Among Friends

Summer 2010



Outreach

Published by Illinois Yearly Meeting

Editor's Note

Quaker Laundromat? A place where Quakers wash their clothes? A place where Quakers wash the clothes of non-Quakers? A place where Quakers wash the clothes of other Quakers? Outreach does seem to be a concern in our contemporary branch of Quaker faith. Outreach can take various venues from a web presence to the programs we offer. There is a fine balance between wanting to share a spiritual practice that we find beneficial for ourselves and helping others explore their spiritual journeys. In Quaker communities there is often an interaction between outreach and inreach. Often efforts that seek to share our faith and practice involve a process that results in deepening or enriching our own understandings of our faith and practice.

Is a Quaker Meetinghouse a place where Quakers engage in their own spiritual development? A place where Quakers engage in the the spiritual development of seekers? A place where Quakers engage in the spiritual development of each other? This issue contains articles about various ways in which monthly meetings have been engaged in outreach and includes ways in which these efforts have enriched the live of individuals or life of the meeting.

Wil Brant

Published twice a year, *Among Friends* is a publication of the Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends and provides a forum about activities within the various meetings and worship groups that make up Illinois Yearly Meeting. *Among Friends* also provides pertinent information provided by Quaker organizations and by interested readers. Readers are reminided that signed articles and letters express the view of the writers and not official positions of Illinois Yearly Meeting.

www.ilym.org

Editor:
Wil Brant
300 N. Cavender St.
Hobart, IN 46342
wilbrant☺lavabit.com

Printing and Distribution:
David Finke, Omega Graphics
1106 Maplewood Dr.
Columbia, MO 65203
dfinke☺iland.net

Photos: Laura Pedelty, John Hackman, Roy Treadway, and Cindy Boyd

Graphics: Fariba Murray

Email addresses are written with ☺ rather than @

Submission Information

All submissions should be sent to the editor. Deadline date for next issue is posted on ILYM website.

Informal articles about your meeting or worship group (not State of Society Reports), plus poetry, artwork, and photos are encouraged and received with appreciation.

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Website Workshop

Mariellen Gilpin, Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting

ILYM's Ministry and Advancement Committee sponsored a Web Workshop in Bloomington-Normal on October 24. The purpose of the workshop was to help Friends create 21st Century signposts for their meetings—to help them let potential newcomers know what Friends stand for, and how the meetings can be found.

The workshop presenters were Beth Burbank, Bill Esler, and Peter McMahan, all from Northside Meeting, Chicago. They are very knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and organized, while still being able to flex when peppered with questions. The workshop drew 17 representatives from 11 different meetings. Chicago Monthly Meeting (Western Yearly Meeting) also was invited and sent a representative. Clearly, this initiative spoke to a felt need among our meetings for using the web as a tool for outreach in our communities. Thanks to Beth Burbank for her initiative and energetic momentum. Thanks Bill and Peter, for sharing their expertise so generously with the wider Quaker community.

Also thanks to Mike Dennis who made available a delightful office space for the workshop: lots of hookups for Friends' laptops, a great setup for visuals such as an LED screen, and trouble-free Internet connections. Mike made it available to Friends for free, and he stayed with us the entire day, in case he was needed. He has offered it to Friends on other occasions, like the Visioning Workshop in January.

The food was catered by Zach and Kelly Schobernd—very tasty, very healthy, with lots of eye appeal. Fariba Murray made overnight hospitality arrangements with Friends in Bloomington-Normal, and Nancy Duncan served as our faithful registrar, braving an Excel worksheet through many drafts in order to keep us updated who was coming. The Web Workshop was the work of a lot of committed Friends, including those who opened their homes to Friendly visitors.

The Workshop Instigators (Beth Burbank, Dawn Amos, Paul Buckley, and Mariellen Gilpin) realized afterwards that much follow-up work remained: they wanted to help those Friends eager to get the word out about their meetings, but whose eyes glazed over when asked to learn technical skills. For these Friends from eight meetings, there is an offer to present a second Web Workshop in April. However, in the meantime, four of those meetings created or updated their websites without further assistance from the Yearly Meeting. So, instead of requiring the remaining four meetings to add to the carbon footprint of midwestern Friends by returning to Bloomington-Normal for another workshop, the Workshop Instigators have sent those Friends an invitation to just email them the information they want on their websites—Rick Robey (St. Louis) and Sean West (Spoon River) have volunteered to create websites for them. (The offer was pronounced "magnanimous" by one non-techie Friend.) The Worskshop Instigators hope that by annual session in June, every meeting in Illinois Yearly Meeting will have a website.

ILYM Websites

57th Steet Meeting of Friends: 57thstreetmeeting.org
Clear Creek Friends Meeting: clearcreek.quaker.org
Columbia Friends Meeting: quakers.missouri.org
Downers Grove Friends Meeting: gramma9davis.homestead.com/meeting.html
Evanston Meeting of Friends: evanstonquakers.com
Lake Forest Friends Meeting: lakeforest.il.quaker.org
Northside Friends Meeting: northsidefriends.org
Oak Park Monthly Meeting: oakparkfriends.org

ILYM Websites



Quaker Website Wisdom

Paul Buckley, ILYM Field Secretary, and Mariellen Gilpin, Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting

Some things to include	Some things to avoid
A picture of the building you meet in so that newcomers will know they have come to the right place.	A picture of a historic meetinghouse that looks very Quakerly, but is not where you meet.
Photos of members and attenders engaged in worship and service.	Too many pictures (no matter how pretty) that have nothing to do with the meeting.
Plain descriptions of who you are, where you meet, where to park, and what people should expect when they get there.	Quaker jargon. "Sense of the meeting" and "Clearness Committee" do not mean anything to someone new.
A list of regular events that tells what and when they are in simple terms.	Abbreviations. Only a longtime Quaker could figure out that MWCB means "business meeting."
Plenty of white space.	Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font. Dense columns of text in a tiny font.
An invitation to visit that is written in a open welcoming spirit.	In-jokes. For example, a long list of commercial products using the name Quaker like Old Quaker Whiskey.
A simple statement that Quakerism is a spiritual path.	A list of all your committees.
A description of our form of worship.	A list of all the things we do not do.

