Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide: A Faith Perspective
Adventure into the Amazon
Perverse Discoveries
Among Friends

Our Readers Respond

Occasionally, issues of the JOURNAL take on a life of their own. Such is the case with our October 1997 issue, which contained several articles on the subject of death and dying. A large response from our readers resulted. Several letters have been shared in the Forum of recent issues, and enough good articles were submitted to form the body of the current issue.

My own ability to talk about death and dying was helped by my wife's association for several years with a hospice program in Philadelphia, Pa., where we make our home. Michele helped to start a home-based hospice program in one of the city's hospitals and was employed there as a visiting social worker. I was deeply moved by the personal care she gave to her work in support of individuals and families. She organized groups in which individuals learned to work through their personal feelings of grief and loss and to offer support to others. I have found it exciting to see how the hospice movement has spread across the country in recent years. Many Friends, I know, volunteer time to such programs.

One article we received but chose not to include was written by Doug Smith of Roswell, Ga. Doug entitled his piece "A Finite Finish in the Game of Life." The thesis of his piece is that life might be viewed as an athletic event. "I propose (in my ideal world)," Doug writes, "that one's lifetime should be a predetermined length and equal for everyone—let's say 80 years." Doug goes on to say:

"Now, most of you are saying 'Eighty! No Way! Why, I know many people well over 80 who are very active!... But these are the exceptions. For every one who celebrates a healthy 80th birthday, there are hundreds much less fortunate. In my opinion, God granted us about 80 years, and it is because of the miracles of science, not God, that people are living longer and longer."

Doug Smith proposes that the efforts of doctors and scientists should be focused on an overall better quality of life rather than simply trying to prolong it. "What if everyone, rich or poor, white or black, American or Asian, male or female, was granted 80 years... period! And if we were lucky enough to live to be 80, we were put to rest in a painless and honorable manner." He lists a number of advantages to such an approach: One could prepare mentally and spiritually for death; by expecting and planning for death, the fear, anxiety, and uncertainty would be reduced; medical costs and financial hardships to families from long nursing home care, etc., would be minimized; medical research would be directed towards improving life rather than simply prolonging it.

Well, since most of my parents and grandparents lived well into their 80s and 90s (and I am now midway through the seventh decade of my life), I am not a strong supporter of Doug Smith's proposal. My mother was still active and drove her car well into her 80s. A great-grandfather said "no thank you" to a letter seeking to recruit him for the Spanish American War; he informed the government that he was still a competent doctor, but was close to 90 and would leave such assignments to younger people! And I cherish the wisdom and energy of those octogenarians who serve the Religious Society.

Nevertheless, I am grateful to Doug Smith and the other authors who have contributed to this issue by saying that the subject of death is one we should talk about freely; that good medical care for all is a priority in our country; that quality of life for all is far more important than the length of one's life; that people should have control over the kinds of medical treatment they receive, and (to the degree it is possible) over the right time and way their life should end.

Vinton Denning

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The gift of life

How does one thank others for the gift of life? Last winter, while I was driving alone during a northern Vermont snowstorm, a pickup truck drove directly into the front of my car. The collision destroyed my car and nearly destroyed me. My recollection is seeing shattered glass (my head went into the windshield), hearing a metallic buzzing sound (the front door being removed), and the compassionate faces of a man and women in the rescue squad watching and listening.

Four hours of surgery in the emergency room were followed by a resident doctor saying they were considering amputation. "There’s nothing we can do, there’s nothing you can do," he related. Fortunately I challenged that statement. Now, one year later, I still have my legs and am an active member of our Middlebury (Vt.) Meeting.

My gratitude is many faceted. At the time of the accident on a back country road, a medic with oxygen and equipment “just happened” to be passing by. He had a car phone to call the rescue squad. He visited me the next day at the hospital, and we shared the miracle of his timely presence. I have experienced “angelic beings” both visionary and human.

Our meeting has been an astonishing support. The day before my return from the hospital in a wheelchair, members of all ages gathered at my home and built a ramp. What a welcome! I would now be able to attend meetings and concerts and doctor’s appointments. They arranged immediately for a coordinator to plan daily meals and visits, shopping, and medical care. I was wheelchair-bound for six months. We have a small meeting of about 30 attenders. They gathered friends from other churches and the community. And they thanked me for giving them the opportunity to help!

A musician friend visited one day and heard of my love for the harp. “Would I like to borrow her Celtic harp?” In my wheelchair I straddled the harp and played familiar songs, feeling the resonance in my body and the healing. Now I am a participant in a harp therapy program and have played for a dying patient at the hospital, elderly women alone, Project Independence (a senior day care), and hospice. A Quaker fund is supporting this project.

