



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

October 2007

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## Visit to the First State Prison in New York

by *Betsy Keokosky*

You may not be aware of it but the Ithaca Monthly meeting was written a letter of greeting by Michael Rhynes, the clerk of the Auburn Meeting in the Auburn Correctional Facility. I know because the letter finally made its way to the Social Justice Committee and I was the one who volunteered to answer it.

I've found that writing a first letter to someone in prison seems more an exercise in leaving things out than putting things in. A person can't say too much that is personal or ask too much that is personal. But writing a letter to anyone makes you start wondering what they are like, and when an invitation came through Marilyn's list from Jill McLellan in Auburn to help celebrate 33 years of the Quaker meeting there with the Quakers and Alternatives to Violence (AVP) people, I thought this is my opportunity to meet this guy.

I made the nearly 1 hour trip to Auburn on a beautiful Saturday with my daughter, Sofia, who was already a veteran of volunteering at Camp McCormick with the ACS community service class taught by Jon Raimon. We found the prison easily enough in the middle of town. It had a high wall around it with the classic look-out towers in turrets spaced down its length. We were directed to a huge fortress-like gate. Next to it we discovered a very tiny doorbell which we pushed, but nobody answered until a guard drove up with some groceries and yelled "Hey, Mike" through the crack between the wall and the gate. The door opened and we found ourselves in the prison.

With some other Quakers that had showed up a little late like us, we made our escorted way to a courtyard with a large outdoor tent setup with picnic tables and music and an assorted group of guests: Quakers from Rochester and Syracuse, AVP people, family members of prisoners, and the prisoners themselves who made up the Friends meeting there. I met Michael and liked him right

away. It turned out he writes poetry (and so do I— one of his poems is at the end of this article). After some warm up activities where people introduced themselves and met other people, he led off the meeting with the following statements:

"... We who are Quakers hold firmly to the belief that there is a measure of God in everyone. I find when I look in the mirror I can't always find God in myself. The odd thing is when I engage in heart felt conversation with other people I am able to see my reflection and my own measure of God.

We who are Quakers worship in a slightly different, but natural manner. We worship in silence. We believe God can and will commune with us. In

order to prepare for communion with God we become still, clearing away the static of the material world. We do not worship in a dead silence, we worship in a living silence, a silence which blooms with love, a joyous silence a jubilant silence, a silence pregnant with the possibility



of communing with the Creator...."

But I didn't meet only Michael. I met Walt who is from New York City and was transferred here away from his family and a NYC prison. He manages to wear dark glasses (the officers took ours away) by getting the kind that shade into dark in the sun and still look cool, and he loves to travel when he gets the chance. I met John who was telling my daughter — the one I have been trying to get to meditate — how useful meditation is — how it gets a person through difficult situations. Mike, John, and Walt are all black African American. I also met Israel who is part Italian, part Puerto Rican. He was telling me how he didn't think he could be quiet for 5 minutes, much less 25, but he has found it to be relaxing to be with people who didn't judge you, people who didn't force you to watch your back all the time.

All of these men were part of the program that celebrated Quakers peace making efforts in

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# Announcements

## Do you have something for the November newsletter?

Please get all information you'd like to have included in the November newsletter to Bronwyn Mohlke, by the method of your choice, no later than Monday, October 22. (277-4183 / bjm9@cornell.edu / 52 Gray Road, Ithaca, NY 14850 or after meeting for worship on October 21)

## Floating Meeting / Saturday, October 6

Floating Meeting is an intergenerational meeting "for worship with attention to eating" and time to get to know each other better. It became known as Floating Meeting because it takes place in a different home each month. The next Floating Meeting will take place at Liam Murphy and Susan Hess's home (78 Genung Circle / 272-4526) on Saturday, October 6. Come early to pick apples! Apple picking from 4:00 on, and a dish-to-pass supper will begin at 6:00. If your spirit is willing, but your body can't climb ladders, don't worry ... we have a few trees near the house and younger people are often willing to help collect. It's a great chance to build intergenerational cooperation! If the weather cooperates, we will again make cider in our press and, if the time is nice, we can offer a great view from our hill and, maybe, a campfire. Come join us!

## Peace Potluck at Perry City Meetinghouse / Saturday, October 6

The Perry City Friends (Quakers) invite you to a "peace potluck" on the first Saturday of each month. Everyone is welcome to share thoughts, feelings, and actions in a safe haven as we explore paths to peace together. The next meeting will be Saturday, October 6th at the Perry City Meeting House on Route 227 in Perry City. This month we will join in an Evening of Personal Sharing as we speak about our experiences and understandings and listen to others do the same. Dish to pass at 5:30; discussion at 7:00. For more information, call Mary Graham - 387-9046.

## CALM Announcements for First Day School / Welcome to First Day School on October 14

October 7th is the first day IMM will begin Meeting for Worship at Anabel Taylor Hall at 11:00am. Oct. 7th falls this year

on the Columbus Day four-day weekend. Please note we will have activities for all children in the Café. Children should attend the first 15 minutes of Meeting For Worship, meet with teachers in the hall and then go to the Cafe as a group. Ellie will lead the children in some group activities and children will have a snack and an opportunity to meet their teachers. The children will be brought back to the Edwards Room at 12:15 to join their parents.

October 14th CALM invites everyone in Meeting to join us, the children, and the teachers for a *Welcome to First Day School* at 10:30 in the Edwards Room.

We will greet all the children, sing a song together, and some of the older children will lead the younger ones in a cooperative game. We will all go to Meeting For Worship. At the end of 15 minutes, the children will meet their teachers in the hall before going to their classrooms.

Parents are requested to tell their children not to run off to what they think might be their classrooms but to wait in the hall for their teacher to take them to their classroom. This will be the process for the beginning of First Day School throughout the year. There have been some changes in group assigned to rooms due to class sizes this year.

