

Southern Appalachian Friend

the Quarterly Newsletter of

SAYMA
Southern Appalachian
Yearly Meeting & Association

Spring 2009

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Deadline for Winter 2010 issue of SAF is January 4.

All Friendly reports, concerns, minutes,
announcements, humor, musings &
poems are welcome.

Send submissions to:
Kathleen Mavournin
SAFeditor@sayma.org

Please put your name and email address
or phone number on all submissions.

SAYMA Calendar 2010

March 6, 2010
Spring Representative Meeting
Nashville, TN

June 10-13, 2010
Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions
Warren Wilson College
Swanannoa, NC

September, 2010
Fall Representative Meeting
Date and place TBA

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Words from the SAYMA Clerk- Reaching In and Reaching Out

Dennis Gregg, Crossville Monthly Meeting

Within North American unprogrammed Quaker circles, there has been a conversation building for years about the shrinking size of our Meetings. SAYMA has benefitted from the influx of population to the South, which has brought both those with Quaker affiliations from other regions, but also those seeking a spiritual home different from that they were raised in. This has resulted in the continuing establishment of new Meetings and Worship groups and has masked to some extent the problems that other unprogrammed meetings have faced – how do we attract people and bring them into our faith community. It goes beyond simply letting folks know we exist, though that's an important step. It's the next and more important step.

At Yearly Meeting this year, there were presentations about Quaker Quest, an FGC affiliated process that begins with the Monthly Meeting looking in for up to a year before reaching out. Some Meetings within SAYMA are following this formal program but all of SAYMA can benefit from asking ourselves the fundamental question: "How does attending Meeting and being part of this faith community help us live in Spirit and Truth?" Try answering this right now. If you don't have a strong affirmative answer to this, perhaps this is a question your Meeting needs to look at together. If Quakerism is working for you, why are you not sharing your own Good News with others?

After all, we are the Religious Society of Friends. We do share many social concerns, we do have some "peculiar" habits and procedures. We do have a history as a church. We do have many shared "practices." But it is

our fundamentalism that defines us, our insistence that Truth is known “experimentally,” that we don’t “believe” in God, but experience God’s presence, some of us more frequently than others, but with the goal of “walking in the Light” at all times.

I bring this to you now for two reasons. First, the merchants of fear are working overtime right now in the world and in our region. It is hard not to get caught up in it, if only to fear those who are expressing their fears through anger. The only real antidote to fear is the Spirit. “Fear not, for I am with you,” is not just a quote, it is an experience with the Spirit. We can not fight fear but God can. Second, there is a new committee that has been formed to look at outreach within SAYMA. I hope they will be able to help us all learn how to better communicate the blessing that being a member of the Religious Society of Friends can be.

A Call to Reflection and Action from ECN

Roy Taylor, Canton Worship Group

During the SAYMA Yearly Meeting in 2001, we passed the minute below. I am raising it up as an issue that we as an organization have not been consciously attentive to. More than eight years have passed and environmental problems are worse. We are now clearly past 350 parts per million CO2 in the atmosphere -- the amount judged to be sustainable. We are past the point where just being conscious about recycling and changing some lightbulbs will be enough; these still are good things to do and in doing so we witness to our beliefs.

We need to find ways in our lives to use less energy, water and other resources (conservation). We need to get more out of those that we do use (efficiency). We need to support each other in this endeavor, both in the collective activities of our Meetings and in our personal lives (walk the walk). We need to let our leaders know that this is important and we expect them to make the hard decisions and work together at global levels to reduce activities that are putting Earth at risk (public witness, i.e., a statement for the Copenhagen conference).

This is also a Peace and Social Concerns issue. The two-degree rise in average global temperature expected in the next two-three decades will displace millions of people in coastal areas. The costs will be immense in dollars, in disruption of lives, in relocation, and in the threat to peace that disruption will cause. World leaders have already shifted the focus of their conversation from prevention to adaptation because it is too late to stop some of these effects of climate change.

So the question that we must ask ourselves, as individuals, as Meetings, as an Association of Meetings, is what are we willing to do? Friends, what canst thou say?

Please be in touch with us, Ecological Concerns Network, to keep us informed of your progress in discussions and the actions that you are taking with regard to this issue.

SAYMA Minute Regarding Global Climate Change

SAYMA Friends recognize that unprecedented rate of change in our global climate is causing rising global temperature, diminishing polar ice, changing local weather patterns, and increasing frequency of severe storms. We also recognize that human activity, largely the combustion of fossil fuels, is a major cause of these changes.

Further, this global climate change is destabilizing many of our planet's ecosystems, reducing their production of foods, medicines, and other products for humans, and accelerating species extinction.

Human refugees from droughts, floods, and rising sea levels, and the human suffering caused by crop failures and the spread of infectious diseases from warmer climates are stressing societies and governments, setting the stage for violence, oppression, and conflict. Our peace testimony leads us to find ways to remove these potential causes of war.

