

Appendix F: Epistles

SAYMA Yearly Meeting Epistle

SAYF—Southern Appalachian Young Friends Epistle

YAF—Young Adult Friends Epistle

Junior Yearly Meeting (*included in minutes*)

SAYMA Epistle

To Friends Far and Wide:

The 2007 Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association began at noon on Thursday, June 7 and ran through Sunday, June 10.

Once again we enjoyed the hospitality and beautiful surroundings of Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina, the state whose first organized religion was the Religious Society of Friends.

Two Hundred and Forty-Six members and attenders in its Monthly Meetings, Preparatory Meetings, and worship groups attended this year's meeting, including 45 Young Friends (ages 12-18), and 22 Junior Friends (ages 0-12), and 15 Young Adult Friends (ages 18-35), each with their own program as well as opportunities to share other yearly meeting activities and opportunities to work with youth in other groups. Twenty-five SAYMA meetings and worship groups were present, and there were six representatives from meetings beyond our borders.

Three evening plenaries, open to all ages, developed our theme of "Nourished by Our Roots, Bursting Forth with Fruits." Peterson Toscano, an openly gay, Christ-centered Friend from New England Yearly Meeting, presented his message with dramatic humor on the first night. On Friday night, Jan Hoffman from New England Yearly Meeting used personal stories of growth and sharing to give her message. The third plenary was actually a tribute to Hibbard Thatcher, a Celebration Dance, reviving a past practice. This replaced a talent show presentation of the "fruits" of attenders, which was sorely missed.

Opportunities were offered each day for worship sharing on the queries, "What are the roots of your Quakerism (both Quaker and non-Quaker)?" and, "How is your Quakerism expressed in your life?" The Young Adult Friends redubbed the message of the queries, "Fruit Loops" as fruits and roots continually feed each other. Indeed, by the end of the Celebration dance, led by Friend David McGinnis, we were all pretty loopy!

In Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, a new edition of our Faith and Practice continued to be reviewed after a year of seasoning in the monthly meetings. A new section on the testimony of Integrity was added. Concerns were raised around the place of monthly meetings regarding the legal aspects of marriage. The section on planning a marriage was held over for more seasoning. Work was also done on Electronic Communications, and that Ad Hoc committee was laid down.

To inspire deeper consideration of our theme, workshops open to all were offered in everything from Old English dancing to fundraising to how to eliminate torture to nurturing individual ministry. By stretching the length and reducing the number of workshops, we achieved a more relaxed atmosphere.

Young Friends again enjoyed each other's fellowship and developed their leadership gifts in Quaker practice. Young Adult Friends helped run Meeting for Business and are included on committees. A desire was expressed for more connections among young Friends of all ages. Six high school seniors were "carried off" by the Young Adult Friends to initiate them into the next age group.

This year's Yearly Meeting again reflected growth in the Spirit. Discussions seemed to grow deeper organically, and people took advantage of the extra time to have spontaneous, serious discussions with serious disagreements on serious subjects, showing a willingness to be vulnerable and open to the Spirit in themselves and others.

SAYF Epistle

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) had another successful year. We hosted 7 retreats during the past year. We have averaged 37 Young Friends (YF) per retreat with 77 different teens coming to at least one retreat during the past year. This, once again, is an increase from the previous year. Some Young Friends attended all retreats and others attended one. All retreats this year were held at Meetinghouses.

In addition to our retreats we hosted two joint Nurturing and Steering Committee retreats.

SAYF Retreats:

1. Chapel Hill, NC Retreat September 29-October 1, 2006
Theme: Community Building
31 Yfs (Young Friends)
6 FAPs (Friendly Adult Presences)
Activities included: yoga, trust experiences, a workshop on communicating boundaries, and a 3-legged scavenger hunt.
2. West Knoxville, TN Retreat October 20-22, 2006
Theme: Creativity, Spirit and Self-Expression
32 YFs
9 FAPs
Activities included creative self-expression through drawing, collage, music and haiku.
3. Asheville, NC Retreat November 17-19, 2006
Theme: Caring for Self, Others and the Environment
43 YFs
11 FAPs
Activities included a massage workshop, a listening circles activity, a service project doing ground maintenance at the Meetinghouse and a contra dance in the evening.
4. Atlanta, GA Retreat January 12-14, 2007
Theme: Fun, with hippies, dinosaurs, fairy Princesses and Spirituality
45 YFs
12 FAPs

- Activities included: a Meeting for Laughter/Healing, a movie and discussion and a dance.
5. West Knoxville, TN Retreat March 9-11, 2007
 Theme: Service Project
 36 YFs
 8 FAPs
 Activities included: spending an entire day doing many outdoor projects at Resurrection House, a home for troubled teen in Knoxville.
 6. Nashville, TN Retreat April 27-29, 2007
 Theme: Memories
 35 YFs
 7 FAPs
 Activities included: collage making, and a trip to Centennial Park for games, fun and relaxation.
 7. SAYMA Yearly Meeting
 46 YFs, including 6 seniors

Young Adult Friends Epistle

<p>This year we had: NO Retreats. We had only one lonely retreat.</p> <p>NO Talent. There was no talent show this year.</p> <p>NO Representation, Schedule, or Presence in the Program. We were quite unorganized.</p> <p>NO Unity. Half of us lived in one dorm, half in another.</p> <p>NO Contact. We did not have a complete list of names or email addresses.</p> <p>NO Failure. We led two very well-attended worship sharings with thought-provoking queries.</p> <p>NO Laziness. We served the Yearly Meeting in many roles Including Night Shepherds and FAPs for SAYF, Recording Clerk,</p>	<p>Next year we plan to: KNOW retreats. We have three retreats planned in Atlanta, Maryville, and Asheville</p> <p>KNOW talent. We plan to propose a YAF-led talent Show.</p> <p>KNOW representation, a schedule, and the program. We have four representatives for the next year and will participate in creating the schedule and program.</p> <p>KNOW unity. Next year we will all participate in the Simple Living Option and thus have more time together.</p> <p>KNOW Contact. We are creating an email listserve and will ask Monthly Meetings to give us lists of Y Afs in their Meetings.</p> <p>KNOW Success. We plan to do the same next year.</p> <p>KNOW Service. We hope to continue to increase our service to the Yearly Meeting.</p>
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Naming Committee, workshop
Leaders, microphone skippers,
Assistants to clerk's table,
Cupcake and pico de gallo creators,
SAYF graduate kidnapers, and
Lowering the "Mean" age of the
Yearly Meeting to a "Friendlier Age."

NO Money. Self Explanatory. KNOW Money. We have \$21. Yippee!