

# Sentinel News

*QUERY: Do you respect that of God in every person? Do you search yourself for and strive to eliminate prejudices such as those related to race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and economic condition? In what ways do you accept and appreciate differences among your friends and associates? Do you avoid exploiting or manipulating others to accomplish ends, however worthy?*



## **“Faith Is Something You Believe In When You Think It Ain’t So” 1**

Is there any better time of year than Spring to savor the errant hues of light cast from our meetinghouse walls? A colorful evolution, heretofore thought to be permanent happens before our eyes and penetrates our conscience. As we sit in worship, questions of Truth’s consistency can challenge our faith.

When the time is right, light changes our perspective of most things that touch our lives. To describe our Meetinghouse, one might offer a simple explanation of brown and white walls and wooden benches. One must look for true colors however changing. Witness the gleaming streams of sun pouring through the meetinghouse windows. They cast their warm lumens on our knowing lumbered walls. What wisdom those glowing planks can release.

Experience offers a much more revealing and complex portrait our faith and trust. If our secret inner light were questioned, it could respond in a beautiful selection of colorful hues. Warm yellow, soft reds, deep black and soothing grays peek from the soul of our wood grained walls. Bench rails smooth from anxious palms long gone, polish the patina. One can feel the warmth and pulsing of many hearts, from wisdom felt within the colored shades before us.

One wonders if the rainbows were painted by our own spiritual brushes for God’s safe keeping, only to emerge when the light is right. The colors are elusive but can be captured when they visit our presence, for they mutate as we watch. Warm yellow can turn to deep sooty black of the old wood stove fire as our spirit follows the sun’s track. Soft reds and soothing grays turn deep brown across the poplar boughs as passing clouds transform our tinted light. Are these the same colors that presented themselves to traveling Friends’ ministers who preached for hours? Or did they seep from our sounds of silence? We need to reassure our elusive Trust even if only for a moment, that the hues of discovery exist.

Our present day meetinghouse has the same embedded wood grain for over two centuries. As sunlight pours through six paned orifices to our hearts, feel how the birthing colors bend our perspectives. Each person sitting in silence does not see an all brown room or a perfectly clear Truth, but a spectrum of

many hues. Wise Friends who search for Truth through continuing revelation, know that the process varies. The spring sun shining on the wood work energizes the journey of discovery.

How have the streams of light been viewed by countless others before us? Do ancient voice prints, pulses and heart beats live in our wood work? Who saw the same warm yellow? Who carved initials, letting the wood bleed soft red? Who spoke their Truth only to have it fade or change until the right light brought it forth? The mysteries are encapsulated and held fast by the long grained trees. They only reveal their secrets by color, creaks and glows.

Between the swishing of automobiles heard through open doors, we may hear spoken messages. At times, we may feel the message of another worshipper and know the words. Each vibration competes to penetrate a sun drenched board shouting "make room for another". Should we not doubt that old revelations can be brought forth time and again? Can we find the wisdom and truth that has impregnated our fine wood grained walls by many before us, again and again? There is nothing new in the world, only rediscovery through the paned portals of time.

One homespun philosopher once said "Faith is something you believe in, when you think it ain't so" 1 . So we must search for our continually changing light and the revelations left behind by those before us. When faith doubts, we can remember that our souls see the very same warm yellows, soft reds, soothing grays and deep blacks in many forms.

1. M.T.

SCW

Please Help the Summer Gathering  
for Young Friends at Onas  
be a reality for all Young Friends who wish to attend!  
Young Friends Summer Gathering  
August, 23-29, 2009  
Camp Onas  
Friendly Adult Presences are needed. Can you volunteer???  
Do you know of someone who could lead a workshop?  
Lifeguards are needed - Young Friends or adults.  
Young Friends lifeguards get a \$100 credit toward the gathering.  
If you can help with any of the above...

## PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING NEWS

Planned Giving Coordinator at Friends General Conference: FGC is seeking candidates for a full-time position on our Development team with major responsibility for planned giving (bequests, annuities, trusts). We plan to build planned giving into a strong "leg" of our multi-faceted Development Program, and the Planned Giving Coordinator will have major responsibility for the entire initiative. We do NOT need a highly skilled "planned giving expert" who knows all the ins and outs of charitable remainder trusts. We DO need someone who knows and cares about the Religious Society of Friends, enjoys meeting and talking with people, is very comfortable talking about money, has some fundraising experience, and is prepared to take the initiative and assume real responsibility for this part of FGC's development work while working with a broader FGC staff and volunteer team. This staff person will travel widely among Friends in the United States and Canada to develop relationships, offer assistance with estate planning, and raise money for FGC. Starting salary is negotiable, depending upon experience, but is likely to be in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year. Full job description available at <http://fgcquaker.org/about-us/employment-internships>. To apply, send letter of application and resume to [Nicoler@fgcquaker.org](mailto:Nicoler@fgcquaker.org), or call Nicole at 215-561-1700, ext. 3008. Final interviews planned in August 2009, with starting date September or October.

Children's Summer Sessions is looking for Volunteer Staff. Enthusiastic volunteers are needed to create an incredible Sessions experience for children. No experience is needed. The Children's Sessions Planning Group and PYM staff will support volunteers with an orientation/retreat in July, curricula plans and activities, and fellowship with other Children's Sessions staff. The Children's Sessions focus this year is earth care. Children's Sessions volunteers receive a fee waiver covering up to the full cost of attending Sessions. There are

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different levels of time commitment. Find one that works for you and join us as we worship, play, and learn about earth care in the Spirit! Contact Children's Sessions Coordinator Elizabeth Piersol Schmidt: [childrensessions@pym.org](mailto:childrensessions@pym.org) 215-241-7236

Teacher Training on Conflict Resolution Register now for the PYM Non-Violence and Children Working Group's annual training for elementary and middle school educators -- "Building Safe Communities in our Classrooms and Conflict Resolution Skills in our Students" -- Friday, August 14 and Saturday, August 15 from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM at the Fourth and Arch Street Meeting House in Philadelphia. This two-day workshop will provide participants with practical strategies to build a caring classroom community, teach kids creative conflict resolution skills, help kids learn to manage their anger, integrate conflict resolution teaching into an ongoing classroom

**MINUTES OF SOLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING**  
**Sixth Month, Seventh Day 2009**

Meeting for Business opened with a few minutes of silent worship, there were nineteen present.

**Minutes:** The Minutes of the Fifth Month were approved as written.

**News of Members:** There was no news of members

**Announcements:** George Rhoads said that we received a thank you note from Pendle Hill for the recent donation.

**Overseers Report:** Lynne Feldman reported that the decision on a new name for Overseers has been held over for several months. She reminded Friends that Overseers had suggested "Pastoral Care" as a possible new name for their Committee. There was a discussion regarding the merits of changing the name at all, but Friends agreed that the name should be changed in recognition of the negative connotation of the word "Overseer" that is left over from the slavery era. After some discussion Friends united on "Oversight and Counsel" as a new name to replace "Overseers". George Rhoads said he would ask the members that had objected to the name "Overseers" whether the term "Oversight" would be acceptable. The new name, "Oversight and Counsel" was approved contingent on its acceptability to these members. If Oversight is acceptable to the concerned members, it was agreed that Oversight and Council Committee would be the new name for the Committee.

**House and Grounds:** It was reported that Valerie Brown has requested using the educational building for a Buddhist retreat. The request was approved. It was reported that the Boy Scouts broke a window and

are paying for the repair. The electrical wires have been damaged by vermin and the repairs cost \$750.

The phone company has terminated our phone service by mistake and has given our number to someone else. Phone service, with a new number, will be reinstated in the next 10 days.

We have received a request to use the Meeting House and grounds in a documentary film about Bucks County. A letter of understanding has been issued stating that the film is for educational purpose and no monetary gain will be derived. We will receive a copy of film.