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Friends' concerns for simplicity, right sharing of resources, and equality, and our recognition that the effects of global warming desecrate God's creation, lead us to issue an urgent call for Friends to make substantive changes in their lifestyles including:

- reducing use of fossil fuels--for transportation; home heating, air-conditioning, and lighting; and recreation--through conservation, efficiency, and use of alternative energy sources (human, solar, and wind power).
- reducing industrial combustion of fossil fuels through informed choices of products and services.
- working for public policy that:
 - ✓ supports international agreements to reduce heat-trapping gases
 - ✓ discourages use of carbon-based fuels and encourages use of renewable sources of energy
 - ✓ develops, supports, and promotes both local and long distance public transportation systems.

We urge Friends Meetings and individuals to act on these urgent concerns. We call on Monthly Meetings & Worship Groups to report on such actions at the next Yearly Meeting. We ask Friends to consider how to develop social supports that enable us to move into spiritually informed daily efforts to change our lives and act on our concerns.

Approved by Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, Yearly Meeting 2001, Minute 45

Birmingham Minute on Universal Health Care

Approved September 6, 2009

Birmingham Friends of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker), in keeping with our testimony of Equality and recognizing that of God in each person, see all persons as brothers and sisters, equal and infinitely valuable.

Coming from a Christian heritage we recall the words of Jesus in Matthew 25, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

We therefore find the current state of access to health care in the United States to be most disturbing in its approach toward health care as a commodity rather than a basic human need and universal human right. This approach is not only inhumane, but also inefficient and costly. Millions are now left with little or no access to care except for intermittent charity and emergency care, with almost no preventive care at all. Even those insured persons face the anxiety and fear of financial ruin in the face of a catastrophic illness, as their policies are typically more limited than they realized when they first subscribed. The numerous private insurers with their own set of forms and administrative rules add exponentially to the costs of health care in this country, as not only must the insurers' own administrative costs be supported, but also those of the hospitals, clinics and medical offices that must correctly adhere to each patient's insurance protocol for payment.

Real health care reform must first and last focus on the need for affordable, quality health care for all, with no exceptions. It is the welfare of the human beings who make up this country that must be the primary motivation in any of the changes under consideration. People must also be freed of the fear of losing coverage if they change jobs (or lose a job) or move to another location. Some of the most egregious and harmful "cost-saving" practices of the private health insurers, such as that of refusing to cover anyone with a "preexisting condition" or dropping coverage when a subscriber becomes ill, must be prohibited. Finally, the gross inefficiencies and waste of the current system must be addressed with, again, the needs of the consumer first and foremost in the deliberations.

Birmingham Friends Meeting encourages the political leaders of this country to find consensus in the midst of this emotionally charged debate to find that better way to take care of our brothers and sisters in a humane, reasonable and informed manner. We hold these leaders in the Light as they seek a just solution to our current health care crisis.

In Search of a Host Meeting

Tim Lamm and Sallie Prugh, SAYMA Reps to FWCC

The Southeastern Region of Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas (FWCC-SOA) tries to have a gathering each year. It is SAYMA's turn to host the gathering in the fall of 2010.

Regional gatherings are not business sessions. Rather, they are more like a retreat or small conference with a program that is of interest to Friends from various traditions. A regional planning committee will plan the program for the gathering and invite speakers. However, we need a monthly meeting to host the gathering.

The gathering will be open to all Friends. FWCC representatives from Baltimore Yearly Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (FUM), North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative, SAYMA, Jamaica Yearly Meeting and Southeast Yearly Meeting will likely attend as well as perhaps a representative from the national office. Local Friends and other SAYMA Friends are also invited to attend. Getting to know Quakers from other yearly meeting and other Friends traditions can be an enriching experience for you and your meeting.

Responsibilities for Monthly Meetings who would host a regional FWCC Gathering:

1. Provide hospitality for approximately 30 guests including breakfast and a potluck meal. People would arrive Friday evening or early Saturday morning.
2. Provide a meeting space for Friday evening, Saturday morning and Saturday evening.
3. Suggest sites of interest in the surrounding areas for field trips for Saturday afternoon.
4. Invite members of their monthly meeting to attend.

We ask that you bring this to your monthly meeting to see if you feel led to host this gathering. If you are interested, please let Tim Lamm or Sallie Prugh know by the middle of January, 2010.

