

# Albany Friends Meeting Newsletter

December

2010



## Calendar And Calendar Notes

Unless specified, events are held at the Meeting House

### Every First Day:

- 11:00 am Meeting for Worship and First Day School  
(Childcare available; First Day School \*)

\* Dec. theme: THE GIFT OF REFUGEES  
led by Becky Raymond and Barbara Spring

12:00 pm Announcements, Refreshments, and Visiting

Sun., Dec. 5, 10:00 am Faith and Practice-Topic: Simplicity"  
(Coffee at 9:45; childcare provided)

Sun., Dec. 5, 12:45 pm Earthcare Witness Committee

Sun., Dec. 12, 12:45 pm Meeting for Worship With  
A Concern For Business

Sun., Dec. 19, 12:45 pm Rise of Meeting Luncheon

Fri., Dec. 25 at 4:30 pm **Christmas Eve Programmed  
Meeting with lessons and carols  
for Christmas and potluck**

Sun., Dec. 26, 10:00 am Hymn Sing

Sun., Dec. 26, 6:00 pm Open Circle Folksing

## Quaker Quest

### Dorothy's Story



I love to tell the story of my Quaker Quest. It's a story that began on Cape Cod one Sunday in June of 1996, shortly after my husband and I became "wash-a-shores" as new residents are called by the locals. I remember leaving our new house in Harwich that early summer day and driving past startlingly beautiful cranberry bogs on my way to the

historic 1820 South Yarmouth Meeting House. It was an impulsive visit having never been to Worship or known Quakers before. Raised a Catholic and educated for twelve years by nuns, I married and raised my children in that faith. Subsequently, becoming disillusioned, I drifted away, searching for a new faith. Crossing the Bass River, I parked my car, walked through the grave yard and stepped into the foyer of the old white clapboard building. I was greeted by a woman with a straw hat whom I immediately recognized as someone I knew from the book club I had joined. Smiling and with an extended hand, Peg Smith motioned to the inner door. I lifted the wrought iron latch and seated myself on a wooden bench sensing the quiet, simple atmosphere and crackling fire on the open hearth. As I sat taking in the silence, thoughts from a college course on Colonial Women came flooding back. I had been impressed back then by the difference between the Quaker women and their counterparts of that day. The difference between a Quaker woman's autonomy and the sexism of the Catholic Church was pronounced. Now, however, what struck me was the "integrity" of the Yarmouth Friends here at Worship. The "Inner Light" as I had remembered it from my research in that long ago class, was what these Quakers were listening to! God was not up on an altar in a tabernacle

Dear Friends:

At the October Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, Albany Friends Meeting approved a proposal for a one-day orientation workshop to discern whether or not we are ready to bring Quaker Quest to our community. Quaker Quest was founded in 2002 in England by Quakers who were called to do outreach. Friends General Conference, the organization sponsoring the program in the United States and Canada, describes Quaker Quest as "a dynamic and transformative inreach and outreach program" based on the conviction that Quakerism offers a spiritual path that is "simple, radical, and contemporary."

On **Saturday, January 8, 2011**, Albany Friends Meeting will host a Quaker Quest orientation session. The session will be held at the Meetinghouse from **9 to 4** and will include a light lunch. It is essential that we have **at least 25 members and attenders** participating in this session in order for us to be able to discern whether we should move forward with offering Quaker Quest. We write to ask you to commit to being one of those 25 persons.

The orientation session offers our Meeting the opportunity to explore together the foundations of our faith and practice as we reflect upon sharing Quakerism with a wider audience. It provides an opportunity for us to build community among ourselves as we consider what changes we need to make in order to be more welcoming to newcomers. Above all, it provides an opportunity for us to deepen the spiritual life of our community, for ultimately it is the vitality of our spiritual life and the loving community witnessed among us that will bring newcomers to return to worship with us. This one-day workshop is a valuable experience for our meeting regardless of how we discern with respect to Quaker Quest.

