



Tending the garden . . .

Friends Bound Together

Clerk's Message by Don Nagler, LEYM Clerk, Pine River

After earth passes through the space of the winter solstice, it will be spinning us closer and closer to the sun, and yet central Michigan has yet to experience the touch of a covering of snow. Soon it will be March second when we have LEYM Representative Meeting in Oberlin, and then from June 13-16 will be our annual gathering in Bluffton.

One of the important means I have had to connect with meetings this year has been through the reading of newsletters, large and small. They convey the energy, depth and community within meetings scattered from Grand Rapids to Monongalia. They reveal a diversity of activities inside and outside of our meetings. Most seem to be growing in numbers and in their sense of God's leadings. I gather that there is great variation in the nature of the meetings' social and

religious experience, their vitality, "right order" and power. In a few, there seems to be little sense of LEYM as a community, let alone an entity.

I wish there were ways for all to share in the happenings in our meetings; what is living and meaningful moving within them. The Friendship in the Society is really an appreciation of what we share and a mutual participation in the sharing experience; our relationship to each other and to the Spirit. *Or are we a Religious Society of Strangers?* Affection and common feeling really come about when we share with each other our experiences of meaning of all sizes and shapes and our moving toward living within the community of God.

The work of the Ministry and Oversight Committee has been pro-

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Articulating the Silence

by Eric Starbuck, LEYM Editor, Akron

A comment in a meeting newsletter recently stated that Quakers have spirit, but membership is declining because we don't know what we believe and articulate it.

I disagree. True, Quakers have both spirit and declining membership, but it's not from lack of creeds

or statements of belief. It's more because our worship practices are difficult for casual worshippers. Silent worship is not for the fainthearted.

Indeed, I find the lack of spiritual statements of belief in Hicksite-

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Clerk's Message

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digious and helpful. The committee has not only continued to frame Queries directed at areas of current concern, but has collected information from meetings broadly on the types of Query practice and substance within LEYM. Many meetings make use of PYM or other sources amended to their own needs and some are entirely self-generated. Many meetings use queries monthly, drawn from a comprehensive set. Many describe a centering, empowering function for their use.

I would like to quote from the commentary by Carolyn Diem, clerk of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Ann Arbor Meeting on their July Query on Social, Economic, and Civic Responsibilities:

"If you can't remember the wording of this Query, it can be found in the July Newsletter or in our Meeting's Handbook. As our Queries go, it's more than a mouthful: it's a whole plateful. As you read through all the words, it's easy to brush it off, thinking to yourself, 'Well, I'm doing that and that and that's all that I can do.' But we Quakers are given to holding ourselves, as well as the problems we face, under the Light of God's love, and finding in the Light our individual gifts and strengths and our communal response to conflicts or problems that are at odds with the vision we hold of the world God wants for us. ..."

We may often feel that the goals and tasks of each age, each decade, are too difficult. Yet when we look backward there is steady evidence of accomplishments. Quakers, as a peculiar people, working together, have done much to change the way many people of the world think about human relationships, about approaching opponents with non-violent persuasion as well as with courage and integrity.

The tasks are always unfinished but the basic experience of God's love, and our communities based on love, have lasted. It is the Way to live out our lives which we have chosen. One Quaker has described it as a door. On one side of the door is our faith, our mystical experience of that which we recognize as God. On the other side of the door is our need to work for the restoration of God's kingdom, for that original Harmony, and to live our lives, insofar as we are able, as if it were already here. One could also say that on one side of the door is the First Commandment: Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and strength. And on the other side is the Second: Love your neighbor as yourself. That's what this Query is all about."

On this same theme, Abraham Heschel states, in *Asked for Wonder*, "The beginning of faith is not a feeling for the mystery of living or a sense of awe, wonder and amazement. The root of religion is the question of what to do with the feeling for the mystery of living; what to do with awe, wonder and amazement. Religion begins with a consciousness that something is asked of us!...Faith, in this sense, is faithfulness."

Don Nagler, clerk

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Articulating the Silence

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tradition Quakerism one of our strongest points. There is nothing you can safely say all Quakers believe, not even the Peace Testimony. That's because spiritual experience, though universal, can be expressed but imperfectly in words.

I was inspired to demonstrated that in a talk about Friends shortly after September 11. We started with a moment of silence. I asked if the audience felt something in the silence, and many nodded. I said, "That's what Friends pursue, that power in the silence. We talk about it a lot, find guidance in it, and try to use it on an almost daily basis, but we try hard not to define it. Words can't contain it."

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GPQM Teen Retreat

The Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting teen group held their October 2001 retreat at greenfire ecovillage & Earth regeneration center. We were generously hosted by the Hogan family. The theme of the weekend was "*Simplicity and Service*".

We spent the morning in worship reflecting on the film "Affluenza" and queries about how we incorporate simplicity in our lives amidst a consumer culture. Dick Hogan then explained his vision of greenfire as one example of putting Quaker ideals into practice by living gently on the earth. The rest of the day was spent working at greenfire - helping to put the gardens to bed for the winter and replacing the cover of a greenhouse-workshop.

We were glad for the opportunity to work and worship, and were inspired by the work of the Hogans as they embody a Quaker community living in tune with the rest of creation. Many blessings and thanks.

-Kri Anderson,
LEYM/GPQM High School Group Coordinator

Articulating the Silence

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Instead of creeds or statements of belief, most of us use Queries. These seem aimed to raise questions for self-examination, by individual and community. They request the use of our judgment, informed by God's, for what attention should be paid to aspects of our lives raised in the queries.

We pay a price in continuity and stability for this refusal to delineate a rule or form to walk by. Yet we have earned benefits, as well. Quaker activism is legendary; our prodding of society has produced results far outweighing our numbers. Business meeting decision-making is slower than most, but decisions are more profound and participants more committed. Individual spiritual seeking--and tolerance of it--characterizes those who can stand our unique processes.

Friends found the silence a profound source of spiritual truth. There may be words there, but we despair of fully describing, let alone defining, spiritual experience in mere words. Even the whole of life is not be enough to express all that God offers.

As the elders at Balby, Yorkshire, said in 1656: "*... these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not in the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*"

Eric Starbuck, Editor

LEYM Youth Retreat

The LEYM Youth retreat met October 5-7 at Temple Hills in Bellville Ohio. We got off to a slow start Friday night waiting for many of friends to arrive.

Long trips, traffic and bad weather detained them. All 36 of us eventually arrived safely.

Saturday after breakfast we explored Temple Hills. We found a playground and wild turkeys. Some of us learned to whistle through acorn tops.

