

These are the responses to queries sent to ARCH Visitors asking about their work in the last half of 2013

1. I HAVE WORKED WITH THREE PEOPLE INTENSIVELY THIS YEAR; WITH ONE, I HELPED SET UP AND COORDINATE A CARE TEAM PRIOR TO AND DURING A SIX-WEEK PERIOD IN WHICH SHE RECEIVED CHEMOTHERAPY AND RADIATION THERAPY. THIS INVOLVED TWO VISITS TO SET UP THE TEAM AND ONCE A MONTH VISITS TO WORSHIP WHILE SHE WAS UNABLE TO GET TO MEETING AND SEVERAL HOSPITAL VISITS PRIOR TO BEGINNING THERAPIES. IN TOTAL, I ESTIMATE 10 PHONE CALLS AND 10 VISITS.

FOR THE SECOND PERSON, I WAS INVOLVED IN WEEKLY PHONE CALLS DURING THE FIRST PART OF THE YEAR, THEN A MEETING WITH THIS PERSON AND HIS DOCTOR TO PLAN FOR FUTURE EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN HIS INDEPENDENCE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR WEEKLY PHONE CALLS FROM ME. SO MY ESTIMATE IS 12 PHONE CALLS AND TWO VISITS. I ACCOMPANIED HIM TO A VISIT TO AN ELDER CARE LAWYER AS WELL, TOOK NOTES TO JOG HIS MEMORY, AND HELPED WITH FOLLOW-UP.

THE THIRD PERSON IS SOMEONE ON DISABILITY WHO NEEDS HELP GETTING TO AND FROM MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS. I HAVE BEEN COORDINATING A TEAM OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE OFFERED TO HELP WITH THIS MINISTRY. I ESTIMATE THAT I HAVE HAD ONE VISIT TO SET UP THE CARE TEAM, A COUPLE OF TIMES ACCOMPANYING HIM TO APPOINTMENTS, AND ABOUT 10 PHONE CALLS.

2. WE HOLD MONTHLY MEETINGS OF THE PASTORAL CARE SUBCOMMITTEE OF M & C, WHICH CONSISTS OF PEOPLE TRAINED AS ARCH VISITORS. WE HOLD MONTHLY MEETINGS FOR CAREGIVERS. WE HELD A SMALL WORKSHOP ON VIGILING.

3. I HAVE LEARNED NOT TO FEAR DEATH. I HAVE LEARNED THAT AGING PEOPLE HAVE MUCH TO OFFER. FOR THE HISTORY COMMITTEE, I HAVE INTERVIEWED AND TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS OF A COUPLE OF OCTOGENERIANS IN OUR MEETING. WE ARE NOW STARTING TO INTERVIEW PEOPLE IN THEIR 70'S AND HOPE TO GET ONTO A ONCE A MONTH SCHEDULE FOR INTERVIEWS. WE HAVE PUBLISHED THE FIRST FIVE INTERVIEWS AND MADE THE BOOKLET AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE MEETING.

4. MY RELATIONSHIP TO THE QUAKER COMMUNITY HAS BEEN STRONG FOR 40+ YEARS. I FEEL LED TO WORK WITH PASTORAL CARE ISSUES AND TO PROVIDE AS MUCH SUPPORT AS POSSIBLE TO THE OLDER PEOPLE IN OUR MEETING. ARCH HAS STRENGTHENED THAT LEADING AND PROVIDED SUPPORT IN IDENTIFYING RESOURCES AND ENCOURAGING NEW PROJECTS

Nancy Black

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10 consultations, plus I've spent some time on the phone with two friends one was recovering from a fall and broken leg the other was recovering from foot surgery. I continue to maintain contact with Louise who is now driving locally and is doing very well. I have learned the high cost of health care.

Kate Lawson

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Three of us from Manasquan Meeting took the Visitor training in October in Ocean Grove.

No visiting yet, but the word is out in writing and verbally. In addition, we had a lunch on 12/12 for Senior members and anyone else interested. There were 8 of us; we talked about the wide range of services available in our area, our health concerns, ideas for topics for discussion, and we laughed! The group decided it wanted another meeting in January, and that is scheduled for January 23. I spoke with Barbara before the meeting, and she gave me some great ideas for getting the conversation going for which I thank her

As a result of the meeting, I became aware of the high level of concern we all have about having the care and companionship we will need as we age and are unable to do all the things we have taken for granted most of our lives. Also as a result of our lunch meeting, I felt more a part of my meeting and closer to other members. I hope this process will grow. Thank you all for presenting the opportunity.