The article by Sidney Cobb with Cathrine Gordon giving their viewpoint on forgiveness (FJ April) leads me to write. Their opening paragraph makes the statement that “Both sides must accept responsibility,” which challenges me. I do heartily agree with the sentence that ends this paragraph, “It is appropriate that Friends, as a people called to peacemaking, closely consider this process.” We each have sole responsibility for ourselves to act as led by the Inner Guide regardless of others’ actions. I have become convinced by experience that negotiations can begin at any time—without having to wait for “an end to physical and emotional expressions of violence.”

How does one determine when “real reconciliation and peace” has begun? That becomes evident in retrospect. The authors refer to “gradual” forgiving, which rather surprises me, while I do resonate with reestablishment of trust sometimes requiring a slow process. I find a problem, too, with the concept that religious leaders may more easily be effective in reconciliations when the two sides have the same principal religions. Do the Protestant and Catholic Christians qualify as “same” or not? I have created a T-shirt message, which applies here:

2 FIND
PEACE
BEFRIEND
ENEMIES

Spiritual companions

I am grateful to Anthony Manousos for his article on sharing the good news of Quakerism (FJ March). He seems to have found, as I have found, what is so precious in Quakerism and what gives it a unique identity: beliefs in the Inner Light, that of God in everyone universally, freedom to find one’s own path to Truth (while valuing diversity), experiencing the divine direct (without intermediaries), and harmonious oneness with the whole of Creation. I wouldn’t be surprised if he believed, as I do, in the primacy of the Inner Light over scripture.

It is so comforting and pleasurable to know I have companions on my spiritual journey, excluding none. There is no greater transforming joy than sharing the Inner Light, our that of God, with each other and with the world.

Ultimate reality

The first half of Paul W. Bixby’s lively, upbeat article, “To Open a Dialog about Christian Faith” (FJ April), struck a responsive chord in me, because I started out in life with much the same exposure to biblical literalism as he describes. My 84 years as a lifelong Quaker have been fairly evenly divided between worshiping in the Christ-centered, biblically oriented, socially and politically conservative atmosphere of Friends United Meeting and the philosophically and politically oriented, mainly this-worldly liberalism of Friends General Conference.

In the second half of his article Paul Bixby valiantly attempts to present a “Christian humanistic faith that has replaced traditional literalism” for him. “Heaven as a place and a life for me after my body is dead,” he says, “are examples of the fantasies I wish to avoid. I need a faith that will help me in a world increasingly dominated by the observations of science and the demonstrations of technology . . . . I have less need for fantasies about perpetuating my person and become more content with accepting my place in the natural stream of cosmic life.”

Paul Bixby’s references here to “fantasies” and his confidence in “the observations of science and the demonstrations of technology” make me wonder whether he isn’t closer still to the fundamentalism of his childhood than he realizes. It appears to be much easier to make the transition from biblical fundamentalism to scientific fundamentalism than it is to apply what theologians used to call the Higher Criticism not only to the Bible but also to science. Any evidence suggesting that the ultimate reality may not be matter after all but consciousness, or spirit, is still dismissed by most scientific fundamentalists as “anecdotal.”

For Paul Bixby and others who share the views he set forth, I suggest they test...
their convictions against a remarkable 225-page book published by Harper and Row 16 years ago, which appears to have escaped the attention of Friends. It is Recollections of Death: A Medical Investigation by Michael B. Sabom, who is a prominent heart specialist at Emory University. In his introduction he says: "I suppose that if someone had asked me what I thought of death, I would have said that with death you are dead and that is the end of it. Although I had been raised in a churchgoing family, I had always tried to keep religious and scientific doctrines separate." His book grew out of a reading of Dr. Sabom was highly critical of experiences. Dr. Sabom's methodology, but the experience led him to review the records and conduct further interviews with more than 100 of his former patients who had been resuscitated after undergoing cardiac arrest. In its careful, scientific methodology, Dr. Sabom's study of the near-death experiences of his patients is unmatched by any other book I know on this subject. Even in the midst of its scientific rigor, his frequent quotations from his records of interviews with his patients make this an absorbingly readable book, just the thing for Paul Bixby and kindred spirits to use as a means of putting their own views to the test.

William Edgerston
Bloomington, Ind.