Later we spent time together deciding on a design For our weekend T-shirt.

It took a long time, but with help we all embraced a single design. In the afternoon we silk-screened the T-shirts. It was exciting watching each T-shirt go from being plain to having our design on it. We all stood around watching as the screen was pulled off each shirt and were amazed each time at how cool it looked. We said oh-ahh.

Temple Hills has a challenge course that we experienced later Saturday. We all had to help figure out how to get over and through certain challenges.

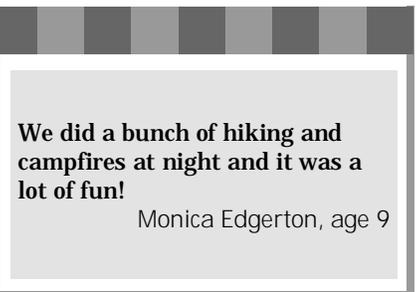
Then we would try out our ideas and see if they worked. We were not able to complete the entire course and would like to finish it next year. We all do want to come back next year!

Saturday evening we went on a night hike. Then we made s'mores around the campfire.

Sunday we spent time worship sharing about our experiences here at the youth retreat. We used a talking leaf instead of a talking stick. Other than the scheduled activities we enjoyed capture the flag and rolling down hills. We will also greatly miss Erin D. as she will be too old to attend next year.

Here's some statistics: 23 children and 13 adults attended. Eight people came from Michigan (thanks for making the trip). About a third of the attenders were new this year. Everyone said they want to come back next year.

Carla Pratt Harrington (Athens)



Focus on Humor

Sometimes humor is the best way to look at the world. "The rich get richer, and the poor get funnier."

I always thought it sorry compensation to get wiser as you age. Turns out there are other benefits, too.

Practical Benefits of Growing Older

- In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
- It's harder and harder for sexual harassment charges to stick.
- Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
- No one expects you to run into a burning building.
- People call at 9 PM and ask, "Did I wake you?"
- People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
- There's nothing left to learn the hard way.
- Things you buy now won't wear out.
- You buy a compass for the dash of your car.
- You can eat dinner at 4:00.
- You can live without sex but not without glasses.
- You can't remember the last time you laid on the floor to watch television.
- You consider coffee one of the most important things in life.
- You constantly talk about the price of gasoline.
- You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.
- You get into a heated argument about pension plans.
- You got cable for the weather channel.
- You have a party and the neighbors don't even realize it.
- You no longer think of speed limits as a challenge.
- You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.
- You send money to PBS.
- You sing along with elevator music.
- You talk about "good grass" and you're referring to someone's lawn.
- Your arms are almost too short to read the newspaper.
- Your back goes out more than you do.
- Your ears are hairier than your head.
- Your eyes won't get much worse.
- Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
- Your joints are more accurate than the National Weather Service.
- Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
- Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.

Provided by Janet Smith (Broadmead)

Do we have all the answers?

Another Look At War And Peace

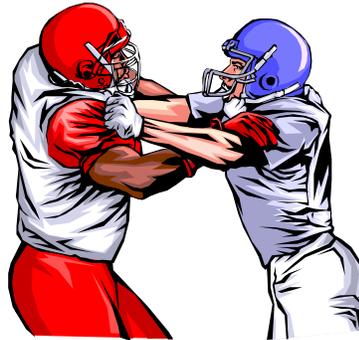
Question: Why have Ohio and Michigan never been to war with one another?

Answer: They have been, and are. However, the military is not involved.

News from the War Front

Cleveland Purples To Face Detroit Cougars

Purples have been training for months for this commando operation deep in enemy territory. The upcoming battle will be hot. Says Purples training manager Gotta Gitten, "This time, they'll be ours! We've got new tactics, and better intelligence. Our scouts have identified vulnerable key points in the Cougars' offense, and we're practicing special operations to break them!"



Rubber City Recovering From Latest Attack

Brideston-Freestone is still reeling from Fjord's strategy of replacing original equipment Freestone tires with other, inferior tires on its Exploder and other lines of unsafe vehicles. "We'll pull through this, too," stated spokesperson Bridget Stone.

Skepticism remains the order of the day, especially since the attack on consumer confidence in the travel industry as a whole this fall.

Considering the major defeat in the early 1970s, from which Ohio tire business is still recovering, the only thing we can do is keep the morale up!

Do the dirty work and make the sacrifices! It's the only way to win.

New designs are planned at Gourdyear and Brideston-Freestone to begin winning the day again in 2002.

Question: Do these scenarios (or truer ones) actually have anything to do with preventing war?

Answer: We don't understand everything in the human psyche about violence, conquest, or domination. I'd love to see a serious historical study about why slavery suddenly ended (almost completely, and worldwide) after thousands of years, or why Michigan has never invaded Ohio.

Eric Starbuck (Akron)

Focus on Humor

Sometimes a tale hits the heart harder than the funny bone.

The Telling Difference

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt about a tragedy.

He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent one. The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one".

The grandson asked him, "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?"

The grandfather answered, "The one I feed."

Provided by Janet Smith (Broadmead)

There are many ways to win friends and influence people.

The following method was not overly successful.

On Renewing The Lease

Once Upon A Time Long Ago (in the 1960's) the Oberlin Monthly Meeting consisted in the summer months of only three to five adult members and an additional dozen or so Oberlin College students in the nine months of the school year.

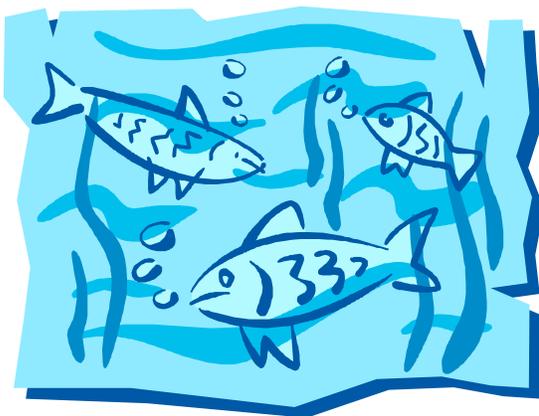
We held our Meetings for Worship while seated on child-sized chairs in the Orchard Kindergarten building on the Oberlin College campus. The only ones who fit comfortably were the three pre-school sons and a slightly older daughter of two of the adult members. At the rise of Meeting the children would wander about the classroom while the adults and students visited with each other.

On one Sunday after Meeting one of the sons, fascinated by the gadgets used to operate the fish aquarium, turned

up the water thermostat and consequently cooked the fish. It wasn't long afterwards that Oberlin Friends were asked to find another location for their meetings.

