

# Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter



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

## January 2010

**Query:** "Do you endeavor to widen your circle of friendships within the Meeting, seeking to know persons of all ages and at all stages of the spiritual journey? Does the Meeting provide for the spiritual refreshment of all members and attenders? Do Friends provide spiritual and practical care for the elderly, the lonely, and others with special needs? Steve McLaughlin for M&W

### Visit to El Sitio, El Salvador by Don Bender Part One of a Two Part Report

On November 1-4 Judy and I visited our friend Frank Cummings in Suchitoto, El Salvador. The purpose of our visit was to offer our support as representatives of (Atlanta Friends Meeting (AFM) and with this report to provide a visitors perspective on the work there to U.S. Friends. This report will not go into detail on their work in Suchitoto and El Sitio because this is covered well in an article in the October, 2009 issue of Friends Journal. But in summary, Frank and Carol were the heart and soul of the Sanctuary effort in Atlanta for 10 years. Through their local, national and then international contacts they were instrumental in supporting the new settlement in El Sitio from its beginning and in establishing a sister community relationship between the AFM and El Sitio. We also were able to visit with Frank's son, Andrew and his family and to meet Robert Broz, another Quaker living in Suchitoto.

On our second full day we took a launch to El Sitio, a 15 minute trip across the lake. On our arrival there we walked through the community to the tilapia ponds. With Judy's experience with tilapia in the Dominican Republic this was a particularly exciting experience for her. Currently there are about 20 people involved in the tilapia project who do the work of maintaining the ponds, feeding the fish and guarding the ponds against theft. There is a small coordinating committee, but most decisions are made by the entire group, which meets every other week.

The project buys their fingerlings and fish feed from a place outside the community which limits their profitability. Their goal in the future is to raise

their own fingerlings and to find food alternatives to improve their business viability. It takes 5-6 months for the fish to reach 1 lb, the full target rate. At first they had a problem of the fish reproducing, thus overcrowding and compromising the water quality so that the fish would only reach 1/3 lb. This problem was solved by introducing carnivorous fish into the pond to control the population. Their profitability is limited but 2 years into the project, they operate in the black.

Tilo Ayala, who is president of the community and a former scholarship student, spoke about the relationship of the tilapia project to the community. The fish project is on community property and through a legally documented relationship pays the community entity a fee to administer the program. Nelson Ayala, who visited the AFM in 2003, described their work on a land use plan so that other groups can have projects on community property. The community property is a total of about 11 acres with 2 acres currently in use for the tilapia project. When we visited they were working on a 4 ft. square topographical model of the common area to be used to present other projects to potential funders.

The community has gotten approval and some funding for a restaurant and training center with a swimming pool. Tourism and recreation is seen as one focus for income and for employment for their youth and such ideas as zip lines, boating and horse-back riding are being considered. They also want have started to harvest bat guano from a nearby bat cave to demonstrate its use as fertilizer as well as to bag the guano for sale. They are looking at other possible projects such as raising llamas for meat. (Continued on page 3)

# Announcements

## Season's Greetings from FRIENDS JOURNAL

If you're like me, you can't wait to share great books with your friends and loved ones. If you're in a book-sharing mood this Christmas, we have a great opportunity for you: we've compiled the books reviewed in 2009 in the pages of FRIENDS JOURNAL all in one place, for your shopping convenience. We also have set up the 2009 Young Friends Bookshelf, with books for kids and teens, for you to browse. A portion of your purchases at Powell's Books, if you use these links, will support FRIENDS JOURNAL, so your generosity will be multiplied. And don't forget a gift subscription to the JOURNAL, the magazine that has been informing and inspiring Friends since 1955.

Happy holidays, from all of us at FRIENDS JOURNAL. Thank you for your readership and for being a part of our community.

Yours in peace, Susan Corson-Finnerty Publisher and Executive Editor

P.S. When deciding on year-end charitable donations, consider supporting FRIENDS JOURNAL, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving the Quaker community. Your gifts will help sustain our unique ministry of the written word. Contributed by Mary Ann Downey

Please check your information for the **2010 Directory** in the greeting room at the meetinghouse. This is one of the years I'm going to not just assume that things are correct just because no one has told me it's wrong and will be trying to confirm everyone's contact information and will be emailing or calling people who haven't checked the draft at the meetinghouse.

--Even if none of your information has changed, please double-check in case I typed something in wrong or something changed in the computer. For example, last summer the computer changed the

birthdates of the all the children by two days.

--If everything is correct, please write OK by your info so I'll know you checked it and won't need to email or call to follow up and make sure there are no changes.