Please confirm that you will join this orientation session; email Barbara Spring at [barbarakspring4@msn.com](mailto:barbarakspring4@msn.com) or Judith Fetterley at [jf@albany.edu](mailto:jf@albany.edu) as soon as possible. If you have questions about the session, please call Barbara Spring at 772-2290. A fun day can be organized for your children, also, if you let us know by December 20. **We look forward to seeing YOU on January 8!** This is a significant opportunity for our Meeting to grow both inwardly and outwardly.

In anticipation, Barbara Spring and Judith Fetterley

*Cont. - Dorothy's Story*

but resting in the hearts of all mankind. At rise of meeting a woman turned to greet me but I was unable to speak with emotion. She said, "that's OK, I was the same at my first Worship too." I became a convinced Quaker that morning, but waited a year to ask for membership. The mystical nature of the Religious Society of Friends is an important part of the beliefs and practice that offer me comfort and shelter to this day. It is a beautiful faith and I am grateful to be among its community.

Dorothy Richards

**Dates to Remember**

**Dec. 24**  
**Christmas Eve**  
**Programmed Meeting**  
**with lessons and carols**  
**followed by a**  
**potluck dinner.**  
**Time: 4:30 — 7:00**



**Jan. 8, 2011**  
**Quaker Quest Orientation Session**  
**9 am — 4 pm Albany Friends Meeting**

**Sun., Jan. 23** at 12:30 p.m. located at the Meetinghouse — Paul Rhem will do a presentation on "Morally responsible investment for peace in Israel/Palestine."

**Whom to call with questions**

Clerk:	Betsy Voss	273-1840
Assistant Clerk:	Becky Raymond	674-0344
Trustees:	Judith Fetterley	475-1773
Ministry & Counsel:	Joeseeph Levinger	861-6908
Nurture & Oversight: <i>Co-clerks:</i>	Julia Richards	439-7068
	Barbara Spring	772-2290
Advancement & Outreach:	Paula McConnell	729-4566
First Day School: <i>Co-clerks:</i>	Tom Mancuso	381-8860
	Dot Richards	478-2220
Building Use By Outside Group:		
Paula McConnell & Kurt Seitz:	<b>caretaker@albanyquakers.org</b>	
Meeting Treasurer:	Maggy Wiard	235-8102
Peace & Service/Alternatives to Violence Project:		
	Pat Beetle	477-4004
Children's Peace Week:	Sue Clark	274-0784
Newsletter:	Julia Richards	439-7068
	Send news to:	juliagrace@aol.com
Website:		www.albanyquakers.org



We are sad to announce that **Donn Fichter** passed away **November 23, 2010**. A Memorial Meeting is being planned for **Sat., December 18, 10 am** at the Albany Friends Meeting.

**Community Activity and Events**

**Thurs., Dec. 2** Post Disaster Community Development in Haiti, Speakers – Peasants of Fondwa and Prof. Loretta Pyles from SUNY SSW. At Standish Room of Science Library, up town campus at 5 PM and at noon at Richardson Hall – (downtown campus) basement fl. Room 002.

Noon at Federal Bldg Albany - Speak Out at Congressional Offices "No Billionaire's Bailout"

Film "The End of Poverty" documentary at Bethlehem Public Library 6:45-9:45PM 466-1192

**Sun., Dec. 5** Film "Salud – Cuba's health care" 5 – 8 PM Bethlehem Neighbors Store Clearance. Potluck snacks at Bethlehem Town Hall. Discussion about US Single Payer.

**Mon., Dec. 6** Film "Private" about Palestinian- Israeli relations when IDF soldiers take over a private home on the West Bank. Pine Hills Library, 517 Western Ave., Albany.