PS: Kids were ours.

Marie Cotton (Broadmead)



Unfortunately, the following tale is completely true.

Hardened Criminal

I have a confession to make. I'm an habitual criminal. Yes, your editor has a history of flagrant lawbreaking.

Perhaps you shouldn't read the rest of this. You may become corrupted.

I am a confirmed, hardened criminal. I've been breaking the traffic laws regularly for years.

Now I've been caught 5 times in eight months, and they'll probably take away my license if I get one more ticket!

My life is transformed.

I'm now driving within speed limits. I'm stopping at amber lights. I'm signaling everything. Such a good little commuter!

Drivers hate me.

Vroom! They fly around me. They cut in front of me. They shake their heads in disgust.

It's kind of fun to sit in the slow lane at speed limit and watch all the other vehicles interrupt their cruising to swing around me. Gives me a feeling of power. Simply by driving legally, I've affected all the other traffic.

Does it always feel that good to do the right thing?

But why do the police let all those people zooming around me, running amber lights, and refusing to signal get away with it? I got caught 5 times. Sure, I was guilty. So was every other driver on the road. Or most of them. Why me?

They must be picking on me. "There's another of those vicious Quakers. Let's get him!"

Discrimination is a terrible thing.

Eric Starbuck (Akron)

Simplicity is not much regarded for Thanksgiving (or Christmas) these days. Here's a warning and plea from a harried home-maker.

Testimony of Simplicity

Martha Stewart will not be dining with us this Thanksgiving. I'm telling you in advance, so don't act surprised. Since Ms. Stewart won't be coming, I've made a few small changes: *Our sidewalk will not be*

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Focus on Humor

Testimony of Simplicity

(Continued from page 5)

lined with homemade, paper bag luminaries. After a trial run, it was decided that no matter how cleverly done, rows of flaming lunch sacks do not have the desired welcoming effect.

Once inside, our guests will note that *the entry hall is not decorated with the swags of Indian corn and fall foliage* I had planned to make. Instead, I've gotten the kids involved in the decorating by having them track in colorful autumn leaves from the front yard. The mud was their idea.

The dining table will not be covered with expensive linens, fancy china, or crystal goblets. If possible, we will use dishes that match and everyone will get a fork. Since this IS Thanksgiving, we will refrain from using the plastic Peter Rabbit plate and the Santa napkins from last Christmas.

Our centerpiece will not be the tower of fresh fruit and flowers that I promised. Instead we will be displaying a hedgehog-like decoration hand-crafted from the finest construction paper. The artist assures me it is a turkey.

From A Business Meeting Minute

From The Tatler, Newsletter of Cleveland Friends Meeting, 11/2001

Friends spoke to various aspects of the ministry and oversight question, reminded that God is our protector and guide through this exploration and remembering that our diversity may also be our strength.

We considered that we are struggling because we have no clear understanding as individuals or as a group of what we are trying to accomplish and that we need to ask God why we are here, in this place with one another.

Friends who have served on the Ministry and Oversight Committee in the past shared the experience of that service:

Pastoral care was different than caring for the spiritual sense of the meeting.

Pastoral care was demanding.

The expectations placed on the committee were extensive and demanded a lot.

There was a difficulty balancing confidentiality with letting the meeting know what was happening.



We will be dining fashionably late. The children will entertain you while you wait. I'm sure they will be happy to share every choice comment I have made regarding Thanksgiving, pilgrims and the turkey hotline. Please remember that most of these comments were made at

5:00 a.m. upon discovering that the turkey was still hard enough to cut diamonds.

As accompaniment to the children's recital, I will play a recording of tribal drumming. If the children should mention that I don't own a recording of tribal drumming, or that tribal drumming sounds suspiciously like a frozen turkey in a clothes dryer, ignore them. They are lying.

We toyed with the idea of ringing a dainty silver bell to announce the start of our feast. In the end, we chose to keep our traditional method. We've also decided against a formal seating arrangement. When the smoke alarm sounds, please gather around the table and sit where you like. In the spirit of harmony, we will ask the children to sit at a separate table. In a separate room. Next door.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind my young diners that "passing the rolls" is not a football play. Nor is it a request to bean your sister in the head with warm tasty bread.

Before I forget, there is one last change. *Instead of offering a choice between 12 different scrumptious desserts, we will be serving the traditional pumpkin pie, garnished with whipped cream and small fingerprints.* You will still have a choice: "Take it or leave it."

Martha Stewart will not be dining with us this Thanksgiving. She probably won't come next year either. I am thankful.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Provided by Sandi Robison (Akron)

This marks the end of our Focus on Humor. Many thanks to all who contributed.

Remember, in this holiday season, Friends don't let Friends drive drunk. Best not let Catholics drive drunk either.

E ditor

Quaker Youth Seminar

The Equality Testimony

"Can We Take the Testimony of Equality and Write It Into Our Hearts?"

The William Penn House annual Quaker Youth Seminar will take place President's Day weekend, February 15-18, at William Penn House, 515 East Capitol Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003. It is open on a first come basis to 30 high school juniors and seniors and costs \$50. We will examine the origins and history of the equality testimony, and will hear from Friends who are living it today. To apply, send payment and a permission letter from parents, telling whether or not they authorize you to be away from the seminar without adult supervision. Registration deadline is February 1, but space is limited so apply early. 202-543-5560 dirpennhouse@pennsnet.org

Equality

If God is directly accessible to all persons, regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, economic, social, or educational position -- if every person is held equal in God's love and has equal potential to be a channel for revelation of God's Truth then all persons are to be equally valued. There is that Seed, that Light -- there is "that of God" in every person. In England and the English colonies this had to mean end of privilege based on wealth or class. In Japan and Kenya, where existing cultures made women little more than "domestic property," it resulted in the establishment of Quaker schools for girls. It also formed the basis for opposition to slavery and the death penalty.

Quaker Youth Queries (from FGC Connections)

1. Are we ready to accept the challenge to move out of our area of comfort with regard to awareness of racism [and other inequality]?
2. What things do we do or say that continue racism [or other inequality]?
3. When dealing with others, do we come from a place of aloneness and separateness, or from our place of connectedness?
4. Taking responsibility is not accepting blame. It is empowering. Do we accept the gift of our responsibility for positive change and racial justice?
5. How do we use our Spirit-given creativity to confront and heal the effects of oppression?
6. Are we ready to let go of a need to justify and defend ourselves in order to acknowledge the painful experiences of [persons who are treated unjustly]?
7. Can we stop resting on the laurels of our history

RSWR

Board of Trustees Meeting

The Right Sharing of World Resources Board of Trustees met in Cincinnati Ohio, March 19-20 for its bi-annual session. During the weekend the Board approved several points:

Since RSWR's separation from FWCC 2½ years ago it has grown and is now a strong, Quaker organization. From this position of strength, the Board committed the organization to further outreach, especially to programmed Friends, and the expansion of the education and grant making program.