At the representative meeting on September 12, it was approved that SAYMA would help support the attendance of Jamaica Yearly Meeting by donating \$200.00. North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative has agreed to hold donations for this purpose. We encourage individuals and month meeting to also consider making a donation. Money can be sent to:

Dora Owens, Treasurer, NC Yearly Meeting Conservative
159 Luby Lane, Pittsboro, NC 37312
919-542-4688, ddowens@mindspring.com

Blessings and Joy, Quakers and Entrepreneurship: Discerning and Shaping our Work

Free Polazzo, Atlanta Monthly Meeting freepolazzo@comcast.net

The business I created out of necessity in 1982 was called Friendly Systems because I wanted a less patriarchal workplace than I could find. Isn't that the 'mother of invention?' Creating a company to have a job so you and your children can eat is surely the best endeavor anyone could pursue. Fear of not eating or having a place to sleep is a great motivator. Did you know that stress helps the 'creative process?' "... research on what is known as *Post-Traumatic Growth* has found that some people become more resilient when faced with adversity," says Shawn Achor of Harvard. "Creativity surges as they adapt to new situations," (www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/business/smallbusiness/23venture.htm). Just don't wait too long to get creative.

So, there I was, out of work after the company I sold business software for closed their Southeast Office. I looked and looked and couldn't find a job. Everyone I interviewed told me that I was 'overqualified'. And if you looked at my resume you would see that they were right. Besides, I had begun attending the Atlanta Friends

Meeting and was asking questions of prospective employers like “Do you sell to companies that make war materials?” or “How do you treat racial minorities and homosexuals in your company?” Hmm.... what to do?

I realized that the job I wanted in an organization where I would feel good working did not yet exist and that it would be rude of me to expect an employer to provide what I needed. After all, hadn't they worked long and hard to create their own dream jobs for themselves and those they hired? After attending a men's group at the Atlanta Meetinghouse and learning from other businessmen that it isn't as hard or scary as it looks, I chose to start my own business and follow my leadings in the world of work as well as in the world of Spirit. I learned to see money as sort of a 'clearness committee' that helped me know whether the wider community wants what I'm offering or whether I'm just offering up my ego. I learned to live on what I earn. The testimonies of Simplicity, Community, Peace, and Equality go a long way in the business world. Integrity goes without saying, right? So I got to “SPICE” up my life at work and the rest is his/story.

Some questions were raised in a forum on *Business and the Spirit* at Atlanta Meeting in August for which I would like to offer some resources.

1. The issue of Fear came up; I recommend *The Gift of Fear* by Gavin De Becker; he understands that fear is not something to be ignored, but something that we know “experientially.” He learned about fear growing up in an abusive family and now makes a living teaching police officers how to handle fear. He emphasizes learning to trust our own feelings about what we are afraid of and to distinguish “real” fear from that which others tell us is scary. Gavin says we need to get out of our heads and listen to what our guts are saying.

2. The issue of Mistakes came up: I recommend *Earn from Your Mistakes* by Gerard Nierenberg. Hey, the best baseball batters only get a hit about 4 out of 10 times. If you don't swing, you don't ever get a hit and rarely score a run. Get a good coach and attend a Landmark Education Forum so you can learn the stuff you 'don't know that you don't know' (www.landmarkeducation.com). Many Atlanta Friends, including me, have attended these weekend workshops and found them helpful to be able to live in the present instead of the past (where the mistakes live.)

3. The issue of Sales came up: I recommend *The Sandler Rules* adapted by David Mattson (www.sandler.com). Everyone actually 'sells' and especially Quakers. We don't call it that because the word has been stigmatized. We use the words “advancement” or “development” and we say “way opens” (or closes). Sandler believes that a good salesperson is trying to help a prospect identify the source of their business pain. That is not easy to do as fear of change, even to lessen pain, is a very powerful force. Friends could learn to see sales as an invitation to speak Truth to the Powerful about their pains. Once I help someone allay their pain, they are more likely to help me with mine. As my dad often said: “One hand washes the other.” Usually that means they write a check for my services and products. Money is one way people say “thank you” in business communities. The more money you earn the more thanks people have given you. Sometimes it also means that they will listen to my ideas on how to make their businesses more green or less sexist or less racist. Tricky to do but worthy goals that I believe are easier to accomplish once I am inside an organization as a trusted advisor than if I am outside.

4. The issue of Quaker Values and Business came up: I recommend *Ethical Business Relationships* by Lee B. Thomas, Jr. (founding member of Louisville, KY Friends Meeting and President and CEO of Vermont American Corp for 22 years.) You may have seen his monthly ad in Friends Journal. Just by showing up in the workplace with our Friends' values, we change the way business is done. Many say that “business is a form of warfare.” Well, I don't agree and I can always help to find a “third way” when a problem arises so that we don't have a win/lose outcome, but a win/win one.

5. The issue of knowing what to do came up: I quote from *The Stirring of the Soul in the Workplace* by Alan Briskin: on pg. 268 he says the key question to ask is: “Where do I start to heal the wounds that are around

me and that are in me?” Maybe focusing on that question comes from my Jewish upbringing more than my adopted Quaker faith. Jews are taught at an early age to practice “Tikkun Olam,” that we are here to “Repair the World” which is pretty obviously broken. Most Jews don’t believe that G-D finished making the world in six days. Lots of work is left for us to do. Friends are much better than most at noticing what is broken. Perhaps Quakers are here to help with the job of “Repairing the World’s Pain.”

