

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER



April 2015

Summary of 2014 Ministry for Mary Ann Downey

This is one of a group of reports from individuals whose ministries are under the care of the meeting. Additional ministry reports will be included in subsequent newsletters.

The Atlanta Friends Meeting and Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting first recognized and recorded support for my work with the Traveling Ministry Program of Friends General Conference in June, 2000. Since then I have been supported by an anchoring committee of Friends in Atlanta and have offered yearly summaries of the work I've been called to do. I am grateful for the faithful care I've been given for this work from those on the committee as well as the meeting as a whole. The current committee is Bill Holland, Dave Thurman, Nan O'Connor and Lewis Fuller.

My 2014 ministry was focused on Quaker Voluntary Service. This included being a spiritual nurturer for one volunteer, helping 2 volunteers prepare a workshop for SAYMA, assisting the director of QVS, meeting regularly to support the current Atlanta house coordinator, developing educational material on our meeting for worship with attention to business for the website, helping orient spiritual nurturers, and facilitating a workshop for telling stories of spiritual journeys with the 2014-2015 volunteers.

Calls from Friends in AFM requesting my help with discernment and clearness came regularly this year for marriage, membership, ministry, life challenges and memorial services. I meet regularly with 2 members of meeting to support and anchor their ministry.

Workshops for SAYMA and FGC Gathering that Bill and I were asked to lead were canceled due to my eye surgery, but we participated in a consultation at Quaker Hill, Richmond, ID with Friends in the Traveling Ministry Program for the New Meetings Project of FGC. We also organized a weekend retreat with John Calvi at AFM featuring his book, **The Dance Between Hope and Fear**, and led a half day workshop using the book, **Building Consensus: Conflict and Unity** for Oakhurst Baptist Church in Atlanta.

When I taught students on probation and was discouraged, my strong and patient co-teacher reminded me, "we're planting seeds and we might not get to see them come up." It is a great gift when I do see the seeds of my ministry begin to grow and hear about how someone I've helped is helping others. I am discovering deep joy in my work behind the scenes, as well as the work I do in a leadership role.

My spiritual life has been challenged and strengthened this year with a series of eye surgeries that kept me from doing work I looked forward to and healing that required more time to sit and wait. In morning meditation with sight in only one eye, I realized how my physical eyesight is always limited by many things including my

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

QUERY

How do we center our lives in the awareness of God the Spirit, so that all things may take their rightful places? Do we try to exist fully in the present moment, when we are more likely to act out of a centered place?

- Adapted from Penn Valley (Kansas City, Missouri) Meeting

willingness to pay attention to both the expected and the unexpected in life. This is also true for my spiritual life. I'm learning that patient attention for this journey within is required in order to discover the lessons, and insights God has for me now. I am reminded of John Milton's poem "On His Blindness" which ends with "they also serve who only stand and wait."

I feel blessed to have been well used and faithful to the work I was led to do. Without the support of my anchoring committee, my family and the family of Friends who help me discern God's guidance it would not be possible.

Letter to Don Bender from Burundi Friends

Dear Friend,

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. On behalf of Burundi Friends and myself, I use this opportunity to present our project to you, so that you can help us find the best way to achieve our objective without breaking laws.

Since we came in Georgia, finding Evangelical friends Church was not possible. This led us to find an alternative friends community, which is Atlanta Friends Meeting. We accept that both have the Friends doctrine despite their different ways of worship. They also showed us their strong support, the time we participated in Mid America Yearly Meeting conference in 2009 without our own contribution (money).

While searching for Friends Churches which are close to Georgia, we found that the Evangelical Friends Church Eastern region works in Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina, Michigan and Florida. This pushed us to think how we may start the programmed Friends Church activities once they would like to encourage this work. This may help us to control our children behavior because they're taken away by different beliefs, as they need the opportunity to participate in chorale groups, to listen to preaching and have Baptism ceremony.

We can't forget to mention that we need a place where people may worship in Kirundi and English "because the youth are full English while adult are Kirundi speakers." All refugees who tried to worship together did not succeed because there was no capable Leader "Pastor" to help them in God's ministry. That's why we would like a church under an American leader, in order to act without breaking the law and maintain the Friends doctrine.

Since 2007, you remember that we belong to AFM; according to that, we would request that our respective meeting leaders recommend us and present our request to the Evangelical Friends Church Eastern region headquarter office.

