 16 the theme will be Hawaiian; July 7, All-American; August 18, Beach Party; and September 1, Country Western.

Friends are invited to attend. Wear something appropriate for the theme. If you plan to attend, please call 908-755-8600, so they'll know to expect you.

### **Summer Graduate Courses at ESR**

Earlham School of Religion offers several two-week intensive graduate courses August 1–12 on campus in Richmond, Ind. The courses are available for credit or audit.

Deadlines: admission, July 4; registration, July 18.

The courses are: Intro to Spiritual Formation, Writing as Ministry, Pauline Psychagogy: Spiritual Formation & Pastoral Care in Early Christian Communities, Perspectives in Christian Education, Quaker Spirituality, and Constructive Theology. Course summary information is online at [http://esr.earlham.edu/esr\\_access/oncampus.html](http://esr.earlham.edu/esr_access/oncampus.html). To register or for more information call 800-432-1377 or apply at [esr.earlham.edu](http://esr.earlham.edu).

Contact person is Sue Axtell, director of recruitment and admissions, ESR, 228 College

Ave., Richmond IN 47374-4095.

### **Quaker Street Youth in China Summer Workcamp**

The Journey of a Thousand Miles Begins with a Single Step

*Traditional Chinese saying*

Rebecca White, member of Quaker Street Meeting expects to participate in this summer's China Workcamp, a program established by the American Friends Service Committee in 2001. Participants will:

- experience life in rural China first-hand by living and working together with local college students on this project
- help tutor local children in English and raise environmental awareness
- learn about current social, political, environmental, and economic issues in China while sharing their own special skills and experience

The primary mission of the workcamp is to expand understanding among all members. Not only will participants learn a great deal about each other's society, culture, values, and beliefs, but they will also likely learn even more about themselves. In addition, the dedication and hard work of workcamp participants will indirectly focus local attention on this school and its mission of improving women's education in rural China. While these efforts will form the main focus of our workcamp, the opportunity for Chinese, American, and other participants from around East Asia to live and work together will provide the real meaning of this project.

We are looking forward to an in-depth report from Rebecca when she returns. Anyone who wants more information about Rebecca's involvement can contact her care of Quaker Street meeting, Box 102, Quaker St. NY 12141.

### **Rotary World Peace Scholarships**

The Rotary Foundation is now accepting applications for the Rotary World Peace Scholarship.

Successful candidates will pursue a master's level degree in international studies, peace studies, and conflict resolution at one of the eight Rotary partner universities in California and North Carolina in the U.S. and in Argentina, Australia, England, France, and Japan.

Applicants must be committed to peace and have proven experience in their field. For

information, scholarship program, and application information:  
[www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb\\_scho/centers/scholars/](http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb_scho/centers/scholars/).

### **Housatonic Will Archive CO Statements**

Following our deeply held belief in the Peace Testimony, the Housatonic Monthly Meeting in New Milford, Conn., is offering to support young conscientious objectors (COs) by archiving their written statements.

Young people considering conscientious objection, regardless of their draft registration status, are urged to write a claim now and, if possible, gather some supporting letters. (Claims can always be updated or revised before an actual submittal is necessary.) Doing this now will save time and, most importantly, create a record that supports the long-standing nature of the applicant's beliefs, an important point when defending the sincerity of a CO claim.

Written claims and letters of support should be copied, and either the originals or photocopies mailed to: Housatonic Monthly Meeting, Box 43, New Milford CT 06776, Att: CO Archiving

The date of receipt will be noted on the documents, an acknowledgment will be mailed to the sender, and the documents will be stored in a locked, fireproof cabinet. Documents will be returned to the sender upon written request.

Please note this is an archiving service only; review, editing, and counseling are not in the scope of this service. For information on how to prepare a statement of conscientious objection or for draft counseling, contact your local Friends meeting or:

- Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, 800-394-9544, 215-563-8787; [www.objector.org](http://www.objector.org); [info@objector.org](mailto:info@objector.org).
- Center on Conscience and War, 202-483-2220, 800-379-2679; [www.nisbco.org](http://www.nisbco.org); [nisbco@nisbco.org](mailto:nisbco@nisbco.org).

