

# NEWSLETTER

ASHEVILLE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Seventh Month 2003

## Symptoms of Peace

Watch for  
signs of  
Peace!

The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to it, and it seems likely that we could find ourselves experiencing it in epidemic proportions.

## Some signs and symptoms of Inner Peace:

...Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.

...Increasing susceptibility to love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

...Increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.

...Loss of interest in judging other people.

...Loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.

...Loss of interest in judging self.

...An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.

...Tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than from fear based on past experiences.

...Frequent attacks of smiling through the eyes from the heart.

...Contented feelings of connectedness with others and with nature.

...Loss of ability to worry (a very serious symptom).

...Loss of interest in conflict.

If you have all or even most of the above symptoms, please be advised that your condition may be too far advanced to turn back. If you are exposed to anyone exhibiting several of these symptoms, remain exposed at your own risk. This condition of Inner Peace is likely well into its infectious stage. Be forewarned.



## BUSINESS MEETING

[Lauren Mitchell Oversight, Brainstorming]

2. "We recommend making a deposit to secure one of these dates, leaving a final decision on the retreat to next year."

3. **Friends approved the committee's recommendation of putting down a deposit to reserve Bon-Clarken for the fourth weekend of October 2004 for our Meeting's residential retreat.**

4. Spiritual Enrichment asks Meeting to spend some time reflecting on what we feel we need them to arrange.

### Lauren Mitchell Oversight Committee

1. "Lauren Mitchell and her Oversight Committee met this month. The committee includes Robin Wells, Elizabeth Roebing and Evan Richardson. We heard from Lauren about her ministry and plans for travel. We reviewed expenses and approved a number of upcoming trips.

2. "The committee notes that a number of these trips are coming up in the next several months. The meeting is not currently in the position to use the monies received

### Asheville Friends Meeting Brainstorming Ideas (from Sixth Month meeting)

Friends recently offered the following ideas. Four main themes appeared and the ideas are grouped into these themes. Some could easily fit into another category and all the categories are linked to each other, but the ideas have been grouped according to their dominant focus.

#### I. Community Building

- Get to know each other so that gifts become who we are.
- Be flexible and willing to adapt to change in building a spiritual community. Use spiritual hospitality to build our community: welcome newcomers.
- Look at our directory and how it helps us get to know each other.
- Revive Friendly Eights.
- More cookout experiences.
- Set aside retreat and ongoing times for opportunities – opportunity partners and committees.
- Offer food in a way that builds intimacy – provide a family environment – have community complete in its gathering for those who are gathered.
- Mid-week Meeting experience has offered an experience of community.

#### II. Spiritual Growth

- More personal sharing time.
- Love our neighbors as ourselves.
- Volunteer to clerk our own ideas.
- Every 3 years members reaffirm/reapply for membership.
- Create a web of intimacy with spiritual friendship groups of 3 or 4. Everyone with a standing clearness/support/oversight committee.
- Small "Spiritual Formation" groups.

from the Pickett Fund. The Finance Committee will need to assure that a system for reimbursement from the Pickett Fund monies adheres to appropriate principles. In the meantime, the Oversight Committee asks the Meeting to approve reimbursing Lauren's travel expenses out of the general fund up to a total amount of \$2000. This will enable Lauren to continue with her work and not burden her or her parents financially.

3. "The Oversight Committee plans to give a more detailed report in the next two months."

4. **Friends approved the request for Asheville Friends Meeting to pay up to \$2000 of Lauren's travel reimbursement from the General Fund until the Finance Committee works out the details of how to handle the Pickett Fund Grant.**

3. A Friend asked us to consider making a commitment to support this work over and above the amount of this grant.

### Review of Brainstorming Ideas

1. Susan Mitchell submitted the following summary of ideas from sixth month meeting to "bring about what we seek".

#### Meeting House Phone

(828) 258-0974

#### Clerk of the Meeting

Evan Richardson

#### Recording Clerk

Margaret Farmer

#### Treasurer

Susan Williams

#### Newsletter Committee

Steve Livingston (ed.),  
Margaret Farmer, George Gjelfriend,  
George Oldham, Bob Payne

The Asheville Friends Meeting *Newsletter* is published monthly. Friends are welcome to contribute letters, book reviews, announcements, articles, and quotations. Please submit copy via email to

newsletter@ashevillefriends.org

Hard copy is acceptable. Deadline is third First Day.