**Sun., Dec. 12,** 4 – 6 PM At Maureen Aumand's Home 14 Amelia Dr., Colonie. Festive Fundraiser for Ellie Bernstein, filmmaker, "We are still Standing. Stories of Women in Black" around the world. Donation RSVP by 11/8 at callanca@gmail.com.

**Sun., Dec. 12** at 2:00 PM Interfaith Panel Forum "Peace: A Spiritual Perspective".

Panelist will include: Imam Djafar Sebkhoui, al-Hadiya Mosque, Sister Francine Dempsey, St. Joseph, K. Balasubramanian, Hindu Temple, Kevin Graunke, Christian Science Board of Lectureship and Rabbi Yaakov Kellman, JERNY. Located at the NYS Museum's Clark Auditorium, Madison Ave., Albany For info: 917-974-0258

**Thur., Dec. 16** Washington, DC Veterans and others will stage the largest veterans led civil resistance to U. S. wars in recent history. www.stopthesewars.org or email: Takauff@gmail.com or Jajaja1234@aol.com



## Events at Powell House

### **AA/Alanon: A Weekend at Powell House!**

Fri., Dec. 3 at 6:00 p.m. to Sun., Dec. 5 at 2:00 p.m.

An on-going series of AA and Alanon meetings throughout the weekend starting Friday and ending with a Quaker Healing Meeting Sunday morning!! Bring you Big Books, Step Books, As Bill Sees It, and any meditation reading you have!!! Cross-addicted drug/alcoholics are also invited, so we will not restrict the discussion to only alcohol. Arlene R. and Derek P. will be pulling this together with Angi C. Separate Alanon meetings so bring your significant others. There will be open Candlelight 11th Step Meditation Meetings on Friday and Saturday nights. Fellow sufferers outside the Quaker community are heartily welcome to join us. The weekend includes two nights lodgings and meals from Friday dinner to Sunday lunch. There is a commuting option if you cannot come for the whole weekend. Powell House is a beautiful location for retreats such as this. It has fifty-seven acres with a swimming pond, trails, and a bird sanctuary nearby, in the heart on Columbia County in Old Chatham. We will have a break Saturday afternoon to enjoy the outdoors or to allow impromptu gatherings. Depending on weather, bring your skis or ice skates. We will have practitioners of body energy work who will provide sessions to attenders for a free-will donation to Powell House.

Contact : Sharon Koomler, Registrar: [sharon@powellhouse.org](mailto:sharon@powellhouse.org) 518-794-8811

Register by Nov 15th: \$220 adults, 110 ages 13-22 and commuters, \$55 infants-12. After Nov 15th: \$240/\$120/\$60

### **WinterSong 8th - 12th**

Fri., Dec., 10 at 6:00 p.m. — Sun. Dec. 12 at 2:00 p.m.

Mystical. Magical. Incredible. Real.

Join us as we gather to celebrate our amazing community and fill both houses with Light and Love.

There will be inspiring workshops, a game or two, small group discussions, simple but elegant food at the “dress-up” dinner, and the ever-entertaining, stretching-late-into-the-night cabaret.



## Minutes of Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business — November 14, 2010

Present: Chris Koster, Ed Cady, Pierre Douyon, Marcia Cady, Barbara Cary, Maggy Wiard, Pat Beetle, Anne Saxton, David Easter, Mary Lou Baum, Joe Levinger, Judy Fetterley, Maud Easter, Sue Clark, Barbara Sinacore, Becky Raymond, Betsy Voss.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The Treasurer's report was approved. Unrestricted cash on hand \$538.31 as of November 12, 2010. Treasurer encourages Friends to send any year end contributions soon so the Meeting can fulfill its financial commitments.