The education ministry of RSWR was launched. Sally Miller, the newly appointed Education Coordinator, was present. Sally was asked to focus her efforts in the following areas: 1) Further develop the RSWR website as an easily usable resource; 2) Prepare curricula for both youth and adults; 3) When the RSWR video is completed, prepare a study guide for its use; 4) Develop the means to support Friends in the use of the resources available via RSWR.

Ted Hawkins, Baltimore Yearly Meeting, was appointed to the Board. Colin Saxton, Northwest Yearly Meeting, was re-appointed as Clerk. Mary Eagleson, New York Yearly Meeting, was re-appointed Recording Clerk. Clyde Baker, Illinois and Western Yearly Meetings, was re-appointed Treasurer. Roland Kreager, Ohio Valley and Wilmington Yearly Meetings, was re-appointed General Secretary.

The 2002 budget of \$272,000 was approved.

The Board affirmed its interest in a stronger presence among Friends in Kenya. The General Secretary was asked to attend the Friends United Meeting Triennial to further develop this initiative.

Nine projects, totaling \$34,450, approved in previous years for multi-year funding, were affirmed.

Eleven new projects, totaling \$49,575, were approved.

These twenty projects represent approximately half of the 2002 projects. The balance will be approved at the next meeting of the Board.

Roland Kreager, General Secretary

and grapple with the reality of inequality in the present?

8. Can we take the testimony of equality and write it into our hearts?

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On Being Faithful Stewards

FCNL - Annual Meeting

Any report from this LEYM representative to the FCNL Annual Meeting (11/8-11/11) must open with an expression of deep, heartfelt gratitude for the privilege of being a part of it all. No doubt the post-9/11 world lent an emotional dimension that I shared with many attenders in private talks and in Worship Sharing groups. It was important and supportive to be together. We were provided with many possibilities for positive response.

The excellent program planning covered a wide range of concerns in depth. This report will summarize some key issues, suggestions for further study and action.

The opening briefing on legislative issues (Rayburn House Office Bldg.) offered detailed updates on Congressional action since 9/11 by two Congressional Legislative aides and an ACLU Legal Counsel. All three urged the need to communicate Quaker viewpoints, hopefully to moderate policy on human rights (Anti-Terrorism Bill contains serious new legal areas; and internationalism not unilateralism re Afghanistan/terrorism). "Grass roots action matters," said Shannon Smith, aide to Cong. Barbara Lee.

As always, the reports from FCNL interns was inspiring. These young people bring zest and good backgrounds for their functions on the Hill.

My choice of a singularly outstanding presentation was the panel on *"Seeking an Earth Restored: The Pentagon's Impact on the Environment."* Urged as required reading and promotion: Lloyd Dumas's book: *"Lethal Arrogance: Human Fallibility and Dangerous Technologies."* His discussion of the dangers of our current lax guarding of nuclear systems gives top urgency to improving methods, but also need for co-operating with others on intelligence and programs to reduce poverty. His words: "Technology cannot solve human/political problems. . . . Respected people don't hate."

The alternative to weaponry and war was outlined persuasively by John Washburn, active with United Nations Association and the World Federalist Association. "The UN Response to Terrorism."

He stressed the need to arouse Senators to live up to and strengthen international obligations such as the International Criminal Court ratification.

The major FCNL policy action was considered carefully and at length. We revised Part IV of FCNL Statement of Legislative Policy - "We seek an Earth restored." (1) Caring for the Earth, (2) Population and Consumption, (3) Global Climate Change and Energy Policy, (4) Environmental Restoration and Regeneration. Incorporation of these sections recognizes the inter-relationship of water and food supplies as relevant to our peace testimony. "Peace on Earth means Peace WITH the Earth."

To continue its recognized crucial work in Washington, we learned of the growing need for financial support. End-of-year special gifts are needed and welcome.

Also for FCNL to continue in its prize location - in the Capitol Hill Historic District - an update on remodeling plans was presented by architects Harry Gordon and Gina Baker, a design "walking lightly on earth." The building fund aim of \$6.47 million is one-half achieved. An urgent plea for special donations is called for to meet the goal of beginning construction in 2003. Contributions to the FCNL Education Fund (the building fund) are tax deductible. My request for Meetings and individuals for participation comes from my heartfelt gratitude for the vital work of FCNL.

Gerry McNabb
Oberlin Friends Meeting

LEYM representatives present
Lila Cornell
Michael Fuson
Gerry McNabb
Thomas Taylor

Other LEYM members present
David Bassett
Miyo Bassett
Bill Bliss
Isabel Bliss
Meg Hummon
Margaret Kanost
Marjorie Nelson
Rusty Sweitzer

Spiritual Friends to Focus on Discernment at September Gather-In

from Among Friends, Newsletter for Athens Friends Meeting, September 2001

The Spiritual Friends experiment now has 20 participants and is still open to newcomers. There will be a gather-in at 7:00 PM, Sept. 20, for all those involved to share highlights and challenges. Discerning what are true "leadings" and ways to help someone be faithful through the discernment process are things we will also consider. If you would like to explore a spiritual friendship, please contact Helen Horn or Pat Dewees before Sept. 20.

Message from FWCC

At its May 2000 Meeting, the Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas Executive Committee approved using *"The Meaning of the Peace Testimony for Quakers Today"* as the theme for the 2002 Annual Meeting.

In preparation for that Annual Meeting, all representatives and other interested Friends are asked to seek ways to promote discussion of this theme in their local Meetings/Churches and Yearly Meetings. Perhaps the following thoughts can be a beginning point for discussion.

Friends Peace Testimony

The historic Friends peace testimony is an opposition to war and to preparing for war. For most Friends this testimony also includes opposition to service in the armed forces, and for some, to registration for possible military service. In more recent times, to this basic testimony was also added a call for ending the arms race, and a concerted effort to educate the public about the unique and terrible dangers of nuclear war.