All the children will be brought back to the Edwards Room at about 12:15 each First Day. They will reenter the Edwards Room to join their parents during announcements. This will also be the process throughout this year.

IMM Line Item Gifts	2006	2007
Advocacy Center - Tompkins County	250	250
American Friends Service Committee	750	750
Cayuga Nature Center Ruth Yarrow Fund	175	175
Center for Conscience & War (NISBCO)	300	300
Central Com. Conscientious Objn.	100	100
Community Dispute Resolution Center	275	275
Fellowship of Reconciliation	150	150
Friends Committee on National Legislation	750	750
Friends Peace Teams	200	200
Friendship Center	200	200
Guatemala Friends Scholarship	250	250
Offender Aid & Restoration	250	250
Peace Witness Committee (Discretionary)	500	500
Peace Witness Committee (Meeting Approval)	500	500
ProNica	150	150
Quaker House in Fayetteville NC	200	300
Quaker UN Office	200	200
Ramallah Peace Center (formerly Meetinghouse)	150	150
Ramallah School	150	150
Social Justice Committee (Discretionary)	500	500
Social Justice Committee (Meeting Approval)	500	500
Southern Tier AIDS Program	200	250
Southside Community Center	200	200
Suicide Prevention and Crisis Services	100	100
<b>Total Gifts</b>	<b>7000</b>	<b>7150</b>

## Discussion on Meeting gifts / Sunday, October 7

Dear Friends,

The Budget Committee (Dick Crepeau, Melanie-Claire Mallison, Chuck Mohler, Steve Mohlke, Mike Simkin and Will White) is proposing an expansion of the process by which decisions on contributions to organizations under the Witness and Nurture sections of the annual budget are made. We are inviting Friends to attend a general information and discussion meeting following meeting for worship on October 7 in the Café in Anabel Taylor Hall.

This will be an information sharing and discussion of where we donate money annually. In the past the Budget Committee acted with feedback from committees and individuals but had very little actual discussion until the annual business meeting at the end of the year. There, limits in time prevent a careful discussion of

the many details of the budget. This gathering will be an opportunity for Friends to contribute to the process and for the Budget Committee to answer questions. If you have a strong opinion or connection to any of our gifts, we need to hear from you!

We are also looking to keep meeting better informed, perhaps through the newsletter, in the future when donations are actually made to specific organizations so the process is kept current.

We appreciate your participation and sharing in these efforts.

First Hour of Discussion:

Why do we give gifts corporately rather than as individuals? How do we maintain our corporate connection to the organization receiving the gift?

What are we trying to accomplish by giving these gifts? Locally? Nationally? Internationally?

How much of our budget should go towards gifts? What is the appropriate total amount?

Is this the right number of gifts and approximate size of gifts? Should we have fewer line item gifts and allocate more money for distribution by the Social Justice and Peace Witness Committees?

Second Hour of Discussion

Speaking to the present, specific gift line items:

1. Who in Meeting is connected to this line?
2. Why is it important for this to be a corporate gift rather than an individual gift?
3. What connection is there to Quaker testimonies?
4. Who benefits from this gift?
5. What is the organization's budget relative to our gift?

## **Social Justice Committee / meetings Sunday, October 7 and Thursday, October 25**

We will have a brief SJC meeting in the café on Sunday, October 7 after the discussion on Meeting Gifts. It will be an initial consideration of the Earthcare Minute from 2007 NYYM (see below).

During October, we will have a second SJC meeting on the 4th Thursday, Oct 25, at 6 pm at the Burt House. This will be a regular SJC agenda, with first part focusing on Earthcare and the second part on Social Justice.

In November, we will return to our regular Anabel Taylor Hall schedule of meeting on the first Sunday of the month: November 4th, after the Rise of Meeting, in the café.

## **Christopher Sammond at Poplar Ridge Meeting, October 7**

Poplar Ridge Friends would like to invite Friends from neighboring Meetings to join us on October 7 when Christopher Sammond will be our guest for Soup and Sharing to discuss the FUM hiring policies, the action(s) leading up to and at the FUM Board meeting in Kenya, thoughts about where we in NYYM go from here.

His request is that we allow an ample 1 1/2, preferably 2 hours, so that there is time enough for the context to be understood, for thoughts and feelings to have full expression and questions answered.

Poplar Ridge Meeting for Worship is at 10:00. People will gather afterward for soup at 11:30 with the program to begin at about 12.

## **Peace Witness Committee / Tuesday, October 9**

The Peace Witness Committee will meet on Tuesday, October 9 at 7:30 PM at the Burt House. All are welcome to attend. Work with Friends to bring the Peace Testimony into our lives and community. See also the announcement about the visit on October 22 by Ahmad Hijazi of Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam, the "Oasis of Peace."

## **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business / Sunday, October 14**

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held after the rise of Meeting for Worship on October 14. All are encouraged to attend. Please come with an open mind and a listening heart, mindful of our Meeting as a loving community and business conducted under a spirit of worship.

Please get agenda items to our clerk, Tom Brown, no later than Tuesday, October 9.

A message from our clerk:

I think we have made good progress over this year in adhering to Quaker process during our business meetings, but feedback indicates we still have some distance to go. Thus, please be reminded that Meetings for Business are conducted in a spirit of worship, that we allow some time between messages (just as in Meeting for Worship), and that comments (messages) are directed to the clerk or to the Meeting as a whole and not to an individual. As a way to emphasize this and help us to remember, Ministry and Oversight is requesting that everyone who is physically able should stand when speaking. As we have done previously, simply raise your hand if you wish to be recognized by the clerk. Thank you.

