

FMW Newsletter, September 2017

 [Printer-friendly version](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Thinking About Race](#)

[Random Happenings](#)

[Comics](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 2: Help make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. Convene at 6:15 am at **So Others Might Eat**. For more information, contact Tim Schleicher at timothy.c.schleicher@gmail.com

Sept. 6: Help make sandwiches for the **Grate Patrol** to take to our vulnerable neighbors, starting at 5:30 pm. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu

Sept. 7: **Active Bystander Training**, given by J.E. McNeil, 7 to 10 pm. If you've ever wondered what to do when you see an act of oppression, here are answers. For more information and to register, contact J.E. at jmcnrick@gmail.com

September 8 – 10 - Spiritual Formation Program Fall Retreat, Priestfield Pastoral Center (Kearneysville, WV) You are invited to join Friends from across Baltimore Yearly Meeting for the Fall Spiritual Formation Retreat at the beautiful Priest Field Pastoral Center in Kearneysville, West Virginia (priestfield.org). To find out more about the retreat and the Spiritual Formation Program, go to the BYM website at www.bym-rsf.org/events/spiritform/. We look forward to contemplating words of wisdom and faith, time for personal reflection, sharing with spiritual friends and growing in spiritual community with you. Registration closes on August 28th. Scholarships are available.

Sept. 9: **Meeting for Worship with a Concern for the Marriage of Sarah Radomsky and Sasha Rindisbacher**, 1:00 pm, Meeting Room. All are welcome. Reception to follow in the garden.

Sept. 15 – 17: FMW has reserved **Camp Catoctin** the weekend of September 15-17. It should be a glorious--lagoon swimming AND the start of fall leaves. Please join us. For more information, contact Anita Drever, anita.drever@gmail.com

September 16 -- Retreat for Clerks of BYM Committees and Working Groups, Langley Hill Friends Meeting (McLean, VA) The clerks of BYM Committees and Working Groups– past, present, and future – are invited to gather for a day of worship and preparation for the new committee year. We will have time to worship, share information about the role and tasks of a clerk, and especially to share our knowledge and wisdom with each other. Please bring questions you'd like to

explore, and insights about committee life and clerking to share. We will look at some of the nuts and bolts of clerking a BYM committee, including such different things as recognizing and nurturing gifts of committee members, as well as using internet and computer technology to connect with one another, and working with BYM staff. We will discuss and discern how to nurture our committees to keep them spiritually centered and vital as we serve our Yearly Meeting and local Meetings. The retreat will begin with hospitality at 9:45am and run until 4pm.

Sept. 10: Interfaith Unity Walk, 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. The opening ceremony will be at the Washington Hebrew Congregation (3935 Macomb Street, NW), and the closing ceremony will be at the Islamic Center of Washington (2551 Massachusetts Avenue, NW). The point is that over a thousand people representing many different faiths will be walking together in friendship to show that we support all our neighbors, whoever they are, with no exceptions. There will be a

Resource fair from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. The walk begins at 1:30 p.m. For details, see:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/unity-walk-2017-know-your-neighbor-tickets-36011570577>

Sept. 16: Working Group on Racism The Yearly Meeting's Working Group on Racism will be meeting in the Bethesda Friends Meeting Library from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 16. The purpose is to strengthen our abilities to contribute positively to our multiracial society. We share resources and experiences and benefit greatly from the process. For details: Peirce Hammond (peirceah.03.01@gmail.com, 301-897-0925).

September 29 – October 1 – Young Friends Conference, Goose Creek Friends Meeting (Lincoln, VA) Young Friends should plan to begin arriving at 7:00 pm on Friday. For information, check the Young Friends website (www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/yfs/yfcon.html) or [contact Jocelyn Dowling](mailto:jocelyn.dowling@bym-rsf.org). (301-774-7663) Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is two weeks before the conference (September 15). Any one registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend.

October 1: World Quaker Day This is the day when we Friends celebrate worldwide our different ways of worship, traditions, and practices. This year's theme is Gathering in Worship around the World. For details: www.worldquakerday.org

October 1: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue F(f)riends are invited to a potluck and

Quaker dialogue at William Penn House on Sunday, October 1, at 6:30 p.m. Peter Toscano will

display his artful, playful, outrageously funny, and deeply moving storytelling craft. A shapeshifter, he transforms right before your eyes into a whole cast of comic characters who explore the serious worlds of gender, sexuality, privilege, religion, and environmental justice. Bring a dish to share; family members and friends are always welcome. WPH is at 515 East Capitol Street, SE. For more details: www.WilliamPennHouse.org, 202-543-5560.

October 6 to 9: Silent Retreat for Friends Is your spirit in need of nourishment and

refreshment? Join members of Annapolis Friends Meeting for a Silent Retreat. This retreat has never been full, so please join us. We will keep the silence from Friday evening until after worship on Monday, enjoying the beauty of God's creation in meadows and woods, reading, walking, resting,

praying, finding our own rhythms, and listening for the “still, small voice” at Dayspring Retreat Center in Germantown, MD. The cost of the retreat is \$300, and the deadline for registrations is September 29. For details, contact facilitator Jean Christianson (jschristianson@gmail.com, 410- 544-1912). If Dayspring is new to you, check their web site (www.dayspringretreat.org) to get a sense of it. There is also a YouTube piece online

created at an October BYM retreat.