**PREPARING FOR GRETA MICKEY'S VISIT ON NOV. 21** Suggested topics:

- International criminal court and the bombing of the World Trade Center
- Quaker attitudes towards police
- \*What is our role as a small Quaker group –lay out the possibilities of how we answer our calling to be peacemakers. What do we take on as a Meeting as opposed to individuals? How do we think of ourselves? How do we balance these two concepts?
- \*Take this further and ask her to talk about what other Meetings have done to add a Quaker witness/voice on peace to the community. Practical ways to express our distinctive voice in the community.
- Envision what peace would look like and the steps to get there.
- How to balance a personal leading/passion with those of others in the Meeting without stepping on others passions.
- How to get the peace movement and the environmental movement together.
- How to organize Friends into a committed and active Peace and Service committee.

Friends authorized Betsy to convey these ideas to Greta and to make a final decision with Greta without coming back to business meeting for final approval.

\* - indicates the topics Friends agreed to forward to Greta.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**TRUSTEES:** \$20,100 has been raised towards the Capital Campaign. In addition, several three year pledges have been made. The third floor kitchen has been renovated. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor bathrooms will be renovated and the back door lock fixed. The front porch has been painted and new storm windows have been installed.

Trustees are concerned about the numerous problems caused by the ivy on the front and side of the building. Friends agreed that the ivy should be removed.

**Caretakers:** a search for new caretakers is getting underway and a revised job description and memorandum of agreement developed. The search process will begin in January. Friends stated that there needs to be a Quaker connection, someone in harmony with Quaker principles and that the caretaker(s) will be the public face of AFM. An advertising plan is being developed. Contact Trustees for more information.

A sign has been placed on the bulletin board regarding posting policies for flyers, announcements, newsletters, etc.

**MINISTRY AND COUNSEL:** Two members from the Ministry and Counsel and 2 from Nurture and Oversight committees met to discuss merging the committees. Progress was made. They will meet again in December. Friends are asked to voice their opinions about whether the two committees should merge to any member of the two committees.

**QUAKER QUEST -** A one day orientation session will be held on January 8. The facilitator is Kathy Slattery from FGC. Twenty-five people minimum are needed to participate. A letter has been written to ask Friends to commit to participate. A budget of \$500 is being asked to cover the facilitator's travel expenses and childcare expenses. The request was approved to come from the 2011 budget. After the orientation, Albany Friends Meeting will then discern whether to undertake Quaker Quest.

### LETTER FROM NYYM ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE WITH REQUEST FOR RESPONSE BY YEAR'S END.

The letter was read and includes several queries. The letter was turned over to Outreach and Advancement for discernment.

**DAMIEN CENTER DINNER (JAN. 29):** A discussion was held regarding whether we should continue the Dinner. The Damien Center is now providing 5 meals a week for their consumers. What is the best way to use our people-power to provide service in the community that would also be community-building for us? This could be part of our consideration for donations/contributions. Replacing the stove is going to be a multi-step process and would have to be postponed until February to allow for cooking the Damien Center dinner. The topic will be discussed again at the December business meeting.

**MINUTE ABOUT MILITARY SPENDING:** Pat Beetle shared the minute from Ann Arbor Friends Meeting. Friends are encouraged to consult the FCNL website for further information.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** New York Yearly Meeting Potential Move - Discussion regarding NYYM's possible move from NYC and whether AFM would consider allowing NYYM to rent the third-floor apartment as their office. Pierre Douyon sits on the committee and said they are starting to look at potential locations. As a first step, it was decided to have a discussion at December Business Meeting regarding whether AFM will continue to have caretakers live in the Meetinghouse.

Pat Beetle thanked Friends for helping with Liz Pearson's memorial service on November 6.

The meeting ended with a period of silence.