--If you're a recent high school or college graduate, we'd love to be able to contact you. You can add your info under your parents' info or create your own entry.

--If you won't be able to get to the meeting house to check the draft there, please email me at ninagooch AT gmail DOT com or call me at home at 404-371-9873.

### Adult Religious Education for January 2010

Muireann Brennan will tell us about her spiritual journey on January 3. For the rest of the month, we will explore the book, **Plain Living: A Quaker path to Simplicity**, compiled by Catherine Whitmire. This book is a collection of the sayings of Friends )ranging from Margaret Fell and Isaac Penington to Jan Hoffman and Patricia Loring( which speak to every aspect of living a spiritually centered and simple life. Topics explored include work, plain speech, money and resources, committed relationships, grief, fear, leadings, community, practicing non-violence, spirit-led service and inward simplicity. Each section is followed by queries.

### What do you know about the history of Friends and people of African descent?

Quiz yourself below:

When did American Quakers free themselves of enslaving people of African descent?

- a. In the 1670s and 1680s
- b. In the 1730s and 1740s
- c. In the 1780s and 1790s
- d. In the 1820s and 1830s
- e. Quakers never enslaved people of African descent

The answer appears on page 5 in the newsletter.

Intrigued? You can find the answer to this and many other questions in *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice*, which is on sale at the ORAIARH table or can be bought through Quaker Press.

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Carol and Frank at a planning meeting

(Continued from page 1) These seem ambitious projects and probably not all will materialize but their vision and confidence is impressive and their accomplishments to date make their vision seem possible. Not only is it important to El Sitio to develop economic opportunities for young people in the community, it is important for El Salvador as a country to provide an alternative to the temptation for the youth to migrate to the U.S. for economic opportunities.

Back in Suchitoto, we got together over coffee, with Frank, Andrew and Robert to explore ideas as to how we could be supportive. One idea that emerged was to

encourage other Friends to visit El Salvador to foster the spirit of sisterhood between Atlanta (and other U.S communities) and El Sitio (and other communities in the Municipality of Suchitoto). Friends from Atlanta could receive education in Spanish and share their gifts of artistic education or business expertise for example. Even seeing El Salvador as an ecotourism recreational destination (i.e., a bird watching expedition) helps their local economy. Any visits between our sister communities by open minded people can only help to build the sense of community across the stitches in our map.

One of our commitments, that we discussed, is that we will work to support the scholarship program of AFM. This program began in 2003 and has been important in providing funding for higher education for rural youth from the communities, including El Sitio, that make up the Municipality of Suchitoto. That fund has helped 20 students and the current campaign goal is \$50,000 to be spread over 5 years. The raising of this fund is lead by Bert Skellie (AFM), who has been involved since its inception. The beauty of this fund is that it is one of several such programs started in Suchitoto in the past 5 years and 4 of these programs are administered by either Frank or Robert Broz. Contributions to this fund should be made out to Atlanta Friends Meeting with El Sitio in the memo line.

### **GATHERED MEETING RETREAT**

Each year, the Atlanta Friends Gathered Meeting Retreat is held to support spiritual growth and deepen our sense of community. This is a time for gathering in silence and other forms of sharing, relaxing, spending quality time together as spiritual seekers and friends, and for having fun. All are encouraged to attend, whether you are new or seasoned in our Meeting, and whether you are a member or an attender. This time can be especially beneficial for new attenders to connect with others in the Meeting. **Partial scholarships are available—please don't let funding keep you from this vital experience.**

**This year we will focus on** “Tending our Spiritual Gardens” with facilitation by Quaker leaders from our own Atlanta Friends Meeting: **Mary Ann Downey and Bill Holland.** Mary Ann and Bill have been active in deepening the spiritual lives of Quakers and non-Quakers for many years. Through their organization, Decision Bridges, as well as the Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries Program, they have provided workshops and retreats on a variety of topics to monthly meetings throughout the United States as well as Friends General Conference Gathering and Pendle Hill.

The retreat is being held at the **Charlie Elliott Center in Mansfield, GA**, about one hour east of the perimeter. Cost, **including meals:** single room (**\$220**); two people per room (**\$140/person**); three per room (**\$133/person**); four per room (**\$130/person** [if this configuration can be arranged]). The cost per person **includes all meals** from Friday night dinner through Sunday lunch.