At the present time, provisions for mandatory military service are widespread throughout the Americas, although such provisions are unevenly applied. Through the horror of living on the brink of nuclear war has receded dramatically, the danger of nuclear weapons is still very real. Even though no world war engages the nations of the Americas at the present time, numerous armed conflicts and the threat of such conflicts continue -- both within the Americas and (often with US involvement) in other parts of the world. Friends' commitment to peace continues to be challenged by ethnic cleansing, genocide, and UN-sponsored "peace-keeping" missions -- as well as by the chilling incidence of hate crimes, domestic violence, and other, more hidden forms of abuse.

How many Friends in today's world live more fully "in virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion for war?" What is the meaning of the peace testimony for Friends today? What -- if anything -- sets the testimonies of historic peace churches apart from the rest of society? The World Council of Churches has declared 2001-2010 the *"Decade to Overcome Violence."* The United Nations has named the same period as a *"Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World."* What is the Religious Society of Friends doing?

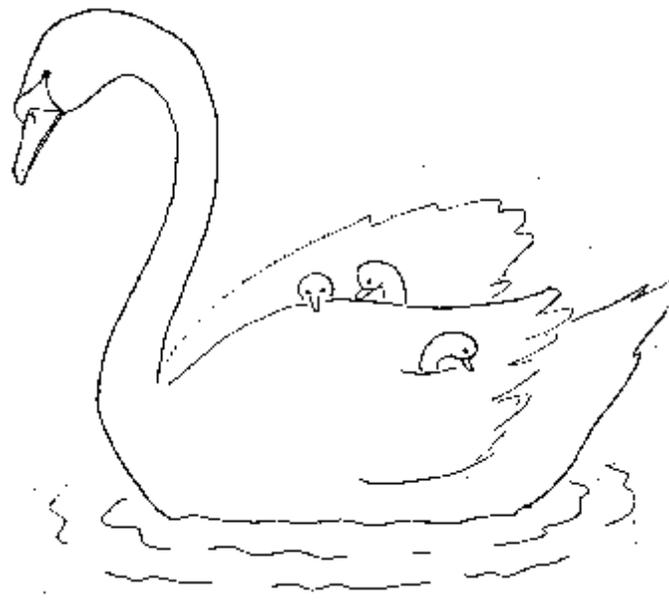
Keeping in mind the changing character of war and violence in our time, we invite members of the Meetings/Churches and Yearly Meetings within each region to consider the following queries:

1. What is our understanding of the meaning of Friends' peace testimony in today's world?
2. In what ways do we ourselves participate -- knowingly or unknowingly -- in the perpetuation of violence and war?
3. What activities do we carry out in the name of peace or nonviolence?
4. How may we contribute constructively to peace initiatives by other groups, such as the UN Decade for Peace and the World Council of Churches Decade to Overcome Violence?

In the words of George Fox, What canst THOU say? Please circulate these queries and request feedback on them. Consider planning any regional gathering around them. Allow these activities to lead you and your religious community into action, if so moved. Be prepared to share what you have done with the 2002 Annual Meeting. As William Penn reminded us, Let us see what love can do.

Quaker Kids Page

from *The Kindler*, newsletter of Akron Friends Meeting, drawn by Rosalita Rowe



Swan questions

Mother Swan keeps her babies warm.
A baby swan is called a cygnet.
How many cygnets are under Mother Swan's wing?
Color the picture.

Quaker Earthcare Witness

A Call to Friends to Celebrate and Advance Our Quaker Earthcare Witness

The life of the earth community is now well into the sixth major (known) mass extinction process since earth's formation approximately 4.5 billion years ago. About 65 million years ago, an event marked the extinction of the dinosaurs and ammonites, ending the 200+ million year Mesozoic Era, and "way opened" for the beginning of the Cenozoic Era and the advance of mammals. Today, we find ourselves, the human species, responsible for the termination of the Cenozoic Era and conditions supportive of human existence. This is occurring through extraordinarily violent and destructive impact, by humans, on the soils, forests, water, air and the community of life.

Quaker Earthcare Witness is emerging as a positive, healing approach toward centering down together to re-inhabit Earth in a regenerative healing process. This witness flows from Divine Love for all of God's creation and a profound human commitment to an ongoing faith and practice. Earthcare is living and learning to care for Earth, care for its people and the full

sharing of spiritual gifts and personal resources toward the regeneration of the Earth Community.

This is no special interest concern. This requires deep commitment to growth and sharing which is primary and proportional to the potential for healing. The Quaker Earthcare Testimony and Witness are the spiritual and physical ground of our shared faith, practice, and journey together as a spirit-led, gathered Religious Society. This testimony strengthens and integrates all our testimonies as we walk together healing each other and our blessed Earth Community.

Among the most urgent of priorities are: stabilizing human population; major reduction in consumption and waste; stabilizing climate; stopping the loss of biological and cultural diversity; and recovering our genetic commons and economy from any outward domination while restoring local sovereignty and community-based conservation and control. The integrity of all local communities is primary. They are the context of our journey home. Regenerating integrity and vibrant health includes the recovery of the nature of learning and memory, land access, water, seed, food, shelter, en-

Some Nurturing and Strengthening Resources:

Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN), Website: www.fcun.org, E-mail: fcun@fcun.org, 173-B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-1607 (802) 658-0308

- New Items: *Awakening to Earth: Natural Awareness As A Spiritual Practice*, by Bill Cahalan, pamphlet, 24p. \$4.00.
- *Sustainability and Spirituality: A Study Guide for Friends and Others*, pamphlet, 28p. \$4.00.
- Partial Compilation of Friends Meetings Minutes on Unity with Nature, 8/01
- *Befriending Creation*, newsletter, 6 issues/year
- Speakers Bureau

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), (800)630-1330, Website:<http://www.fcnl.org>, E-mail fcnl@fcnl.org, 245 Second St. N.E., Washington D.C. 20002-5795.

- "*War is not the Answer: a Grass-roots Tool Kit*", brochure, 1 page.
- "*We Seek An Earth Restored*," Statement of Legislative policy as 11/9/01 draft, part IV.

EarthLight Magazine, 111 Fairmount Ave., Oakland, CA 94611, a ministry of the Pacific Yearly Meeting with focus on spiritual ecology, 510-451-4926, Website: www.earthlight.org, 4 issues/year, \$20.00.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Akron, OH, c/o AFSCOLE@aol.com Re: People over corporations, people's bicentennial, and more....

The Treaty Initiative to Share the Genetic Commons, E-mail: treaty@foet.org, 202-466-2823, 1660 I St. N.W., Suite 216, Washington D.C. 20036

The Earth Literacy Web, Companions in the Great Work, Website: www.spiritualecology.org, E-mail: info@spiritualecology.org, Center for Sacred Ecology, 111 Fairmount Ave., Oakland, CA 94611

Quaker Earthcare Witness

ergy and right livelihood.