ILYM Websites

Rolla Friends Meeting (Preparative): friendsmeetingofrolla.org
Saint Louis Friends Meeting: stlouisfriends.org
South Bend Friends Meeting: southbend.quaker.org
Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting: siquaker.org
Spoon River Quaker Meeting: spoonriverquakers.org
Springfield Worship Group: quaker.org/urbana/Springfield
Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting: quaker.org/urbana
Illinois Yearly Meeting: ilym.org

A Taste, Not Meal

Bonnie Oulman, Downers Grove Friends Meeting

We have all experienced being the new person in a situation where everyone else seems to already have a conversation going with someone else. While our intent as a Meeting is to be welcoming to newcomers, at times our regulars attenders can be engrossed in conversations with each other or stretched for time so they might forget to provide the welcoming support a newcomer needs.

At Downers Grove Meeting, a group called Exploring Quakerism was begun to help address this situation. Beginning in January 2010, this small group has been meeting a couple times a month. Its purpose is to give general information about Quakerism and another experience with the Silence. All are welcome to attend, those new to Quakerism and those excited about Quakerism. After Meeting for Worship and after a little time for grabbing a cup of something warm, the group forms in a relaxed atmosphere. When a new person first attends, introductions are made and worship sharing guidelines are gone over. Because someone may have joined us with a burning question like "Does the Meeting run on donations and where does one put them?" we allow a brief time for questions before we begin the lesson. We provide short answers, refer them to another Friend or book, or make an appointment for a more complete chat at a later time. Then we begin the lesson by taking turns reading from a two-page lesson and move into worship sharing. As part of our goal for minimal commitment, we end our "stand alone" class in one hour.

We are following the FGC curriculum *Exploring Quakerism* by Marsha D. Holliday. There are 15 two-page lessons about Quakerism with discussion questions and a question for worship sharing. We have altered the format a bit to make each lesson stand alone for whomever may want to join us. We read the lesson and instead of "staying in our heads" with discussion questions, we go into worship sharing on that topic. Examples of worship sharing queries include "What kinds of diversity are present in my life?" and "Which of my revelations has impacted my life the most?" This format allows us to learn about some aspect of Quakerism and then share our experience from the heart. The worship sharing questions are general enough that anyone is able to speak to them, and challenging enough that any Friend may hear a new perspective from another Friend. Breaking the silence in a group of 5-7 people in relation to a focus question is much less daunting than in Meeting for Worship. We are free to pass during worship sharing, while still participating fully by listening deeply and lovingly.

Each lesson is designed to stand alone, with very little commitment of time and energy. It is a taste, not a meal; but each is a taste of substance. Further goals for participants may include:

- Having learned about Quakerism with this experience of minimal commitment and group support, the new attender may become ready and eager to make the commitment to the Quakerism 101 class. (Exploring Quakerism is not meant to take the place of the much more extensive Quakerism 101.)

- Having developed an understanding of how silence is used in Meeting for Worship, the participants may develop more comfort with speaking into the silence when prompted by the Spirit, an experience that enriches all of us.

As facilitator, I have been enriched by the heartfelt expressions of our worship sharing experiences. There is a special bond between the members, and yet the group is open to new folks dropping in and out. It has been my experience that when someone has made the choice to go try out a Quaker meeting,

something is already drawing them into a deeper place spiritually. They may have come to a Meeting or two where no verbal ministry occurs and really be wondering, "What are these folks thinking?" This group offers an opportunity to know and be known at a spiritual level, from the heart. We offer this alternative, perhaps less intimidating, way to understand the Quaker process of waiting on the Spirit. For some things experience is a better teacher than written words.



Seeing Ourselves as Others See Us

Paul Buckley, ILYM Field Secretary

While we want our meetings to attract newcomers, it is easy to get so used to the way things are that we may not be aware of how they look to a visitor. Following are some things to reflect upon that may help us see ourselves as others see us.

Can a visitor find your meeting easily?
- Is there a good map on your website?
- If someone drives by, will he or she know you are there?
- Are there signs leading them to your door?
- How will a newcomer know he or she is at the right place?

What messages about your community does a first time visitor pick up? (Note: this is different from the messages people share during worship.)
- Is your entranceway welcoming?
- What messages are displayed on your walls?
- What impression do visitors get as they approach your meeting room?
- What messages are conveyed as Friends greet one another before and after worship?

What opportunities will new attenders have to learn about Quakerism once they arrive?
- At their first meeting?
- After they have come for a while?

How will you help new attenders make friends?

Drudgery of Service Leads to a New Spiritual Path

Joy Duncan, 57th Street Meeting of Friends

I started leading the First Day School (FDS) program with the other parents just because our previous leader had moved to another state and someone had to do it. However, I realized that a FDS program has to be inspired. If not, it will fall short and the children will feel it. Some Sundays I often felt that FDS was sort of like any pre-school curriculum with a Quaker slant to it. We liked talking about being good people and being nice to others with a few Quaker words here and there. If all our children turn out to be good people who treat others well that would be great, but we knew we wanted something more, something deeper. I e-mailed Michael Gibson at FGC to ask how this could happen in a small meeting FDS with children of various ages. He wrote back giving me some ideas—one of his ideas was Godly Play. He wrote an awful lot about Godly Play and about about how great it is. So I looked into it and found out that it is necessary to have some training to use it. The only way I could think to get trained was to travel to Pendle Hill. I tried to imagine how I could do this with two preschool-age twins and a baby. There was no way! But way opened and out of the nowhere a friend told me about a Godly Play training across the park from my house. Suddenly, it seemed like the invisible hand was working. Godly Play inspired me and helped me really to think about FDS in a new way. When I went to training for Godly Play, leaders talked about how children already have a spiritual life and spiritual experiences and how it is up to us adults to cultivate that and to be sure not to accidentally get in the way—this is a very delicate balance. While I had given thought about many things in relation to Quaker process and discernment, I had never deeply thought about what I believed about children and religious education. Also, I had been thinking about how I had to do FDS for the children and for the meeting, like it was solely a type of service for others. Godly Play helped me make that jump to realizing that FDS was important for my own spiritual journey. I am not saying that Godly Play and Faith & Play are the only FDS program that would do this. I am just saying that is what they did for me.