## FCNL Corner Friends Committee on National Legislation

*The Friends Committee on National Legislation ([www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org)), the oldest registered religious lobby in Washington, is a non-partisan Quaker lobby in the public interest. FCNL works with a nationwide network of tens of thousands of people from every state in the United States to advocate for social and economic justice, peace, and good government.*



### War is Making You Poor

The U.S. has already spent over \$1,000,000,000,000 (\$1 trillion) on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; **In 2011 these wars will cost taxpayers another \$159 billion.**

Please go to [fcnl.org](http://fcnl.org) and [sign the petition to Congress](#) to tell them you support cutting \$960 billion from the Pentagon budget over the next 10 years. These include:

- Cutting \$113 billion by reducing the U.S. nuclear arsenal to 1,050 total warheads deployed on 450 land-based missiles and seven submarines;
- Saving \$200 billion by reducing U.S. military presence in Europe and Asia to 100,000 while reducing total uniformed military personnel to 1.3 million, and;
- Eliminating \$138 billion in spending by terminating costly and unworkable weapons systems.
- Escalating Pentagon spending is in neither the strategic nor financial interest of the United States. Please support these and other cuts in military spending.



### Don't Let Senator Kyl Stand in the Way!

The fewer nuclear weapons and the more we know about them, the safer we will all be. Senator Lugar knows this; so do the past five chairs of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and General Colin Powell. That's why they, along with FCNL, are demanding that the Senate ratify the New START treaty with Russia, now -- before this session of Congress ends in December 2010.

We have the 67 votes needed to ratify the treaty, but that supermajority makes no difference if one man, Senator Jon Kyl from Arizona, gets the way. He wants to prevent a vote. We need you to tell your senators to make sure that Senator Kyl does not get a "one-man veto."

### Torture Memos Released

On April 16 President Obama ordered the release of memos outlining what interrogation techniques were authorized under the Bush administration.

These memos are known as the "torture memos" because they offer extreme interpretations of U.S. and international law to falsely legitimate torture, abuse, and other cruel, inhumane, and degrading practices in interrogating terror suspects.

The memos prove that officials at the highest level of the U.S. government approved the use of torture.

FCNL Responds to the Memos—In response to the release of the torture memos, FCNL calls for a "Commission of Inquiry". We believe it is the United States' moral obligation to investigate the authorization and use of torture by U.S. government agents in our name. Find out more about a commission of inquiry by logging on to [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org).

We also call on Attorney General Eric Holder to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the abuse, and assign personal accountability. The memos contain evidence that the highest U.S. officials broke laws. The United States must send a signal that such actions will not be tolerated.

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518-436-8812

Webb Page <http://www.albanyquakers.org>



**If you have a friend who might be interested in Quakers please share this newsletter with them. If you prefer to be taken off this mailing list, send a request to [juliagrace@aol.com](mailto:juliagrace@aol.com) or postcard to above address.**

Weekly Peace Vigil  
**Every Wednesday from 12-1PM**  
In front of the Capitol, at State and Eagle Street. Sponsored by Albany Friends Meeting and Peace Action.  
Everyone Welcome

### **Advice and Queries for December**

#### **On Tenderness toward Each Other**

As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and receive it, our Meeting can be a channel for love and forgiveness. All are reminded to speak truth with love. Even a seeming harshness may discourage a person from change, and a lack of sympathy may cause harm where only good was intended. How can we make our Meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured? How are love and unity fostered among us? If differences arise, do we endeavor to reconcile them in a spirit of love and truth? Do we make ourselves available in a tender and caring way when we sense a need for assistance in time of trouble? Do we trust each other enough to make our needs known to someone in our Meeting?

### **Enriching Vocal Ministry for December**

Never before did there seem so many things to be done, to be said, to be thought; and in every direction I was pushed and pulled, and greeted with noisy acclamations of unspeakable unrest. It seemed necessary for me to listen to some of them, and to answer some of them, but God said, 'Be still, and know that I am God'. Then came the conflict of thoughts for the morrow, and its duties and cares; but God said 'Be still'. And as I listened, and slowly learned to obey, and shut my ears to every sound, I found, after a while, that when the other voices ceased, or I ceased to hear them, there was a still, small voice in the depths of my being that began to speak with an inexpressible tenderness, power and comfort.

*John Edward Southall, c 1900*