This is a glimpse of the "Great Work" before us. Let us live up to the light available to us and more will be granted. Let us seek a journey together toward taking away the occasion for violence, terror and war-like behavior toward any part of God's creation. Let us pray unceasingly for deep, full and timely participation in this witness, toward choosing life. Together, with God's love and guidance, can we regenerate spiritual, social and economic health and vitality for all of God's Creation?

Let us hold these concerns and possibilities in the light as we reach out to our meeting families and prepare for an initiative at Representative Meeting and in our wider journey together. Among the options within our monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting family orbits is the formation of an earthcare web for sharing awareness and action in the Great lakes and Ohio River Basin watersheds. This could also be enhanced through the formation of Earthcare focused worship sharing groups within our monthly meeting families. We may also benefit by forming a standing Earthcare committee for LEYM. I can be reached at greenfire ecovillage and earth regeneration center, 2767 State Route 56, New Marshfield, OH 45766, 740-664-4028, e-mail: hogangreenfire@msn.com.

Blessings for Creation
Dick Hogan
LEYM Representative to FCUN

Exploring a New Cosmology, Reflections on the writings of Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme, by Miriam MacGillis, OP. 2-volume video, \$30.00. 800-707-7932. Foundation for Global Community

Water: Sacred & Profaned, video, The Foundation for Global Community, 222 High St., Palo Alto, CA 94301, Website: www.globalcommunity.org, 800-707-7932

The Next Industrial Revolution, Ecology, Economy, Equity video, \$35.00, Earth Home Productions, P.O. Box 212, Stevenson, MD 21153, 410-902-3400, E-mail: filmwork@earthhome.org, Website: www.thenextindustrialrevolution.com

Broadmead Friend Releases CD of Tunes From New Quaker Hymnal

A CD titled *Come Spirit: Hymns for the Mountain Dulcimer* has just been released by Mathilda Navias, of Tiffin, Ohio. It features music exclusively from *Worship in Song: A Friends Hymnal*.

The mountain dulcimer is an American folk instrument. *Come, Spirit* showcases the wide variety of styles and sounds possible on the instrument, from the harp-like "*My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*" to the medieval-sounding use of drones and octaves for "*Of the Father's Love Begotten*" to the fiddle-tune style of "*Lord of the Dance*."

In 1996, Mathilda Navias was the FGC Gathering's Music Coordinator. The Gathering, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, featured concerts by Pete Seeger and John McCutcheon.

CD Pricing: \$15 plus \$2 shipping for 1-4 copies; 5-24 copies ordered earn a discount of \$3 (\$12 each plus shipping); 25 or more go for \$10 each plus shipping.

To order, or for more information, call Mathilda at 419-448-0578, mathilda1@lycos.com, or write Mathilda Navias, 147 Hall Street, Tiffin, Ohio 44883.

Mathilda Navias (Broadmead)
Product offered by LEYM member

Want a Web Page For Your Meeting?

The internet is the coming thing. But is it coming for Quakers? My experience says "yes." Over the past 4-5 years, Akron Friends Meeting has had more inquiries from our web page (linked to www.quaker.org) than from all other sources combined, including the telephone white pages and the local AFSC office.

Akron's page is based on the handout brochure we had. It explains a little about Quakers and silent meeting, and lists Akron's clerks. Take a look at <http://home.att.net/~ericstarbuck/afm.html>. No maintenance except changing the clerks once a year.

Want a page? Contact me at ericstarbuck@att.net for suggestions and pricing.

Building a web page of your own? Let me know so I can link to it from the LEYM site at www.quaker.org/leym. There are only 5 meeting links there now.

Remember, Quakers are mostly seekers. There's more for seekers on the internet than anywhere else.

Eric Starbuck (Akron)
Service offered by LEYM member

FWCC Americas Seeks Executive Secretary

Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas seeks a Friend for appointment as Executive Secretary beginning Summer 2002. The Section of the Americas administers a portion of FWCC's world-wide work of developing communication and cooperation among Friends of varying backgrounds and traditions. The Section's Executive Secretary employs and supervises staff in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. office and elsewhere in the Americas to assist Friends in their worship and work together. The position requires close coordination with FWCC offices and Sections around the world and considerable travel. Spanish-language skills desirable. Applicants should have deep experience of the life of their own yearly meetings or groups and an active awareness of Quaker faith and practice among other groups. Deadline for applications April 30, 2002.

Job description and application form available from: FWCC Section of the Americas, 1506 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102, Phone (215) 241-7250 Fax (215) 241-7285. americas@fwcc.quaker.org

Cilde Grover, Executive Secretary

Reactions to FGC Gathering 2001

From Among Friends, Newsletter for Athens Friends Meeting, August 2001

Kathy Devecka

At the end of the workshop, I found myself to full of things to say to be able to speak. Only through dance could I express all I felt -- and, as I looked around the circle or closed my eyes as I danced, I knew I was in good hands. I hope we, as a meeting, will consider inviting Elizabeth Cave to our meeting to lead us in a similar workshop to feed our bodies and inform our spirits -- for she truly teaches sacred circle dance.

Bonnie Edwards

We found time during the week to attend discussions and singing groups. We especially enjoyed the Doo Wop noon sings outside the dining hall each day. Gene flourished in this environment with a nostalgic return to the music of his youth. I enjoyed Round singing, Madrigal singing and attended the interest group on singing out of the silence. We saw four films during the week and part of the video series on Tich Naht Han

EFI Eastern Region Yearly Meeting Report

The power of the spirit was over all during the Eastern Region Yearly Meeting sessions held in Canton, Ohio in July. One evening was begun with over an hour of modern gospel music, powerfully presented by talented soloists and an energetic youth chorus from Cornerstone Friends Church in Madison, Ohio. Their energy level was so high they didn't seem to really need the electronic help but somehow even the amps added to the experience. The music created a kind of mental energy and dynamic which helped us be alert to the content of the message to follow. It also created a counterpoint for times of quiet reflection which followed.

Joe Roher of Friendswood, Texas brought us a message of the never failing love of God. He recounted the story of Brother Dominic who dedicated his life to street people after being diagnosed with terminal cancer. His selflessness and pure joy were the vehicles which led many to come to know God and to then become themselves ministers. Joe's message was touching, including events from his own life such as the special feelings he and his wife experienced at the birth of their first grandchild. Near the end of the regular services those who were experiencing difficulties in their own lives or who felt a call to re-dedicate their lives were invited to stay after for a special prayer service. I felt very much at home with Eastern Region Friends. It was especially good to meet and talk to several afterward, including Alvin and Lucy Anderson who some of you may know from FWCC gatherings. Alvin and Lucy were to leave for a time of teaching in Guatemala soon after close of the sessions. The letter of greeting from LEYM was given to John Williams for delivery to the General Superintendent.

