



Newsletter of the  
**Ithaca Monthly Meeting**  
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

**July 2008**

**CONTENTS**

Meeting Events: 2  
Announcements: 3  
    Quakers in Our Region: 4  
    In Our Community: 4  
IMM Minutes: 6  
Calendar of Events: 6

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**Website:** [ithacamonthlymeeting.org](http://ithacamonthlymeeting.org)

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS  
Due July 29th**

Materials for the August newsletter may be submitted by the method of your choice to:  
Rini Clarkberg  
150 Giles St., Ithaca, NY 14850  
277-9364 • [mec30@cornell.edu](mailto:mec30@cornell.edu)

**Good Friends Gathering**

—*Tonia Saxon*

The retreat we hold for our children every year often leads to new discoveries. This year's retreat, held from June 27-29 at the Foundation of Light, was no exception.

We packed bag lunches for Loaves and Fishes and discovered that twenty-five children can produce one hundred twenty-five bag lunches in sixty minutes—as long as we don't hold the sandwich-makers to uniformity of peanut butter application. We did crafts, many kids learned to operate the "jiggly saw," and we discovered that it's possible to make a jigsaw puzzle that can't be done. We watched the annual kid-organized circus on the final night of the retreat and learned that Elspeth Rhodin is a splendid actress. At our campfire afterwards, one young camper discovered that it is possible to chew through a glow stick.

of their huge hall, their playground, their kindergarten room with fabulous wooden clothespins good for hanging off ears and noses, their bathrooms (running water!), and their kitchen (electricity! a sink!). Those of us who had lugged cartfuls of craft supplies on and off the land, driven our cars across the meadow, and hauled water in and out of the 79 site reveled in the luxury of the parking lot, the faucets, and the option

of serving (and eating) warm food.

The retreat this year was broken not into age groups, as we had always done before, but into groups that crossed age boundaries—"clans," we called them. Instead of spending time with the children they had known from First Day School during the year, campers got to know other children who were much older than they were, or much younger. Older girls gave the littler children piggy-back rides; young



*We love our neighbor Fiona. More retreat photos at [ithacamonthlymeeting.org/gallery](http://ithacamonthlymeeting.org/gallery).*

Rainy weather greeted the first morning of our retreat, but it didn't matter; we had a roof over our heads. Up until now the retreat has always been held outdoors at the meeting's property on Route 79, at the mercy of wet or too-hot weather. This year the lengthy application process for a Town of Ithaca land use permit drove us to seek a backup facility, and we rented the Foundation of Light for three days. This entitled us to the use

and old, assigned "secret friends," wrote notes to each other and offered each other friendship bracelets. (Memo to myself for next year: make certain secret friends are going to be there on the same days in order to avert the tragedy of not having a secret friend to make presents for.)

"How do you spew 'aw'?" one very young child asked, writing a note to someone.

***Good Friends, continued on page 2***

## Good Friends, continued from page 1

“Aw’?” said the older children, puzzled.

“Yeah,” said the small child, “Wike ‘you aw.’”

“Do you mean ‘You all?’”

“No,” said the small child impatiently “You AW.”

“Oh!” another child realized. “She means ‘You are’! A-R-E.”

Later, a small child found a friendship bracelet in the bathroom. “Who’s is this?” she asked.

“I don’t know,” I answered. “You could go around and ask people whether they’ve lost theirs.”

She picked up the bracelet and marched out of the bathroom. The first person she met was Larry Clarkberg.

“Is this yours?” she asked.

“No,” he said thoughtfully, looking down at her. “Did you find it in the girl’s bathroom?”

“Yes,” she said.

“And now you’re going around asking people if it’s theirs?” he went on.

“Yes,” she said.

He looked at her very seriously. “You could cut your asking time in half,” he said, “if you didn’t ask any men.”

The clans were named Simplicity, Integrity, and Peace; two plays on the final night (one of which starred Elspeth) took Simplicity and Integrity as their themes. With Quakerly austerity, a brown tarp served for a garden plot, two dropped pot lids stood for a the clatter of a bicycle accident, and an emperor wore a bedsheet. Young and old shared a dish-to-pass dinner and s’mores around the campfire.

