SAYF Report to SAYMA
June, 2011

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) hosted 7 retreats during the past year. Six have been completed and the 7th occurs in June at our SAYMA gathering. For the 6 completed retreats, we have averaged 38 Young Friends (YF) per retreat with 75 different teens coming to at least one retreat during the past year. Some Young Friends attended all 6 retreats and others attended one. Details of each retreat are summarized below. All six retreats this year were hosted at Meetinghouses….and we are deeply appreciative to Friends for allowing us to use their facilities.

We also held two joint Nurturing and Steering Committee retreats, again using Meetinghouses, and those too are detailed below.

SAYF Retreats:

1. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat September 10-12, 2010
Theme: Community Building
# of YFs 44
# of full-time FAPs* 10
(*Friendly Adult Presence)
Activities included: a white water rafting trip, making pet rocks, Worship Sharing

2. Atlanta Meetinghouse Retreat October 15-17, 2010
Theme: Building a Stronger Foundation with the Wider Community
# of YFs 32
# of full-time FAPs : 9
Activities included: Worship Dialogue with guests from the Buddhist Community; Rock Wall climbing activity; and workshop choices including yoga, meditation, arts & crafts and Acting Improv.

3. Chattanooga Meetinghouse Retreat November 5-7, 2010
Theme: Building Community through Creativity
# of YFs 23
# of full-time FAPs: 7
Activities included: service projects making rain barrels, and dog biscuits for the Animal Shelter, a skits activity and workshop choices of yoga or drumming.

4. Atlanta Meetinghouse Retreat January 14-16, 2011
Theme: Double rainbows
# of YFs 38
# of FAPs: 7
Activities included: Service project with local HOSEA group setting up chairs and table for a dinner to serve 3000 homeless people on MLK day; workshop choices on monkey chanting, drumming or racism.

5. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat March 25-27, 2011

Theme: Inclusivity

# of YFs: 51

# of full time FAPs: 8

Activities included: workshop with local Jovenes group discussing realities facing undocumented persons in the US; attended Catholic mass at the Basilica; toured Asheville.

6. W. Knoxville Meetinghouse Retreat April 15-17, 2011

Theme: Celebrating Our Stories

# of YFs: 37

# of full time FAPs: 6 1/2 (1 FAP there till midday Saturday).

Activities included: 4 hour workshop with storyteller; collage making; meeting for healing with attention to telling Ceal Wutka stories; small graduation ceremony; community discussion about the purpose and importance of SAYF guidelines and values.

Nurturing/Steering/Oversight Committees Retreats

1. Swannanoa Meetinghouse.
August 20-22, 2010

# of Nurturing Committee Members 12

# of Steering Committee Members 6

We reviewed what went well with SAYF at Yearly Meeting in June and noted changes that we wished to make for the upcoming year. We reviewed the annual letter that we send to parents and made many changes to it. We updated the first aid kit. We spent considerable discerning how to incorporate more service projects into our retreats.

2. Knoxville, TN
W. Knoxville Meetinghouse
February 25-27, 2011

# of Nurturing Committee Members 17

# of Steering Committee Members 4 and 1 guest

We developed our calendar of retreats for the 2011-2012 year. We looked at incidents that occurred during previous retreats trying to discern what we can learn from those incidents and what changes (if any) needed to be made. We discussed confusions that arise about who can attend SAYF and agreed to have just a grade requirement and eliminate the age requirement. Anyone who is in 7th grade or higher (or a rising 7th grader at YM) can come to SAYF.

---submitted by Therese Hildebrand
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