

QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

TWELFTH MONTH, 2011

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**Newsletter submissions are due on the Monday
before the last Sunday of the month.**

Please Hold In the Light

Jean Burton

Carol Clark

Doris Nabors and Family

Morrie Trimmer

Marie and Dave Parsons

Eleanor and Andy Merritt

Words to Contemplate

"Your strength is to stand still, that you may receive refreshings, that you may know how to wait, and how to walk to God . . . by the Spirit of God within you . . . and watch over one another in that which is eternal, and see everyone that your words be eternal life . . . and in your meeting wait upon the Lord, and take heed of a form of words, but mind the power . . . which will keep you in all unity walking in the Spirit."

~ George Fox's letter dated October 1653,
Dewsbury et al., Several Letters to Saints (1654),
D1272, Fox's letter, 13-14.



Our Christmas Family

Our Meeting has adopted a family to nurture with our collective Christmas giving, a single mom with three children. One of the children is autistic. There is a sign-up sheet in the Social room with gift suggestions. Among them are board games, nonviolent DVDs, art & craft supplies, soccer and kick balls, clothing, Walmart or Food Lion gift cards and RTS bus passes.

MEMBER NEWS



Rebecca Ray, **Tim and Connie Ray**'s daughter and former member of our meeting, has recently been interviewed on CNN-Spanish and (by long distance) a radio station in Argentina about her research on Argentina's remarkable economic turnaround. Her research showed that Argentina's decision to default on its debt and unpeg its currency from the dollar brought it from a severe recession and fiscal tightening led by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to one quarter of a severe financial crisis followed by a decade of the highest growth rate in the hemisphere and one of the highest in the world, 94%.

She reported in depth about the effect on unemployment, poverty, child health, exports, and inequality.

Becky is a research associate at the Center for Economic and Policy Research and a member of Alexandria Friends Meeting.

~ Connie Ray

Anne Winefordner is currently enrolled at Santa Fe College. She is taking prerequisite courses for nursing school. Her children are also enrolled in school. Tucker is in prekindergarten at St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Lex is in second grade and Hannah is in fifth grade.

Sophia Sebastien would like everyone to know that she is with us in thought. Her master's program "is really tough" and, although she wants to come to Meeting for Worship, she must study late and cannot manage the time to attend. (You can send messages of encouragement in the care of her husband, **Javier Solier**).



Friends,

We are excited to announce the addition of Aletha Rose Maitland Kleinheksel to our family. Aletha was born on October 20th, which is also AJ's grandmother's birthday, whom we named her after. We met Aletha on October 23rd, which was AJ's birthday.

The call from Catholic Charities came as a surprise, as we had less than 24 hours to prepare before we bright Aletha home. However, we are all adjusting well so far. The loss of sleep is nothing compared to our feeling of gratitude for this amazing blessing.

Peace,
AJ & Ryan



Jim Morrison is on sabbatical from our Meeting (and from his position as clerk of Peace & Social Concerns) until next summer. He's teaching classes in Poland. Emails from Jim are fascinating, and sent regularly; if you want to stay in touch with him, write to him at morriso2005@yahoo.com.

His most recent correspondence included a request:

"I am sending an appeal to think about sending me some things for the library of the new university (founded 1994) I am teaching in, as they have a small, but growing library.

If you have any American magazines of any kind, or anything else that represents American culture, please save them for me, as I am trying to build up a collection for the library here. They have absolutely no American magazines (except for the Atlantic Monthly)--not even Time--and I don't see how it is possible to teach about American culture without having magazines for the students to hold and peruse in their own school library.