I realized that I could not be a mom of three young kids, the FDS teacher and actively involved in an outreach committee that has been discussed by the meeting. Yet, the momentum only got stronger and stronger until I realized that I was (and am) now on a new exciting spiritual path about myself, about outreach, and about the young Friends in our meeting—it spreads out in many directions. I realized that FDS is an excellent way to do outreach. We have FDS every 1st and 2nd Sunday of the month, and those are the Sundays that the children and their parents are strongly drawn to meeting. One young Friend brings his best friend to meeting on FDS Sundays. Parents of another active young Friend e-mailed me quite a time ago asking about our religious education program. Then one Sunday this family arrived. They still come very often on 1st and 2nd Sundays. I have gently invited/encouraged other neighborhood parents with whom I am friendly and have asked me about Quaker meeting to visit our meeting on FDS Sundays. A couple of them have actually done

it. The motivation for all of these parents to come to meeting is very clearly linked to their child's participation in FDS. It is very exciting how many children are starting to be a big part of 57th Street Meeting. Recently, children made up 25% of the meeting for worship! That could not have happened a little while ago. It is step by step development that has involved responding to opportunities for inviting parents to bring their children. The development seems to be pointing to a stronger and well-attended FDS program at our meeting. It is wonderful on so many levels to be given this gift of thinking about our meeting and FDS program in a new way. I am led to be a part of the responsibility and happily engage in it. This was all because I started out thinking that I had to teach FDS because there was no one else there to do it. Now in FDS with Godly Play and Faith & Play the children wonder and talk about altars, death, and about many gods versus one God who is everywhere. I feel like we are truly in this together.



Quaker Quest

Joanna Wiebe, Evanston Monthly Meeting of Friends

On 6, 2010, Friends from Evanston Friends Meeting and a few other meetings gathered at the Evanston Meetinghouse for a day-long Saturday workshop that was facilitated by Barry Crossno and Summer Cushman of Friends General Conference. The purpose of the event was to provide a taste of what a full-fledged Quaker Quest session would be like. Quaker Quest is a series of public open meetings on Quaker topics, which are presented in repeated cycles (for example, a three topic series would make a six week program). The sessions follow a lively format which engages seekers intently for two hours. During each session three Friends speak briefly from the heart about the evening's topic. Seekers then divide into small groups each facilitated by a Friend who makes certain that everyone has a chance to share. The three presenters then offer a second, shorter set of talks. A question and answer period follows. The program closes with a 30-minute Meeting for Worship. There is a time of hospitality at the beginning and end of each session.

Quaker Quest is not about proselytizing but about spiritual hospitality. It is a dynamic form of outreach to seekers that encourages Friends to clarify and speak of their faith experience, It strongly affirms that Friends have a spiritual path for today that is simple, radical, and contemporary. Seekers who come to Quaker Quest are usually very interested in exploring our contemporary spirituality. Quaker Quest simultaneously serves as a powerful form of meeting inreach. A meeting that hosts a Quaker Quest also finds that it strengthens the meeting community by developing a stronger sense of itself and of what it has to offer seekers. At the workshop attenders displayed a deep interest in enhancing hospitality and welcome to seekers, and integrating them more skillfully into the life of the meeting, should they choose to continue to attend and become members.

Queries for Reflecting on the Health of a Quaker Meeting

IYLM Ministry and Advancement Committee (approved June 20, 2009)

These queries are designed to kindle and deepen the spiritual life of the meeting. Meetings are welcome to use them as an opportunity for spiritual growth by pondering them together in contexts such as meeting forums, business meetings, and committee meetings. They may also be used for individual consideration. Meetings are advised to use these queries judiciously, as not all are applicable to every meeting's situation.

1. How is the life of the Spirit faring in your meeting?

2. How is the Presence felt in your meeting's worship? Is vocal ministry Spirit-led? Is the silence Spirit-filled? How is the Presence reflected in your members' daily lives?

3. How is your meeting developing and nurturing ministry and service? Are you supporting guidance committees, traveling minutes, communication in business meeting, funding for education and travel, and loving eldering and mentoring? How are your efforts working? Do you have a system of accountability and support?

4. Does joy prevail among you? How are relationships of mutual care and enjoyment being fostered among members and attenders? Are you learning to know one another in that which is Eternal? How do you care for one another in times of need?

5. What kinds of conflict have you experienced? How has your meeting dealt with those conflicts? Has your meeting used these conflicts as opportunities for spiritual growth? Has your meeting grown spiritually in dealing with them?

6. What are you teaching your children? What are you teaching adults? How are you doing it? How are you encouraging Friends, including teenagers, to participate in your programs? Are you encouraging young people to attend Quaker and Yearly Meeting activities?

7. Is your membership changing? How and why has it changed in recent years? What are you doing in response?

8. Are you making use of the resources of Friends from outside the meeting? If so, has that been helpful?

9. How do you relate to your local community? Are you reaching out to invite newcomers? How are you doing so? How is that working?

10. What physical, financial, and spiritual resources does your meeting enjoy? Do you see them as entrusted to your care for a period of time? How do you exercise stewardship of these resources? Do you care for, maintain, and grow them while using them faithfully?

A printable PDF version is available for download
on ILYM website in the Ministry and Advancement Committee section.

Clerk's Corner

David Finke, ILYM Presiding Clerk



I bring delight and anticipation to this period of service in my new role of being and working and worshiping with you, as together we let God's Presence build up the Body of Christ experienced among us in fresh and living ways.