Registration will begin in January. Questions? Contact Denny Webster )404-353-6230(  
[dennywebster@gmail.com](mailto:dennywebster@gmail.com) or Ron Nuse, (404-378-1243) [nuser@bellsouth.net](mailto:nuser@bellsouth.net)

**Poor Peoples' Day at the Capitol** (Feb. 10 & 11, 2010)

2010 will mark the 30th anniversary of this event, which brings together low-income residents and their supporters from throughout the State. Feb. 10 is Education Day, with presentations and workshops on topics such as minimum wage, health care homelessness and foreclosures, ending with phone lobbying. Feb. 11 is Action Day with a march and a legislative hearing on jobs, wages and rebuilding our communities. Bert Skellie has represented the Meeting on the planning committee for the past several years. For more information contact Bert at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883.

**Multi-generational Meeting for Worship:** January 31, 2010

Members of Ministry & Worship and Religious Ed Committees are planning a special Multi-generational Meeting for Worship for the 5th First Day in January. On this day, students from preschool through high school will worship with their Parents and Friends in the Meeting Room from 10 to 11 a.m. During the Meeting, as Spirit moves, a teacher in the First Day School will tell a story from the Godly Play Curriculum, which is a regular part of the worship experience in the First Day classes. There will be no First Day classes for Young Friends on this Sunday, however the nursery will be open as usual. Friends who prefer a traditional silent worship can join the Meeting in the Library. More details will follow in the weekly Announcement Sheets.

7. Invictus Poem favored by Nelson Mandela in the film

OUT of the night that covers me,      Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,      Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
I thank whatever gods may be      And yet the menace of the years  
For my unconquerable soul.      Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

In the fell clutch of circumstance      It matters not how strait the gate,  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.      How charged with punishments the scroll,  
Under the bludgeonings of chance      I am the master of my fate:  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.      I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley. 1849–1903

Haiku Poem contributed by Tara Hands      Sitting quietly  
(5 syllables in 1st and 3rd lines,      Allows for relaxation.  
7 in the middle. (Japanese origin)      And contemplation.

Answer to quiz question:

c. In the 1780s, American Quakers freed themselves of enslaving people of African descent. See p. 3 in Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice for more information

**Atlanta Friends Meeting**  
**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**  
**12th Month 20, 2009**  
**Recorded Pending Approval**

Tom Kenworthy presented the query: “ Are you open to the stress of changing a habit?” (Tom Kenworthy)  
In attendance were: Folami Adams, John Adams, Mike Aland, Julia Ewen, Judith Greenberg, Tara Hands, Meg Harper, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Sally MacEwen, Paul Mangelsdorf, Paul Mangelsdorf, Jr., Alison Mawle, Steve McLaughlin, Karen terHorst Morris, Ronald Nuse, Meredith Reynolds John Roberts, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Rick Stoops, Joan Thompson, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Austin Wattles, Pat Williamson, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), Steve Collins (Clerk) (28 Friends)

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

Minute 09-12-01: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of Eleventh Month without corrections.

2.Ministry & Worship: Steve McLaughlin reported that the meeting has received a letter of request from Barbara Seal and Donald Schreiber to be married under the care of the Meeting. The Ministry and Worship Clearness Committee members are Beth Martinson, Carolyn Coburn-Allen, Tom Kenworthy, and Suzan Kenworthy.

3.Nominating Committee: Sally MacEwen presented for final approval Georgia Lord for Clerk of the Meeting, Cal Gough for Archivist, Nina Gooch for Membership Recorder, and Blake Williamson for SAYMA representative.

Minute 09-12-02: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Georgia Lord as Clerk of the Meeting

Minute 09-12-03: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Cal Gough as Archivist

Minute 09-12-04: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Nina Gooch as Membership Recorder

Minute 09-12-05: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves Blake Williamson as SAYMA representative

Nominating Committee brought forward additional recommendations for 2010, approval of which will be sought in 1st Month. Webmaster: Aaron Ruschetta, Ministry & Worship at-large member: Lynn Leuszler, SAYMA Representative: Wendy Phillips. Once completed, the list of current clerks for all committees will be put on the website.

4.Naming Committee: Bert Skellie reported that Lynn Leuszler, Roland Heath, Folami Prescott-Adams, Caroline Noyes, and Wendy Philips will continue on Nominating Committee. Sally MacEwen will also continue as a member of Nominating until it completes the 2010 slate. Bert Skellie nominated Steve Collins for Nominating Committee, approval of which will be sought in 1st month.

5.Social Concerns: John Adams reported on the December 13th State Legislation workshop which was well attended (about 16) and where a good discussion was held on lobbying at the state level. Social Concerns is also considering a request from a Friend in Cartersville on a training program on outreach to women for prison ministry or shelters. The Committee also approved five grants totaling \$906 for McNair Elementary school (3 projects) and McNair Middle School (2 projects). There will be an AFSC fundraiser on January 14.