There is so much pain in the world. I find that many organizations are aware that they need help but don’t know what to do or who to trust to alleviate their pain. They are desperate to hear from people with new ideas on how to bring peace with justice to their business lives. Continuing Revelation is one of our competitive advantages, so use that to the fullest. Use processes we know work in our meetings, like active listening or even clearness committees, to discern truth and clarify communication that has gone awry.

My dad gave me great advice that came from his father. I’m relearning it at the age of 65 as I find myself starting a new business because the old one took a U-turn after 27 years and turned into ‘Unfriendly Systems.’ “Make sure you pick people to fish with who won’t shoot a hole in your boat.” It’s never too late to learn and earn from what you already know inside you. The world needs more Quaker businesspeople. Enjoy the ride.

News of the Meetings

Compiled from monthly meeting minutes by Errol Hess

Atlanta: Friends are studying Marcus Borg’s book on parallel sayings of Jesus and the Buddha. A workshop on whites being allies to people of color on working against racism is being presented in September by Committee on Undoing Racism in Atlanta Friends Meeting. Atlanta Meeting since 1991 has supported projects in Suchitoto Province of El Salvador, including scholarships, a freshwater talapia project and a micro-enterprise program.

Brevard: In August, Brevard Friendly Eights watched *The World of Apu*, the first film of a trilogy, *Pather Panchali*, directed by Satyajit Ray. Filmed in the 1950s, it depicts the childhood of a young boy in rural Bengal in the 1920s. Also in August, the Quaker Bakers brought homemade treats to share after rise of meeting one First Day. We indulged in good talk, good food, and amiable company.

Celo: The meeting gives a scholarship to each meeting child who is a day student at Arthur Morgan School. Beginning in November "simplicity support groups" will be formed. In October a potluck is planned in honor of visitor Donna McDaniel, co-author of the book, *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship*.

Columbia: Columbia Meeting collect food each week for the Harvest Hope food bank. The meeting has taken out an insurance policy to cover all meeting activities. Meeting members helped organize the annual Hiroshima vigil. The meeting assisted with the International Day of Peace at Harmony School.

Charleston: Charleston Friends have worship sharing instead of meeting for worship on fifth Sundays. Friends will sing on Sunday, October 18. Statewide gathering was September 13. The meeting’s book club is reading *The Year of Magical Thinking*.

Memphis: Friends have set up a book exchange in the pamphlet room. The meeting collects used batteries and periodically takes them to a hazardous waste disposal facility.

West Knoxville: Friends had a workshop about committees during pot-luck lunch on September 20 to describe the way much of the work of the meeting is done by our committees and share ideas about how to have great committees this year. Special desserts were provided as enticement to stay for the workshop.

SAYMA MEETINGS AND WORSHIP GROUPS

Asheville Friends Meeting	North Carolina	(828) 258-0974
Athens Friends Meeting	Georgia	(706) 353-2856
Atlanta Friends Meeting	Georgia	(404) 377-2474
Berea Friends Meeting	Kentucky	(859) 985-8950
Birmingham Friends Meeting	Alabama	(205) 592-0570
Boone Friends Meeting	North Carolina	(828) 264-5812
Brevard Friends Meeting	North Carolina	(828) 698-2862
Canton Worship Group	Georgia	(770) 720-4669
Celo Monthly Meeting	Burnsville NC	(828) 675-4456
Charleston Friends Meeting	West Virginia	(304) 756-3033
Chattanooga Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(423) 629-2580
Clemson Worship Group	South Carolina	(864) 654-2588
Columbia Friends Meeting	South Carolina	(803) 252-2221
Cookeville Monthly Meeting	Tennessee	(931) 260-1206
Crossville Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(931) 742-0030
Foxfire Friends Meeting of Holston Valley	Johnson City TN	(423) 202-8661
Greenville Friends Meeting	South Carolina	(864) 246-6852
Huntsville Area Friends Meeting	Alabama	(256) 837-6327
Memphis Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(901) 324-3500
Murfreesboro Worship Group	Tennessee	(615) 895-0953
Nashville Friends Meeting	Tennessee	(615) 329-2640
Oxford Quaker Meeting	Mississippi	(662) 234-1602
Royal Worship Group	Blountsville AL	(205) 429-3088
Sevier County Worship Group	Sevierville TN	(865) 429-1807
Sewanee Worship Group	Tennessee	(931) 598-5031
Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting	Black Mountain NC	(828) 669-0832
West Knoxville Friends Meeting	Knoxville TN	(865) 694-0036

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