The Asheville Friends Meeting is located at 227 Edgewood Road, between Merimon Avenue and the University of North Carolina campus. Friends meet for singing at 9:40 and for worship at 10:00 a. m. every First Day. First Day School begins at 10:00. Friends meet to conduct business on the second First Day at 11:30 a.m. On other First Days, the hour following meeting for worship is used for adult education or for fellowship.

*cover article from Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation newsletter, 1986, submitted by George Oldham.*

## BUSINESS MEETING

[Brainstorming]

- Change the nominating process; test individual leadings corporately.
- Forms that intentionally provide, nurture, maintain spiritual space.

### III. Care of the Meeting: Its Business and Routines

- Change the way we do food on Meeting-for Business Sundays and other Sundays.
- Hold Sunday offerings at time that frees up Sunday afternoons.
- Can we have a sit-down meal with Meeting for Business?
- Should we hire out meetinghouse maintenance?
- Share the work – workdays as extensions of Meeting for Worship - assign snacks.
- Meeting for Business on another evening or afternoon.
- Meeting for Worship begin at 10 with one hour’s worship followed by fellowship. Then resume Meeting for Business.
  - Look at how we use break of meeting time to get to know each other.
  - Discern together how to use our time in Meeting for Business. Use the query: How do we want to spend our holy time together?
  - Establish clear time boundaries; use a bell.

### IV. Religious Education

- Adult Religious Education – explore our spiritual lives outside Meeting for Worship.
- All ages in Meeting for Worship. Concurrent adult and young friends’ RE time each Sunday.
- Learn more about corporate discernment process together.
- Bring in a Friend with experience to advise us of the benefits of having individual overseers.
- Provide more guidance for forums.

2. It was decided to discuss these topics over a shared meal. Susan’s idea for this time was to look at the list to find out what is do-able. We took a break for a simple meal with small group discussion of these topics.

### Review of Small Group Discussions

1. The clerk suggested we spend time hearing what we came up with, moving in August toward decision making.

2. Community building: This group observed the longing for a deeper sense of community within meeting and within our culture. They noted that shared time together, especially in retreats, was extremely valuable, to see each other in the fullness of our lives. It provides for deep bonding with these intentional intrusions into one another’s lives.

3. They want to encourage the acts of ministry. For example, each of us might wish to participate in a random weekly phone friendship with another one in meeting, or that some Friend led to ministry might take on four or five other Friends and keep a link with them. In a regular village life, it was expected that people call on one another, and it is a privilege to be called on; a bond of trust grows.

4. We do not have this completely in our community. Not everyone calls or attends when there is a loss or death. It is important to observe how we are not functioning as well as how we are.

5. We could start off with geographical Friendly 8’s; which are structured so that each group keep in communication with all of its members, to keep up with one another and get to know each other more fully. It’s too hard for one committee like Care and Counsel to do this well for the whole community.

6. Spiritual Growth: There were three things off of the list that really jumped out at us: 1) creating a web of intimacy with spiritual friendship groups of three or four people. One of the ideas that came forth under this was to find out our common interests, referring to our needs as individuals, and form groups around these (e.g., study groups, sharing spiritual journeys). Preparatory meetings have small geographic groups that meet for worship and still keep their connection with the wider meeting. With this we need to be aware of the needs of children and families, not wanting to lose the support here. 2) Forms that intentionally provide, nurture, and maintain spiritual space. If we kept this question as the underlying organizing principle for everything that we do in our meeting community, this would transform our lives and our community experience. For example, does singing before meeting for worship as currently practiced do these things? 3) Encouraging committee work to come out of worship, particularly the nominating committee. Also, ask nominating to ask each individual in meeting, not just newcomers, about

*Happiness is realizing that nothing is too important*

Antonio Gala, *Spanish poet and playwright*

## BUSINESS MEETING

[Brainstorming]

their strengths and weaknesses. If we did all of our committee work out of worship, it would transform our Meeting and enrich all our lives.

