

# September 2013 Newsletter

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**(There was no Meeting for Business in August, so this newsletter includes no Minutes or Reports)**

### UPCOMING EVENTS – SEPTEMBER 2013

The **Grate Patrol** will pack and deliver 120 bag lunches and soup to people living on the street on **Wednesday, Sept. 4**. Soup or chili is made in the afternoon. At 5:30 PM we start making sandwiches and packing the lunch bags. At 7 PM, we load the van and one or two people go out on delivery for about an hour. You're welcome to help out with any or all of these things. Call Steve Brooks 240-328-5439 or email [sbrooks@uab.edu](mailto:sbrooks@uab.edu) for more information.

Come to **S.O.M.E.** on **Saturday, Sept. 7** at 6:15 AM and be prepared to flip pancakes and help prepare breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. The kitchen is at 70 "O" St. NW, adjacent to a parking lot. For more information and to sign up, contact Betsy Bramon at [betsy.bramon@gmail.com](mailto:betsy.bramon@gmail.com)

On **Saturday, Sept. 7**, come to a **Forest Walk** at **Friends Wilderness Center**. Carlen Emmanuel, a forester with the Potomac Appalachian Conservancy, will lead this walk along the trails of Friends Wilderness Center. Contact Sheila Bach (304-728-4820 or [snbach@earthlink.net](mailto:snbach@earthlink.net)) for reservations.

On **Sunday, Sept. 8**, come to a potluck and talk at **William Penn House** on "**Sobriety, Violence, and Injustice: Tension of abstinence-focused drug policy in Quaker Values.**" Friends have long discouraged the use of alcohol and drugs in the interest of advancing sobriety. Unfortunately, in the support of Friends' opposition to intoxication and the misuse of drugs and alcohol, Friends have supported, either directly or through silence, the anti-narcotics laws and policies of the U.S. government and the United Nations. These laws and policies are enforced in racially unjust ways. Eric will explain how the drug law creates and sustains violence. Quakers must develop a more sophisticated understanding of how to teach and encourage sobriety and abandon any further support of prohibition of drug use and distribution. Eric Sterling is a member of Bethesda Friends Meeting, a graduate of Haverford College, and is highly experienced in this field. Potlucks at 6:30 pm.

**Come to Catoctin!** Please join us for an unprogrammed weekend at Catoctin Quaker Camp, in the lovely hills of Thurmont, MD, on **September 13 through 15**. We share meals and fellowship in the lodge; we enjoy canoeing and hiking; we toast s'mores on Saturday night; and we worship on Sunday morning at the fire circle. Cabins are available, or bring your tent; come for one day or stay for all three. Cost is \$20 per adult staying overnight, \$10 for adult day-trippers, and free for all children, payable to FMW. And we ask that you contribute groceries for group meals.

More details and sign up information coming soon. If you would like to help organize, or have other questions, contact the FMW office at [admin@quakersdc.org](mailto:admin@quakersdc.org) or call 202.483.3310.

**Weekend Retreat: A Gathering of Crones** begins on **Friday, Sept. 13**. This weekend retreat for women over fifty will be led by seasoned facilitators (and BYM members!) Bette Rainbow Hoover and Nancy Preuss. Women can expect to be renewed and find the wise and holy woman within. For information or to register, contact Bette Hoover. (410-531-5610 or [bette@justpeacecircles.org](mailto:bette@justpeacecircles.org))

A **memorial meeting** for our beloved Friend, **Bill Cousins**, will be held on **Saturday, Sept. 14** at 1:00 pm at the Meetinghouse.

On **Saturday, Sept. 14**, come help **improve Opequon!** Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills and an opportunity to enjoy meaningful and satisfying work. For information, check the BYM Camp website, or contact David Hunter, Camp Property Manager. (301-774-7663 or [davidhunter@bym-rsf.org](mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsf.org))

There will be a vigil to **protest drone warfare**, held at the gates to the C.I.A. facility in McLean, Virginia, on **Saturday, Sept. 14**, starting at 10:00 AM. For more information, contact Malachy Kilbride at [malachykilbride@yahoo.com](mailto:malachykilbride@yahoo.com)

**Bridging Gaps: An FUM Gathering for Leaders of Youth and Young Adults** What does it look like to lead a sustainable lifestyle, avoiding burnout while caring for younger Friends? Leaders of Youth and Young Adults will gather at Quaker Hill in Richmond, IN on **Friday, Sept. 20** to discuss how to bridge gaps in youth programs between individuals, between meeting and community, and between generations. What does it mean to experience the Sabbath rest that Jesus offers us (Matthew 11:28-30)? This retreat will feature times of worship and fellowship, speakers and workshops with David Phillips, Micah Bales, Tim Vestal, Gabi Savory Bailey and Damon Seacott. We hope this will be a time where we can go deeper together, exploring what it means to have a holistic ministry, engaging our congregations, youth and the resources available in our wider community. For more information, contact Friends United Meeting ([terrij@fum.org](mailto:terrij@fum.org)) or see their website. ([www.fum.org](http://www.fum.org))

On **Saturday, Sept. 21** there will be a meeting at Langley Hill Friends Meeting for any and all **committee clerks**. Come and talk about clerking; find out how BYM office helps you; think about how staff works with committees. Share Experiences, Be Guided, Eat Together! RSP to [admin@bym-rsf.org](mailto:admin@bym-rsf.org) in advance helpful, but not required

**Work Day! Work Day! Work Day!** Come to the Meetinghouse anytime between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm on **Saturday, Sept. 28** to participate in the monthly work day. All skill sets appreciated. Come ready to clean, paint, sort, dig, discombobulate and recombobulate your Meetinghouse. Have fun, meet/hang out with F/friends, and give back to the Meeting, all in one fell swoop. Lunch will be provided. For more information, contact Jean Harman at [ellenjeanharman@hotmail.com](mailto:ellenjeanharman@hotmail.com)



There will be a presentation by a member of the **Christian Peacemaker Team** which provides support to **Palestinian children attending school in Gaza** on **Sunday, Sept. 29** at 2:00 in the Decatur Place Room. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Maurice Boyd at (202) 488-4312.