Mike Hinshaw

and his teachings. Gene attended a meeting on racial relations that spoke to his deeply felt concern, participated in a discussion at the men's center on intergenerational relationships, and became more aware of the Friends in Higher Education group. We practiced Tai Chi almost every day and Gene had a beautiful kayak trip with our friend on the New River.

I especially enjoyed meeting up with folks from Athens when walking or biking around the campus, or sharing a table at the dining hall to learn about their adventures. While at the gathering, Friends have opportunities for so many experiences. It is definitely a time and space for spiritual renewal. We came home refreshed and grateful. Thank You Friends.

FWCC Lower Great Lakes Regional Gathering

Tenth Month 5-7, 2001, Inspiration Hills, Burbank, Ohio

Statement

We have come together as members of the Religious Society of Friends to consider the meaning and the relevance of the Friends' Peace Testimony as a statement of our beliefs. In the light of the tragic events of 9-11-2001, we unite in reaffirming the hopes already stated by other Quaker groups that we will not meet violence with violence, and that our actions will not take the form of killing innocents to avenge the killing of other innocents. Rather, we look to the sources of hate, and seek to respond to them with the love that brings order and understanding to our world. We seek to discern appropriate actions, both individual and corporate, that arise from the Source of our spiritual roots in order to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

We were particularly touched by the insights of Nahida Gordon, a Palestinian- American, regarding the ways in which United States policies and actions are most often viewed in the Middle East. We also appreciated the ongoing efforts of John Looney and the

Alternatives to Violence course, "Peace Grows," as one way to address the problem of how to teach peacemaking skills to ourselves, to our meetings, and to our communities. An hour of folk dancing reminded us of our kinship with the people of the world, as, with the guidance of two members of the Friendly FolkDancers, we enjoyed dances from Bolivia, French Canada, Israel, Japan, Serbia, Scotland, and the United States. Our newly appointed FWCC Field Staffperson, Susan Lee Barton, joined us for the weekend.

We encourage the sharing of statements of our Peace Testimony among our monthly meetings with those of like mind, and beyond our monthly meetings with those with differing views. We reaffirm that the Peace Testimony of the Religious Society of Friends must go beyond statements into the realm of experience, and into the life and power of Truth that takes away the occasion for all war.

Martha S. Giffen, clerk
Leroy Curtis
Margaret Kanost
Joyce Balderston
Zig Dermer
John Looney
Phil Balderston
J. Randall Giffen

Clémence Ravaçon Mer-shon
Susan Lee Barton
Geoffrey Gilmore
Eric Starbuck
Rosemary Coffey
Nahida Gordon
Helen Wiegel

Calender

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

- ü **3/2/02** REPRESENTATIVE MEETING IN OBERLIN
- ü **3/15/02** DUE DATE FOR *SPRING BULLETIN*
- ü **5/24/02-5/26/02** SPIRITUAL FORMATION (CLOSING) RETREAT
- ü **6/13/02-6/16/02** LEYM ANNUAL MEETING IN BLUFFTON
- ü **6/16/02** DEADLINE FOR *LEYM ANNUAL RECORDS 2002*

WIDER QUAKERS

- ü **7/12/02-8/10/02** FWCC QUAKER YOUTH PILGRIMAGE, TRACING GEORGE FOX'S JOURNEY IN AMERICA, AMERICAS@FWCC.QUAKER.ORG. GET YOUR REGISTRATION IN NOW!