The Burundi Friends families decided to contact you for advice and suggestions, because you are among the elders, trusted and respectful persons in our Friends Meeting, who may show us the best way to conduct our request.

It's our understanding that you'll support our request and help us present this request to the Atlanta Friends Meeting for their consideration of our request.

On behalf of Burundi Friends,

Ntibayazi Dieudonne

John Lewis Siceloff 1953-2015

John Siceloff passed away at his home in Dutchess County, NY on March 6, 2015, under the care of hospice and surrounded by loving family. He was 61.

John led a life committed to solutions-oriented journalism and educational empowerment. His career spanned 5 continents, beginning with his work as a war correspondent reporting from the Middle East, Africa and Central America. He was bureau chief for CBS News in El Salvador during the height of that country's civil war and

bureau chief for NBC News in Managua during the contra war. In the U.S., he worked as a producer and senior producer for ABC, NBC, and CBS before taking a position as senior executive producer to launch [NOW on PBS](#) with Bill Moyers, later hosted by David Brancaccio. His book [Your America: Democracy's Local Heroes](#), co-written with Jason Maloney, featured Individuals profiled on NOW who were part of the 'geography of hope'.

In 2009 John founded [Catch the Next](#) (CTN), a non-profit education organization fostering college success and graduation for at-risk students. CTN has assisted thousands of students and currently has partnerships with community colleges in Texas where the program has increased completion and success rates by 50%.

John executive produced the 2012 documentary feature [Fixing the Future](#), which brought stories of innovative, green, and local jobs to convening events in 75 cities to engage residents of each community in a grassroots process of economic revitalization.

John was born and raised on St. Helena Island, S.C., where his parents, Courtney and Elizabeth Siceloff, ran the [Penn Center](#). Founded in 1862 to teach reading, writing, and practical skills to newly freed slaves, in the 1950s and 1960s Penn was a center of community development and social justice, hosting retreats for leaders of SCLC and the civil rights movement. John's experiences of growing up in a family at the center of the violence and vision of the Movement formed the basis of his recently completed memoir, *Lowcountry Blood*. John served on the Board of Directors of Penn Center and was actively working to ensure its future.

John served on the Board of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) from 1999-2004. He was active on the International Programs Executive Committee (IPEC), which he clerked from 2000-2004.

For his television work, John received six national Emmys, the Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia Award, the Peabody Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award from the Overseas Press Club for Best International Documentary, and the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Television Political Journalism. He was a graduate of Swarthmore College and held an MA in Communications from Stanford University.

He is survived by his beloved wife Birgit Siceloff, with whom he trekked in Bhutan, traversed Patagonian glaciers, and experienced every life joy and obstacle hand in hand; by his son Andrew Siceloff, a producer, director, and editor in New York City and a partner in his passion for media and education; by his sister Mary Siceloff of Savannah, GA who shares his Lowcountry childhood and love of literature, and numerous extended family, all of whom were profoundly influenced by his life.

Memorial services have not yet been announced. The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Catch the Next, PO Box 856, New York, NY 10163, or online at <http://catchthenext.org/donate/>.

Meetinghouse Library News Part I, Submitted by Library Clerk Cal Gough

Several items – some purchased, some donated by attendees - have been added recently to the library's collections. Shown below in alphabetical order are the titles, followed by the "shelf address" and brief descriptions excerpted from the Quaker Books catalog or Amazon.com. Most purchases from the library's 2014 materials budget were replacements of borrowed-but-never-returned classics, indicated by (*).

- *You Enlist: The Real Deal on Joining the Military* (2006) - VIDEO
- *Beyond Majority Rule: Voteless Decision Making in the Religious Society of Friends** (1983) 262 /.S5 - A Jesuit scholar spent two years visiting meetings, studying the actual decision-making process used among Friends. This resulting book includes a history and description of the Quaker process and draws conclusions about what works well and what does not.
- *Grandfather Gandhi* (2014). J B Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's grandson, tells how his grandfather taught him to turn darkness into light in this uniquely personal and vibrantly illustrated tale that carries a message of peace.
- *In God's Name* (1994) J 291.2 / .S1. In poetic text and vibrant illustrations, this modern fable celebrates the diversity and, at the same time, the unity of all people.

