

Atlanta Friends Meeting Newsletter



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

July 2010

Query: Are you a dutiful citizen - informing yourself of current issues, voting, expressing your views to those in authority, and discharging jury duty - in all things keeping foremost the leading of the Spirit? Do you work for penal reform and abolition of the death penalty?

John Adams Interview: Conscientious Objection (continued from June)

I decided I was going to give him a call, and I put his number on a piece of paper in my pocket. I ended up procrastinating and not calling him. I did call my father, who was a colonel in the Air Force at that time, and had a conversation with him about my feelings. He told me I was a CO—and he didn't know much about it but that I should ask around, maybe talk to a military chaplain. (As a sidebar, I had also thought about claiming to be militarily insane, but a friend who was a psychologist refused to sign what I'd written up. He said I was sane.)

So I went to see Mariba Sankofa (Sankofa, a word from West Africa, means a spirit of returning, looking back over your past to find wisdom), an AFSC counselor. He also counseled me that he felt I was a bone fide CO and began to help me plan the process. We could have decided for me 1) not to report, 2) hire lawyers to report for me, 3) send a letter, or 4) go—shave up, clean up, put on a uniform, go, and then claim myself as a CO and go through the military proceedings to determine it. And that's what I chose. I was a staff sergeant at the time. So I showed up. For the counselor, timing was a strategy, so I didn't announce immediately: he was wondering if they were going to use me, because if they didn't use me the whole thing would be a moot point. So I went through all the processing: shots, new uniforms, military briefings—and then we were assembled in a large military building as a whole squadron, and they had processing teams beginning to process you for orders to wherever you were going.

At that time he told me to declare. (At least twice a day I was in touch with the counselor, who took collect calls thanks to AFSC.) I claimed at a military assembly and was brisked off to a secluded spot and informed that that wasn't an option; I needed to get myself together and go ahead and do what I was ordered. I had an index card with references to military laws as to what my rights were and I quoted the index card, and they moved me to a secluded barracks.

There were two of us there: a female on the other side was a Jehovah's Witness. They allowed me to make phone calls after the first day. I was being advised by AFSC all along the way. At that point, they connected me with a lawyer in the San Antonio area, and I would call her for updates. She would advise me of my rights. She was also calling the staff judge advocate's office to show that I was not alone. So that was the beginning of the proceedings. First I was basically restricted to my barracks. After that, they wanted to assign me to work. At first, the work seemed to be in support of the war mission, because it was processing paperwork for people who were being deployed. Then they asked me if I wanted to work in the hospital, and I refused that. Then they asked me if I wanted to pick up cigarette butts, and I did that. The whole proceedings took a long time—over six months. In fact, a lot of the soldiers had returned from the war and were going home and asking me why I was still there. The war was announced a success and my case was still going on. Very murky, nothing concrete.

In October '92, I received a letter and news that my CO status had been approved, that I would be honorably discharged in the next couple of days, and to prepare myself for out-processing. Great news. But before the two days, I received news that a staff judge advocate had overturned my CO designation and that I was to begin processing under military corporal law. Pretty much, the discussions were about six months in prison.

My lawyers started complaining to our legislators about the unfairness of the process. After about ten days, I received notice from (Senator) Sam Nunn's office that the official designation was to be accepted, and I was released that day.

I got back to Atlanta and went to a reception, where I shared my experiences with AFSC. I'm just blessed that it turned out the way it did, and that I can still honor our veterans and honor our American values in a way that still speaks truth to war. And it's insanity. It's insane.

I think about all these Somalian guys in the news recently who are leaving America to become suicide bombers. This American journalist was taking a swipe about how they'd been brainwashed, and I couldn't help but think of how many young men and women had lost their lives in the military, and we call it patriotism. I often think about how after the bombs are dropped, the troops are cleared, the bodybags are zipped, there's a pretty contingent of VIPs who sit at desks and sign things, over a meal or coffee, and sign treaties. Why don't we do that first? It seems crazy that weapons manufacturers make their money. I don't think anything is learned ever by anybody losing their life in war. It might as well be a drive-by shooting—because for me it seems like they're all casualties. Innocent bystanders. No matter how strongly you believe you're doing the right thing, it's still a chess game.