## **CROP Walk / Sunday, October 14**

This year the Ithaca CROP WALK will be held on Sunday, October 14th, starting in Dewitt Park at 2:00 p.m. (registration at 1:30 p.m.) Across the U.S. some 2,000 communities sponsor CROP WALKS to support hunger-fighting development efforts locally and globally. For more than 25 years, Area Congregations Together (ACT) has sponsored the Ithaca CROP Walk. Twenty-five percent of the funds raised in the Ithaca CROP Walk will stay right here in Tompkins County supporting local hunger relief programs. That has been more than \$4,000 in recent years.

A large group from Meeting has often started on the CROP walk together. It is an enjoyable time! Please get in touch with Bronwyn Mohlke (277-4183 / bjm9@cornell.edu) if you would like a sponsor form. Won't be able to walk this year? How about sponsoring a Friend or two?

## **Common Heart Interfaith Fellowship Events in October / Sunday, October 14 and Saturday October 27**

Second Sunday Celebration Circle  
Second Sunday of every month, 7:00 - 8:30 PM  
Adults and teens welcome.  
Sunday, October 14th 7 PM  
"The Power of Stories and Myths"

Stories and myths have the power to shape our lives and our culture. They provide us with spiritual sustenance and inspiration, adding richness and depth to our world. They lift us out of the

mundane and remind us of the sacredness of life. Writer & educator Aileen Fitzke will speak to us about the power of myth and story, and will lead us in an experiential ritual using story. This will be woven together with singing and meditation led by Jody. If you wish, bring a book, picture, or object that represents a story, myth, or character that has been inspirational to you in your life.

Halloween/Samhain/Dia de Los Muertos Celebration Saturday October 27th 7 PM Led by Rev. Jody Kessler and Aileen Fitzke. All ages welcome.

We will explore the earth-based tradition from which Halloween originates and, because it is believed that the veil between the living and the dead is thinnest at this time, we will do a ritual to honor our ancestors and loved ones who have passed on. We will also be honoring Dia de Los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, a festive holiday celebrated in Mexico on November 2nd. There'll be lots of great singing and creative participation that will be engaging for both adults and children. We'll have a colorful altar arranged in the Dia de los Muertos tradition, and everyone will be given a mask to decorate and take home. You are invited to bring a carved Jack 'O Lantern to help decorate the space. Also, if you wish, bring a photo or memento of a loved one who has passed on. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Unless otherwise noted, our celebrations take place at the Henry St. John Building, 301 S. Geneva St., Ithaca, suite 103. Enter the building through the playground side ramp entrance. We are downstairs, first door on the left. The building is wheelchair accessible, and there is plenty of free parking.

## **Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam, the "Oasis of Peace" in Israel in a village between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv / Monday, October 22**

On Monday, October 22, 7:30 PM at the Unitarian Church of Ithaca, 306 North Aurora Street, Ahmad Hijazi of Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam, the "Oasis of Peace," will be speaking on his experience of Jews and Arabs living together. For over 20 years, residents of the "Oasis of Peace," who are all Israeli citizens, have lived and educated their children together as equals. The village is home to the region's first ever bilingual, bi-national Primary School, an internationally acclaimed conflict management program at the School for Peace, and the Pluralistic Spiritual Center. Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam has been nominated five times for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ahmad Hijazi first came to Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam in 1984 as a teenager to attend a School for Peace youth encounter workshop. It was a pivotal experience in his life. He later trained as a School for Peace facilitator. In 1992, Ahmad and his wife chose to live in Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam, and he served as Mayor from 1995 to 1997. Ahmad is currently the Director of Public Relations in the community and a facilitator at the School for Peace.

This evening is sponsored by Amnesty International, CRESP Center for Transformative Action, the Social Action Committee of Congregation Tikun V'Or, Muslim Educational and Cultural Association (MECA), the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church, Catholic Charities, the Social Action Committee of Temple Beth El, Kol Haverim, Catholic Worker, First Baptist Church, Cornell UNA-USA Young Professionals for International Cooperation (YPIC), Cornell Hillel, Islamic Alliance for Justice and Peace Witness Committee of the Ithaca Friends Meeting.

## **Meeting for Healing / Tuesday, October 23**

*I Believe in Angels*

*The colors come  
and flow  
prisms and flashes of sunlight  
and drops of rain,  
or crystal from broken glass.*

*Dreams of rainbows,  
dreams of light,  
Angel wings, gliding, soaring  
and the colors float  
always bright, always silent.*

*Are these voices from the past  
music of the future  
fragments of the world's wisdom*

*Or, are they Angels?*

*—Edith Edgerton*

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, Ithaca). This month it will be on October 23. All are welcome to attend. If you have a concern but cannot attend, let Melody know, and you will be held in the Light. For directions, or more information, please call Melody at 272-8755.

## **Fall Work Day at the Burt House / Saturday, October 27 9:00 am – 1 pm**

Special fall clean up in the Burt House yard due to new fraternity fence. Bring rakes, weeders, pruners, work gloves, etc. to help pick up sticks and debris for whatever time you can contribute. "Many hands make light work."

## **Quaker Basics / first in the series on Sunday, October 28**

It's fall which means it's time again for Quaker Basics, our adult education program designed to help F/friends understand a little more about Quakerism and Ithaca Monthly Meeting. All F/friends are welcome and encouraged to attend. Program Committee has decided to try a different approach with Quaker Basics this year. We will be focusing on one topic a month from October through May (but skipping December because it's such a busy month). Discussion will be held on Sunday afternoons after the rise of Meeting for Worship. We're still finalizing the schedule and leaders for each discussion so look for more details in future newsletters.

The first Quaker Basics session will address Quaker History with Tony Gaenslen on Sunday, October 28, 2007 from 1:00 to 2:45 pm. In November Esther Darlington will lead us in a discussion of Quaker Testimonies.

Other topics we'll address in 2008 include:

- Meeting for Worship
- Meeting for Business
- The Quaker Life Cycle: Birth, Marriage, Death
- Wider Quaker Organizations

- Leading a Quaker Life

Childcare can be provided upon request to the Program Committee by Wednesday before the session.