- *Just Moms: Conveying Justice in an Unjust World** (2011) 649.1 / .J21. Twenty-seven women share their (mis)adventures modeling social-justice principles for their children and communities. Here moms bend their own rules and redefine success as they work to raise kids who value peace, equality, truth, simplicity, and love.
- *Living the Quaker Way: Timeless Wisdom for a Better Life Today** (2014) 248.4 / .G21. Philip Gulley shows how Quaker values provide real solutions to many of our most pressing contemporary challenges. Includes a 30-day spiritual practice that applies the Quaker tradition of Queries.
- *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible* (1991) 220.7 / .H5. Born to a clergyman in 1662 and ordained into the British Presbyterian Church, Matthew Henry has left his mark on the hearts of countless Christians who seek a deeper understanding of the riches that Scripture contains. This edition of uses the King James text and is abridged from the original six volumes completed shortly before his death in 1714.
- *Pathblazers: Eight People Who Made a Difference* (1992) J 920 / F.21. The lives and achievements of eight African-Americans who contributed to civil rights, education, and the arts are vividly rendered in anecdotal prose: Septima Clark, Jester Hairston, Josephine Baker, Thurgood Marshall, Gwendolyn Brooks, James Forman, Andrew Young, and Barbara Jordan.
- *Paths to Quaker Parenting** (2009) 649.1 / .Q21. Should my nine-year-old have both an iPod and a cell phone, or neither? How do I deal with my anger when my teenager rolls his eyes and doesn't take out the trash? This book is the sharing of a group of parents who have struggled with concerns such as these and have looked to their Quaker faith to find strength and guidance.
- *Peace One Day: The Making of World Peace Day* (2005) J 303.6 / .G9
- *Portrait in Grey: A Short History of the Quakers** (2006) 289.6 / .P8. Revised edition of this comprehensive and readable introduction to the history of Quakerism, from its origins in 17th century England to the development of the differing varieties found around the world today.

Callaway-Singer Wedding – April 11

We are happy to announce that Nylgia and Kelly Callaway-Singer will be married under the care of the Atlanta Friends Meeting April 11 at 11:30 AM at the meeting house. Potluck reception to follow. Childcare provided.

Green Friends Film Series – April 26

Our second film will be screened on Sunday, April 26, at 11:45 in the Meeting Room. It is an episode of the well-received Showtime series “Years of Living Dangerously”; this episode looks at the downside of natural gas as a form of energy (fracking, methane leakage), and at the upside of renewable energy, particularly wind power. Snacks will be served. Subsequent sessions will be devoted to single topics, such as climate change, food issues, and biodiversity.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business – March 15, 2015

Recorded pending approval

Attendance: Mike Aland, Don Bender, Muireann Brennan, Steve Collins, Susan Cozzens, Jennifer Dickie, Julia Ewen, Sally Ferguson, Susan Firestone, David Foster, Julie Foster, Larry Foster, Clive Gordon, Carol Gray, Cathy Hammond, Roland Heath, Martha Hutchins, Kathy Johnson, Chris Kohler, Lynn Leuszler, Georgia Lord, Susan May, Karen terHorst Morris, Ronald Nuse, Erica Schoon, Bert Skellie, Karen Skellie, Rebecca Sullivan, Elizabeth Tolmach, Jim Tolmach, Myrna Trapp, Ashley Wilcox, Nan O'Connor (Clerk), Elizabeth Lamb (Recording Clerk) (34 Friends).

Query: Ashley Wilcox presented the query: “Do you believe that faithfulness and sincerity in speaking, even very briefly, may open the way to fuller ministry from others? When prompted to speak, do you wait patiently to know that the leading and the time are right, praying that your ministry may arise from deep experience? Are

you aware of speaking predictably or too often, and of making additions towards the end of a meeting when it was well left before?"

Discernment Items

Ministry and Worship Committee: On behalf of the Ministry and Worship Committee Ashley Wilcox reported that we have received a request from several of our Burundi Friends to assist them in forming a new Evangelical Friends Church in Atlanta under the care of Evangelical Friends Church -Eastern Region (EFC-ER). An ad hoc committee of seven, including two Burundian Friends, has met and has compiled a report that is available from Ashley Wilcox. The Burundi Friends would like EFC-ER to provide them with an experienced American pastor who can provide leadership and unite people from different ethnicities. Once approval has been obtained from EFC-ER they would like to hold a 2-hour worship service on Sundays sometime between 10AM and 2PM. Because the AFM meetinghouse is busy during those times, the worship would be in another location, most likely in Clarkston. The committee feels that this could provide a positive example of cooperation and collaboration between different branches of Friends and would mutually benefit our Burundian Friends and AFM as a whole. We are at the beginning of a process of exploration. Ministry and Worship recommends that AFM authorize the Clerk to communicate with Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region, formally beginning the process of engaging Evangelical Friends in support of this endeavor.