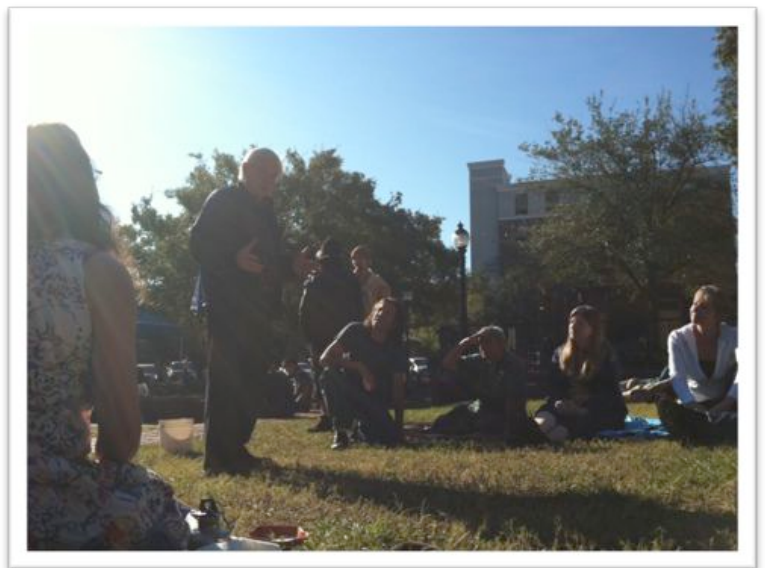
The students are really great, and eager to learn about American life and culture and current events, about which they know virtually nothing. Despite the ever-present influence of America, it is mostly commercial and does not show anything about real life and goings on in the US--good or bad.

Maybe we can get the Friends Meeting to save some, too, and get a box together to send. I think I can even get money from the university here to reimburse for shipping costs.

I also went to the US Embassy last Wednesday to see if I could get some help with magazines--maybe a subscription or a one-time presentation of spare ones--but was shocked to find that even their library has absolutely no magazines--lack of space, they say. Even if they did, I don't know why anyone would want to go through the security gauntlet to get in--no cameras or cell phones or packages, personal airport type screening, long lines and mobs waiting to get visas that you have to get through, and limited hours. It is amazing how, thanks to security, we have made ourselves isolated and unwelcoming in our foreign outposts. The terrorists have won again.

Any suggestions for appropriate films--or TV programs about life in the US, especially positive ideas or experiments (like YouTube segments of 60 minutes or Frontline) that might be accessed through the Internet would also be welcomed. I can get a wi-fi hookup, laptop and projector in my classroom and show almost anything from the Internet or from a DVD."

Photo at right: The day before he left the country, Jim visited Occupy Gainesville at the downtown plaza. His impromptu lecture on the Solidarność movement in Poland was well-attended and much appreciated.



A WALK IN THE QUAKER WOODS

Explorations of the Meetinghouse Property

by Jean Larson with photographs by Bill Mitchell

The weather in November has been very pleasant for walking in the woods. A week or so ago, Javier and I wandered out to the Meeting for Worship in Nature area and wondered why we had not scheduled meeting outside this month. Let us do so in the spring. Sandy came early to meeting today and took a walk in the woods -- I find a walk in the woods settles me down and refreshes me.

The Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*) bloomed on the holly at the entrance to the meeting parking lot. Bill has taken pictures to document how the flowers change over time.

Dick and the children have planted bok choy, lettuce, and cabbage in the children's yard, all cold weather vegetables. The nearby goldenrod is fuzzy with flowers turning into seed heads.

The light filtering through the trees as they are losing their leaves is dappled and brightens ones mood. Fewer plants are

blooming than in the spring, but the ageratina (*Ageratina altissima*, white snakeroot) has been blooming behind the split rail fence, the salt and pepper bushes are still putting out the odd bloom, and the rose planted by Bud had a gorgeous flower visible from my spot at lunch today.

My day was enriched by sharing my love of the woods with Sandy on her morning walk. I pointed out a flower here and there and listened to her tell of sights she had seen in Georgia. Bill on one of his walks captured an iridescent blue damselfly and took a portrait of the turtle we regularly seek out. What special sights or sounds (the children explored sound today) brightened your day?



Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*) on the tree south of the drive near the street.



More photos from our "A Quaker Walk in the Woods series can be found on our new website, located at www.gainesvillequakers.org.

Select the "Committees menu," and click "Building & Grounds. Or, try the search feature.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

First Day School Committee

Adult Friends, please remember to sign up to be the "Messenger" or "Story Teller" for First Day School. Someone will be in the room to manage the children's needs - all you need to do is share something from your life. The children have so enjoyed this, hearing stories about Quakerism and Quaker values. This is an important tool for strengthening our community, and for raising Quaker children.

Holiday Fun Time! On Saturday, December 10 from 1-4 pm, an afternoon of cookie decorating, ornament making, and gift making is planned for our wee and young friends. Parents are welcome to leave their children or stay and join the fun. Please call or see Sandy Lyon or sign up on the bulletin board in the First Day Room if you or your children plan to join us. We need to be sure to have enough supplies and staff so that everyone has a safe and fun time.

