

# Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter

Atlanta Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Quakers. All are welcome.



Meeting for Worship  
Each First Day (Sunday)  
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.  
701 W. Howard Ave.  
Decatur, GA 30030

## December 2009

**Query:** "Are you open to the stress of changing a habit?" Contributed by Tom Kenworthy

### Conscientious Objectors in the Atlanta Friends Meeting by Harry G. Lefever

Throughout their history, Quakers have been known for their peace testimony. This important witness and practice, in the past and in the present, is an expression of their belief that "there is that of God in everyone."

One way Quakers have expressed their commitment to peace is to refuse to participate in war, a practice known as conscientious objection. During WWII and the Vietnam War the following members of the Atlanta Friends Meeting were drafted for military service. However, they refused military service and served as conscientious objectors in Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps or performed other types of alternative service.

**Britt Pendergrast** was born into a Presbyterian family in Atlanta, Georgia in 1917. At Georgia Tech he was a member of the Naval ROTC Command. In the spring of 1941 he was called to active duty. During WWII he was assigned duty on a submarine but refused to serve. His appeal for conscientious objector status found little sympathy from his local Georgia draft board. He ultimately agreed to serve as a non-combatant, but was found ineligible due to a history of allergies. He identifies himself as a "pragmatic objector" rather than a conscientious objector.

**Courtney Siceloff** was born in Texas in 1922. His father, a Methodist minister, served congregations in small towns across Texas. During WWII Courtney was a student at Haverford College. Following graduation he was drafted into the military. However, he refused military service and declared himself a conscientious objector. As a C.O., he was sent to Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps in West

Virginia, Maryland and New Hampshire. His alternative service included working as an intern in psychiatric wards, building roads, and stringing telephone and electric lines.

**Harry Lefever** was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania in 1931. He was drafted in 1950. For the next five years, during his four years of college and one year of graduate work at Eastern Mennonite College in Harrisonburg, Virginia, he obtained student deferments. Then from 1956 to 1959, accompanied by his wife Esther, he served three years with the Mennonite Central Committee in South Vietnam. His alternative service included working with a medical team for 19 months at a leprosarium 120 kilometers north of Saigon, the capitol, and for 17 months in Saigon, assisting Saigon University students attend American Friends Service Committee-sponsored work camps and seminars throughout southeast Asia.

**Don Bender** was born in Greenwood, Delaware in 1940. His parents, Nevin and Esther Bender, were Mennonites. He registered for the draft as a conscientious objector, which was the norm for young men in his church. He had a student deferment while attending Eastern Mennonite College for four years from 1960-64 and received a teaching deferment while he taught school in Grottoes, Virginia for the school year 1964-65. After changing to a position in social work, he was drafted and went to Atlanta, Georgia under the Mennonite Central Committee from 1966-68. His alternative service was to teach in junior high school during the school terms and to coordinate a team of summer volunteer teachers to teach summer school in the mornings and to organize a remedial tutoring program in the afternoons. He also organized a boys club and camping trips for the teenagers in the low-income neighborhood where he lived.

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## **Announcements** From Julie Meadows!

Little J is doing well -- he's big and healthy and smiley and spends a lot of time having serious



conversations with household objects (especially shiny ones). Life is still pretty unpredictable, but also wonderful beyond words. First worship group meeting in Clinton! Two faculty members and one student, sitting by a sunny window looking out at the pond. It was really good to worship again. Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC

### **AFM Holiday Bazaar--Sunday, December 13**

The middle school First Day school class will be sponsoring a Holiday Bazaar this year. Following Meeting for Worship on December 13, Friends of all ages will be welcome to stroll the tables for locally produced arts and crafts. Goodies will be sold compliments of the elementary classes. Anyone interested in participating with art, crafts, baked goods or other items should speak to one of the Middle School Young Friends in the next several weeks.