## Announcements from Ministry and Oversight (M&O)

### Arriving for Meeting for Worship

As we return to Anabel Taylor for our meeting for worship, we will resume the practice we began last year of asking Friends to arrive before the beginning of meeting for worship. The first fifteen minute period is what most of the children see of Meeting for Worship, and that should also be a time when we are settled. If you are a few minutes late, please slip into Meeting as quietly as you can. If you are more than five minutes late, we ask you to wait until the children leave for First Day School classes before entering Meeting (approximately 11:15). Friends who arrive late are welcome to gather in worship in the Episcopal Lounge, past the Edwards Room, around the corner and down the hall, the last door on the right. A member of M&O will be there, and will let Friends know when it is time to go to the Edwards Room. There will be a sign on the Edwards Room reminding Friends of this practice.

### Additional Meetings for Worship during the Holidays

We are already beginning to discuss additional meetings for worship during the holiday season. Meeting for worship will take place on Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve, and will be announced in the corresponding newsletter. Friends are asked to consider whether they would attend meeting for worship in the early evening on Christmas Eve, and/or in the morning on Christmas Day, and whether meeting at the Hector Meetinghouse or the Burt House would be preferable. Please respond to any member of M&O. M&O will next meet on November 1 and 29, and again on December 20 (no meeting in October).

Friends currently serving on Ministry and Oversight are: Rini Clarkberg, Ed Cranch, Marion DaGrossa, Elspeth Rhodin, Ellie Rosenberg, Sue Ruff, and Tonia Saxon.

## Directory Changes

Please send any corrections or additions to the 2007 directory to Steve and Bronwyn Mohlke, 52 Gray Road, Ithaca, NY 14850 / 277-4183 / <bjm9@cornell.edu>

### Corrections:

John Lewis and Annalisa Lewis Raymer are leaving us, and are making an adventurous move to Alaska. Their contact information is 4242 Chess Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508 / (907) 338-1968 / their e-mail addresses will remain the same: johnsherwood@yahoo.com and alr26@cornell.edu

### Additions:

Jason Gallant / 130 East Spencer Street, Ithaca, NY 14850 / (860) 933-4366 / jrg63@cornell.edu

Rose Metro / 601 North Cayuga Street #2, Ithaca, NY 14850 / 607 342-8241 / [rm492@cornell.edu](mailto:rm492@cornell.edu)

Holly Summers / 121 Sears Street, Ithaca, NY 14850 / (818) 256-7520 / hes36@cornell.edu

## Committees and the Work of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Much of the Religious Society of Friends operates without the benefit of paid personnel and relies on the work of caring volun-

teers. Nominating Committee invites you to think about your gifts and how you might contribute to the work of the Ithaca Monthly Meeting.

Nominating Committee brings names for the standing committees to Monthly Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business for consideration. While committee members are not self-appointed, Nominating Committee welcomes your suggestions regarding your own interests and/or thoughts about others who might effectively fulfill a need in some area.

(We also note that some committees are "open committees" inviting the attendance at meetings of anyone who is interested. These open committees include CALM, Social Justice, and Peace Witness.)

Please reflect on the committees below and contact a member of this year's Nominating Committee (Rini Clarkberg, Marion DaGrossa, Wendy Wolfe, Mike Simkin, and Melody Johnson) with your thoughts. Only a small number of committees are limited to members; those below are open to all attenders over the age of 12.

### Burt House

Manages the repair and maintenance of the Burt House Friends Center as needed, sets policy for its current use, and supports its sojourners and longer term residents.

### Children and the Life of the Meeting (CALM)

Organizes and coordinates First Day School for the children of the Meeting, Out of the Nest Program for young Friends age 15 and older, and intergenerational programs for the whole Meeting

### Directory

Maintains current contact information for Meeting members and attenders in a database (currently, MS Access). Produces paper directory and prints mailing labels when needed.

### Hector Meeting House

Maintains the Hector Meeting House and its grounds, sets policy for its use, prepares building and grounds for Meetings for Worship and special occasions.

### Hospitality

Readies the Edwards Room for Meeting each Sunday, organizes food and hospitality for after Meeting gatherings and for special events.

### Library

Purchases, circulates and promotes reading materials related to Quakerism.

### Newsletter

Collects information on upcoming events and other items of interest to Meeting. Produces a newsletter each month that is distributed at Meeting and mailed to those who do not sign-off having picked up their own copy.

### Peace Witness

Activities include: overseeing the weekly peace vigil at the foot of State Street, supporting conscientious war resisters, producing peace-related programs and collaborating with other community groups on educational programs.

### Program

Plans discussion and education for adults (such as in the evening or before Meeting for Worship) as well as special all-Meeting events such as Quaker Basics, the talent show, and annual picnic.

## Publicity

Maintains listings in periodicals and seeks other ways to ensure that others in the community are aware of our existence and can find us if they so chose.

## Route 79 Property

Outdoor maintenance and development at the land on Rte 79.

## Social Justice

Activities may include: providing transportation for families of prisoners in the county jail, working in food distribution agencies, tax counseling, and the promotion of socially consciously and sustainable lifestyle choices.

## Young Friends Advisors

Welcomes college students and assists with programs for Friends who consider themselves young.

## Social Justice Committee / transportation for family and friends to the Tompkins County Jail

Dear Friends, For the past five years, the Social Justice Committee has been providing transportation on Tuesdays and Saturdays for people who have loved ones in the Tompkins County Jail. This is done in coordination with OAR, a local organization which provides case management services for jail inmates and their families. This service allows inmates to stay connected to their families and helps them to make a productive transition to the outside community. We have a strong core of dedicated volunteers most of whom have been doing this for the whole five years. But, we are desperately in need of some new volunteers. It would be good if we could schedule half days because of the sometimes large number of people who want rides. And since all volunteers have other obligations as well, making the schedule gets a little tricky at times. Everyone who does this volunteer work really enjoys it and the clients are very appreciative not only of the ride but also the kind and listening ear which the volunteer offers. If you have any questions about this and/or may be interested in volunteering, please contact Barbara Barry at 533-7563 or e-mail [fb12@cornell.edu](mailto:fb12@cornell.edu).