A broader view

Late in 1991 I wrote to various Quaker periodicals expressing my concerns about the haphazard way in which many monthly meetings deal with membership applications. Respect for both the applicant and the meaning of membership require that we delve fairly deeply into what has led the applicant to this request and what the full implications of membership really are. The appointment of a clearness committee to explore these questions with the applicant has wrongly been described by some as an examination, which tends to frighten off both parties. Surely the purpose of such an interview is to establish that we share a common understanding of membership in a monthly meeting and avoid future conflict with regard to what we embrace as "Quakerism." It can be a rewarding experience for both the applicant and the clearness appointees. Too often I have heard new members reveal that they felt "let down" by the lack of significance given to the occasion and that the interview was in effect just a very pleasant social occasion, when they were anticipating (possibly anxiously) a more rigorous "examination".

My long held concern is that we often fail to explain the diversity of Friends. Few meetings are mirror images of one another, and their members reflect the whole range of concerns and experiences that draw people into Quakerism. In joining a monthly meeting one is also joining a quarterly or other regional group and the yearly meeting to which the monthly meeting belongs. The yearly meeting probably has a good deal of diversity within its membership, and very likely it also belongs to some larger grouping such as Friends World Committee for Consultation, Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, or Evangelical Friends International. An applicant for membership needs to know what is being joined and at least something about these alliances. These organizations do not impose conditions on individual membership; that is still the province of the monthly meeting to determine. But ignorance limits the applicant's view of what being a Quaker means and may lead to future discomfort or to the applicant later trying to define the Religious Society of Friends in narrow and unrealistic ways. Concealed diversity leads to misunderstanding and perhaps to confrontation, which is best avoided by knowledge and acceptance of the fact that our Quaker heritage is shared by several different traditions whose emphases and practices may vary widely.

The FWCC Triennial last July recommended to the Interim Committee that the Goals and Purposes be amended to include not just understanding, but appreciation of our diversity. This acknowledges that our diversity is a positive thing and that our experience is enriched and our horizons expanded when we meet and worship with Friends from different traditions and practices. We each are drawn to worship with and join those with whom we are comfortable, where we experience a divine call and find what "speaks to our condition." We learn when we meet Friends from other traditions that others were similarly called but the choices offered were different and so was the resulting affiliation. Yet we all call ourselves "Friends," and our lives have been changed in consequence.

My plea, therefore, is that we make better use of the opportunity afforded by the clearness committee procedure, recommended by almost all of our yearly meeting disciplines for new members, as a real mutual exploration of the full meaning of membership, a real "getting acquainted in the things that are eternal," and that we include, if not in detail, at least a recognition and acceptance that there is a wide range of varied tradition and practice (also theology, language, and culture) among people who also belong to the Religious Society of Friends.

Heather C. Moir
Chocorua, N.H.

Race as an issue?

In her letter on volunteer service (Forum, April) Arlene Hobson stated "I find myself distressed by the subordination of Quaker service to social advocacy... It would appear that diversity and affirmative action as interpreted by [the American Friends Service Committee] have, unfortunately, muted Quaker volunteerism and reduced involvement of meetings." First, I question her distinction between Quaker service and social advocacy. Are the two mutually exclusive? Second, I am very disturbed by her belief that the AFSC, in hiring people of different colors, ethnicities, sexualities, and abilities means a reduced Quaker influence. Does she believe all Quakers are white, heterosexual, and perfectly able? While I agree that our meetings need to take a proactive role in maintaining a strong Quaker influence in a service organization that bears our name, I (both an African American and a Quaker) strongly disagree that the lack of Quaker volunteerism is due to the AFSC's affirmative action policies.

Friends, "race" is one of the major issues facing our Religious Society today. Ignorance and paternalism on one hand and bitterness and frustration on the other will not bring us to unity. Only vigilance, prayer, and real commitment by every individual Friend and each meeting and church will make us a people gathered.

Claudia Wair
Media, Pa.

Friends Journal welcomes Forum contributions. Please try to be brief so we may include as many as possible. Limit letters to 300 words, Viewpoint to 1,000 words. Addresses are omitted to maintain the authors' privacy; those wishing to correspond directly with authors may send letters to Friends Journal to be forwarded. Authors' names are not to be used for personal or organizational solicitation. -Ed.
Once he determined that the strangers were strong enough to hike all day, he offered, through their guides, the opportunity of a lifetime. He would welcome them to his village for a three-day stay. In return, he hoped that the children would carry back to North America what they learned about the plight of an indigenous people struggling to maintain their culture. The shaman knows that the children are the future.