Cleanup chatter centered around the eerie suitability of the Foundation of Light design for a Quaker meetinghouse. It had a big, light, airy meeting room which could double as a dance space—or a basketball court. It had an ample kitchen which seemed to love to have people sitting around drinking coffee in it. It had three smaller rooms the right size for First Day School classrooms, and generous bathrooms. Many jokes were made about simply buying the blueprints from the Foundation of Light rather than reinventing the wheel. “It’s badly built,” someone who had toured the building after its construction told us. “It’s very cold in the winter.” Nevertheless, having a building to use gave our thoughts about meetinghouses new immediacy.

But the next morning, as we met for early morning meeting in the birch grove back on the land on Route 79, we marveled at the absolute simplicity of that place—dark earth, forest, the songs of birds. Several spoke of being able to listen there, to really hear things. Having the wealth of a sink and a dishwasher and electric lights had been wonderful for a couple of days, but the wind in the hemlocks and the wood thrush had been waiting for us.

## Meeting Events

### Peace Witness Committee Meeting Tuesday, July 8th, 7:30p

Please join us at the Burt House as we continue our efforts to express Friends’ Peace Testimony. Bring your thoughts and ideas.

### Social Justice Comm. Meeting Thursday, July 10th

We will be meeting at the Burt House at 6 pm.

### Meeting for Healing Tuesday, July 22nd, 7:15p

A Meeting for Healing is held at 7:15 on the fourth Tuesday of every month at Melody Johnson and Dick Crepeau’s house (112 Mount Pleasant Road). If you have a concern but cannot attend, let Melody know and you will be held in the Light. For directions or more information, call Melody, 272-8755.

### Floating Meeting at the Burt House Watch for the date!

We anticipate a dish-to-pass dinner at the Burt House in August. Watch for more information, or contact Mary Balfour, 273-5421.

### Letter to the Editor

*This afternoon I received the June newsletter, mailed by Ann Rhodin, and I find each article so interesting. [...]*

*I am moved by the “Out of the Nest” report by Tonia Saxon [describing her trip to New Orleans with Ariel Mohler to work with Love Knows No Bounds].*

*Meeting friends might like to know that Karl’s “power chair,” (for he never referred to it as a wheelchair), was sent to New Orleans a few months after his death, through Love Knows No Bounds. It was gratefully received.*

*With appreciative thanks,*

*Helen Schantz*

## Announcements

### Tom Brown is Out of Town

Wilma and I will be vacation in July and Mike Simkin, our Assistant Clerk, will be clerking Business Meeting on the 13th. If you have items for July Business Meeting, please coordinate with Mike (mes13@cornell.edu) before the 10th. Thank you for your assistance and support of Mike as Acting Clerk during the rest of this month. Wilma and I expect to return July 29.

— Tom Brown, Clerk

### Hector Meetinghouse Cemetery Policy

Trustees are seeking volunteers who are members of the Meeting for an *ad hoc* (temporary) committee to review and update the policies for the Hector Meetinghouse Cemetery. A site map showing available and filled plots also needs to be created. It has been almost 30 years since IMM has worked on such policies. The Trustees expect that this committee will be able to accomplish its tasks in a relatively short time and has developed a structure to facilitate the work.

Melody Johnson will be the convenor and volunteers should notify her of their interest before September 1st (272-8755 or <rcrepea1@twcny.rr.com>). Trustees will bring a list of recommended members for the Committee to MM in September for approval.

— Marilyn Ray, Trustees Convener

### Discernment: How is Ithaca Monthly Meeting?

Friends, a July 6th discussion with Nancy Gabriel focuses on NYYM "Meetings for Discernment." These meetings are worship sessions which hold Meetings in the Light, and an opportunity to convey the joys and concerns of our meeting with others in the Yearly Meeting. The first such meeting was in March. Our representative to those meetings, Nancy Gabriel, writes:

*Although approved by Ithaca Monthly Meeting as your representative to this body, I had not solicited input from you as to concerns of our Meeting to be shared there. This is a summary of what I remember saying in the worship sharing:*