## Home available for rent in Odessa

The Schantz family is looking for a person, a couple, or a family to rent the house next to Helen's home which is in a lovely space of countryside, about 18 miles west of Ithaca. Part of the rent for this two-story house would be paid in terms of work: gardening, mowing, snow-blowing, fixing things, taking recycling into town, generally helping with the kind of work that Helen can no longer do. We need someone who would really enjoy being here, yet would probably have a job to which he/she would commute. In other words, we are not expecting a caregiver role; in fact, respecting each other's need for solitude is an important part of the arrangement. If you know of someone who might be interested, please write Helen Schantz, by e-mail: [Schantz6@lightlink.com](mailto:Schantz6@lightlink.com) or by ordinary post: 3742 Newtown Road, Odessa, NY 14869. For those of you newer to Meeting, Helen and Karl were active in the Meeting for many years. Karl died last March and Helen continues to live in their home, near to three of our four daughters and their families and with Karl's beautiful paintings and pottery a daily source of joy and sustenance.

## Funds available for babysitting costs

The Budget Committee reminds Friends with children that Ithaca Meeting provides money for baby sitting in your home to help you attend Meeting activities such as Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, Quaker Basics, Midweek Meeting etc. Contact the treasurer, Steve Mohlke, regarding requests (277-4183 / [smohlke@lightlink.com](mailto:smohlke@lightlink.com))

## Friendly 8s Dinners

by *Melissa Travis Dunham*

Last spring the Program Committee introduced a new type of opportunity for F/friends to gather for fellowship—Friendly 8s Dinners. This was something Committee members had experienced at other Meetings and felt would be beneficial to our Meeting. We announced 3 initial dinners to be held at the homes of Program Committee members (it's always easiest to first recruit people from your own committee). Like many of the best laid plans, life got in the way and the dinners didn't all go as scheduled. But one group formed a cohesive group and by now has met for dinner 5 times. We call ourselves the Friendly 9 Guinea Pigs. There are 9 of us, not 8, but who's counting! The "guinea pig" reference is partly because we were the first group to try this idea and get together for a dinner, and partly in honor of Chris and my pet guinea pigs, whom the younger members of our group had fun playing with during the evening. As a member of a "successful" Friendly 8 group, I was charged with writing something for the newsletter explaining how the group works, with the hope that this will inspire some of you to create new Friendly 8 groups.

What are Friendly 8s Dinners and how do they work? The basic idea is for groups of people in our Meeting to gather for dinner in each others' homes. A goal is to meet 8 times throughout the year, but really the frequency is as the members' schedules allow. Members of the group each take turns hosting a dinner. For the Friendly 9 Guinea Pigs it has worked out that the hosts prepare a main entrée and other members bring salad, bread, and dessert. When scheduling the first dinner we determined any dietary restrictions the participants may have. As a result our meals are vegetarian since several of the members are vegetarian. We've also established an unplanned and unofficial rotation of who brings salad, bread, and dessert. We start our meals with a silent grace which is probably the most Quaker-specific aspect of the meal. We don't have an agenda of topics to discuss, except to try to set a date and location for the next dinner.

Why only 8 people? While the name "Friendly 8s" indicates a specific number of people and dinners, in reality the number is just a suggestion. Scholars of interpersonal communication may be able to cite research that shows 8 is the limit in small group communication before people start to break into smaller sub-groups. Personally I think it's because it's an easy number to fit around a dining room table. As I mentioned our particular group is currently 9 people, although schedules don't always permit all 9 of us to be present at every dinner. Recently we've talked about inviting newcomers to join our group. If the number of Friendly Guinea Pigs increases in the future, we'll just add another leaf to the table and squeeze closer.

What's the benefit of being part of a Friendly 8 group? Ours is a large Meeting and it can be difficult (especially for newcomers) to get to know people and consider them friends and not just Friends. Joining a dinner group provides an opportunity to get to know (or know better) a new cross-section of people in a more in-

timate setting.

How do the Friendly 8s Dinner groups form? If you're interested in being part of a Friendly 8s group the easiest thing to do is offer to host the first dinner. Put your name, contact information, and the proposed date of the dinner on a piece of paper, leave space for F/friends to provide their names, contact information, and any dietary restrictions, and make an announcement at the rise of Meeting. Program Committee would love to see the Friendly 8s be a self-sustaining fellowship opportunity. Ideally groups will form and meet; existing groups may change membership or disband if they feel it's appropriate to do so. No one from Program Committee will be monitoring the groups to see if you're meeting when you said you would or tell you to stop meeting because you've had your 8 dinners, although we may check in from time to time to see how things are going. Friendly 8s can meet as often or become as large as the group feels is appropriate. If you think this would be fun, form a group. Put out a sign-up sheet and let random people come to your house for dinner. You might just discover new friends.

## **Celebrate the Library Read Some Quaker Books**

Now that we are back in the Edwards Room on First Days, do take a moment to browse through the books and pamphlets and brochures on our library shelf. Some of these materials are from Friends General Conference (FGC) and they include information about Quakerism and Quaker worship. Some materials are about New York Yearly Meeting, and some are pamphlets about our own meeting. Find membership information or information about marriage under the care of our meeting.

There are copies of the current edition of New York Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice.

You will notice that some materials have a price tag on them, and some materials bear a lenders pocket inside the cover.

All the materials are available for borrowing. If you choose to take a copy home with you, please fill out the lenders card from the pocket and leave it in the sign-out box on the shelf. Then when you return the copy, you can retrieve the card, cross off your name and return the card to the book.