6.Treasurer's Report: Meredith Reynolds reported that there has been \$104,206 raised through November 31 and expenses of \$119,573. Total income thus far in 2009 represents 73% of the budget. The deficit as of November 31st stands at \$15,366. We need to bring in about \$40,000 before the end of the year to meet

the budget, and amount consistent with prior years. Overall, expenditures are running about 10% under budget because of position vacancies (Friend in Residence and Young Friends Coordinator positions have been open for part of the year) and substantial savings on utilities.

7. Finance Committee: Paul Mangelsdorf presented the 2010 budget. The requested budget is \$143,400 and the suggested budget is \$141,600. Highlighted items include a 3% salary for the two continuing employees, an increase in the budget for the Gathered Meeting Retreat, a modest increase in the budget for Religious Education Committee to cover expenses for the Godly Play materials and to cover teachers' out-of-pocket expenses, a 5% increase in the Social Concerns budget, and a 5% increase for some line items in the Gifts & Affiliations budget.

Minute 09-12-06: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the 2010 requested budget of \$143,400.

The end-of-year report will include a breakout of all the money that is filtered through the meeting through various contributions and funds. Georgia Lord suggested that Committees examine their internal and external expenditures and find ways to reduce internal expenditures. There was consensus that, if needed, the Gathered Meeting Retreat Scholarship Fund will cover the Friend in Residence's attendance at the Retreat.

8. Other: Austin Wattles is seeking assistance from Friends who would like to help Austin interview students seeking assistance from New England Yearly Meeting's Freedman Fund which supports African American students in attending college.

Tara Hands brought forth a concern about the need for a more systematic approach to communicating with and outreach to newcomers. John Roberts suggested that the new Webmaster gather information from the Meeting website on visitors and examine ways to improve outreach through the website.

Bert Skellie announced an upcoming workshop on White Privilege being offered by the Committee on Undoing Racism on January 24th at 11:45am. [See below, ed]

Minute 09-12-07: Atlanta Friends Meeting expresses its appreciation and praise for Steve Collins' dedicated service as Clerk of Atlanta Friends Meeting from January 2007 through December 2009.

9. Clerk's items: The clerk asked committee clerks to provide input for the 2009 State of the Meeting report by January 31. The deadline to send the report to SAYMA is April 9.

Meeting closed with silent worship.

Respectfully Submitted,

Steve Collins, Clerk

Caroline Noyes, Recording Clerk

### **WHITE PRIVILEGE WORKSHOP 1/24 11:45**

The Committee on Undoing Racism in the Atlanta Friends Meeting invites you to join us for an exploration of white privilege on Sunday, January 24 at 11:45. Everyone is welcome. Based on comments of attenders last time we held this workshop, we especially encourage the clerk and at least one member of each of the Meeting's committees to attend. Peggy McIntosh, author of "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" states that she "was taught to see racism as individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group". How have cultural messages and social policies maintained these privileges for those identified as white while limiting them for people of color? What does this mean for all of us who work against racism? For more information, contact Susan Firestone, Karen Morris, or Bert Skellie (bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-378-5883).

## Calendar for First Month 2010

### 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, 12:30 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

1/3, First Day (Sunday) Potluck

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

11:30-1:00 SAYF Retreat Planning Committee,  
Sr High Room

1/4, Second Day (Monday)

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

1/6, Forth Day (Wednesday)

7:00-10:00 Administration Committee  
Meeting, Library

1/7, Fifth Day (Thursday)

7:30-9:00 Meeting for Peace Jr. High Room

1/10, First Day (Sunday)

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

11:45-2:00 Finance, Library

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

11:45-2:00 Religious Ed, Nursery

11:30-1:00 SAYF Retreat Planning

Committee, Sr High Room

1/13, Forth Day (Wednesday)

7:00-9:30 ORAIARH, Library

1/14, FifthDay (Thursday)

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

1/17, First Day (Sunday)

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

Business Meeting

1/18, Second Day (Monday)

7:00-10:00 Spiritual Nurture Group

Newcomers Dinner see weekly

announcements for details

1/22, Sixth Day, (Friday) Deadline for Second Month  
newsletter

1/23, Seventh Day (Saturday)

4:00-10:00 With Attention to Song

1/24, First Day (Sunday)

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

12:00-1:30 CUR-AFM: White Privilege

Workshop for Committee clerks and members,  
Meeting Room

1/31, First Day (Sunday)

11:45-1:30 Green Friends Forum, Mt Rm

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  
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#### ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

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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 2<sup>ND</sup> Month newsletter: 1<sup>st</sup> Month 22**

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 preferably in plain text in the body of the email.

*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*