**House and Grounds Budget:** The House and grounds Committee is waiting to hear from budget approval before letting contracts to contractors. Rhoda questioned how people felt about replacing the carpet in the Education Building. Stu stated that the Committee had a list of priorities for repairs over the next several years, but that the rug could be given more priority if Members wanted.

**Nominating Committee:** Bob Holt circulated the proposed Nominating Committee list. Mike Daly was added to the Worship and Ministry Committee. It was noted that the Human Relations and Outreach is a large Committee but not very active. The Nominating Committee is waiting for feedback from the Clerk of this committee on his outreach to members of Human Relations and Outreach Committee.

Stu Wisse is replaced by Kevin Kirwan on the Mary Blackmar Fund Committee.

Colleen Lion agreed to serve on the Outreach Committee.

It was noted that the Buckingham Friends School liaison term ends in 2012.

David Craig has been working with the eldest First Day class.

Marian Hepburn stated that the Nominating Committee needs to work on finding a new clerk for Budget Committee.

The Nominating Committees recommendations were approved with the above changes.

**Budget Report:** There was no budget report.

**Religious Education:** There was no report

**Buckingham Friends School:** There was no report from Buckingham Friends School

**Updates:** Quaker Heritage Day raised \$1,600 and expenses were \$305. John stated that half of the net goes to Pedals for Progress and the other half to Fish. We collected 23 bikes this year, which is about average. Pedals for Progress also takes sewing machines, which we may do next year. There was general support for continuing Quaker Heritage Day.

However, it was suggested that the name be changed and better public relations to market the event. It was reported that the Outreach Committee has created new stationary.

George Rhoads agreed to write a letter thanking Spring Muse from Abington Meeting for performing at Quaker Heritage Day.

**Quaker Quest:** It was reported that there was not overwhelming interest from the four meetings interested in Quaker Quest. The Meetings will explore pursuing Quaker Quest again in the Fall.

Business Meeting closed with a few moments of silent worship.

#### PHILADELPHIA YEARLY NEWS, CONT'D

curriculum and support kids' resiliency. Act 48 credits available for Pennsylvania educators. Scholarships available to PYM members. Childcare gladly provided by request. A \$40 fee includes training, meals, information packet and handouts. For more information and to register contact Elke Muller at [elkem@pym.org](mailto:elkem@pym.org) or 215-241-7223.

Chester Meeting asked to share the following with other meeting newsletters:

Chester Monthly Meeting of Friends  
520 E. 24th St.  
Chester PA 19013

Statement of the Chester Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

regarding Governor Rendell's proposal to legalize video poker in bars and clubs.

The Chester Friends Meeting applauds Governor Rendell's intent to provide \$550 million a year for tuition assistance to 175,000 Pennsylvania college students but is totally opposed to his plan to finance it by legalizing video poker in bars and clubs.

Friends believe:

- Gambling is addictive and can become obsessive to the point where it ruins individuals' and families' lives.
- Where gambling is instituted crime tends to rise.
- Most money from gambling comes from those who have less money to spare.
- Gambling feeds on people's feelings of despair and promotes an attitude that one can get



**Quaker Heritage Day 2009**

Images from the day: L to R, Top to Bottom: a flea market full of treasures, beautiful plants for sale, music by Spring Muse, and face painting by Mike Daly. Beautiful weather made the day even better!

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PYM NEWS CONT'D.

something for nothing.

[Interim Committee, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, December 5, 1996.]

For the State to rely on legalized gambling for any of its revenue amounts to a regressive form of taxation, in which those least able to pay bear the greatest burden. But beyond this, there are issues that make the Governor's proposal particularly onerous.

1. It will greatly expand gambling by those most vulnerable to social and economic ills. The problem is compounded by the current economic downturn, when more people are driven to desperate measures simply in order to survive economically.

2. Video poker has been called the 'crack cocaine' of gambling because of its quick and deep hold on players. The speed of the play (as many as 12 hands in a minute) and the illusion that it is a game of skill are factors in this, according to Game Planit

Interactive, a consumer education organization. The potential in video poker for addiction to gambling among those who are not predisposed to addictions has been reported by the Canadian Medical Association.