If you would like to keep any materials, please leave a donation in the container provided on the shelf. This way we can replenish the materials and keep new ones coming. Also, your donations will help provide new books.

Further, if you have one of our library books at home, please return it to the Edwards Room bookshelf so it can stay in circulation. If you have borrowed a book from the Burtt House, please return it so that our materials can be used by all. Books borrowed from the Burtt House may be returned to the Edwards Room shelf and we will see that they get back to the proper shelves.

Hymn books are part of our non-circulating collection. We like to have plenty on hand on First Day when we gather to sing before Meeting for Worship. If you have borrowed one, please return it to the Edwards Room.

## **Equal Exchange Coffee and Cocoa for Sale after Meeting for Worship**

The Social Justice Committee continues to offer Equal Exchange Coffee available for sale at the rise of Meeting each First Day.

The coffee will be in the Edwards Room, along with a "self-service" price list. You can pay Margaret McCasland. Checks can be made out to Ithaca Monthly Meeting, with a note in the memo line that it is for coffee.

Regular coffee is \$6.25 for a 12 oz bag of drip or whole bean (two roasts: Breakfast Blend or French)

Decaf coffee is \$7.25 for a 12 oz bag.

2 pound bags of French Roast whole beans is \$13.70 per bag (BEST VALUE!!)

Hot cocoa mix @ \$4.80/can (for nippy late summer mornings and/or evenings around a campfire).

You may place a special order for other AFSC Coffee Project items by contacting Carol Mohler at 539-6454 or <cmkmohler@frontiernet.net

The Coffee project's products are listed at <[www.equalexchange.com/ifPDF/AFSCorderform.pdf](http://www.equalexchange.com/ifPDF/AFSCorderform.pdf)>

We add a small surcharge to the wholesale prices to cover expenses. Any surplus goes to Social Justice projects in our area.

## **Name change for the café in Anabel Taylor Hall**

The café in Anabel Taylor Hall, most recently call the *Cul-de-Snack Café*, has undergone a name change and is now *Moosewood at Anabel Taylor*. Many of our after meeting for worship events take place in the café. It is one floor up from the Edwards Room, at the west end of the building (near the parking lot).

## **Peace with Earth Minute: A Call to Reverence and Action (NYYM)**

In our 1660 peace declaration Friends declared, "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatever: this is our testimony to the whole world." That statement is still true, but its meaning has deepened beyond what those early Quakers would have understood. Can we now commit ourselves to ending humanity's war with the Earth?

The Religious Society of Friends has witnessed for peace for almost 350 years. Over that time, our witness has grown and widened; we have worked for the end of war, for the end of the African slave trade, for equality of women, civil rights for African Americans and for human rights around the world.

Now we are led to widen our witness again to work for peace between humans and our sacred Earth community. Our culture has considered the Earth our property to be exploited, and we have all, knowingly and unknowingly, been complicit in this violent appropriation of world resources. We must now search for the seeds of this war in our possessions and in our lives and work to nurture a new, mutual relationship with the Earth in all of our actions. The spirit is calling us to hold in reverence this miracle that God has given us. If we are connected to our source, our lives are richer and deeper.

We are asking that this minute be forwarded to all Monthly Meetings and worship groups in New York Yearly Meeting with a "call to action." We suggest that each Monthly Meeting worshipfully address the following queries:

1. What are God and the Earth asking of our Meeting at this point in time?
2. How do we respond in ways appropriate to our Meeting, our community and the wider world?

3. How does this response build on previous or ongoing Earthcare work our Meeting has already done?
4. What further specific changes are we willing to make in our spiritual practice, Meetings and in our individual lives to reflect a strong witness for the Earth?

It is our hope that this prayerful consideration of our responsibility to the planet that sustains us will generate the actions necessary to bring us back into harmony with our beloved Earth.

## Friendly Composting

To continue our introduction to composting, this month I am including the first section of "Composting 101," from Martha Stewart Living, 1996 [slightly edited]. I have **bolded** the parts that refer to ways composting helps reduce the major heat-trapping gases in our atmosphere.

The team at Martha Stewart Living also put out a great list with 101 tips for reducing global warming. In fact, I found this composting article while trying to find the "101 tips" online. I never did find the 101 tips, but I have a paper copy. (I'll bring copies of both articles to Meeting.) Who knew Martha was so green? -- Margaret McCasland

It's been understood since ancient times that what comes from the earth should be returned to the earth. And the best way of returning Earth's richest (with interest) is to build a compost heap. Composting everyday plant debris and kitchen scraps results in the rich humus [decomposed organic matter] that is essential for good garden soil. Humus helps soil hold water, allows for air flow, controls erosion, and creates a home for bacteria that protect plants against disease, **capture airborne nitrogen**, lure soil-enriching earthworms, and ferry minerals from the subsoil.

Composting is an ideal way to dispose of organic household refuse such as lawn clippings, leaves, and many kitchen scraps. After six months to a year\* of composting, you'll be rewarded with pungent, coffee-dark, crumbly humus that **helps plants thrive [captures CO2]**.

--The best compost combines 2 to 3 parts "brown," or carbon-rich materials [such as dried leaves or straw] with 1 part "green," or nitrogen-rich materials [such food scraps or recent grass clippings or yard waste].

--[For organic compost,] never add materials treated with poisons or pesticides.

--Most gardeners keep two piles, one started about 6 months after the first. This way, they can use the compost from the first pile as the other is decomposing.

\*There are other techniques that can produce compost much faster, which you can learn from the Master Composters at Cooperative Extension. <<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/tompkins/compost/downloads.htm>>

COMPOST TIP: From Suzanne Kates, IMM's own maven of green living, a suggestion for an easy way to get enough "brown" materials for your compost pile: "Many bags of leaves appear at the curb in the fall." In addition to picking up a few for your own compost bin or pile, consider picking a few for the Burt House compost bins.