Winter Adventure? Sandy Lyon and Jen Cotter, both avid outdoor people, are discussing the possibility of a winter camping trip (tent, cabins, and/or campers) or perhaps a beach weekend for our wee and young friends and their families. Mill Dam in Ocala National Forest and Mike Roess Gold Head Branch State Park near Keystone Heights are two good possibilities. If you are interested, please see Sandy and we will get together a planning committee and make this happen

Gainesville Action Network

On Monday, November 28, several members of our meeting (mostly Peace & Social Concerns) met with Jose Luis Morantes, an Orlando-based community organizer who works for People Improving Communities through Organizing (PICO). PICO is a national organization that helped to create the Gainesville Action Network many years ago. This local faith-based group has been somewhat dormant the past few years, but PICO has allocated resources to help encourage its revival. Our Meeting has been invited to participate in this group, which looks at the issues that face our community and seeks out healthy solutions. During this meeting, we discussed issues facing our homeless population. This topic, as well as others, will be explored in greater detail in January, when the Gainesville Action Network will have a larger meeting, with several area clergy and faith-group representatives present.

Hospitality Committee

Our Christmas Party will take place this year after the Rise of Meeting on December 11. Everyone is asked to bring food for the potluck. Plan on being together throughout the afternoon, we'll sing carols with Annie & David and enjoy the warmth of one another's company. Anyone who has a special Christmas activity or reading to share, please do!

Meeting for Business

The second Sunday of December we will have our Christmas Party. Our regularly scheduled business meeting has been cancelled. (We will gather for a "Spiritual State of the Meeting" that morning, 9am on December 11th). Our next Meeting for Business will be January 8th. If you have business that absolutely cannot wait, please contact Annie at anniemcp@bellsouth.net or [352-514-7316](tel:352-514-7316)

Ministry & Nurture Committee

On October 23rd, we celebrated the new membership of Tim Ray. It was a tremendously joyful occasion. Tim was thrilled to have the party at the Meetinghouse, where everyone participated. We had a potluck lunch and a cake. Tim, we're so happy to have you with us!

On November 19th, ten people from our Meeting attended *Healing Body, Mind & Spirit: The Mysticism of Quaker Contemplation*. They were richly rewarded for their time. Jonathan Jordan, a Friend from the Winter Park Monthly Meeting presented a workshop on mindfulness. Jonathan's experiences being raised as an Irish Catholic, studying in Buddhism in Nepal, becoming a Quaker and having private practice in counseling and mindfulness made this an interesting and very informative workshop. A lecture was given with Power Point, but we had opportunities to discuss, ask questions, share, and practice techniques. The workshop concluded with holding two of our members in the Light. We talked about the healing concepts of God above, God within, and God among us. If you attended the workshop and have feedback for Jonathan, or if you have questions, email Jonathan@MindfullyChange.com. Since the workshop was part of a project funded by The Elizabeth Ann Bogert Memorial Fund for the Study and Practice of Christian Mysticism, he would welcome responses from the participants.

Peace & Social Concerns Committee

On Sunday, December 4th at 1pm, we will watch "Better this World" a documentary about the protesters at the 2008 Republican Convention in Minnesota. Betty Odum will lead the discussion afterwards. (The grandson of Betty Odum and Morrie Trimmer is one of the people featured in the film).

On December 7th from 1-3pm, David Cobb and the Move to Amend Coalition will present "We the People, Not We the Corporations," at the Civic Media Center, 433 South Main Street.

On December 13th at 7pm, Tom Dix will present "Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy of US Policy" at the Civic Media Center, 433 S. Main Street.