This is how a Buckingham (Pa.) Friends School journey into Ecuador took us into the indigenous Amazonian community of Rio Blanco. With backpacks secured and strength gained from all of our previous hikes in and around the pristine rainforest of Jarun Sacha, we embarked upon one of the most challenging adventures we will ever have. We hiked over very flimsily built bamboo foot bridges spanning deep gorges. On rafts of logs fastened together with vine and in dugouts, we floated through fast-flowing rivers where the jungle was too thick to penetrate. We climbed beside waterfalls that spilled past fossils documenting the past. We paused by a giant kapok tree where the shaman took time to construct a “natural-swing” for the children to play and rest on. We hiked through streams where we were refreshed by the cleansing effect of natural soap-leaves, which the shaman had us collect and then pound into a “mush” that lasted up as good as Ivory soap ever did. We ate lemon-flavored ants, sugar cane, vines, and bark that we were given to chew for energy. We passed leaf-cutter ants carrying clipped pieces of leaf back to their colonies, giant Congo ants whose poison is extracted for the poisoned arrows used by the indigenous people, huge blue morpho butterflies, tarantulas, scorpions, the extremely poisonous fer-de-lance snake, and mushrooms that glowed in the dark. Then, finally, with the starlight of the southern cross, we entered the village of Rio Blanco. No roads lead here. The only way in is the way we came.

We spent our first night in Rio Blanco inside huts constructed of saplings and grasses. Roughly cut saplings hidden under thousands of swarming termites became our beds. Over the next three days, we saw the hectares of medicinal gardens the shaman was cultivating and using as a classroom to teach the community children the healing botanical wisdom of the past. We watched mesmerized as the traditional fish, bird, and small mammal traps on which their diet partially depends were constructed. We ate manioc, plantain, rice, and palm-beetle larvae, which were so generously offered us at meals and afforded us a quick lesson concerning the true meaning of “waste not, want not.” We observed the quiet babies and toddlers always bound to their mothers with folded pieces of white material. We watched intrigued as the shaman gave the bird call for one bird after another as he pointed to the picture of the corresponding bird in a South American bird book that one student carried everywhere.

Karen Seaton is the resource coordinator at Buckingham Friends School in Lahaska, Pa. She is also the clerk of the Joint Environmental Mission Committee. ©1998 Karen Seaton
my pack and were off, I suppose, to experiment. Through a series of translations, we also learned (around a fire one night) a little about how Augustine became the shaman of this tribe. We learned, too, how 21 years ago, a few Quechua moved deep into the jungle to escape the encroaching destruction of the outer rim of the forest. That group expanded into the some 200 indigenous people now living as part of the Rio Blanco community trying to preserve the ways of the grandfathers' grandfathers.

We also studied hand-drawn maps of the river hanging on the community building wall warning of oil contamination along the river. There is oil under the earth where the community of Rio Blanco now lives, and it is only a matter of time before U.S. and Canadian oil companies build the roads necessary to come for it. For years the Ecuadorian government policy toward its Amazon people has been to integrate them into the larger society. Missionaries try to convert them into Christians. Multinational corporations try to convert them into cheap labor. Entrepreneurs continually invade their territories in search of new land, gold, wood, and now, oil.

Oil companies build roads for petroleum explorations. Colonists follow the roads, settle, and clear-cut the forest. As hunting grounds and forest resources are destroyed, the people are forced into smaller and smaller patches of land that cannot support them. In the blazing Amazon sun, even newly laid pipe lines develop leaks of crude oil that contaminate the water and food sources as well as the skin of these people. Their lands and water polluted, their hunting grounds stolen, their way of life threatened, these people have become victims of an unnoticed genocide.

This is an area of pristine forest and active volcanoes and is probably one of the richest areas in the world in terms of plant and animal diversity. We want to save it because we understand that plants found here might hold the cure to diseases that threaten us (like the tree we saw from which the medic

cine man extracts latex to give his people daily to protect their immune systems). Or we want to save it because we became interested in a colorful bird or threatened animal and want to protect it. But, as there are threatened animals, there are also threatened people. We had the rare opportunity to live with such threatened people and in doing so got a glimpse both into the past and into the future.

Alvin Toffler has said that "education springs from images of the future and education creates images of the future." We left the forest wondering: in the future, which will we need more, the oil from this land or the botanical and spiritual wisdom from its grandfathers' grandfathers?

Visiting the indigenous people of Rio Blanco and their shaman, Augustine, we experienced the care, wisdom, and

In traditional dress, the Quechua demonstrate one of their dances to the students.