QUERY FOR NEXT MONTH: How do you keep critters out of your compost, in the house or in the yard? This is truly a question, and not just a "preview of coming attractions."

Please call (272-2544), write (511 First St, Ithaca) or email <[margaret@mccaslands.com](mailto:margaret@mccaslands.com)> your favorite composting tip OR challenges to Margaret McCasland.

## Friends Journal October 2007: Special Issue on Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) 70th Anniversary

This month's Friends Journal is a special issue on the 70th anniversary of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)

Articles include: Taking the Pulse of FWCC, My History with FWCC, Facing a Fractured Quakerism, FWCC: A Timeline, All Friends' Conference of 1920, 1967 Friends World Conference: A Youthful Recollection, and Why Does (or Doesn't) FWCC Do That?

## "World Peace" Art Exhibit / now through October 12

In Honor of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, the Willard Straight Hall Student Union Board is hosting an art exhibit titled "World Peace". It may be viewed at any time in the Willard Straight Hall Art Gallery (Cornell campus) from now through October 12. For more information, call 255-4311.

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## Minutes of the September 2007 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business of the Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

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*Tom Brown, Clerk*

*Nancy Gabriel, Assistant Clerk*

*Marilyn Ray, Recording Clerk for the day*

*Steve Mohlke, treasurer*

(The @ signifies that the minute has been read and approved during the Meeting.)

### 200709.1 Gathering:

The Ithaca Monthly Meeting (IMM) of the Religious Society of Friends met on September 9, 2007, at Hector Meetinghouse for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. At 12 noon., twenty F/friends settled into worship.

Clerk read the introduction to a publication from Southeastern Yearly Meeting, entitled "Blessed Community: Quaker Faith, Testimony, and Practice."

Since no one had a copy of the August 2007 Newsletter, Clerk dispensed with reading the minutes of the July 2007 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Approved @

### 200709.2 Ministry & Oversight Report:

Ed Cranch read the proposed Memorial Minute for Edith Edgerton. Friends approved the Memorial Minute with two minor changes in language. (Copy on file with the Recording Clerk) Approved @

Clerk reported that a Memorial Service for Louis Edgerton was held September 2, 2007 with help from Friends and Ed Cranch representing M&O in the arrangements. A Memorial Minute for Louis Edgerton is being prepared.

### 200709.3 Route 79 Property Committee Progress Report:

Mike Simkin presented an interim report on the Committee's progress gathering information about and cost estimates for access onto the property. The Committee has received two estimates for

access onto the property ranging widely from \$7,100 to as much as \$100,000, depending on construction details. Both contractors mentioned that it would be less expensive to place the access onto the property at the East entrance, rather than the West entrance off RT. 79. The Committee will continue exploring this issue. @

#### 200709.4 Budget Committee Report

Chuck Mohler presented the following minute for consideration: Minute: Ithaca Monthly Meeting expects to provide a minimum of \$13,000 for support of New York Yearly Meeting during 2008. Approved @

The Budget Committee announced that it will hold a discussion meeting after the rise of Meeting for Worship on October 7, 2007 in the cul-de-sack in Anabel Taylor Hall to discuss the budget line item for gifts. @

The Budget Committee announced it will be bringing to the October Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business a request to place a substantial amount of money-between \$10,000 and \$17,000-into the New Meetinghouse Fund. This amount represents roughly the amount the Committee estimates the Meeting will need annually for operation costs when we have a new Meetinghouse. @

#### 200709.5 Proposed Minute for Farmington Scipio Regional Meeting:

Steve Mohlke suggested the following Minute in order to align Monthly Meetings', Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting's, and New York Yearly Meeting's budget processes in a logical fashion. Minute: Ithaca Monthly Meeting requests Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting consider changing the date of Fall Gathering to the third Saturday of September each year. Approved @

#### 200709.6 CALM Report

Marilyn Ray reported that CALM has been struggling with a Committee vacancy since last April. Nominating Committee is meeting next week and will continue attempting to fill this vacancy. Marilyn Ray reported that the Burt House has requested CALM's assistance in arranging child care for Committee meetings and other gatherings at the Burt House. CALM feels this is beyond the scope of the Committee's mission. The Committee requested Meeting clarify whether this is part of the Committee's mission and if it is found to be, the Committee requests an additional member be appointed to the Committee to fulfill these functions. Clerk agreed to take this issue under advisement and discuss it with the Burt House Committee. [Note: This minute accurately reflects the CALM report but there was a misunderstanding about the Burt House Committee request to CALM.]

Marilyn Ray reported that she has been in communication with a member of the Syracuse Monthly Meeting who had heard about IMM's youth program. This mother of a 15 year old youth, has talked with several other parents of teens and it now looks as if up to five children ages 9-15 may be traveling from Syracuse twice monthly for First Day School. @

#### 200709.7 Treasurer's Report

Steve Mohlke reviewed the balance sheet for August. Friends received the report. @

At 1:35 p.m., 19 F/friends continued their silent worship before adjourning. We will meet again for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on October 14, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Ray, Acting Recording Clerk

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#### Visit to Auburn State Prison continued from page 1

different countries around the world. One man who spoke found the Quaker life defined as "simple, peaceful, and quiet". He was intrigued because he looked up "peace" in the dictionary and found it related to "quiet" as in "keep your peace". Another man transcended his literacy problems to contribute. Following the program was lots of talk, a huge lunch and much picture taking. We left feeling like we had participated in an amazing experience. The influence of Friends there allowed us to find the light of commonality among people we were usually isolated from.

You may be aware that Angela Davis recently came to Cornell and gave a talk on prisons. She saw prisons as a negative affirmation of the existence of freedom, a civil death for those incarcerated there, who are disenfranchised the rest of their lives. She saw the huge increase in prisons as money diverted from schools and other institutions in poor neighborhoods that improved might better enable young people to dream another way of life into happening. She stated that in the USA on any one day there are around 2.2 million people in prison, but over a year there are 13 million.