—*Jim Picton*

## **Peace Tax Fund Bill back in Congress: H.R. 2631**

On May 25, Representative John Lewis (D-GA) introduced the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund bill in the House of Representatives. This legislation, if enacted, would allow conscientious objectors to pay their federal taxes into a nonmilitary fund. Lewis was joined by 34 other representatives as original cosponsors on the bill, an increase of 6 from two years ago.

A congressional bill has to be reintroduced every 2 years. In this Congress, the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund's bill number is H.R. 2631. Please take this opportunity to draw your representative's attention to this new piece of legislation.

If your representative is one of the 35 who've already cosponsored, please send her or him a thank you note. If your representative is one of the 400+ who haven't yet cosponsored, please ask him or her to do so. The list of cosponsors can be found at [www.peacetaxfund.org/](http://www.peacetaxfund.org/). You can also send an e-mail to your representative from this site.

### **New on the Web Site**

On January 25, 2005, Linda Chidsey testified in Albany at the New York State Legislature's hearings on the death penalty. On June 9, 2005, she spoke before the New York City Council in support of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act. Her remarks are available at [www.nyym.org/ministry](http://www.nyym.org/ministry).

### **What Do Our Meetings Mean to Us?**

Quaker Street Meeting recently held a meeting for worship sharing on what the Meeting means to us and how we would feel if our Meeting didn't exist. We felt that the Meeting is like family in that whenever we make mistakes (sin) we are nevertheless accepted.

We come for two reasons: Worship, in which we feel the everlasting arms supporting and strengthening us through our daily activities; and Witness by which we reach out into the world with at least a smile and a helping hand.

After the meeting was over we realized that most of us are trying to focus on the ocean of Light while many of our neighbors and the world are focusing on the ocean of darkness.

—*Dorothy Garner*

## Coming up at Powell House

### Adults

#### **Living from the Divine Center: A Contemplative Retreat**

Linda Chidsey June 17–20

#### **Forgiveness As a Spiritual Practice**

Sue Regen June 24–June 26

#### **Youth-to-Youth Advocacy, with a Little Help from Adults: Selective Service Procedures, Draft Registration, and Conscientious Objection**

Joan Janiszewski & Paul Frazier August 12–14

#### **Friends and Money: Confronting Our Discomfort**

Howard Zuses August 19–21

#### **Lettuce Chi Together**

Ty Griese & Powell House staff August 26–28

#### **Are We Raising Peacemakers?**

Mary Rothschild September 10

### Youth Events

#### **Good Times, Good Games 4th–6th grades June 10–12**

#### **Unwinding Sr. High July 14–17**

#### **Heartsong II 7th–12th grades August 5–7**

#### **Camping in the Maze 4th–6th grades w/ Adult Sponsor August 26–28**

For further information: Powell House, 524 Pitt Hall Rd., Old Chatham NY 12136; 518-794-8811; [info@powellhouse.org](mailto:info@powellhouse.org); [www.powellhouse.org](http://www.powellhouse.org)

## **FWCC Annual Meeting**

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), Section of the Americas (SOA), had its Annual Meeting in Tempe, Ariz., April 14–17, 2005. Over 200 Friends were in attendance, including many from Latin and South America. Unfortunately Cuban Friends were not allowed a visa by the US government.

There was report on the Quaker Youth pilgrimage by one of the attendees.

Margaret Fraser, executive secretary of the SOA, gave a full report on the changes to the Quaker UN Program. After a meeting in England this past winter (including AFSC, the Quaker UN Offices in New York and Geneva, FWCC representatives) it was decided that a new Executive Board would be established in QUNO-NY. It would be made up of four representatives from AFSC and four from FWCC, along with a staff member from each organization. The existing Board is to be laid down but some of their expertise may be used in subcommittees.

The Peace Issues Working Group asked that its status be changed from an ad-hoc group to a standing committee of the section. This was taken under advisement by the Executive committee of the section. The ad-hoc Peace issues working group was asked, in the interim, to continue its work. The group had final copies of the proceedings of the 2003 Peace Conference for sale at this meeting.

There was an update by Henry Freeman on the Capital Campaign that is now underway.