On Sunday, October 30th, Peace & Social Concerns held a forum on "Occupy Gainesville" (OG). About 20 members of OG, who have been occupying Gainesville's downtown plaza since October 12th as an act of solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street movement, came to our Meetinghouse to participate. The forum used the consensus process practiced in the Occupy movement's General Assemblies, including hand signals that encourage respectful participation. Members of OG and our Meeting were able to ask questions of one another, and much common ground was found, particularly in the morality issue at stake in our current economic crisis, (and also in the amusing challenges that present themselves when large groups of people organize themselves without central leadership, relying instead on the power of committees). Several members of our Meeting wanted to know how they could help the movement. The most popular suggestion was "attend and participate!" There are meetings held every night at 6:30pm in Bo Diddley plaza, and all are welcome. As the weather gets colder, donations of warm things (blankets, sleeping bags, hats, gloves) are appreciated, as are warm beverages (coffee, tea, cider). Our Meeting has been sponsoring a bagel breakfast two mornings a week, see Dick Beardsley if you want to contribute. Monetary donations for food are also accepted at Citizen's Co-op at 435 S. Main St., or you can email the Food & Comfort committee at Food@OccupyGainesville.org, or talk to Jen Ambrose Cotter.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

Sun Dec 4, 2011

11am Meeting for Worship, 11:15am First Day School

1pm Film: "Better This World"

Mon Dec 5, 2011

6pm Yoga with Gary Arthur

Tue Dec 6, 2011

11:30am Friendly Lunch at Books, Inc.

Wed Dec 7, 2011

1pm Move to Amend @ the Civic Media Center

"We, the People of the United States of America, reject the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Citizens United, and move to amend our Constitution to firmly establish that money is not speech, and that human beings, not corporations, are persons entitled to constitutional rights." ~ Move to Amend

Sat Dec 10, 2011

9:30am - ? Cleaning & Greening the Meetinghouse: Bring a Lunch

1pm – 4pm First Day School Holiday Fun Time

Parents can drop off their children, or stay for the fun. Sign up in the First Day Room or contact Sandy Lyon.

Sun Dec 11, 2011

9am Spiritual State of the Meeting

Please see page 8 for Queries suggested by SEYM's Ministry & Nurture committee

11am Meeting for Worship, 11:15am First Day School

12pm Christmas Party

Please bring a dish for potluck, and a favorite Christmas song, reading or activity to share with the children.

Mon Dec 12, 2011

6pm Yoga with Gary Arthur

Last yoga class until January 2nd

Tues Dec 13, 2011

7:30pm Paul Dix on "Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy" @ the Meetinghouse

Paul is a photographer who has worked in Nicaragua – at times with ProNica - for several decades. He recently published a book of his photographs, "Nicaragua: Surviving the Legacy of US Policy."

Sun Dec 18, 2011

11am Meeting for Worship, 11:15am First Day School

12pm Rise of Meeting Potluck

1pm Friendly Reading Group: Christmases around the World

Sun Dec 25, 2011

11am Meeting for Worship, 11:15am First Day School

12:30pm Bible Study

Sun Jan 1, 2012

11am Meeting for Worship, 11:15am First Day School

*There is no forum scheduled yet for this first Sunday. Check our online calendar for updates:
www.GainesvilleQuakers.org/calendar*

QUERIES

“Preparing for our Spiritual State of the Meeting”

How do we support each other as members of this beloved community? ∞ How well do our meetings for worship with a concern for business lead to a corporate search for and revelation of God’s truth? ∞ What was our meeting’s witness in the wider community in the last year? ∞ How has our meeting for worship or other meeting activities nurtured our spiritual growth? ∞ Has there been a deepening and strengthening of the sense of the Divine Presence in our midst during the past year? Do we feel a sense of our individual spirits fusing into an undivided group as we worship? Do we leave our meetings filled with a sense of love and peace and courage to meet the challenge of Spirit filled living? ∞ Where do you find hope in the meeting and in our spiritual life? ∞ How is God’s presence being experienced in our meeting? ∞ Are there places where the meeting isn’t reaching fully for the Light? ∞ Do you have other reflections on the current condition of the meeting—places where you see new life emerging, loss or sadness that you want to share? ∞ How does the spirit of worship extend into our committee work and into meeting for worship with a concern for business? ∞ How does love manifest itself in our meeting, in our communities and in the world? ∞ How has the Spirit been moving among us this past year? What makes it difficult to attend meeting? ∞ Especially in this time of economic uncertainty, are we taking stock of the meeting’s financial health and planning for ways to help those in need? ∞ What has already and would nourish you in our meeting? ∞ What needs to be different to help us attend meeting more regularly? ∞ What makes it difficult to attend meeting? ∞ What would we like meeting to be to meet our needs and needs of those who would attend meeting? ∞ What do I need to say about our meeting?

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of the Religious Society of Friends
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