7. Care of the Meeting: business & routines: We focused our discussion on 3 elements: time, break of meeting, and maintenance:

8. Time: We valued use of the Tibetan bowl as a signal to gather. Paying attention to finishing on time is not as important as recognizing spirit and being attentive to our business process. We could all help the clerk see when it's time to move on and finish the work in another setting. Silent worship is an appropriate ending. We can be patient with the process and reschedule unfinished business. Spiritual grounding is more important than how long it takes to finish.

9. Breaks: The group found our use of time with break & meal today fruitful for business sessions; would like to continue this practice for a few months to give us some basis on which to consider it for the long term. They liked firmness about no oral announcements bar an emergency so we can begin when we need to. They recommend a brainstorming session to think about different ways we could be more playful and get to know each other better in break time.

10. Maintenance: There has been frustration with people not being able to participate on work days. They recommend more structured planning to make it a more community-building affair (child care, meal). Set a date for project completion: if we can't get it done by then, contract the work out. Posting a list of whom to call about building or grounds issues would be very helpful. A roster of committees and committee members would also be useful. A concern was expressed for handicap access at the back of the Meetinghouse; it is too cluttered. The condition of our house and grounds gives people their first impression of us. We are all responsible for attending to this.

11. Religious education: They felt a desire to spend time together on a regularly scheduled basis. They offer the following structure for the next 9 months to help us all get to know each other better:

12. 1st Sunday: Pick 2 topics per year and hold worship sharing/discussion that allow for deeper, on-going consideration of these topics.

13. 2nd Sunday: Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

14. 3rd Sunday: Listening to one or two members/attenders sharing their spiritual journeys out of the silence, so we could deeply hear each other and know each others' backgrounds.

15. 4th Sunday: Sandwich Sunday. They recom-

mended that 4th Sunday be intergenerational worship (with a quiet box, books for children) followed by food and fellowship. This would allow worship opportunities for adults working with younger Friends.

16. 5th Sunday: Bring in a speaker from wider Quaker organizations.

17. They discussed possible format changes for Sunday, beginning with all worshipping together, followed by separate religious education for children, youth, and adults. Be mindful that the main reason for kids coming to meeting is to be with their friends.

18. General topics related to religious education that came up were: current scholarship regarding Jesus; corporate discernment, including Jan Hoffman's exercises. What is the simple message of Jesus? What is the heart of Quakerism? What is the essential spiritual spark that is speaking to us?

19. The clerk will lead further discussion in the next month's Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business after getting this report out to the wider community.

**20. Friends approved following this structure of starting at 11:30 and breaking for a simple meal next month.**

### Review of Sixth Month Minutes

The nominating committee corrected their report: Sarah Jane Thomas requested release from Music Committee; Sarah Ann Thompson requested release from Religious Education. **The minutes were approved with this correction.**

### Individual Concerns

1. Peace and Earth is considering Asheville Friends Meeting's participation in the Goombay Festival for next year.

2. Five people in Asheville started training for the GI HotLine. Veterans for Peace is organizing this; Peace and Earth is supporting this.

3. We would like the Naming Committee to convene to offer names for the Nominating Committee.

### Close of Meeting

The Meeting closed at 2:36 pm with unprogrammed worship.

### *Attention, Quaker Packrats!*

The AFM library needs a few back issues of newsletters for the archives. If anyone has a copy of the Jan. and Feb. 2000, June 2001, or July 2002 newsletters, please let Marcia know:

(marmaster@msn.com)

## Tidbits:



**Linda Alfredson** has launched a very difficult home improvement project. She is trying to teach her children, **Galen** and **Zack Cobb**, how to cook and how to clean the bathroom. Stay tuned.