### **FROM THE VAULT**

*A monthly series of edited extracts from the historical material of the Friends Meeting of Washington.*

The Meeting office staff left several thick files of letters to and from the Meeting, most of which I filed along with related material on the appropriate topic: union of the two Baltimore Yearly Meetings, racial justice, finances, and so forth. But this left us with a residue of simply miscellaneous correspondence and here are three extracts, all taken from 1953, and showing some of the other types of matters brought to FMW over the years:

Nashville, April 3, 1953

Dear Friends:

Would you mind helping us out of a little difficulty? In our family, my father and I occasionally discover a useful idea which we consider worth examining. In order to bring this about, we would like to ask you whether you know a reliable patent attorney -- perhaps a Friend -- who would help us.

It is very hard for us here in Nashville to find someone in Washington; that is why we are troubling you. We know that you will recommend us a good person.

Yours,  
Libor Velinsky

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Washington DC, 10 August 1953

Gentlemen:

Now and then I sort out my books and find many which I no longer wish to keep. For instance at present I have old copies, in good shape, of works by Hawthorne and Poe which I know I shall never read, but which might give pleasure to others -- the very old or the very young, perhaps. Having heard that mountain schools sometimes use these books, I wonder if you have the address of one; or could you suggest other places where they might be used. Thank-you very much!

Yours sincerely,  
Virginia Lee Grimes

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APO 205/72 c/o NYC NY, Feb. 18, 1953

Dear Sara & Herb --

Enclosed is a small repayment installment for the debt we owe Florida Ave Meeting -- also 60 cents for two copies of "The Life of the Meeting" mentioned in the last news letter. Our "little meeting" continues and we often have interesting guests from other faiths. Unfortunately we have no "weighty" spiritual members like Florida Ave, but we patiently pray for assistance.

(last page missing)

Hayden Wetzel  
FMW Historian

## **TERRACE ROOM MURALS**

Friends might have noticed that the three murals painted about 15 years ago in the Terrace Room (Friends in Costa Rica, F in Bolivia and Peru, F in Jamaica) have been painted over in the recent renovation. These, and the hanging Friends in Kenya in the Decatur Place Room, were a multi-year project of my First-Day School class overseen by our member Martin Dougherty to make the meetinghouse more welcoming to international visitors and to make an educational and fun project for the kids.

Things come and go, but you will be happy to know that about a year ago I carefully photographed each of the murals (Jamaica had already lost about a third of itself to a wall repair) and added a good history of them, and this documentation is in our files.

Best to all,  
Hayden

## **RANDOM HAPPENINGS**

The Meetinghouse has been particularly well-used over the last month, both by F/friends seeking community, spiritual guidance, and social action, and by others less familiar with our ways.

- » A nearby temporary office worker came almost daily for about five weeks at lunchtime and spent a quiet half hour in the Meeting Room, re-centering his day. Then his office was moved. He expressed particular thanks to the Meeting for providing this daily retreat.
- » The incoming freshman class at Sidwell Friends came to see what a Meetinghouse looked like, and ended up asking very deep questions about Friends and slavery, same-sex marriage, and the Occupy movement.

»



The Bradley Manning Support Network asked to rent the Meeting Room for a meeting featuring Dr. Cornel West and war correspondent Chris Hedges. Their front man came to tour the room and ask about microphones, bench arrangements, etc. I explained the lack of hierarchy and how that underpins both our architecture and our meetings. He sat in the room quietly for about 10 minutes, and then told me, “I didn’t think this would work at first, but now I think people will come in and just be blown away by it.” (They were, he told me later.)

» A darling couple named Sally and Debbie called right after the Defense of Marriage Act was struck down by the Supreme Court. They wanted to hold their wedding at the Meetinghouse for themselves and a (very few) friends as soon as possible, they said. They’d been waiting for 13 years. The next Friday, they rolled Sally’s wheelchair onto the Metro, brought an officiate with them to the Parlor, and said their vows, witnessed by Ken Orvis and Andrew Hall, who was filling in at the office that day. I feel so bittersweet about this—delighted that they were able to enjoy the peace of the Meetinghouse on this important day, and so, so, so sad that they had to wait.





Meanwhile, FMW F/friends did a lot during these dog days of summer. Many attended the annual sessions of Baltimore Yearly Meeting—**Virginia Avanesyan** and **Windy Cooler** even worked for the Junior Young Friends Program. **Steve Coleman** and **Jean Harman** entered into negotiations with the D.C. tax office to try to reduce our tax burden. Then, according to **Ken Orvis**, we held one of the best-attended-ever **Work Days** and brought the Terrace Room much closer to completion—big thanks to everyone who attended. **Jean Capps** asked about replacing our “How does your life help to reduce the causes of war?” banner on the fence. Peace & Social Concerns approved this. Then **Gene Throwe** and I found a copy while digging through some other banners, and **Michael Beer** and family hung it on the fence. **Ministry & Worship and the Healing & Reconciliation committees** held a powerful and inspiring meeting about **Spirit-led eldering**, and became excited about the possibility of using this Quaker tool to nurture and nourish each other individually and corporately across the Meeting. Finally, Friends prepared for **memorial services** for our beloved Friends **Sara Satterthwaite** and **Bill Cousins**, who each died peacefully on July 31, surrounded by their families.

- Debby