The keynote speech was given by Loida F. Fernández, executive secretary of the Committee of Latin American Friends (COAL). It was a moving testimony to the work that Friends are doing in Latin and South America, There was great enthusiasm when it was announced that the 2006 Annual Meeting will be held in Guatemala—the first time outside the continental U.S.

There were workshops on our Quaker Peace Witness, a healthy approach to the Bible, and Friends' work in Latin America, There were also interest groups led by John Calvi, on his concern on torture, and Son Ha Din from the QUNO in NY.

It was a full, rich, rewarding four days, reminding us that SOA and the Society of Friends have many tasks ahead of us. —*George Rubin, Representative to FWCC*

## **Spiritual Gifts in NYYM**

A wealth of different gifts are necessary to a monthly meeting or worship group if it is to grow and thrive. Gifts in hospitality, pastoral care, stewardship of money, education of children, maintenance of buildings, clerking, recording clerking, discernment, vocal

ministry, holding the center of the meeting in a deeply grounded place, dealing with conflict, nurturing the meeting community, recognizing gifts, and more, are necessary if a worshiping community is to sustain itself. All are crucial.

It is very hard for most of us to know our own gifts; we are often too close to them to see them clearly. It is harder yet to see gifts that are just emerging, and have not yet taken on a definite form. For these emerging gifts to find expression, the support, counsel, and witnessing of others is extremely important.

Our gifts in the Spirit are not ours, but are given in trust to us for the benefit of the whole community. Ministry and Counsel Coordinating Committee is sponsoring a series of workshops at Powell House designed to help Friends bring their gifts forward so that they may share them with our community. Whether you are feeling only the faintest tug of something ill-defined, or have a pretty good sense of the service you are being drawn into, these workshops should be helpful in supporting you in moving more fully into your gifts.

The first workshop will be devoted to empowering Friends and helping them in their discernment of how the Divine is working in them, and whether that is pulling them toward some form of service. Future workshops in the series will be devoted to more specific gifts.

Here is a planned schedule of six workshops, to begin in January 2006 and continue through March 2007.

### **Drawing out Gifts**

- 1. Becoming the Gift God Made You to Be**—Christopher Sammond, facilitator, January 27–29, 2006
- 2. Serving As Elder: Grounding the Life of the Meeting**—Elaine Emily, facilitator, March 24–26, 2006
- 3. How Can I Keep from Speaking? Discernment in Spirit-Led Vocal Ministry**—facilitator to be announced, May 12–14, 2006
- 4. Practicing the Ministry of Presence**—facilitator to be announced, September 15–17, 2006
- 5. Traveling in the Ministry**—facilitator to be announced, January 26–28, 2007
- 6. Supporting Our Gifts**—facilitator to be announced, March 16–18, 2007

—*Christopher Sammond, general secretary*

### **Powell House Seeks Childcare Providers**

Childcare providers are needed during adult and family weekends at Powell House. Anyone interested in providing childcare and/or children's programs for these occasional weekends please contact Ann Davidson at [ann@powellhouse.org](mailto:ann@powellhouse.org) or call 518-794-8811. It's a great way to share in the Powell House adventure! This is a paid position.

### **Powell House Youth Program Reunion 2006**

Start planning now: Alums of the PoHo Youth Program and Junior Yearly Meeting are invited to the Powell House Youth Reunion, Thursday, July 13–Sunday, July 16, 2006, celebrating four decades of Quaking in the Anna Curtis Center.

Bring yourselves and bring your families (back) to Powell House to see Bill Staines in concert; the sculpture dedication ceremony; your favorite past and present Youth Program staff; hundreds & hundreds of PoHo alums; the biggest ultimate game ever; cabaret on a whole new level; all our favorite traditions, games, music, massages, and other events & activities to be announced.

All proceeds go to the Powell House Youth Program. Keep the Youth Program strong for future generations!

Registration encouraged for both full and partial attendance. For further information, or to be placed on the e-mail list, contact [pohoreunion@yahoo.com](mailto:pohoreunion@yahoo.com) or Powell House, 524 Pitt Hall Rd., Old Chatham NY 12136; 518-794-8811. —*Elfriede Eliza-Maria Brennan & Megan Elizabeth Myers-Hayes*