ILYM has been my "extended family" for at least three decades, and I sense that for you as well it gives a feel of being "at home." Our homes require investments of energy, besides also being places of refreshment and repose. I agreed to be your clerk only on the assurance that this is something we will be doing *together*, as mutually-accountable brothers and sisters. In this shared life as God's family, some also serve us as wise elder aunts or uncles.

Recently a Friend who was traveling in the ministry among some of our meetings wrote her reflections of what astonishing and life-giving expressions of God's Love she witnessed in our midst. Are we aware of how much Light is shining through us? Are we always ready to let the candle be set on a stand and not under a bushel, as Jesus teaches?

Sometimes we may need an outside perspective to give us greater insight as to our condition. The work of the Light always is (at least) two-fold: it reveals—even that part of the greater Truth than we are comfortable with—and it also heals and gives growth.

This past year has been one in which I have seen our yearly meeting venture into new territory, unexplored and unprecedented, with the sudden doubling of our acreage of real estate. We have acquired spaces about which we have started sharing our dreams into a future of "good news, which shall be to all people." As I've stayed in touch with our various committees, I am so impressed with both the earnest dedication and intelligent hard work, and also the spirit of generosity and forbearance in which we try to help each other rather than compete with each other in the ways of the world. I will continue to bear witness to that activity of the Holy Spirit in our midst, as I trust you will as well.

At our Spring Continuing Committee, I distributed for Friends' meditation the classic quote by Penington (see facing page), where he speaks of our needing to "give over" all that is ego-driven, and "sink down to the Seed that God sows in thy heart." We are urged to let the Seed be and grow and breathe and act in us—which I believe is happening even now. The promise is that in our "sweet experience," we will find that "That of God" is known and loved and owned by God, by which God remains vitally within and among us, leading "to the inheritance of life."

What a treasure we have, Friends! It is, as Paul soberly reminds us, something we carry in our "earthen vessels," which can be fragile and are always imperfect. Nonetheless, the treasure, the "Pearl of Great Price," is there for us to draw upon, and share with the world.

Give over thine own willing,
give over thine own running,
give over thine own desiring to know or be anything.

Sink down to the seed that God sows in thy heart.
Let that seed be in thee,
and grow in thee,
and breathe in thee
and act in thee,

And thou wilt find by sweet experience
that the Lord
knows that
and loves
and owns that.

And the Lord will remain with that
which is [His portion] in thee.
God will lead it to the inheritance of life.

Isaac Penington, 1661
from "Some Directions to the Panting Soul" (1661),
in *Works*, Volume II, pp. 205-6.

Opening New Space for Us

Maurine Pyle, Southern Illinois Friends Meeting

As the Maintenance and Planning Committee began its work to clear and update the newly acquired Mills homestead, we were somewhat awed at all that we had to accomplish. Neil Mesner, co-clerk, reminded us that scriptures say, "the people went right to work because their hearts were in it." We saw the evidence of that joyful undertaking while witnessing the hard work of Clear Creek members who stripped wallpaper and removed ceiling tiles. They were joined by members of Maintenance and Planning and the Stewards who kept up a fast pace for many months. We also hired the Dancing Rabbit Eco-Village to clear out debris from the outbuildings, filling three dumpsters with recyclable metals and seven dumpsters with non-recyclable garbage. An unsafe lean-to shed was deconstructed, and the side of the barn that was exposed was then sided with the metal roof which had covered the shed.

Environmental Concerns Committee has removed invasive non-native trees, cut weeds and has plans to remove dead trees that could damage the house in a storm. They plan to remove rocks and boulders, grind stumps and keep the "Old Field" mowed and free of woody vegetation. They are already imagining a nature path between the meetinghouse and the Mills House with meditative features along the way.

Restoration work inside the house has included:

- Rewiring and adding safety features and exit lighting
- Repair of the floor joists
- Removal of wood paneling and ceiling tiles in nearly every room
- Dry-walling the ceilings
- Repairing plaster on the main floor and two rooms upstairs
- Painting of the replastered rooms
- Staining and reinstalling the wood trim

Many duties remain, including clearing the septic system, renewing two bathrooms and painting the remaining rooms and hallways. We hope to have the Mills House in useable condition for the annual sessions, where it will be used mainly as a cooling station for young children and older adults. The house is furnished with a table and chairs on the first floor. There are no furnished rooms upstairs at this time.

Clear Creek Meeting has been enjoying having a warm meeting space over the winter. They are looking forward to sharing their new space with the yearly meeting in June.



The Story of the Mills Homestead

Excerpted from *150 Years in Review of Clear Creek Families and Friends, Putnam County, Illinois* by Helen Jean Nelson, pp. 48, 66.

Ernest, oldest son of Willis and Mattie Mills, and Lula Mills made their home in the new residence on Quaker Lane (the old Henry Mills farm). Both were active in the Meeting and Grange (see box below). Ernest served as Executive Secretary of the Farmers Mutual Insurance Company. They reared their two sons: Harold who married Maurine Rehn and Kenneth who married Evelyn Randolph of Alton. (Their son, Ernest Kenneth and family lived in Oklahoma.) Kenneth Sr. married Eloise Patton in 1988, and they lived in Oregon.



Ernest and Lulu Mills moved into this (new) home in c. 1905. The front porch has been enclosed. Later residents were Edward and Kay Mills.

Harold and Maurine Mills farmed his father's (Ernest Mills) farm and added dairy cows to the enterprise. Both were very active in Grange and School. Harold served on the first Board of Directors for the Consolidated Magnolia-Swaney School. Harold was stricken with polio and died at an early age. Their son Edward had just finished high school, but he took over the farming business. Maurine spent several years as a housemother at Augustana College, her alma mater, before retiring.

Granger Movement

A campaign for state control of railroads and grain elevators, especially in the north central states, carried on during the 1870s by members of the Patrons of Husbandry (the Grange), a farmers' organization that had been formed for social and cultural purposes.