With a curriculum developed by Heifer International, the Middle School First Day School Class is exploring where the products we

use every day come from and how humans and the environment around the world are effected by our purchases. Our Holiday Bazaar will offer some locally produced items which Friends might purchase for gifts during this season. Part of the money raised by Young Friends at the bazaar will be donated to Heifer International, others who participate will also be asked to make a small donation. From Jennifer Dickie

### **Adult Religious Education Class for December**

On December 6 we will hear the spiritual journey of Martha Jane, MJ Robinson. On December 13, and 20, Elizabeth Valera will present information and examples of the Godly Play curriculum currently offered to young friends. For the last Sunday in December 12/27, Perry Treadwell will offer a book review of David Boulton's Who on Earth was Jesus, essentially a critique of the Jesus Seminar.

**Carolyn Manley's husband, Frank** died at home on November 11 at age 78. Frank was Charles Howard Candler Professor of Renaissance Literature, Emeritus, and former Director of the Creative Writing Department at Emory University as well as an award winning poet, novelist and playwright. Carolyn and Frank were high school sweethearts and were married for 57 years. He is also survived by daughters, Mary, and Evelyn and their children.

### **Newcomer's Dinner Friday, December 18th, 6:30 pm**

Steve Mclaughlin and Meredith Reynolds will host the December Newcomers Potluck on Friday, December 18th, 6:30 (ish) onwards A dish to pass is also welcome. Since its just after a work day, by all means don't be shy about doing something easy, like a quiche, bread and cheese, or a lentil salad from the Farmer's Market. Address: 3221 Valaire Dr. Decatur, GA 30033 Phone 404 683 3096 (Steve) Everyone is welcome.

Clerk of the Meeting  
Steve Collins

Assistant Clerk of the Mtg  
Georgia Lord

Recording Clerk  
Caroline Noyes

Treasurer  
Meredith Reynolds

Finance  
Paul Mangelsdorf

Administration  
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Care & Counsel  
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Ministry & Worship  
Suzan Kenworthy

Religious Education  
Mary Jahntz

Newsletter Editor  
Perry Treadwell

Social Concerns  
Julia Parker Ewen  
John Adams

Office Coordinator  
Jonah McDonald

Friend in Residence  
John Roberts

(Continued from page 1) He co-operated with other groups in civil right activities and in peace demonstrations against the war in Vietnam. He began attending the Atlanta Friends Meeting during his alternative service and later became a member. He remained in Atlanta after his alternative service ended.

**Bert Skellie** was born in 1946 in Evanston, Illinois. His parents were members of the Methodist Church. In 1964 Bert entered Georgia Tech and was required to choose a branch of the ROTC. He chose the Air Force ROTC. Three years later he switched to the Army ROTC which allowed him to do graduate studies at John Hopkins University (1969-73) and, at the same time, obtain a student deferment and avoid fighting in the Vietnam War which he opposed. After graduating from John Hopkins in 1974 Bert was required to do three months of active duty training. Knowing he could not participate in such training in good conscience, he turned to the military chaplain for advice. The chaplain gave him a copy of Advice to Conscientious Objectors in the Military. After reading it Bert knew he "was not far from being a C.O." After study and prayer he applied for C.O. status and was released from the army as a C.O.

**Jim Tolmach** was born in 1947. He was raised a Roman Catholic in Southern California. He attended Yale College during the Vietnam War. The preaching of Yale chaplain, William Sloane Coffin, against the war helped move Jim toward pacifism. Believing that sainthood was easier to obtain than Conscientious Objector status, Jim hoped that he could stay out of the war with deferments, first as a student, then as a teacher, his intended profession. After graduation in 1969 he found that teaching did not suit him, so he had to face the draft and examine his beliefs about war. With advice from a draft counselor at the Florida Avenue Meeting in DC, Jim

by his draft board in California, but their decision was overturned by the Appeals Board. Jim performed his alternative service, 1971-74, at the Center for Auto Safety, a Nader affiliate, then in the Civil Rights Division of the US Justice Department.