FRIENDS CENTER OF OHIO YEARLY MEETING

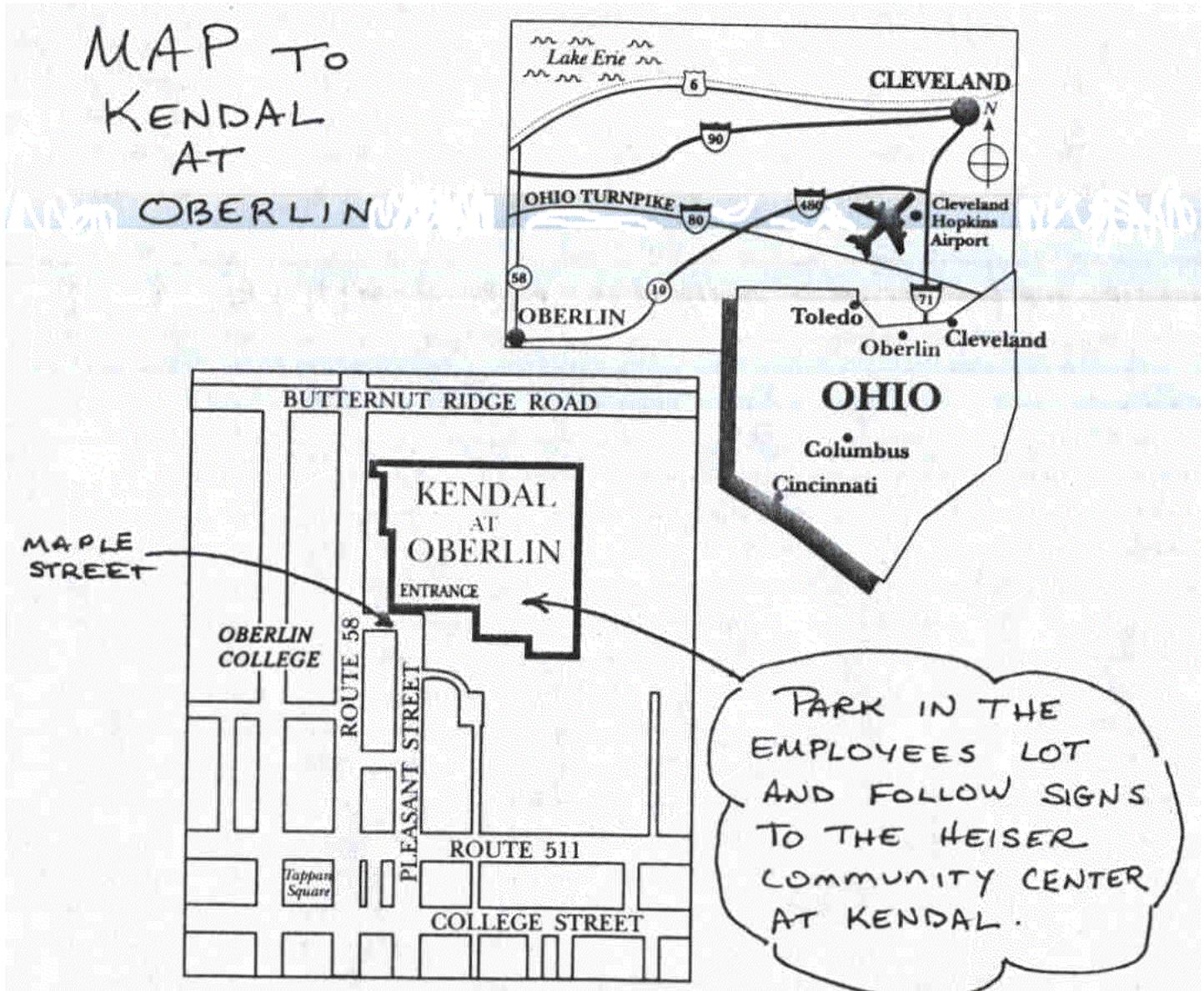
(740) 425-1248

- ü **3/8/02-3/10/02** LISTENING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT, KATHARINE & KEN JACOBSEN
- ü **4/5/02-4/7/02** INTENTIONAL LIVING & MINDFUL DYING, CONNIE McPEAK
- ü **4/26/02-4/28/02** UNDERSTANDING ROBERT BARCLAY, JOHN SMITH
- ü **5/24/02-5/26/02** SPIRITUAL FORMATION SPRING RETREAT, MARTY GRUNDY

Check the online calendar! Email contacts with a click!

<http://www/quaker.org/leym/>

Representative Meeting 2002



The City of Oberlin, easily reached via interstate highway, is located 35 miles southwest of Cleveland, Ohio, and is 30 minutes from Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport. The town is located at the junction of Ohio Route 58 and State Road 511.

From the East: take I-80 (Ohio Turnpike) to exit 9; Ohio Route 10 west to Route 20 west; 20 to SR 511 exit, 511 west into Oberlin.

From the airport: follow signs for I-71 to Cleveland; take I-71 to I-480 west (Toledo); I-480 to Route 10 west; 10 to Route 20 west; 20 to SR 511 exit; 511 west into Oberlin.

From the west: take I-80/90 to exit 8 (Elyria-Lorain) (do not use exit 8A); south on Ohio Route 57 to Ohio Route 113; west on 113 to Ohio Route 58; south on 58 to Oberlin; OR take Ohio Route 2 to Ohio Route 58; south on 58 to Oberlin.

From the south: take I-71 north to Ashland exit; east on US Route 250 to Ohio Route 89; north on 89 to Ohio Route 58; north on 58 to Oberlin.

Lost? Call (440) 774-6175

LEYM Change of Address

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Email _____

Meeting _____

Please return to:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
216 Myrtle Place
Akron, OH 44303

Thank you!

Note: This one's at the top so it will have your old address on the other side when you cut it out!

Poem by Nancy James
from Pittsburgh Friends Meeting Newsletter, August 2001

Dance Your Mistake
Life cannot be red-penciled or retyped.
The Menu does not include Spell Check, Strikeover or Delete.
You can't even scribble in margins.

Life's not a diary but a dance:
If you stumble, the music flows on with you, or without.

So, recover the bear, dance your mistake, play it off with a flourish:

Make it become the step you meant all along.

Representative Meeting 2002 Agenda

- Registration..... 8:15 AM
- Meeting for Worship 9:00 AM
- Announcements 9:50 AM
- Committees..... 10:00 AM
- Lunch..... 12:00 PM
- Business 1:00 PM
- Finish 4:00 PM

* If you **need** child care please register by Feb. 1st.
If you do **not** need child care, mail registration by Feb. 16th.

Mail to:
Oberlin Friends Meeting
c/o Pat Birmingham
141 S. Professor St.
Oberlin, OH 44074

Representative Meeting Registration

Names _____ Kids Ages* _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Meeting _____

Fees per person: \$5
Amount Enclosed.....
(Please make check to **Oberlin Friends Meeting**)

____ We need overnight lodging in Friends' homes.
How many lodgers?
Friday 3/1
Saturday 3/2

Overnight space provided by arrangement with local Friends.

Address Service Re-

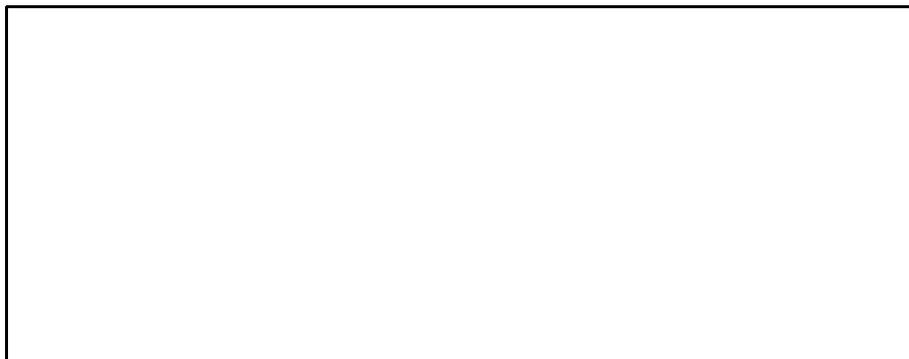
LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

216 Myrtle Place
Akron, OH 44303-2126

Phone: 330/374-0521
Email: ericstarbuck@worldnet.att.net

*Quakers speak not loudly, but strongly.
-Lady Borton*

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Winter 2002 Bulletin



Got To Do Something

From AFSC

on www.afsc.org

American Friends Service Committee

The No More Victims campaign is asking for donations and contributions to support our work on the ground in New York, with Afghan refugees fleeing their homes for safety, and to help mobilize support for peaceful solutions, not violence and retaliation.



Sign the Nobel Peace Laureates' Petition Join Nobel peace laureates in appealing to the United Nations and governments and peoples of the world to develop a culture of peace and nonviolence. On the Peace Response website.

From FCNL

on www.fcnl.org

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Take Action Now!

November letter project: humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan

Take action now to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan (10/25/01)

Oppose giving the military a blank check (10/10/01)
War is Not the Answer: A Grassroots Toolkit (HTML version)

Check the web sites or call

AFSC 1-888-588-2372

FCNL 1-202-547-4343 (Recorded Update)