It's a bittersweet cocktail.

It's a beautiful world. I'm inspired by nature, by love. Anything else usually goes out in the rinse.

John Adams, interviewed by Meg Harper, 11 April 2010.



Announcements

Apologies to Joe Clay for leaving out his photo in last month's newsletter. It got inadvertently dumped along with other material due to the lengthy news articles.

Food in the Library "At the last Administration

Committee meeting, we considered the idea of banning food and drink from the library to better care for the space. We decided to elicit feedback from members and attenders before proceeding. Please voice your thoughts/concerns to a member of the Committee before the end of July: Karen Morris, John Roberts, Jonah McDonald, Judith Greenberg, Jeff Evans, Carolyn Coburn-Allen, Myrna Trapp, Jack Honderd and Dan May."

Forum: "WHO DO YOU SAY I AM? ... A Worship Sharing modeled on the Pendle Hill lecture series. George Fox asked "What can thou say?" and as Friends we understand that when we center together in the listening quiet of Worship our diverse voices, heard together, speak Truth. When : July 25th, After Worship, In the Meeting Room, "From wonder into wonder existence opens." Lao Tsu

Adult First Day School On Sunday, July 4, Margie Reese will tell us about her spiritual journey. For the rest of the month we will discuss the book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This is a book on practice-centered spirituality and each chapter explores a different practice. Books are available from Bill Holland and class meets each Sunday in the library from 9:00-9:50. All are welcome.

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2010/2011 Religious Ed Planning Session

On July 17th, Friends will gather at the meetinghouse to plan for the next First Day school year. Worship will begin at 8:30 and program-wide planning will begin at 9:00. After a potluck lunch, Friends will work on classroom-level organization and planning tasks. Many hearts and hands are needed for this work. If you feel led to teach, be a presence in a classroom, or you have children in the program, please join us for all or part of the day. Contact Mary Jahntz at maryjahntz@gmail.com to RSVP and for details.

Inside Johnny Isakson's Office By Lissa Place

We walked into Johnny Isakson's office last month to lobby for Environmental legislation, and I actually learned that we can make a difference.

A delegation from Green Friends: John Roberts, Robyn Coward, Kathy Johnson, Sue May and Dan May decided to take the leap and go lobby one of our two senators on how we felt about a bill. We went to discuss the CLEAR act, a piece of legislation addressing global warming supported by FCNL. Coal and oil companies who mine or import raw materials bid on permits which cost more over the next 20 years. This is meant to encourage the development of alternative energy sources. There is also a cap on fossil fuel production that decreases over time. 75% of what the coal and oil companies pay is returned to the people through dividends to offset increased fuel costs, the remainder for research into alternative energy. We spoke with Johnny Isakson's state director, Tricia Chastain, which is apparently as close as you can get to actually talking to the senator these days. Tricia was easy to talk to and listened carefully as we discussed the personal and financial ways this bill would support Georgia and our economy by creating thousands of Green jobs. We discussed the personal reasons why we care so much. We left her with a piece of paper with all the facts about the bill on it, with her promise to send it to Washington.

It may seem strange to some, but I have always dreamed of going to a congressional office and telling them what I think about something that matters to me. Working together as a team made it possible. From learning how to make an appointment to how to dress, between us the collective wisdom gave us the steam we needed to actually get there. Fortunately some of us had done this before which gave us an idea what to expect. We followed a long tradition of Quakers lobbying Washington for their ideals. Apparently the persistent and accurate work of FCNL has given our tiny group a significant voice in the legislature. Did she listen? Will it change things? I don't know, but I think that the more congressional offices see Friends coming to speak their minds, the more they'll realize that we don't intend to allow our issues to go unheard. It may eventually create change. None of these things happen quickly, so we'll probably go back and tell them more as time goes on. Until then, at least I can rest with knowing I have spoken my truth.