**Bill Holland** was born in Okinawa, Japan in 1953. His father was an Air Force military chaplain there. His parents were members of the Methodist Church. When Bill registered for the draft in 1971 he indicated on both his application form and in a letter to his draft board in Decatur, Georgia that he intended to seek classification as a conscientious objector. At the time, there was a national lottery system based on birth date which local draft boards used to call up their quotas. Bill's number was sufficiently low so his application was not processed until the summer of 1972. At that point he completed the conscientious objector questionnaire. His first application was rejected so he requested a board hearing. At the hearing he was granted conscientious objector status. However, he was never called for alternative service.

### **Does Punctuality Matter?** Contributed by Mary Ann Downey

On a recent First Day, one member of Meeting counted 55 Friends who were in the room at 10am to begin Meeting for Worship. During the hour of worship another 45 Friends entered the room. What effect does coming after 10:00 have on those who are already present, and on those who are late? What effect does it have on our ability to have a 'gathered meeting'? Balancing the needs, desires and preferences of individuals who are seated for Meeting for Worship before 10 am and those who arrive after the meeting room doors have closed is one of our recurring challenges.

The importance of punctuality for a gathered meeting is addressed by Thomas R. Bodine, in the Britain Yearly Meeting book of Quaker Faith and Practice. "It is not merely a question of disturbing the peace and quiet of those already assembled... In private meditation the worshippers could each 'settle' separately, training themselves not to be disturbed by latecomers. But if our goal is to achieve a group mystical experience, deepening and enriching our individual experience, then, it seems to me, we need to start the process at the same time.

A 'gathered' Quaker meeting is something more than a number of individuals sitting down together but meditating individually. So long as each sits in meditation in the way one does when worshipping by oneself, the worship will seldom reach that greater depth which a Quaker meeting at its best achieves. The goal of a truly 'gathered' meeting is to become fused into something bigger than the sum of the parts..."

I invite you to consider how to 'keep Sabbath', First Day as a special time and place for worship and a priority in your life.

### **An Effective Quaker Voice at the Georgia Capitol** contributed by Julia Ewen

Friends will have a great opportunity to hone lobbying skills and prepare to speak Truth with an effective Quaker voice to the State of Georgia in a workshop on December 13 after rise of Meeting. Keynoting the session will be State Representative Stephanie Stuckey Benfield, whose committee involvements in the Legislature include the Natural Resources committee (Green Friends take note!).

We will be inviting two or three other experts will anchor small group discussions in other areas of Friends peace and justice concerns. Social Concerns will provide ongoing support and networking encouragement for Friends during the 2010 legislative session.

We already are very active through FCNL on national issues, but actually MOST of the programs and the money to fund them that target our areas of deep concern are generated and administrated at a state and local level! We are only about 20 minutes from the Capitol! What a great opportunity for effective witness!

John Adams, co-clerk of Social Concerns, is preparing a survey to ask Friends for input about what else Social Concerns needs to be doing in 2010. The committee feels led toward more proactive involvement with calling forth and nurturing Friends leadings.

### **Friends General Conference and Atlanta Friends Meeting**

The Atlanta Friends Meeting was well represented at the annual meeting of the Central Committee of Friends General Conference October 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> in New Windsor, Maryland. Attending from AFM were Tom Kenworthy, Ceal Wutka, Perry Treadwell and Maia, Stoph and Graham Hallward. Over the years, Atlanta Friends have contributed to the governance of FGC and also has received the services of FGC.

This year at the annual meeting, the Central Committee was called upon to completely restructure this governance partly in light of the financial situation. Unlike some other Quaker service organizations, FGC has weathered the storm with balanced budgets but anticipates a tightening of income sources. It has reconstituted a "greener, cleaner" organization after much discernment.

Over the years that this representative participated in FGC, I have seen a great amount of growth in the services FGC has offered: Quaker Books, Quaker Publishing, Quaker Youth, Traveling in the Ministry, the Committee on Ministry of Racism. AFM has benefitted from these activities as well as the Religious Education Committee's Godly Play and the visit of Vanessa Julye and Donna McDaniel.