*"Our Meeting owns three pieces of property, yet we meet for worship in yet a fourth place most of the time. Depending on how you count it, we have been laboring for nine, or sixty, years over the question of acquiring a place where all Meeting functions could take place. It occurred to me in worship this morning that Ithaca MM is in an analogous position to FUM in that we cannot even speak about 'the' issue; the process has broken down. I am thinking of what we have learned recently about Mother Teresa's agonizing experience of the absence of the Christ to whom she had given her life—distant, silent, invisible. Yet her works throve, and her community throve, as Ithaca's also do. There are enough whispers and glimpses of the Presence to keep us going. But I believe we are a Meeting that is suffering."*

The next Meeting for Discernment will occur at Silver Bay on July 22nd. What joys and concerns of Ithaca Monthly Meeting would you like Nancy to bring to Silver Bay? Please contact Nancy with your feedback, ntg2@cornell.edu, 277-8930.

The following provides some additional description of March's meeting, in which Friends from 21 different Monthly Meetings spoke. This letter has been shortened for print here, but is available in full length from Nancy.

*To Friends of New York Yearly Meeting,*

*Friends reported on the life of most of the thirty-six monthly meetings and worship groups represented in the body. These reports were clearly much more candid than our formal State of Society reports. Out of these disparate reports and concerns, we began to gain a sense of some threads that transcended the condition of our individual communities. These threads did not come into clear focus by the end of our day, but their intimation was enough to make us feel that we were beginning to get a sense of coming together as one body, and to reassure us that our endeavor was well led.*

*First and foremost was the theme of how we can better love one another. Related questions were:*

- *How can we practice genuine hospitality?*
- *How can we better welcome the newcomer into our meeting?*
- *How can we truly integrate them into the full fabric of our community's life?*
- *How can we avoid making those we might see as so different from us into 'the other'?"*

*Intermixed with this theme were many heartfelt concerns about our relationship with the rest of Friends United Meeting. Some Friends brought minutes from their meetings. Some urged us to consider ending our association, or suspending our funding, or amplifying our expression of our concern over our differences in our sense of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender personhood and ministry. Listening to each other brought us some healing. Although we were not able to recognize a clear way forward, Friends felt that this topic would be a part of future Meetings for Discernment. As before, four queries will be before us on July 22.*

- *How is the Spirit moving in your monthly meeting?*
- *What concerns have been laid upon your heart and into the collective care of your monthly meeting?*
- *How is the Spirit moving in the yearly meeting?*
- *What are we as a body called to at this time?*

*We hope all monthly meetings will have appointed one or more Friends. We welcome all Friends to attend.*

— Lee Haring, for the Steering Committee

## Site Plan and Route 79 Driveway

The Town of Ithaca Planning Board gave unanimous approval of the use of our Route 79 land for recreational purposes and the installation of a driveway to facilitate our access to the land. The driveway has since been completed. Friends may find the driveway between 1415 and 1417 East Slaterville Road, directly across from the Hillside Alliance Church driveway.

### Words to Consider

from Meeting for Healing

*The journey into God's love helps us move into the future with a new assurance—all will be well, no matter what. This does not mean that everything will go our way and we will be immune from reality. It means that where it counts—on the inside where we are fed and loved by the Divine—all will be well. There we find an "all-right-ness", that transcends our wants and wishes. Through our "being with" God, we will come to know a love that sustains in suffering, evil and fear. A love that holds us together inside, despite what swirls around us. One that imbues our lives with the most difficult peace of all—peace in suffering. The more we find ourselves loved, the more we are set free. Free to face what is before us, free to find joy, hope and meaning in spite of it.*

*As a heart longs for flowing streams,  
so longs my soul for thee, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God,  
for the living God.*

*Psalm 42:1-2*

*— Sue Monk Kidd*

## Frank Barry's Photographs: Art for Lunch

Frank Barry (Barbara Barry's husband) will be speaking at the Johnson Museum, Cornell University on Thursday July 10th, noon to 1pm, and then an exhibition of his photographs will continue through August 17.

Over this lunch hour, Frank will discuss his exhibition, *Remembering Steam Locomotives*. For over forty years, Frank has traveled all over the world photographing the demise of the steam locomotive, a conveyance that Barry clearly appreciates. This exhibition highlights works from his personal archive.

## Directory Updates

**Barry Kahn** and his wife Joanne Rogers lives at 4323 Gypsy Road, Marcellus, NY 13108. His phone is 315-673-7061 and his email is bkahn001@twcny.rr.com.