Letter from a Young Friend supported by the Scholarship Committee

Dear Friends, I just finished up my senior year at Emory University. I am done with both my Biology and Environmental Studies degrees. However, I have decided to go a fifth year to do honors research involving the study of the invasive species *Hydrilla verticillata*. Also, the economy is not looking too good right now, so I figure an extra year of college cannot hurt. During my fifth year I plan on getting internship experience and applying to graduate school to get my Ph.D. in Ecology.

I'm still not sure if grad school is the right route for me. I like doing research, but getting a job in the Environmental field, such as Wetland Management, is also very appealing and does not require a Ph.D or Masters. The Emory honors program is designed to mimic research at the grad school level, and the internships should give me an idea of what the Environmental field will be like. So hopefully by the end of next year, I will be able to make my decision.

I still cannot believe that I have finished my senior year at Emory. It has been an incredible journey. I thank the Atlanta Friends Meeting for being there to help me succeed every year. Your generous donations have helped me pay for books each year and are greatly appreciated. I hope all is well and will be visiting soon. Thanks, Daniel Gatch

What do you know about the history of Friends and people of African descent? Quiz yourself: Many Quakers, both before and after the Civil War, took an active interest in educating the children of freed African Americans.

a. True or b. False

The answer appears on a following page in the newsletter.

Religious Education Committee Thanks You!

It takes so very many hands to support the religious education program offered to the young Friends in our community. As a parent, my heart often overflows in gratitude for those that serve our children. As clerk of the Religious Education Committee, I am left breathless at the level of service, love, and tender care offered as a gift to young Friends week after week.

On behalf of Atlanta Friends Meeting, I would like recognize and appreciate:

- * All that have held our work in prayer, have seen and acknowledged the divine in a younger member of our community, or supported the personal leading of a young Friend.
- * Parents, guardians, family and community members that bring young Friends to Meeting, ask about their work, and nurture their spirit lives the other six days of the week. Without you, our classrooms and work would be empty.
- * All that have served as substitute teachers, doorkeepers, and Friendly adult presences in our nursery and classrooms throughout the year. Your dedicated presence is so very important to our community. Your gift of service makes this work spiritually and physically lighter for teachers. Your presence brings much joy to young Friends and helps us connect our multigenerational community together more deeply.
- * Jude Lomas for the beautiful handcrafted object boxes.
- * Karen Morris, Jonah McDonald, and Folami Prescott-Adams for the very many ways you guide and support this work and constantly help the committee seek the best way forward.
- * Dawanda Pearson for her light-filled care of the infants and toddlers.
- * Our 2010 First Day School teachers for the commitment, tenderness, and joy they bring to nurturing the spiritual lives of the younger members of our community. Thank you Daphne Clement, Betsy Eggers, Chip Gooding, Maggie Hasbrouck, Jennifer Kramer-Dickie, Alison Mawle, Terri O'Neil, Morgan Phillips-Spotts, Elizabeth Valera, and Pat Williams.

It is the tradition of Atlanta Friends Meeting to mark the end of the First Day School year with programmed worship with attention to the young Friends in our community. On May 23rd, AFM gathered for the 2010 **Celebration of Youth.**

We joyfully celebrated the lives of the youngest members of our community, Buntu Dignite and LeahMarie McNeal, and congratulated High School graduate, Christine Tippen, on reaching this important milestone.

This year, First Day School classes considered how our lives reflect our values and our love for one another. After a period of silent worship, teachers shared some of the spiritual work of young Friends in each class. Queries, art, sacred stories, song, our relationship to the earth, the revolutionary life of Jesus, and personal reflection and action were highlighted. We also recognized the following young Friends as they move up to the next First Day School class:

- * Nursery to Preschool: Keric McConnell-Hicks
 - * Preschool to Lower Elementary: Kory Fiscal and Sean McConnell-Hicks
 - * Lower Elementary to Upper Elementary: Ryu Roberts
 - * Upper Elementary to Middle School: Casey Herring, Merrick Owan, Georgia Gooding, Diane Vyizigiro, and Jimmy Hakizimana.
 - * Middle School to High School: Katelyn Tippen and Chase Gooding
- Song, prayer, and much light filled our celebration and reflected the love we share for the young Friends in our community.