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I met with a member who is planning going onto her social security income, plus a variety of family matters. I think my meeting now thinks of me as the "ARCH person" even though several other Syracuse Quakers took the training in Syracuse.

Ed Stabler

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Having completed my studies in Art, and combined with my previous experiences, I believe I am now prepared to put together and offer art and spiritually based workshops for Care-givers around themes of self-care. At any time that you, as ARCH coordinators, wish to explore this, I am happy to engage.

In 2013 I was able to acquire some gifts of materials to add to our ARCH library, but the physical collection still does not get much use. The online listing does seem to have more going on, with several hundred folks finding our list on WorldCat.org.

My experience at Silver Bay was fantastic. As my disabled spouse was with me, we got to experience how Quakers are toward folks who might need ARCH services, first-hand, and we both left feeling very cared for.

Rebekka Tanner

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I have learned that there is a program for volunteer companions run by Henry St Settlement in Manhattan that extends throughout 5 boroughs. It co-ordinates with agencies in each borough. The head of it would like to come to our Pastoral Care Committee to describe their training. They are always

looking for more. More information is on the website for Henry St Settlement. This is a great relief, because there is a structure and a support system already in place.

And because of my 92 year old mother's increasing disorientation, partly due to her abrupt, but voluntary move from a 4 bedroom house to a 1 bedroom apartment in independent living, and possibly due to dementia, I am becoming more aware of aging side effects.

Julie M. Finch

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I believe almost everything I had to say was included in the article in the current Spark. I can only add that I have had several conversations with 4 members of the Meeting pertaining to matters of care.

Linda Chidsey

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Our dealing with issues of aging has deepened my reflections on aspects of daily living which I had previously ignored. For example the way Debbie Dickinson told a person in our meeting to improve his gait by concentrating on making a longer stride so that he won't shuffle his feet and how he responded to her advice.

One afternoon two members from our meeting and myself sat in my house filling out the Five Wishes together with my husband and my thirty-one year old daughter. It was a lengthy process where we pondered about issues we had not considered before. Having a younger person questioning issues of aging brought a new angle to our conversation.

Personally I have thought about the possibilities that lie ahead for all of us, how we will support one another as we become more fragile and need to rely on others and accept the generosity of our family, friends and strangers.

Lucia Vieira

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This past year I spent a lot of time and attention on my friend and fellow Morningsider, S. D. He's been in 3 nursing homes, back & forth to the hospital and is now in Calvary Hospice. I've learned a fair amount about how to use www.medicare.gov to evaluate nursing homes. Hint: adequate staffing is key. I've also learned more about when DNR is and is not appropriate. Having a small, faithful group of friends who visit makes it much easier for all of us and for Stanley. We hope tomorrow that the four of us will go together and worship or just visit Stanley after business meeting.

Sally Campbell

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While I have been involved in only extremely small ways, I am delighted with how our meeting is growing in this concern/witness for the aging. I am sure we have miles to go, but we are begun, and largely thanks to you all. We are very grateful for your inspiration and help.

My own thinking on aging has certainly grown tremendously with the workshop we attended and its fruit thus far.

Ty Griese

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Sad to say, I don't have a lot to report, having spent so much of last year learning how to accept help. ;-))

-sat with T E and his wife concerning long term health care insurance

-helped M N with his advance directives

-supported B B on various problems of daily living while aging in the community

-visited E R while she was in ICU

-tried to support P G

It is clear to me that caregivers might benefit from more one on one support, ie, taking to lunch, movies --- whatever works as a brief respite---Also, I might like to see more communication around the topics of vigiling.

(And believe me, I have a new appreciation for the work we do!)

Linda Clarke

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I stay in touch by cards/letters, phone calls and visits with my 3 widowed aunts and several retired friends living independently or in care facilities. I learned from a friend being sick, but needing to work for income, and other friends who 'plan' on working forever because they can't afford to retire..

John Tweedle