SAYF Report to SAYMA
June, 2012

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) planned for 6 retreats during the past year and hosted 5. Our October retreat, planned to be in Atlanta, was cancelled due to lack of attendance. For the 5 completed retreats, we have averaged 34 Young Friends (YF) per retreat with 64 different teens coming to at least one retreat during the past year. Some Young Friends attended all 5 retreats and others attended one. Details of each retreat are summarized below. All 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.

We would like to recognize three special notes of our year:

- First, at our January retreat we participated in a nation wide contest sponsored by AFSC making a video answering the query: "If I Had a Trillion Dollars….". This video was selected as one of the top 20 videos and 3 of our Young Friends went to Washington DC for an AFSC sponsored weekend of lobbying and an awards celebration screening of all the winning videos.
- Secondly, two of our FAPs who met at SAYF were united in matrimony at Nashville Meetinghouse on May 12, 2012. They were married with the love of all of us at SAYF and the presence of several Young Friends, FAPs and SAYF Steering Committee members.
- Thirdly, After 11 years of service, Therese Hildebrand is stepping down as SAYF Administrative Assistant. We are grateful for her hard work, her easy-going nature, and the love she has shown for the SAYF program. We also welcome Jonah McDonald as our new administrative assistant.

SAYF Retreats:

1. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat September 9-11, 2011

Theme: Community Building
# of YFs: 38
# of full-time FAPs* 8
(*Friendly Adult Presence)
Activities included: community building games, an outing to the Hot Springs, a silent walk, worship sharing and singing on the porch.

2. W. Knoxville Meetinghouse Retreat November 18-20, 2011

Theme: Dancing Your Way Through Life
# of YFs: 23
# of full-time FAPs: 6
Activities included: outdoor team building games, and a fish bowl activity: "What stresses you and how do you deal with it?"

3. Atlanta Meetinghouse Retreat January 13-15, 2012

Theme: Little Magic Reindeer Ponies and Hats: a retreat for a kind and generous new beginning

# of YFs: 39

# of FAPs: 8

Activities included: both a workshop and a video production around the statement "If I Had a Trillion Dollars….", a service project with Global Soap Works, a conversation with the Tibetan Science Initiative entitled "The Faith to Doubt" and an Indian Cooking class.

4. Asheville Meetinghouse Retreat March 23-25, 2012

Theme: Express Yo'Self

# of YFs: 40

# of full time FAPs: 8

Activities included: two workshops: (one on Quaker nakedness and the other on poem and song writing) and a concert by Friends Jon Watts and Maggie, a hike through the botanical gardens, and an evening talent show.

5. W. Knoxville Meetinghouse Retreat April 13-15, 2012

Theme: Light, Nature and the Four Elements

# of YFs: 28

# of full time FAPs: 6

Activities included: a field trip to the Berea College fields for an afternoon of games and kite flying, a yoga class, candle making and an evening bon fire.

Nurturing/Steering Committees Retreats

1. Swannanoa Meetinghouse. August 19-21, 2011

# of Nurturing Committee Members: 10

# of Steering Committee Members: 5

We spent considerable time discerning how to incorporate more spirituality into our retreats. We reviewed went well with SAYF at Yearly Meeting and noted changes that we wished to make for the upcoming year. We reviewed the process started last year concerning outreach: both to Young Friends in more isolated meetings and outreach to other Quaker Youth programs. Several ideas were presented which we felt best to season for a few months. We reviewed a new draft 12 page pamphlet developed by one of our Steering Committee members. We updated the first aid kit.

2. W. Knoxville Meetinghouse February 23-25, 2012

# of Nurturing Committee Members: 12

# of Steering Committee Members: 6

We reviewed application packets for SAYF Administrative Assistant position. After a lengthy discussion the Steering Committee found clarity in making a recommendation for Personnel Committee. We looked at how SAYF was doing so far this year and from those discussions we developed a new introduction to presenting the guidelines and a new introduction to the worship journals. It is hoped that this will help set a more worshipful tone for both of these activities. We developed our calendar of retreats for the 2012-2013 year. We considered changes to the graduation held each year at Yearly meeting to address issues that arise and to develop a more worshipful atmosphere.