- **Minute 03-15-2015-01:** *On the recommendation of the Ministry and Worship Committee, Atlanta Meeting authorizes the clerk and ad hoc committee to begin a dialogue with Evangelical Friends Church - Eastern Region on how a Friends Church might be formed to serve the spiritual needs of our Burundian Friends.*

Ashley Wilcox next brought forward the names of the two Friends whose requests for transfer of their memberships to AFM was presented in second month.

- **Minute 03-15-2015-02:** *On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Committee, we accept the care for the membership of Rebecca Sullivan by transfer from Friendship Monthly Meeting, Greensboro, North Carolina. We look forward to growing in faith and the Life together.*
- **Minute 03-15-2015-03:** *On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship, we accept the care for the membership of Cathy Amanti by transfer from Pima Monthly Meeting, Tucson, Arizona. We look forward to growing as a spiritual community together.*

Ashley then brought forward the marriage of Cade Curtis and Katie Brown. In Second Month, Ministry and Worship reported that Cade and Katie had asked to be married under the care of the meeting. A clearness committee met with them and has found them clear. The clearness committee and couple have agreed upon the following vows: "In the presence of God and these our friends, I take thee to be my spouse, promising with Divine assistance to be unto thee a loving and faithful partner so long as we both shall live." Ministry and Worship recommends we take their marriage under our care.

- **Minute 03-15-2015-04:** *On the recommendation of Ministry and Worship Committee, we will take the marriage of Cade Curtis and Katie Brown under our care.*

A marriage committee will be brought for approval at a later date.

Reports:

Administration Committee: On behalf of the Administration Committee Steve Collins brought forward the following items:

1. Friend in Residence - The Administration Committee is not requesting to extend Erica Schoon's term, thus it will end August 31, 2015. She is continuing to work with an ad hoc committee to prepare a "user's manual" for the next Friend in Residence and to reevaluate and review the job description, with emphasis on the ministry portion of the job. We will need for the Meeting to approve a Search Committee for a new Friend in Residence, but we are unsure who recommends or appoints members to that committee. If you are interested in serving on that committee, please let Administration know of your interest.
2. New Sprinkler work – The Meetinghouse Committee (Jim Tolmach) has found a suitable firm to do major renovation and replacement on our aging and malfunctioning sprinkler system. B&C Fire Protection has worked with us on recent repairs and has agreed to undertake the work. The approximate cost is \$30,000

with additional expense for major drywall replacement and repair (done by Jim Williams, contractor). Work will begin immediately and is expected to last two to three weeks. The office will be closed during renovation, but the library and classrooms will still be available for scheduled meetings.

3. Library Redesign Committee update - The library redesign report was sent out in January on the AFM listserv. The mold/dust issue is being addressed by culling many older books in the collection (and selling them at book sales), removing the old love seats, cleaning the curtains, and removing the carpet. The two broken tables and the librarian's desk will be removed. The wooden chairs and four central tables will be retained. Nice, stackable chairs will be stored in the library to accommodate larger group meetings. No hauling chairs in and out will be necessary.
4. Playground Project update - Options for the next step(s) are still being conceived and evaluated by Administration.

Nominating Committee: On behalf of the Nominating Committee Ron Nuse submitted a revised description of the Assistant Clerk position. The proposed modification to the description in the Handbook reads as follows:

Membership: The Assistant Clerk must be a member of the Atlanta Friends Meeting.

Term: The Assistant Clerk serves a two-year term. The Assistant Clerk *may be asked* to serve as Clerk, and *prepares for this position*.

Duties:

1. Acts as Clerk in the absence or incapacity of the Clerk;
2. Assists the Clerk by attending committee meetings and other functions as needed;
3. Serves as a member of the Administration Committee;
4. Attends Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, and may be asked to preside at Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business if the Clerk needs to step aside;
5. Assists the Clerk in maintaining contact with the Meeting committee clerks throughout the year and works with them to draft the annual State of the Meeting Report;
6. May be appointed by the Clerk to attend SAYMA Yearly Meeting and other gatherings for Friends and to represent the Meeting at ecumenical functions;
7. Receives instruction in the Clerk's role from the current Clerk and other sources.

Skills: Experience clerking or facilitating decision making groups using consensus process would be helpful.