**Shirley Way's** address is P.O. Box 51, Poplar Ridge, NY 13139. She can be reached at 315-364-8065 or sdway06@yahoo.com.

## Quakers in Our Region

### Meeting for Worship at Genesee Country Village

On Sunday, July 13th there will be a special Meeting for Worship at Genesee Country Village and Museum. This living history museum located about 20 miles east of Rochester, NY.

Friends will gather in the parking lot no later than 10:30. We will enter together as a group. We will have a short introduction to the history of the old Quaker Meetinghouse, followed by worship from 11 am to noon. This will be followed by a dish-to-pass lunch at the picnic tables near the parking lot (bring your own table service and a few spares). If you have questions, please contact Suzanne Blackburn, the clerk of Alfred Meeting, at (585)468-5274 or odonata@hughes.net. For general information about the Genesee Country Village and Museum, visit [www.gcv.org](http://www.gcv.org).

### What is New York Yearly Meeting?

Ithaca is a "monthly meeting" because we conduct Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business once a month. Ithaca is part of a "region" or a "quarter"—the Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting—that conducts business four times a year. We are also a part of New York Yearly Meeting, a group that includes meetings and worship groups from New York State, northern and central New Jersey, and southwestern Connecticut.

Each year, NYYM gathers in the Adirondacks for "Summer Sessions at Silver Bay." This year, the event runs July 20-26. For more information about what happens there, see <[www.nyyym.org/silverbay08/](http://www.nyyym.org/silverbay08/)> or speak with Melanie-Claire Mallison, our NYYM representative.

## In Our Community

### Second Sunday Celebration Circle

Meeting at the Henry St. John building, 301 Geneva Street, every second Sunday at 7pm, this month the theme is "Dailiness: Finding the Sacred in Everyday Life."

Folding laundry, weeding the garden, preparing a meal, washing dishes: each day offers countless opportunities for us to connect with the Divine through the ordinary activities of our daily routines. In this celebration, Aileen Fitzke invites us to reflect on how each of us can see the sacred in the "mundane" aspects of our lives. The evening will be woven together with singing, meditation, a creative activity/ritual, and sharing time.

Aileen Fitzke holds a master's degree in Feminist Spirituality and has been a founding member of several women's spirituality groups. She has over fifteen years experience in religious education with both children and adults. She is also a mother and a writer.

For more information, visit <[www.commonheart.org](http://www.commonheart.org)>.

## Advices & Queries

This month's advices and queries from *NYYM Faith & Practice* for your contemplation:

*Advices 12.* The attention of Friends is called to the propriety of conducting funerals and memorial meetings in a sincere spirit of worship. They are advised to avoid the display of floral decorations and the wearing of mourning, and to adhere to our simple ceremony.

*Query 11.* Do we foster reverence for life? Do we strive to find, to understand, and to remove causes of misery and suffering? Do we, in loving concern, extend assistance to those who require it?

*Query 12.* Do we acknowledge the oneness of humanity and foster a loving spirit toward all people? Do we honor Friends' traditional testimony that men and women are equal? How do we work to make these ideals a reality?

## Meeting Friends



Would you believe that Ed and Virginia Cranch have known each other since 2nd grade? Take a minute to imagine little Edmund and wee Virginia romping through the streets of their New Jersey neighborhood.

Ed and Virginia began attending Ithaca Monthly Meeting in 1943. They married in 1945—that is 63 years of marriage if you are counting—and became members of IMM in 1946, after Ed completed his service in WWII.

If Ed and Virginia seem like newcomers to some, it may be because they moved away from Ithaca from 1978 to 2003 (while Ed served as the President of Worcester Polytechnic Institute among other things). In addition, Ed and Virginia winter in Florida, leaving Ithaca around Thanksgiving and returning in May each year.

Ed serves on the Ministry and Oversight committee and on the Burt House Committee. Virginia also pitches in with the Burt House.

## In the Light

**Carol Mohler** returned home promptly after the second surgery related to cancer. Carol will continue with chemotherapy.

In the same week as Carol's surgery, **Beth Jolles** had laproscopic surgery on a hernia to address low blood levels. Her hip repair remains on hold while she recovers.