The very active Quaker Youth Committee has its own web site (QuakerYouth.org) with a opportunity to blog and "How to" for meetings in small pamphlets which include "Why Youth and Young Adults are Vital to the Religious Society of Friends", "How to Attract and Keep Families with Young Children" and "Quaker Traditions that May Be Helpful to Young Friends." All the How tos can be downloaded from the web site by clicking of Resources for Meetings.

The work of Friends on the local and the national level depends on the Spiritual philanthropy of Friends. FGC is an organization that is making a difference. For example, the Central Committee welcomed the Intermountain Yearly Meeting joining the association of yearly meetings. Other western yearly meeting are also considering associating with FGC. Our work continues to expand. Tom Kenworthy and I serve on the development committee and understand the difficulty that Friends go through in discerning where to put our donations and bequests. But if we intend to build and grow as a religious society, we must pay for it locally and nationally. From Perry

A Haiku Poem contributed by Tara Hands  
(5 syllables in 1st and 3rd lines,  
7 in the middle. (Japanese origin)

I move through this space  
Holding on and letting go.  
What is important?

**Atlanta Friends Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**

**11<sup>th</sup> month 15, 2009**  
**Recorded Pending Approval**

Mary Ann Downey presented the query: “Do you respect that of God in everyone though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern? Each of us has a particular experience of God, and each must find the way to be true to it. When words are strange or disturbing to you, try to sense where they come from and what has nourished the lives of others. Listen patiently and seek the truth. Think it possible that you may be mistaken.” (Advices and Queries of Britain Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice).

In attendance were: Muireann Brennan, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Parker Ewen, Judith Greenberg, Roland Heath, Bill Holland, Suzan Kenworthy, Tom Kenworthy, Elizabeth Lamb, Georgia Lord, Sally MacEwen, Paul Manglesdorf, Alison Mawle, Steve McLaughlin, Karen terHorst Morris, Meredith Reynolds, Eleanor Soler, Rick Stoops, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Denny Webster, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), Steve Collins (Clerk) (24 Friends)

**1. Approval of Minutes of Tenth Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.**

**Minute 09-11-01:** Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of Tenth Month 2009 with corrections.

**2. Treasurer’s Report.** Meredith Reynolds reported that there has been \$93,241 raised through October 31 and expenses of \$106,802. Total income thus far in 2009 represents 65% of the budget. The deficit as of October 31 stands at \$13,561. We need to bring in about \$50,000 before the end of the year to meet the budget, an amount that is consistent with prior years. Newsletter expenses are higher because of late billing from 2008, which has been paid, and adjustments to our insurance policy resulted in higher premiums than had been initially budgeted.  
Treasurer’s Report: Meredith Reynolds

**3. Finance.** Paul Manglesdorf presented the budget recommendations for 2010, approval of which will be sought in 12th month. Religious Education is seeking an increase in their budget to cover expenses for the new Godly Play materials, and the Gifts & Affiliation Fund is seeking slight increases in funds to AFSC, FCNL, and Right Sharing. There was considerable discussion about our SAYMA contribution. Friends were reminded that Atlanta Friends Meeting was integral in establishing SAYMA, and devising the assessment rate. The 2009 budget is currently running a deficit, but a surplus this year would render us net-neutral over the past two years.

**4. Ministry & Worship.** Suzan Kenworthy presented Christina Repoley’s report on the mid-week Meeting for Worship that has been active for the past five weeks. Attendance has ranged from 4 to 15 worshipers; a core group of people attend weekly while several others attend with regularity. Approximately 13 attended the semi-programmed worship. Christina has received positive feedback concerning both the unprogrammed and semi-programmed worship services. While the mid-week evening worship time is more convenient for some attenders, the majority who come regularly also attend regularly on Sundays. For new attenders, the mid-week worship provides an opportunity to better meet people and better connect with the Meeting. Ministry & Worship recommends that the mid-week Meeting for Worship be continued indefinitely.

**Minute 09-11-02:** Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the continuation of the mid-week evening Meeting for Worship.