It was suggested that the duties "serves as an officer of the Corporation" and "signs marriage certificates in the absence of the Clerk" be added. The proposed description will be brought forward in fourth month for approval.

AFSC: On behalf of the American Friends Service Committee Susan Cozzens reported that there are two newly appointed members: John Adams and Bill Jenkins join Chris Kohler and Susan Cozzens representing AFM. Most of the programs currently in Atlanta are continuing. Work has begun to start a Youth Leadership program in Atlanta training youth to work for Peace and Social Justice. AFSC is also looking into starting a program to work against mass incarceration. The old building has been sold and the AFSC office has moved a little distance from its former location. AFSC is currently holding a "Courageous Acts" campaign to raise money. It is suggested that endowments be funded by individuals (not by AFM itself) to honor those who have contributed to Peace and Social Justice in Atlanta. If anyone is interested in becoming involved with AFSC in Atlanta or in being the liaison for AFM, please contact Susan Cozzens.

Minutes of February 2015:

It was noted that Cathy Amanti's name was misspelled in the report from Ministry and Worship.

- **Minute 03-15-2015-05:** *The Minutes of the February 2015 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business were approved with the above correction.*

Meeting closed with Silent Worship.

Respectfully submitted by: Elizabeth Lamb, Recording Clerk; and Mary Ann Downing, Acting Clerk.



Please Hold in The Light:

Laurel Muff, sister of Cynthia Berg

Paul Mangelsdorf's mother, Mary Mangelsdorf, and the rest of her family

Those wishing to have requests for Holding included in this monthly newsletter may give the names to a member of Care & Counsel. Fred Stevens is April's point person.



Atlanta Friends Meeting Contacts

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Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com
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Webmaster: Aaron Ruscetta, arxaaron@gmail.com

Calendar for Fourth Month (April) 2015

Area Meetings for Worship

Every First Day (Sunday)	10:00 a.m. – Meetinghouse, with a smaller group in the Library.
Every Third First Day	12:30 p.m. – Carrollton Friends Worship Group. St. Andrew's UMC Youth Center, 1106 Maple St.; contact Jean Hudson, judson30116@yahoo.com or 678-378-3368; carrolltonfriends.org .
Every Second First Day	10:30 a.m. – Macon Friends Worship Group. Contact Diana Day, 478-227-8892; maconquakers.org
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)	12:10 p.m. – East Lake Commons, Decatur. Contact Bert Skellie at bertskellie@gmail.com or 404-680-4799.
Sixth Day (Friday)	(Mid-August through May), 9:00 a.m. – Friends School of Atlanta. Community Meeting Room, 862 Columbia Dr., Decatur, 404-373-8746.
<i>Currently on hiatus</i>	Canton Friends Worship Group. Contact Roy Taylor at 770-720-4669 or wrlldpeas@mindspring.com .

Weekly Events at the Meetinghouse

Every First Day (Sunday)	9:00 a.m. Adult Religious Education, Library 9:30 a.m. Singing, Classroom A/B 10:00 a.m. Meeting for Worship
Every Second-Fifth Day (Monday-Thursday)	8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Smart Toddlers, Nursery playground
Every Third Day (Tuesday)	7:00 p.m. Silent Meditation, Library
Every Fourth Day (Wednesday)	7:00 p.m. Mid-Week Worship, Library
Every Fifth Day (Thursday)	7:30 p.m. Bible Study, Library

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING
701 W. Howard Ave.
Decatur, GA 30030-2902

ATLANTA FRIENDS MEETING

Office: MWF 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.; 404-377-2474

Web: atlanta.quaker.org atlantaquakers@gmail.com

Clerk: Nan O'Connor, afmclerk1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Lynn Leuszler, afmtreasurer1@gmail.com

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 and contact information to Emily Lawson at elawson7@gmail.com or 404-200-8479. Please indicate if you want to be in the directory, receive the newsletter by mail, or both.

Contributions to the Atlanta Friends Meeting may 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!

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

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, articles, notices and anything else of interest to Friends. Items should be sent directly to atlquakerltr@gmail.com in plain text (Word, not PDF). Pictures should be in .jpg format. Submissions may be edited for length and format.

THE DEADLINE FOR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS IS THE 20TH DAY OF EACH PRECEDING MONTH.

To receive the Newsletter via e-mail, 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; hit reply and you will be added to the list at no charge. To receive general announcements and to participate in discussion, follow the same instructions, but 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.