New York State has made prisons big business and they are replacing the manufacturing that used to be here. We have approximately 70 maximum, medium, and minimum security correctional facilities in New York State. According to a recent article in the Nation ("Stars and Bars" by Daniel Lazare in the Aug/Sept 2007 issue) that reviewed 5 new prison related books, in 2002 just "19% of the felony sentences handed down at the state level were for violent offenses, and of those only about 5% were for murder. Nonviolent drug offenses involving trafficking or possession accounted for 31% of the total, while burglary and fraud made up an additional 32%. Angela Davis makes an interesting point about surveillance. The poor and the dark skinned are under surveillance. Our white sons and daughters in college are not. Society decides whom it needs protection from.

#### Shipwreck

by Michael Rhynes

*adrift on a silver of hope*

*in a emotional sea*

*shrouded by mist and misery*

*bearers of grief*

*surround my depleted soul*

*fog horns play a hypnotic melody*

*by passing ears*

*piercing the inner sanctum of my heart*

*a duet of whales harmonize about un-reciprocated love*

*blue turtles perform a water ballet*

*paying homage to love gained, love lost and love yet to come*

*wave upon wave*

*joy twisted with pain*

*desire intermingled with frustration*

*love entwined with hate*

*wash upon the rock encrusted shore of my soul*

*lights of sanctuary*

*break through blue darkness*

*beckoning all who are lost*

*but need to be found*

# Calendar for October 2007

## Weekly Events:

**Every Tuesday 9-9:20pm** Worship in your own home

**Every Wednesday 7:15 pm** Midweek meeting for worship at the Burt House

**Every Thursday 4:30 pm** Peace vigil from 4:30 to 5:30 PM at the bottom of East State Street

**Oct 3 Wed 1:15 – 3pm** Kitchen Cupboard. Call Ginny Gartlein for information (272-3471). Please remember - Kitchen Cupboard desperately needs brown paper bags.

**Oct 6 Sat 4:00 pm** Floating Meeting at the Murphy/Hess home, starting with apple picking followed by  
**6:00** dish-to-pass supper (at the Murphy/Hess home)  
**5:30 pm** Peace potluck at the Perry City Meetinghouse, followed by a discussion: an evening of personal sharing \*\*\*

**Oct 7 Sun 11:00 am** Meeting for Worship for all ages, Edwards Room  
**11:15 am** Children gather outside the Edwards room. All kids will be together for a group activity in the café. (Please note: the Welcome to First Day School celebration will take place on October 14, and First Day School classes will begin that day.)

**Rise of Mtg** Discussion on Meeting Gifts \*\*\*

**Post discussion** Social Justice Committee meeting in the café. All interested are encouraged to attend.

**Oct 9 Tues 7:30 pm** Peace Witness Committee meeting at the Burt House. All interested are encouraged to attend.

**Oct 14 Sun 10:30 am** Welcome Back to First Day School celebration! All welcome. In the Edwards Room. \*\*\*

**11:00 am** Meeting for Worship for all ages, Edwards Room

**11:15 am** Children meet First Day School teachers outside the Edwards room

**12:15 pm** Children will rejoin their families in the Edwards Room

### CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE KITCHEN CUPBOARD

**12:30 pm** 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 (see above.)

**1:30 pm** CROP Walk / Dewitt Park\*\*\*

**7:00 pm** Second Sunday Celebration Circle: The Power of Stories and Myths / An interfaith worship service led by Jody Kessler \*\*\*

**Oct 21 Sun 10:30 am** Singing in the Edwards Room

**11:00 am** Meeting for Worship for all ages, Edwards Room

**11:15 am** Children meet First Day School teachers outside the Edwards room

**12:15 pm** Children will rejoin their families in the Edwards Room

**Oct 22 Mon** November newsletter due date. Please contact Bronwyn Mohlke if you have anything to be included in the

November newsletter (see contact information listed below).

**7:30 pm** Ahmad Hijazi of Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam, the "Oasis of Peace," will be speaking on his experience of Jews and Arabs living together / held at the Unitarian Church \*\*\*

**Oct 23 Tues 7:15 pm** Meeting for Healing - 112 Mt. Pleasant Road \*\*\*

**Oct 25 Thurs 6:00 pm** Social Justice Committee meeting at the Burt House. All interested are encouraged to attend\*\*\*

**Oct 27 Sat 9am-1pm** Fall Work Day at the Burt House \*\*\*

**7:00 pm** Halloween/Samhain/Dia de Los Muertos Celebration, led by Jody Kessler \*\*\*

**Oct 28 Sun 10:30 am** Singing in the Edwards Room

**11:00 am** Meeting for Worship for all ages, Edwards Room

**11:15 am** Children meet First Day School teachers outside the Edwards room

**12:15 pm** Children will rejoin their families in the Edwards Room

**Rise of Mtg** Light brunch. Please bring finger foods to share.

**1:00 pm** First in the Quaker Basics Series: Quaker History led by Tony Gaenslen \*\*\*

\*\*\* = more details will be found in the announcement section of the newsletter

## Advices & Queries

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

*Advice 4: Friends are advised to observe our Christian testimony for a faithful ministry of the gospel under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Members are reminded that all have a responsibility in ministry.*

*Advice 5: Remembering the tenderness of Jesus for children, we recommend that parents and those who have the important charge of educating youth exercise a loving and watchful care over them. Meetings are urged to help parents and children share religious experiences at home and in the meeting for worship and to give them an understanding of the principles and practices of Friends.*

*Query 4: Are love and unity fostered among us? If differences arise, do we endeavor to reconcile them in a spirit of love and truth? Are we careful not to manipulate and exploit one another? Do we avoid talebearing, and are we careful of the reputation of others?*