Ministry & Worship seeks approval for a multi-generational Meeting for Worship on January 31, 2010. The meeting will be mostly unprogrammed but there will be a semi-programmed element so that all can share in the Godly Play curriculum. Notification will go out to inform Friends of the change in format on that particular First Day.

**Minute 09-11-03:** Atlanta Friends Meeting approves a multi-generational Meeting for Worship on January 31, 2010

**5. Nominating Committee.** Sally MacEwen brought forward Nominating Committee's initial list of recommendations for 2010, approval of which will be sought in 12<sup>th</sup> Month. Clerk: Georgia Lord, Archivist: Cal Gough, Membership Recorder: Nina Gooch, SAYMA Rep: Blake Williamson. Steve Collins reported that the Naming Committee has been reformed, and is in the process of discerning members for Nominating Committee. Members of Naming are Bert Skellie, Chris Lahowitch, and Nan Roark.

**6. Social Concerns.** Julia Ewen reminded Friends that Social Concerns Committee seeks to nurture Friends' concerns and leadings related to social justice. Recently, Friends have brought to Social Concerns leadings regarding programs related to feeding homeless transgendered persons and new opportunities for prison ministry. Social Concerns is working with these Friends to discern the best path forward

**7. Other Items.**

Perry Treadwell notes that the newsletter provides a list of Clerks for various committees and asks that starting in January 2010, phone numbers be included as well.

Steve Collins reported on a request from Don Bender for a sojourning membership to Savannah Friends Meeting for the next year while they reside in Savannah. The new Friend in Residence, John Roberts, will be moving into the apartment on the Saturday or Sunday after Thanksgiving. The Young Friends Support Committee is conducting a job search for the Young Friends Coordinator and would appreciate volunteers to assist them in that search.

Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Collins, Clerk  
Caroline Noyes, Recording Clerk

**SAVE THE DATE**

The annual Atlanta Friends Meeting Gathered Retreat will be held March 26-28, 2010. The theme will be "Tending Our Spiritual Gardens." AFM's own Mary Ann Downey will be the facilitator. This Retreat will be a time to nurture each person's spiritual development while deepening our sense of community in Spirit. Please consider attending.

## Calendar for Twelfth Month, 2009

### Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day, 10:00 a.m.— In the Meeting Room and a small meeting in the Library.

Every First Day, 3 p.m. — Carrollton Friends Worship Group, St. Andrew United Methodist Youth Center, 1106 Maple St, Carrollton, [lessell.bray@gmail.com](mailto:lessell.bray@gmail.com) or 770-830-8705.

Every 2nd and 4th First Day, 10:00 a.m. — Canton Friends Worship Group, 360 E. Marietta St, Canton, 12:00 p.m. Contact Marty Bray for more information: 770-830-8705 or [lessell.bray@gmail.com](mailto:lessell.bray@gmail.com)

Every Fifth Day, 12:10 p.m.— First Thursdays at AFSC office, 189A Sams Street, Decatur, GA, 30030.,

Every other Thursday at East Lake Commons, 404-378-5883 or [bertskellie@gmail.com](mailto:bertskellie@gmail.com).

Every Sixth Day, 8:45 a.m.— Friends School of Atlanta, 862 Columbia Drive, Decatur, GA 30030, 404-373-8746.

Mon-Fri Morning Worship, 8:30 – 9:00: In the library at Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse.

Contact Jonah McDonald, [404-377-2474.afmquakers@hotmail.com](mailto:404-377-2474.afmquakers@hotmail.com)

### Weekly Events

Every First Day (Sunday)

9:00 Adult Religious Education

9:15 Singing, Classroom A/B

10:00 Meetings for Worship

Every Week Day (Monday – Friday)

8:30-9:00 Morning Silent Worship, Library

Every Second-Fifth Day (Monday-Thursday)

8:30-12:30 Smart Toddlers, Nursery

/playground

Every Third Day (Tuesday)

7:30pm Silent Meditation, Meeting Room

7:30pm Bible Study, Library

Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)