Edward and Kay Mills lived in the family home where his parents, Harold and Maurine, had lived, and Kay's two children grew up there. Ed continued in the traditions of his parents, and served as Master of the Grange. He farmed and continued in the dairy business. For a time, he was engaged in the production of eggs from several thousand caged laying hens, then he became a salesman for Griffith Seed Company, and produced silver foxes on a large scale. Kay cultivated flowers suitable for commercial use in winter (dried bouquets).





Environmental Concerns Committee Calls for "Right Care of Creation"

Adrian Fisher, Oak Park Friends Meeting

Landscaping of Illinois Yearly Meeting property, both the original property and the new property, should be guided by earth-friendly, sustainable principles. The overall goal is to create and maintain a beautiful landscape that will support and help conserve bio-diversity of native species of plants, animals, birds and insects, while simultaneously being adapted to human use. Because of this, the landscape at Illinois Yearly Meeting would serve as an example or pattern of earth-friendly, eco-region-specific land use. Such landscaping would help humans interact in a more positive way with other species with whom we share this part of the earth, and would help embody our call to right care of creation.

To read the full proposal of the Environmental Concerns Committees landscaping guidelines for the Illinois Yearly Meeting property, see the Committee's section on the ILYM website.

Environmental Concerns Committee members and Stewards of the Yearly Meeting burned the prairie to the west of the Yearly Meeting meetinghouse. Burning helps rejuvenate the prairie grasses and forbs and eliminate invasive weeds. The prairie should be in full bloom this summer.

Godly Play/Faith and Play

Sophie de la Mar, Lake Forest Friends Meeting

There are now several facilitators for the Godly Play/Faith and Play stories within Illinois Yearly Meeting. Two of these facilitators took Michael Gibson's workshop at FCG Gathering last summer and several more took the week-end workshop in October of 2009 hosted by Urbana Friends Meeting and sponsored by the Religious Education Committee of ILYM.

My own experience in using this curriculum has been at Lake Forest Friends Meeting. Katherine Young and I did "Prayer and Friends Meeting for Worship" and "Listening for God." We did this for a combined First Day School group of pre-school through middle school ages.

The Faith and Play stories, written by Friends for Friends, are intended as a Quaker supplement to Godly Play, an extensive curriculum developed by Jerome Berryman, an Episcopal priest. Godly Play stories focus on the Old Testament stories and the parables of Jesus. Stories in Faith & Play focus on Quaker faith and practice.

Godly Play has opened the way for Friends to teach Bible stories using a method that embodies the Quaker understanding of continuing revelation, supports multiple perspectives on a story, encourages silence as a tool within storytelling and honors the diverse ways the Spirit works within each person. Friends have been using the Godly Play stories for many years.

With Jerome Berryman's permission, the Faith & Play stories were developed by the Faith & Play Working Group of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and added to the Godly Play curriculum. Both the Godly Play stories and the Faith & Play stories have gone through an elaborate series of development, refinement, testing, and re-development. Each story has been years in the making and each word and action has been carefully chosen.

While often associated with storytelling, Godly Play and Faith & Play are clearly much more. Berryman followed the Montessori philosophy of supporting the natural development of children by respecting their individual choice of research and work and by providing uninterrupted concentration rather than group lessons led by an adult. Through intentional community building, contemplative storytelling, open-ended wondering, group sharing, and tactile "wondering with fingers and eyes," Godly Play and Faith & Play give children language and a framework for exploring and sharing their experience of the Spirit.

The method asks that the environment be carefully prepared as a sacred space; that there be two people to co-teach each story, the story-teller and the doorkeeper; and that these people be trained in the Godly Play/Faith & Play method. Story and art materials are of the finest quality possible and the story-teller always handles the materials with care. The children, of course, are always treated with the utmost respect and care as well.

There are currently six published Faith & Play stories. Two additional stories have been approved for distribution and several more are under development. These stories are published and distributed by Friends General Conference, which also supports ongoing development of new stories, provides Godly Play teacher training, and maintains the designated website, www.faithandplay.org. This is a very likable and fruitful teaching method.

"Let the little children come unto me, for theirs is the kingdom of God."

Project Lakota

Cindy Boyd

This Winter was extremely harsh and cold, with many blizzards of high snows and higher snowdrifts. The people had no electricity and no heat, many for days on end. With spring thaws, came icy roads, then floods. Over the Winter, we helped families with some advance repairs and emergency housing. In the midst of all this, came a couple of rays of bright hope. The two government surplus mobile homes arrived on the reservation for the McGaa family and for Ana Alvarez and her sisters and cousins (Minerva Blacksmith's granddaughters and great-grandchild.) Also recently we paid for another new, gently-used, trailer for Minerva Blacksmith and her grandsons. This will be much better for them and much easier than fixing up the old trailer. When all is done, hopefully, there will be a small family compound with complete indoor plumbing and good electricity. After we had moved the old trailer last year, there was a small electrical fire which is always scary with old trailers. The old trailer can be used for storage of building materials and other things.



Entry ramp to the old McGaa trailer.

As the weather gets warmer, the families, with our assistance, need to get the mobile homes situated on site with gravel pads and roads, tied down, under-skirted, electrical lines run, and, most importantly, run water lines and put in septic tanks to connect the plumbing. The McGaas may also need to fix their well which badly froze over the winter. All of this will cost thousands of dollars especially if we cannot get any help from Indian Health Services and from the tribe for septic and water—those lists are usually many months to years long. We will also network with other organizations and people on and off the reservation. We have had some Lakota people contact us this winter offering their consultation and assistance, and we look forward to forming new friends and partnerships. We also want to do some needed sealing, repairs, and winterizing for the One Feather log home. If anyone would like to come up to the Oglala Lakota nation to volunteer, please contact Cindy Boyd (candyboydwrite☺yahoo.com, 314-623-7829). She will be there during July.



Minerva Blacksmith's trailer

Downers Grove Friends Meeting

by Pam Wolfe

Downers Grove Friends Meeting is now meeting in our new meetinghouse. Our first event was the wedding of Josh Davison, son of Sue and Joe Davison, to Antonia Simigis on October 24, 2009. It was a great occasion, and we were happy to have such a joyous event as our "inaugural event." The following weekend we had a farewell gathering for Sue and Joe who are moving to their family home in Pennsylvania. We continue to enjoy Sue's presence as she and Joe work to sell their home in Wheaton.