NEWS FROM FCNL

* The Native American Health Care bill finally passed, part of the larger health insurance reform bill. The Friends Committee on National Legislation joined with Native groups and other allies for nearly ten years to lobby for this improvement. AFM's Michael Kramer, who has worked in a Navajo hospital in Arizona, hopes these funds will aid in such critical areas as home health care for elders and domestic violence prevention.

* FCNL urges support of the bipartisan CLEAR Act, "a fair, simple, and effective bill to cut greenhouse gas pollution." The act would "decarbonize" the U.S. economy, without picking industry favorites, and would compensate consumers for the inevitable increases in energy costs. AFM Green Friends recently lobbied for the act with Sen. Isakson's staff.

* Bipartisan legislation that would require the administration to develop an exit strategy and timetable for withdrawal from Afghanistan, H.R. 5015, now has 64 cosponsors, a figure that is two-thirds of the way toward FCNL's goal of 100 or more cosponsors before Congress votes on the war supplemental funding bill for the U.S. war in Afghanistan. * Sixty-eight Senators have recently written the President, urging him to complete his review of our landmine policy before the end of 2010. The U.S. has not used antipersonnel landmines since 1991, has not exported them since 1992 and has not produced them since 1997.

However, the U.S. is still one of only 39 countries that have not yet joined the Mine Ban Treaty. U.S. participation in the treaty is important. Even though landmine use has been significantly reduced worldwide, a few countries refuse to join—and even continue to use landmines—under the cover that they will not join if the U.S. has not joined. The U.S. currently retains the right to use the 10.4 million landmines still stockpiled in U.S. arsenals.

For details and action steps go to www.fcnl.org . (Sue May)

An Old Observation from 1961

"The burgeoning Quaker House programs infused much vigor into messages as well as participation by members and attenders. At times, some of those present felt that messages tended to be too political or to emphasize social action rather than spiritual growth. Noyes Collinson once was eluded for repeated messages on political and social issues, and as a result refused for a year to speak during meeting." *As Way Opened* p 37

The sense of the Meeting is that the quality of our worship is noticeably strengthened when Friends arrive on time. We appreciate that this is sometimes difficult to do and recognize any extra efforts Friends make to adhere to this discipline on behalf of our community.

a. True. See p. 123-137. Both before and after the Civil War, Quakers took an active interest in educating the children of freed African Americans. Quaker support of the educational needs of African Americans took four principal forms: creating schools specifically for African American children and adults; supporting schools that African Americans themselves founded and operated; admitting African American students to Quaker schools; and, as time went on, creating schools that admitted students regardless of race. European American Quaker Anthony Benezet was one of the pioneers in education for African Americans in the 1750s.

[I received a call several weeks ago from a Quaker in a assisted living home in Roanoke, Virginia, reminding us that Quakers were not the only Christian religion that refused enslavement as stated in the book and the February News Letter: Amish, and Mennonites never did allow it; so the statement in the book is correct in that Quakers were *required* to end it. This news letter is apparently read all over the country. Ed]

Atlanta Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
6th Month 20, 2010
Recorded Pending Approval

Georgia Lord presented the Query: "Am I a grateful recipient of the gifts that life provides? How do I express my gratitude? Do I live with a grace a lightness that makes joy and laughter a part of my everyday life?" (Doug Crawford-Palmer, Oread Friends Meeting)

In attendance were: Steve Collins, Mary Ann Downey, Julia Ewen, Susan Firestone, Jenny Foster, Meg Harper, Bill Holland, Elizabeth Lamb, Lynn Leuszler, Kathy Johnson, Beth Martinson, Rick Martinson, Alison Mawle, Steve McLaughlin, Al Natanagara, Margie Rece, Meredith Reynolds, John Roberts, Marthajane Robinson, Rick Stoops, Myrna Trapp, Perry Treadwell, Denny Webster, Ceal Wutka, Mark Wutka, Caroline Noyes (Recording Clerk), Georgia Lord (Clerk) (27 Friends)

Gathered Meeting Retreat: Denny Webster reported that the 2010 Gathered Meeting Retreat was very successful. Planning for the 2011 Retreat is beginning, and Nominating Committee has been asked to help identify committee members and a clerk or co-clerk.