**Bebe Tarleton** likes working in her garden of flowers and vegetables. Her current challenge is coming to peace with a groundhog, who has learned to climb the picket fence surrounding the garden. Although she recognizes the groundhog's prior claim to the territory, nonetheless she feels that they should come to some amicable sharing arrangement. Since the groundhog seems unlikely to agree to any reasonable terms, Bebe has decided to install an electric fence.

**George Gjelfriend** has started taking chess lessons from a local expert. The hardest lesson so far: humility and arrogance, each in its own place.

**Lauren Mitchell** was the supervising Friend in this summer's Teen Internship Program. She is a junior at Guilford College, majoring in Sociology and Anthropology with a minor in Quaker Studies. Her true love is photography. She recently finished a photo essay as an independent project on *Women's Stories of Sexual Harassment* and is currently working on *Nude Men With Flowers*. Also she is Yearly Meeting representative to FWCC.

**Tom** and **Nöel Pulliam** are newcomers "trying us out". Tom builds furniture, such as gliders; he was in construction trades for 26 years, renovating kitchens, cabinet making, etc. He says that while he does have input, his wife Nöel makes all the major decisions regarding the opening of their new "Southwest flavor" restaurant in Black Mountain. They had hoped to open by the beginning of this month, then found out that the site has neither plumbing nor sewer connections.

**Emma Pulliam** is thirteen years old and going into the eighth grade. She is learning to play guitar and she likes singing in a chorus. So far she likes First Day School enough to keep her parents coming to Meeting.

**Jennifer Walker**

admits to having been named after her family's dogs. She reads 13th Century Persian poetry – in translation – and a few years ago placed eighth in the national Backhoe Driving championships (although, she protests, only 42 states participated!).



**Chris Parsons** has been painting in oils for a couple of months now – working on five different landscapes. He says he had never touched oils before, and needed to try them out. His usual medium is watercolors especially miniatures. He also reports that after six months of practice on the Chinese violin, he has almost learned how to tune it!

**George Love** is a newcomer, right now painting his house, but makes his living "doing a little bit of this and that..." including loan brokering, real estate, engineering, and accounting. He also writes and illustrates "vignettes". He has been to thirty different churches in the last five years while searching for a spiritual home, including five times with us.

### Give us your News!

If you see Friend George Gjelfriend approaching you with notebook in hand, don't panic! Instead, please tell him what is going on in your life that you might wish to share and celebrate with our community. It's so valuable for us all to know one another better, and Friends find these "Tidbits" provide a vehicle for doing that, and encourage us to hold one another's journeys in our hearts.

Many thanks to George for his diligence, perseverance, and punctuality as he provides the material for this column month after month.



**Phil Neal**, whose first name is actually "John", joined the Friends in 1938 while attending Swarthmore College. He had a one-man clearness committee for membership, consisting of philosophy professor Jesse Holms, a former Socialist candidate for governor. J. Phillip was initially attracted to Quaker activism in social concerns.



**Margaret Stipcewich** recently performed with the Autumn Players (an offshoot of Asheville Community Theatre) in a staged reading of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milkwood*, directed by **Hal Hogstrom**. In addition, she and her husband **John** sang some songs.



**Alice Brown** will take a trip to the West Coast to see her great-grandson. She recently helped her daughter celebrate her twentieth wedding anniversary.

## Offering News of Asheville Friends



**Bob Smith** has been busy cleaning out his basement. Also he is *thinking* about getting another goldfish since he has lived alone long enough.

**Marcia Master** recently visited her niece and nephew in Louisville, Kentucky **Art** and **Ginny McVickar** have just moved across the river in Indiana, where Marcia hopes she may stay in contact with them.

**Ellen Farmer** is a fourteen year old ninth grader at Carolina Day School, where she can't really work up any enthusiasm for the academic offerings. Now if they had a course in designing clothes, she might like that! In the meantime, she devotes her time to serious market research – shopping, especially at the Mall! The last book she read for herself was *The High King* by Lloyd Alexander.