For the two months we were without a meetinghouse, we met at the home of Tom and Ann Jones in Lombard. Many of you will remember its connection to our meeting. It was the home of Louis and Mary Ruth Jones, who were former members of 57th Street Meeting and founding members of our meeting. We are blessed to have not just links to the past but strong ties to the community in which we live. Tom and Ann have a new grandson, Andrian Jones, born to Nathan and his wife Pamela who live in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Although we are in our new meeting house, we still do not have our full occupancy permit. Our contractor has been very slow at doing the final grading of our property. Although we worked hard to plant our native storm water detention area in the fall and many wonderful native plants are starting to grow, the storm water detention area was incorrectly dug. Now much of that work will have to be re-done. Building a new building is fraught with many disappointments.

We also mark the sad passing of two members. Lorraine Bartnik who died after a long battle with lung cancer in February. Lorraine was a cheerful and energetic member who started coming to our meeting nearly ten years ago. We all miss her candid insights and warm presence.

After declining slowly for several months, Alice Uttyebrouck died Friday April 23, 2010. Alice was part of the very fabric of our meeting. She and her husband Rodger were the first couple married by Downers Grove Friends Meeting. The Light that shone through her spoken messages was only one of her gifts to us. We mourn the loss of both of these dear Friends.

Evanston Monthly Meeting

by Nancy Halliday

Evanston Monthly Meeting's annual yard sale in the fall of 2009 netted over $4,000 which we split with Right Sharing of World Resources, the H.E. Lane Center (for the homeless) and Hilda Place (a local charity resale shop).

Our meetinghouse was the site for not one but three Youth Quakes during the winter months.

Josh Vura-Weiss and Ann Horton were married under the care of our meeting on November 21, followed by a reception on the lower level.

The Inquirer's Group, a series of six weekly evening explorations of different aspects of Quakerism, mainly for newcomers (but "oldies" are heartily welcome), was again hosted by Joan Pine in her home early in the year.

To commemorate the first anniversary of Israel's invasion of Gaza, we provided our meetinghouse for a interreligious gathering of those distressed by the suffering of Gaza Palestinians. Presiding were Rabbi Brant Rosen, Episcopal priest Rev. Cotton Fite and Imam Abdul-Malik Ryan. Advent candles and the Hanukkah menorah were lit and a reading from

the Koran was given. Many attending gave fervent prayers and testimonials for peace.

One of our members, Nancy Kaufmann, traveled to Pakistan in 2009. As part of our bi-monthly Friday might movie series, she showed a Pakistani film, *Khuda Kay Liye*, on February 12, preceeded by a Middle Eastern dinner that she prepared herself.

Our concern for the Haitian people following the devastating earthquake in that country led us to dispatch a significant amount of cash from our annual surplus for relief supplies, with the expectation that future donations will reimburse the fund.

A need for clarification of the role of committees in the life of the meeting brought about a series of thoughtful discernment sessions following Meeting for Worship on January 5, 31, and February 7.

A celebration of the 50th anniversary of Earlham School of Religion was hosted at the meetinghouse on March 7.

We participated in an intervisitation with Northside Meeting on March 28 after members of that meeting visited us in mid-winter.

Barra Crossno and Summer Cushman of Friends General Conference led us on an all-day workshop on March 6 to explore the possibility of offering a "Quaker Quest" at Evanston Meeting. Quaker Quest was begun in England as a series of outreach and enriching exercises and has spread rapidly in America. Many of our members are quite excited about this opportunity and are seeking to explore this further.

Several of our members participated in a peace march in downtown Chicago on March 25 to mark the seventh anniversary of the beginning of the Iraq war.

The Peace, Social Concerns and Earth Care Committee has designated April as "Earth Month" and is providing suggestions on First Days to conserve energy and reduce waste.

Our membership totals 157, with 86 resident and 71 non-resident members. We accepted two transfers balanced by two individuals who withdrew their membership.

Lake Forest Friends Meeting

by Pam Kuhn

Under the direction of our Ministry and Worship Committee, Lake Forest Friends Meeting spent the year exploring spiritual relationships. In our adult religious education class, we started in September reading selections from Phil Gulley's novel, *Home in Harmony.* From there we moved on to three Pendle Hill Pamphlets, *Members One of Another* by Tom Gates, *Gospel Order* by Sandra Cronk, and *Beyond Consensus* by Barry Morley. In the spring we moved to the challenge of Martin Buber's *I and Thou*. Fortunately, our Friend Marjorie Reed found a paper she had written about Buber and helped us to uncover the gems of his writing.

This work all led to our retreat on April 17 & 18. The purpose of the retreat was to get to know each other more intimately with the goal of strengthening our spiritual life both individually and corporately, helping to build Lake Forest Friends Meeting into a more vital community. To help us with this lofty ideal, we invited John Calvi from Putney, Vermont, to facilitate.

Twenty-five Lake Forest Friends attended the retreat. Most were long-time Friends, but we also had some newcomers, attenders, and returning Friends. It was a beautiful weekend, blue skies, lovely walks around a lake with many spring flowers and trees in bloom. We had four sessions with John plus Meeting for Worship. We did some energy work to try to connect with each

other in a different way. We had some large and small group discussions. At this writing, we are still trying to digest it all.

In addition to our work with relationships, Lake Forest went through our first year of structuring our committees by values. Our newly formed Environmental Committee facilitated two forums (one on food, the other upcoming on Asian Carp). The Peace Committee invited Field Secretary Paul Buckley to review the history of the Peace Testimony with us. Our Social Justice Committee coordinated another year of cooking once a month for PADS (a homeless shelter). Our Pastoral Care Committee is exploring what Friendly pastoral care is and has been aided by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting *Pastoral Care Newsletter*. Our First Day School used the Godly Play curriculum and happily reported activities after meeting each Sunday.