3. Video poker in bars lures in a population that does not start out with the intent to gamble. In this way, it is different from casino gambling. South Carolina banned video poker in bars and other locations after legalizing it for several years. The governor declared that it had spawned a new generation of addicted gamblers and destroyed families. It has been argued that there is already considerable illegal video poker in Pennsylvania bars. But it is widely agreed that legalization would greatly expand it.

Pennsylvania should support the opportunity for its youth to pursue higher education. But for the State to put its stamp of approval on video poker and rely on it to finance higher educational opportunities sends a most unfortunate message, particularly to its youth.

Southampton Meeting Can Use Your Help

Faced with declining membership and attendance over a number of years, Southampton Meeting would like to "borrow" some energy from Friends in the Quarter. Please join us when you can for Meeting for Worship on First Day at 10 am at the meeting house at the corner of Street Rd, and Gravel Hill Rd. in Southampton.

While you're visiting, browse our facilities at the adjoining House on the Hill. We're actively looking to host gatherings and events, both Quaker-related and beyond.

In fact, the meeting currently hosts a twelve-step group and a Theosophical Society discussion group.

Our wooded surroundings are serene and friendly, our facilities warm and simple. They're suitable for everything from book clubs, study groups, and lectures to jazz bands and poetry slams.

So if you have an abundance of enthusiasm, ideas or energy, lend us some, and we'll pay it back, or pay it forward.

Our thanks to Friends Doug Meaker, Holly Olson and Chris Lucca for the contributions they have already made toward helping us rekindle our light.

For more information call the meeting at 215-364-0581.

**ANNUAL FUND FINANCIAL REPORT**

In response to the financial crisis, PYM has laid down the position of Peace and Social Justice coordinator and reduced hours for four other positions.

As you make choices at the end of this fiscal year between worthy causes, please remember that Yearly Meeting needs your support right now. The continuation of programs and services provided by the Annual Fund will depend on our responses. The affected activities include the library, middle school Friends' programs, tuition aid, conference centers and funds for sufferings.

Last year at Solebury meeting, 31 members and attenders gave the annual fund a total of \$3835. At the near close of this fiscal year, only 11 donors contributed \$1420. Please reach into your pockets and help to alleviate this dramatic decrease in giving.

So that your check may be matched by meeting funds, please send it to:

Marian Hepburn  
30 Leif Erickson Ave.  
Princeton, NJ  
08530

Submitted by Judith Norris



## August 2009

- Aug 1-2 Final Days of PYM Summer Sessions at DeSales University, Center Valley, PA  
Aug 5 7:30pm Bucks Quarter Singing Group Meets at Makefield Meeting - All are welcome!  
Aug 12-16 Middletown Grange Fair - Call Holly to Volunteer as a Greeter at the Quaker tent!  
Aug 14 & 15 Teacher Training on Conflict Resolution (Page 2)  
Aug 17 1-3pm Creative Hands Meets at Wrightstown Meeting - Pauline 215-860-5554  
August 20 7pm Buck Quarter Oversight Committee Meets at Buckingham  
Aug 21 6pm Quarterly Meeting Worship and Ministry at Lehigh Valley MM (Below and page 2)  
Aug 23 9:00am Quarterly Meeting for Worship and Business at Bristol Meeting (Below)  
Aug 29 9:30am- 3pm Annual Gathering of Oversight Committee Members at Plymouth Friends Meeting  
Looking Ahead  
Sept 12 8am-3pm Yardley Flea Market - Yardley Friends Meeting (Rain Date September 19)  
Sept 12 2-5pm Friends Center Transformation Celebration  
Sept 26 11am-4pm Peace Fair - The Campus of Buckingham Friends School and Meeting

Chandler Hall Worship Services will be organized by:

August - Newtown September - Solebury October - Wrightstown

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Solebury Friends Meeting  
The Religious Society of Friends  
2680 Sugas Rd.  
New Hope, PA 18938

ALL ARE WELCOME