**Rusty Maynard** rows his wife's recreational shell (much wider than those used in competition) in a 1.5 mile figure-eight around Beaver Lake. Rusty knows the exact distance because he called up the appropriate aerial photograph on the Buncombe County GIS (Geographical Information Service) website and plotted the route.



**Mark Cobb** thought he would be going into cardiology after his required service in the Navy, until a friend told him that young sailors needed the services of a dermatologist more. He tried it and like it, ending up spending twenty years in the Navy. He reports that Naval medicine was the very best of non-fee-for-service, and, as a noncombatant, he saw no conflict with his Quaker upbringing in New Hope, PA.

## News From Distant Friends

Recently **Rivka Maher** was in Asheville for a week, teaching children at the Asheville Art Museum. Along with greetings to her friends and fellow travelers at Asheville Meeting, she brings good news of fulfillment and satisfaction in her new employment and locale. Her current contact information is:

50 Pebble Beach Cove  
Apartment G110  
Bluffton, SC 29910  
843-757-9224  
rebeccamaher@excite.com

A message from Gwen McVickar McMahan concerning her parents, **Art** and **Ginny McVickar**, indicates that they have settled into their new location close to their daughter's family. They may be reached at:

125 Hilltop Drive #304  
Corydon Indiana 47112  
812-738-4757

This just in! **Edith** and **Talmadge Neece** report that they are "making some progress" getting settled in Chapel Hill. They may be reached at:

205 Covington Drive  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-6853  
919-401-6626  
tneece@nc.rr.com

And this just in! contact information for **Pat Lyon**:  
Kendal Crosslands, Room 355  
Crossland Drive  
Kennett Square, PA 19348.  
484-259-0104

### Celebration of Marriage

Ariel Hearne and Christopher Maddox would like to invite Asheville Friends Meeting to share in the joyous moment as they are married under the care of the meeting. All Friends are welcome. Your presence helps to create the meeting for worship out of which they will make this commitment to each other.

The wedding will take place on Saturday, August 16th at 5:30 p.m. in the Formal Gardens at Warren Wilson College, followed by a Reception at the Pavilion (adjacent to the Formal Gardens). In case of rain, Friends are asked to call (201) 247-3747 for a recorded message providing details. Also part of the celebration is a pot-luck dinner to be held at Asheville Friends Meeting on Friday evening, August 15th from 5 to 9 p.m.. Please RSVP to Christina McQuiston at 645-6035 if you are able to attend. She will respond to Ariel and Christopher on behalf of the meeting.

Let us continue to hold Ariel and Christopher in the light as they approach this day and the rich and precious days that follow!

## Asheville Friends Meeting

**Weekly Meeting for Worship:** First Day singing at 9:40, regular worship at 10 a.m. 227 Edgewood Road, Asheville (258-0974).

**Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business** takes place on second Sunday, 8/10. Friends are especially encouraged to join in a celebration of the work we have done in the past two months to deepen our process of conducting business.

**Sandwich Sunday:** Loaves, fishes, and fellowship after Meeting for Worship on fourth First Day (8/24). Your presence is encouraged, there's always plenty of food!

**Midweek Peace Prayer Meeting:** each Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. 30 minutes of silent meeting with a

## Other Nearby Meetings

**Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 9:30 a.m., please call for new location.

**Boone Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 10 a.m., at the home of John and Judy Geary, 175 Edgewood Drive.

**Brevard Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 11 a.m. at the Sharing House, corner of Oakdale and Duckworth.

**Celo Monthly Meeting:** each First Day at 10:45 a.m., 445 Hannah Branch Road.

**Clemson Worship Group:** each First Day at 9 a.m., Clemson Unitarian Church.

**New Moon Worship Group:** meets at the Bar-

## Asheville Friends Meeting

227 Edgewood Road  
Asheville, NC 28804

*address correction requested*

## Kindness

Be kind and merciful.  
Let no one ever come to  
you  
without leaving better and  
happier  
Be a loving expression of  
God's kindness:  
kindness in your face,  
kindness in your eyes,  
kindness in your smile,  
kindness in your warm  
greeting.  
To children, to the poor,  
to all who suffer and are