Oak Park Friends Meeting

by Patricia McMillen

Spring has arrived in Oak Park, and we greet it with relief after a long, cold winter. Our Meeting has been comforted by the support of so many Friends, and others, who knew and loved the late Tom Dix along with us. We continue to hold his surviving family, including his mother Marti Matthews, in the Light during this difficult first year following his death.

On March 19-20, the robotics team Tom founded at Proviso Math and Science Academy (Forest Park, Ill.) competed in the Midwest Regional Division of FIRST, achieving a highly respectable rank of 27 among 42 teams. A special gift from Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting (MCGM), personal mentorship of the team by 57th Street Friend Janet Marcus, and personal and financial support by many others made it possible for Tom's memory to live on through his wonderful robotics students.

Meanwhile, Oak Park Friends recently proudly announced a technological achievement of our own: our new website, now up and running at www.oakparkfriends.org. Thanks to the hard work of our talented Publications Committee, the site is colorful, informative, and easy to navigate. It contains links to ILYM's website as well as to websites of other organizations we support, news about our Meeting, and much more. Please take a look.

A visit from Field Secretary Paul Buckley enhanced our annual "Meeting for Direction of the Meeting" in January. We continue to mull over ideas—both Paul's and our own—concerning child care and children's religious education (both of which have suffered attendance drops over the past couple of years), improving our signage, and improving "inreach"/adult religious education and spirituality support. We began a new session of Quakerism 101 in March, to be continued with meetings roughly once per month rotating among the houses of members and attenders.

In February, Oak Park Friends hosted the regular business meeting of Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting at the beautiful Oak Park Conservatory. The program featured a talk on reconciliation ecology by Adrian Fisher complete with a pop quiz and encouragement to all in attendance to appreciate and nurture the gifts of local wildlife and natural features. Following Adrian's talk, attenders enjoyed a docent-led tour of the Conservatory, the third largest in the Chicago area. The Conservatory houses over 3000 plants and several tropical birds (including a pair of Quaker parrots).

Finally, we are in process of making an important shift in our Meeting's investment

strategy in order to better reflect our Quaker testimonies, which we believe emphasize investing in the local community to meet needs for housing, jobs, and human dignity. We hope to achieve this goal by shifting money into the Domini Social Investment Fund administered at ShoreBank Chicago, and away from the national stock market.

We continue to extend a welcoming hand to all ILYM Friends, to join us for weekly worship at Oak Park Art League, 720 Chicago Ave., Oak Park, when you are in our area. When you are not, "visit" us online at www.oakparkfriends.org.

South Bend Friends

by Monica Maria Tetzlaff

South Bend Friends have experienced the ebb and flow of life as we have said goodbye to Friends at memorial meetings and welcomed babies and toddlers to the circle of our beloved community. Dear Friend Marty Neidigh passed away on February 20, 2009, and a Memorial Meeting was held for her in the summer. Marty lived on a farm in Bremen, Indiana, and many of her Amish neighbors worshiped with us. She was profoundly hard of hearing and her advocacy for the disabled was an important ministry in our meeting. Her deep mysticism touched our Meeting as well. On May 5, 2009, Hannah Maria Laird was born and welcomed into our Meeting. Hannah was officially adopted by parents Monica Tetzlaff and Bradley Laird in August 2009. Another family has brought into Meeting a delightful toddler foster child, who has also been welcomed and loved by the Meeting.

Scott Van Jacob had been a quiet and steady presence in our Meeting for many years, serving on Finance and Long-Range Planning Committees, baking wonderful muffins for fellowship time and sitting with his wife Elizabeth and teenage daughters Nina and Gemma in worship. A librarian at Notre Dame University, a scholar of Latin America, and an avid runner, Scott was liked and respected in many communities. We were saddened to learn of his diagnosis of cancer in 2009 and we were inspired by his continued peaceful presence in meeting and his messages on Facebook and Caringbridge. We miss him since his death on October 10, 2009. The love that he gave lives on in Elizabeth, Nina and Gemma.

On December 10, 2009, Marie Reyburn died after a long life of serving God, activism and motherhood in many places around the world (among them a Cherokee Reservation in the U.S., Nigeria, Ecuador, and Lebanon) as a partner to her husband Bill Reyburn, who was a Bible Translator. Marie had studied anthropology at Columbia University and taught at Wheaton College before her marriage. She served South Bend Friends by providing snacks and beverages as long as her health allowed her to attend.

Just a few days later, our youngest Meeting member, Sarah Ellis Hungerman, was born to Laura Batt and Dan Hungerman on December 16, 2009. Her parents continue to serve God and the Meeting as Treasurer/First Day School Clerk and Recording Clerk, although Mom Laura has gotten some help from other Friends (as she well deserves!). We are grateful for the service of these dedicated friends and welcome their new addition.

South Bend Friends has grown slightly in size as we have joyfully welcomed more new members. One of these new members is Andrew Peterson, who will be returning to Burundi in the summer of 2010 to continue to do his part in

facilitating the ministry of forgiveness and peacemaking made possible by the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI). South Bend Friends learned more about AGLI during this past year when David and Gladys Zarembka visited our Meeting and spoke about Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities (HROC) in April 2009.

South Bend Friends continue to worship at 10:30 a.m. in the Charles Martin Youth Center near downtown South Bend, but we are now renting a room with windows. We also rent a room downstairs where we have First Day School classes for older children and toddlers throughout the school year thanks to the efforts of those who volunteer to teach and to Tammy Bell who is faithfully there with the children every First Day that she is able. We are considering ways to reach out to the neighborhood around the Charles Martin Center and have contributed to the renovation of nearby historic building into a Civil Rights Heritage Center, where Friends planned to participate in planting flowers in April 2010. Last fall, we held a retreat at a county park with the theme of sharing our spiritual journeys. This retreat deepened our spiritual friendships. We intend to have another retreat in the fall of 2010.

Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting

by Maurine Pyle

For over 50 years our small meeting has held meeting for worship mostly at the Interfaith Center on the campus of Southern Illinois University (SIU). Our numbers rise and fall as students and faculty come and go, but we maintain a faithful Quaker presence here. Here are some of our stories.

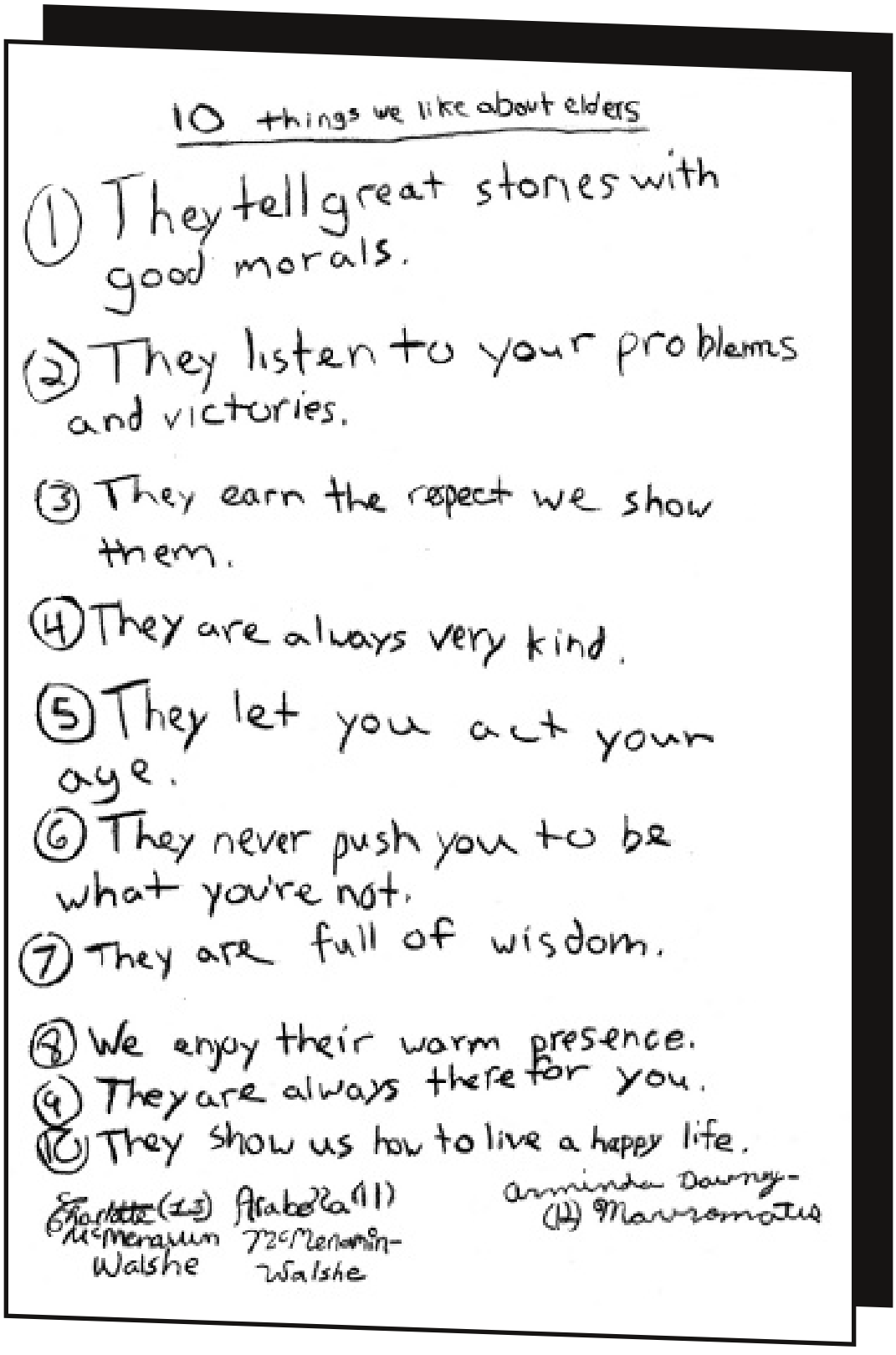
Maurine Pyle arrived in Carbondale in August 2009 to study at SIU. Soon she will become the co-director of the Interfaith Center. When she came, Michael Batinski and Ginny Hoffman answered a calling to serve as Friends in Residence at The Meeting School in Rindge New Hampshire. They are cooking for the community, feeding the animals, chopping wood and raising funds. Meanwhile, Maurine is house sitting for them at their beautiful home in the Shawnee National Forest.

Doc Stoddard, a graduate student at SIU, was received into membership a few months ago. His wife Mallary and son Victor have also been a wonderful addition to our community. We now have a First Day School program, which Doc and Mallary oversee.

Gavin Betzelberger will be graduating soon and departing for parts unknown. He has been a lively addition to our community. We supported his mission with the Christian Peacekeepers to Columbia last year.

Dawn and Mark Amos have been very engaged with Friends World Committee for Consultation. Dawn serves on the Finance Committee and Mark is one of our ILYM representatives.

Our Quaker community has never grown large, but we are always a committed group of faithful Friends. Each month we meet in homes for the Life of the Meeting. That means we have a potluck dinner plus some sort of program. Sometimes we play games and other times we have a discussion. This monthly communal event has greatly enhanced the intimacy of our community.



10 things we like about elders

(1) They tell great stories with good morals.

(2) They listen to your problems and victories.

(3) They earn the repect we show them.

(4) They are always very kind.

(5) They let you act your age.

(6) They never push you to be what you're not.

(7) They are full of wisdom.

(8) We enjoy their warm presence.

(9) They are always there for you.

(10) They show us how to live a happy life.

Charlotte (13) McMenamin Walshe

Arabella (11) McMenamin-Walshe

Arminda Downey-(11) Mavromatis

This list of thoughts concerning elders was written by the middle school young Friends of Lake Forest Meeting on the occasion of Janet Means Underhill's 80th birthday.