Nominating Committee: Steve Collins reported that Nominating Committee is bringing forward Karen Morris to serve as Personnel Liaison and Bill Holland to serve as Assistant Clerk of Atlanta Friends Meeting. Final approval for both will be sought in Seventh Month. Nominating Committee is also looking for members and clerks of the Gathered Meeting Retreat Committee and the Young Friends Support Committee.

Ministry and Worship: Steve McLaughlin reported that Ministry and Worship has received a letter requesting clearness for marriage under the care of the Meeting from Kirsten Smith and Hillary Brown, and a clearness committee has been formed. Ministry and Worship also approved a contribution of \$350 to Laura Norlin to attend the Young Adult Friends national conference as part of the pastoral care team. Ministry and Worship sought final approval for Al Natanagara's membership in Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Minute 10-06-01: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the membership request of Al Natanagara. Ministry and Worship also announces that on August 29, 2010 there will be a Silence and Speech Forum focusing on Friends' process of Meeting for Worship.

SAYMA: Bill Holland and Mary Ann Downey requested that Atlanta Friends Meeting host the March 12, 2011 SAYMA representatives meeting. The Meeting will be responsible for providing hospitality about 10 Friends and arranging a simple lunch.

Minute 10-06-02: Atlanta Friends Meeting an invitation to host the March 12, 2011 SAYMA representatives meeting.

Clerk's Items: The clerk presented a traveling minute for Mark and Ceal Wutka's outreach to North Carolina Yearly Meeting-Conservative. Friends suggested changes in the proposed letter and approved the text, as changed. Dana Goldman has stepped down as clerk of the Young Friends Support Committee. Lili Crymes will temporarily serve as clerk until a new clerk is ed.

Approval of Minutes of Fifth Month Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business:

Minute 10-06-03: Atlanta Friends Meeting approves the minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of Fifth Month without changes.

Respectfully submitted,
Gorgia Lord, Clerk
Caroline Noyes, Recording Clerk

Calendar for Seventh 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 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

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.

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

Suspended for July, will begin again August 13.

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

7/11, First Day, (Sunday)

11:45-2:00 Finance, Library

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

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

11:45–2:00 Religious Ed, Nursery

7/12, Second Day (Monday)

6:15-9:30 Spiritual Nurture Group, Library

7/14, Forth Day, (Wednesday)

7:00-9:30 ORAIARH, Library

7/16, Sixth Day, (Friday) Deadline for 8th Month newsletter

7/18, First Day, (Sunday)

Newcomers Dinner, place to be announced

11:45 Meeting for Business

7/25, First Day, (Sunday)

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

11:45-1:45 "Who Do You Say I Am" Forum Mt Rm

Other Events

7/1 Fifth Day (Thursday)

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

7/4, First Day (Sunday) Potluck

11:30-2:00 Green Friends, A&B

7/6 Third Day (Tuesday)

7:00-9:00 Silent Meditation, Meeting Room

7/7 Fourth Day (Wednesday)

6:45-9:45 Administration Committee, Library

7/8, Fifth Day (Thursday)

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

7/10, Seventh Day (Saturday)

10am-8pm Gooch-French Wedding Anniversary Celebration

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

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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 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@yahoogroups.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@yahoogroups.com. To receive announcements relating directly to the life of the meeting, send the same note to afmannouncements-subscribe@yahoogroups.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 8TH Month newsletter: 7th Month 16

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 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