October 14 – Tenth Month Interim Meeting, Homewood Friends Meeting (Baltimore, MD) Get to know Yearly Meeting Committees and Friends from other Meetings! Be a part of important decision making. Join Friends for morning committee meetings and the afternoon’s Interim Business Meeting. Homewood Friends Meeting will host the Tenth Month Interim Meeting. Friends will begin gathering at 10:00am. Committee meetings will begin at 10:30. [Check the Yearly Meeting website for more information.](#)

Thinking About Race – (September 2017) OJ Simpson and AVP

At O.J. Simpson’s parole hearing in July, he responded to a question about what he had done while incarcerated to improve himself. Here is part of his response, in which he lauds the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). (Note: AVP was created in 1975 in upstate New York at Greenhaven Prison by Quakers in response to requests from inmates for techniques to deal with conflict. It has spread around the world. There are active AVP sessions in prisons in Maryland and efforts to make it available in the wider community.)

O.J. Simpson: “I took two courses that I guess you guys don’t give too much credit to, it’s called Alternative to Violence. I think it is the most important course anybody in this prison could take because it teaches you how to deal with conflict through conversation. I’ve been asked many, many times here to mediate conflict between individuals and groups and it gave me so many tools, how to use it, to try to walk these guys through, and not throw punches at one another.”

Here is the link for those interested: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rdq8BdlnM1Y> . Simpson’s statement starts at around the 45-minute mark.

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Locations vary to allow access to more Friends. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

I was going to call this column, Why I love FMW, but realized that it would take too long to list all of the reasons. Instead, let me just mention a few of the things that have happened here just in the last few weeks:

We had an exciting meeting with a volunteer from the **Metropolitan AME Church** who is working on providing Sanctuary help to African immigrants. She is a former Peace Corps volunteer and is familiar with many of the African ex-pat communities here. Also attending was **Peta Ikambano** from the American Friends Service Committee, who is familiar with other African ex-pat communities. Together, we decided to work as partners to visit these communities and conduct listening sessions, hoping to discover what their needs are to see if we could either meet them or steer them to folks and programs that can help. FMW has spoken for at least 20 years about our desire to partner with an African-American church, but could never figure out a non-awkward way to do so. That way just opened. Yay!

We held a meeting, organized by **Jim Bell**, with three lawyers who work on immigration issues, who spoke with us about the legal risks of housing and supporting undocumented people. This was attended by FMW members and representatives from AFSC, FCNL and several other non-Quaker congregations. It gave us a much better idea of what we will be dealing with, should we choose to go this route.

We gathered together water, snacks, and sandwiches to take down to the Korean Americans who are holding a week-long, 24-hour/day vigil to try to save the Dream Act. **Two groups of Friends** attended this vigil to provide witness; food was organized by **Elaine Wilson** and **Carla Higgins**.

Some of us attended a training held in a local Lutheran church on how to visit with detainees in the immigrant prisons.

A Friend from Alexandria Friends Meeting called to say that he had gone to Charlottesville with a group to attend the counter-protest to the Unite the Right march, and had been caught up in the violence. They were feeling traumatized, and had hired a trauma counselor to help them process. Now they needed a place to meet with that person. The Property Committee gave them access to Quaker House Living Room; **Brian Lutenecker** staffed it.

J.E. McNeil gave one of her excellent Active Bystander trainings to teach non-violent interventions to use when you witness an act of oppression. Her next one is on September 7. J.E. also put in a plea for friends to donate school supplies to support the economically vulnerable students in D.C.

Merry Pearlstein, Alex Mathews, and Judy Hubbard came to stare meaningfully at the Decatur Place Room and the North Room to think about furniture needs in those places. There were many opinions, and a willingness to engage in a spiritually enriching furniture shopping trip, to be held soon.

We held three weddings and the very wonderful celebration of **Bob & Susan Meehan's** 50th wedding anniversary. We also held numerous other events, most of them office retreats by folks like the Peace Corps, Planned Parenthood, Advocates for Youth, the Center for Community Change, and others. The nice Syrians continued their film series, the Spiritists and the Democratic Socialists held their monthly meeting, the LGBTQ Executives met biweekly and Al-anon met weekly, and two new groups of International Honors Program students came to do their orientation before heading off to study health care systems in 3 other countries. There were days when we had the place to ourselves, and a few days when every single room was filled, as well they should be.

This is an amazing Meeting, Friends.

My son lives in Charlottesville and was half a block away when the car rammed into the counter-protesters. I was shaken by this, and spent a lot of time hand wringing. I remembered reading about the end of World War II, when many people asked, Where were the good Germans—the ones who disliked Hitler, who hated what was happening to their country, who were horrified by the death camps and so many other Nazi actions. I asked myself, Where are the good Americans now? Well, look around you, Friends. They're all over the place—with the counter protests in Charlottesville and Boston, and with numerous groups large and small working to preserve supports for the vulnerable. To me, the good people are right here. And I am so grateful for you.

- Debby