7:00-8:30 Mid-Week Semi-Programmed

Worship Mt. Rm

### Other Events

12/2, Fourth Day (Wednesday)

7:00-9:30 Administration Committee, Library

12/5, Seventy Day (Saturday)

7:00-9:30 AFM Fundraising Concert

12/6, First Day (Sunday)

10:00-11:00 Worship followed by potluck

11:15-1:30 Green Friends, A/B

11:30-1:00 SAYF Retreat Planning Committee,

Sr High Rm

12/7, Second Day (Monday)

7:00-10:00 Spiritual Nurture Group, library

12/9, Forth Day (Wednesday)

7:00-9:30 ORAIARH, Library

12/10, Fifth Day (Thursday)

7:00-10:00 Teachings in Silence, Mt. Rm

7:30-9:00 Social Concerns Meeting, Library

12/13, First Day (Sunday)

11:30-2:00 Care and Counsel, Jr. Teen Rm.

11:45-2:00 Religious Ed, Nursery

11:45-2:00 Finance, Library

11:45-2:00 Ministry & Worship, A&B

11:45-1:45 Social Concerns State Legislature

Workshop, Mt Rm

12/18, Seventh Day (Saturday) Newcomers Dinner

see weekly announcements for details

12/20, First Day (Sunday)

10:00-11:00 Meeting for Worship followed by

Business Meeting

12/21, Second Day (Monday)

7:00-10:00 Spiritual Nurture Group

11/27, First Day (Sunday)

11:45-1:15 CUR-AFM Jr High

Please confirm unique events by checking the announcements sheets and or contacting the Meeting

Atlanta Friends Meeting  
701 West Howard Avenue  
Decatur, GA 30030-2902  
Phone: 404-377-2474

#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

701 West Howard Avenue, Decatur, GA 30030

Clerk: Steve Collins, 404-687-8715: [shcollins75@hotmail.com](mailto:shcollins75@hotmail.com)

Treasurer: Meredith Reynolds, 404-683-3096: [afmtreasurer@yahoo.com](mailto:afmtreasurer@yahoo.com)

Newsletter Editor, 404-325-1504, [perryt@bellsouth.net](mailto:perryt@bellsouth.net)

Office: Hours M-W-F 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; E-mail address: [afmquakers@hotmail.com](mailto:afmquakers@hotmail.com)

NAMETAGS: If you would like to have a permanent nametag made, leave a request in one of the baskets on the front table. Indicate whether you prefer one that hangs around the neck or that pins. When Carol Gray has made one for you, it will be placed in the black file box on the greeting table.

If you would like to be included in the AFM database and receive the Newsletter by mail and/or appear in future AFM Directories, please send your name, address phone, e-mail address, etc to Nina Gooch by e-mail at [ninagooch@gmail.com](mailto:ninagooch@gmail.com) or by phone 404-371-9873. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both. This also applies to any change in existing database information, e.g. change of address.

To receive AFM newsletter notices via e-mail, simply send a blank e-mail to [afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:afmnewsletter-subscribe@yahogroups.com) from the address where you want to receive the newsletter. You will receive a note back from Yahoo asking you to confirm your subscription; simply hit reply and you will be added to the list. There is no subscription fee for the newsletter.

To receive general announcements and participate in discussion, follow the same instructions only address the note to [afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:afmdiscussion-subscribe@yahogroups.com). To receive announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send the same note to [afmannouncements-subscribe@yahogroups.com](mailto:afmannouncements-subscribe@yahogroups.com).

Contributions to the Atlanta Friends Meeting can be placed in the slot marked "Contributions" in the greeting area of the Meetinghouse, or mailed to the Treasurer at the above address. Thank you!

DEADLINE FOR 1<sup>ST</sup> Month newsletter: 12th Month 18

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, articles, poetry, calendar notices and anything else of interest to Friends. Items should be sent directly to: Perry Treadwell [perryt@bellsouth.net](mailto:perryt@bellsouth.net) 404-325-1504

*This newsletter is a publication of the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Atlanta Friends Meeting*