**Tonia Saxon** will be moving with her daughter **Sarah Saxon** and her husband **John Levine** to Cambridge—the one in England—in August. John has a job opportunity there.



# Minutes

## June 2008 Monthly Meeting

Tom Brown, Clerk

Michael Simkin, Assistant Clerk

Marilyn Ray and Antonia Saxon, Co-Recording Clerks

Steve Mohlke, Treasurer

@ signifies that the minute has been read and approved

**200806.1 Gathering:** The Ithaca Monthly Meeting (IMM) of the Religious Society of Friends met on June 8, 2008 in the Hector Meetinghouse for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. At 12:15 p.m., fifteen F/friends settled into worship. Clerk read a selection from "Mind the Oneness: The Foundation of good Quaker Business Method" by Robert Halliday. The minutes of the May 2008 Monthly Meeting were read and the agenda for the day reviewed. @

**200806.2 Report of Proposed Route 79 Property.** Marin Clarkberg reported for the Committee. The Route 79 Property Committee requested approval to proceed with building a roadway onto the Route 79 property consistent with the site plan as submitted to the Town of Ithaca Planning Board later this month. @ Minute Approved.

**200806.3 Update on the 2008 Retreat** (formerly called "camp") Marin Clarkberg reported that the retreat will be held at the Foundation of Light June 26-28, 2008 and that the costs will be somewhat increased this year over last. She indicated that when their budget is complete it might be necessary to return to MM with a request for additional funds. @ Friends received the report.

**200806.4 Report from Trustees.** On behalf of Trustees Marilyn Ray proposed the following minute: IMM approves the formation an /ad hoc/ committee to update the policies of the Hector Meetinghouse cemetery and to produce a map to show plots already filled and those still available. Members of the *ad hoc* committee will be selected by Trustees from volunteers who are members of the Ithaca Friend Meeting. Trustees will return to Ithaca Monthly Meeting with a proposed list of members for the *ad hoc* committee in September 2008. Melody Johnson, member of Trustees will convene the *ad hoc* committee and members wishing to volunteer for the committee should submit their request for membership on it to Melody. @ Minute Approved.

**200806.5 Report from Treasurer** Steve Mohlke reviewed the treasurer's report for May 2008 and presented an overview of how to read monthly financial statements (a copy of the report is available from Clerk or Recording Clerk). @ Friends received the report.

At 1:20 p.m., eleven F/friends continued in silent worship before adjourning. We will meet again for Worship with Attention to Business at Hector Meetinghouse on July 13, 2008.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Marilyn Ray, Recording Clerk*

## July 2008 Calendar

### Every Sunday

- 10:00a Singing in the Hector Meeting House
- 10:30a **Meeting for Worship** for all ages
- 10:45a Children are welcome to enjoy the outside.

### Other Weekly IMM Events

- Tues 9-9:20p **Worship** in your own home.
- Wed 7:30p **Midweek meeting** for worship at the Burtt House.
- Thurs 4:30-5:30 **Peace Vigil** at the bottom of East State Street near the Community School for Music and Arts.

### Monthly Events of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

#### Second Sunday (July 13)

Rise of Mtg **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.** Bring a sandwich and a half, if you're so inclined, to share with those who may have forgotten. Child care provided on request (please see left sidebar on page 1).

#### Fourth Sunday (July 27)

Rise of Mtg A light **brunch** of shared snacks. Please bring finger foods to share.

### July Events (\*For more information about asterisked items, see inside.)

#### July 2 (and August 6), Wednesday

1:15-3:00p Volunteers needed at **Kitchen Cupboard**. Call Ginny Gartlein for information (272-2471). Kitchen Cupboard regularly needs brown paper bags.

#### July 8, Tuesday

7:30p **Peace Witness** Committee at the Burtt House.\*

#### July 10, Thursday

6-7:15p **Social Justice** Committee at the Burtt House.\*

#### July 20, Sunday

9:15ish **Children and the Life of the Meeting** (CALM) may meet. Confirm with Marilyn Ray.

#### July 22, Tuesday

7:15p **Meeting for Healing**, 112 Mt. Pleasant Road.\*

#### Coming in August...

**Floating Meeting** at the Burtt House.\*