From Russia to the Amazon: Changing Images

The journey that led us to the Amazon rainforest really began in 1989 with pen-pal letters to our "cold-war enemies" in the Soviet Union (See "Sharing Our Lives," FJ March 1994). Those initial letters between students and teachers at Buckingham Friends School and School N. 213 in Leningrad, USSR, led to ongoing cultural and physical exchanges between the two schools. Both schools decided that a program to empower students to break through political and cultural boundaries and work cooperatively to understand and resolve environmental issues, both locally and globally, was needed. From this decision, JEM (Joint Environmental Mission) was born. The mission of JEM, to help children of all nations walk together in balance with their environment, is now shared by four schools on four continents: North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

When we began our exchange with Russia, I still held a cold-war image of Russians. During a visit as part of the JEM exchange, I realized that years of subtle propaganda had created an inaccurate image of Russia and her people in my mind. My image of Russia and Russians changed. First-hand experience (the best kind of education) taught me what kind, generous, and loving people Russians are.

Before leaving for Ecuador, I also held an image of the Amazon rainforest. I anticipated seeing trees heavy with vines, epiphytes, and monkeys. Fully aware of rainforest destruction, I went to Ecuador wondering if the next generation of BFS students would even have rainforests in their world. But this image of a rainforest that needed to be preserved "for us" or "for the environment" began to take on another form during our visit. The new image that was created was one of utmost urgency.

The JEM program began as a letter exchange and continues as an electronic exchange of information via e-mail and the internet, photos, and video. But it remains the firsthand, face-to-face experience of the physical exchanges between schools and cultures that allows new images of the future to be created and lifelong friendships to occur all over the world. As the world's children learn to connect with each other both electronically and by walking down a city street or jungle path together, a new, brighter image of the future begins to take hold.
spirituality of generous, knowledgeable people. This community does not need outsiders to make their decisions or teach them how to live a meaningful life. This is a community with the kind of involved, highly principled leader we all wish to have. Augustine wonders how long it will be before his tribe’s land will be taken away. Rio Blanco is in the block of land targeted to be the next area for oil exploration. It isn’t just the community of Rio Blanco, but a whole piece of humanity in the Amazon, that has been or is in the process of being destroyed in the name of economic progress. A clear image of preserving the rainforest because it is home to hundreds of families begins to take hold. Perhaps the students who took this journey into the rainforest will one day work to change the rainforest’s history of well-intentioned people exploiting and killing indigenous Amazon people in search of rubber, gold, souls, or oil. Firsthand experience has shown them that the culture of the indigenous Amazon people is innately valuable.

Since we have returned from the Amazon, we have shared slides and stories from this journey with the students in our partner Joint Environmental Mission schools in Russia, Australia, and India. Perhaps together the students from these different cultures will create an image of the future in which there is room, and respect, for all human beings.

We are quite fortunate to have contact with a young woman, Judy Logback, who is working with indigenous rainforest people through Jatun Sacha. She is attempting to help them establish economic survival alternatives that will be sustainable and that are based on traditional crafts and events. Their lands and old ways of living on the earth are being changed rapidly. Judy travels to Quito about once a month to send and receive e-mail. Through her ability to carry and translate letters, we have been able to maintain contact with the people of Rio Blanco.

They have recently acquired a second 2,500-acre section of primary rainforest, which four neighboring communities are invading. Augustine is concerned because in a few months over 150 acres have been disturbed by the outsiders. Because this second block of land is not connected geographically with the land on which they live, they are unable to provide a continual presence that might protect the forest. In addition, an oil company is beginning to build roads very close to Rio Blanco. The Rio Blanco community has asked us to help them raise $3,000 to purchase a motor for a dugout so they might more easily move between their forests. BFS students have had a read-a-thon to attempt to raise money for the endeavor. The children in our JEM partner school in Australia have also contributed to this effort.

We hope to have the money to help them buy a motor soon and will then begin to look for ways to get that money to them. We also hope that we may be able to make a return visit sometime in the future.

The Peaceable Kingdom

We left one lot vacant and unpaved for the Second Coming, thinking that Jesus would prefer grass on his bare feet. Otherwise our city is complete, cement and asphalt perfect, seams tight, not one weed in a crack. The dandy lions are extinct now, and the last whale lashed his tail far from land, is presumed well on his way to fossilization.

We spin on our planet—ours.

What I mean is mine, not thine.

—David Ray

Rainforest Gospel

God speaks to us in clouds
Wind driven
Sun swelled
Pregnant with rain,
Feeding rivers
And gone.
To come again and again.
God speaks to us through clouds.
Rain was at the beginning and Shall be at the end.
Unchanged.

—Margo Waring

David Ray lives in Tucson, Arizona.
Margo Waring is a member of Juneau (Alaska) Meeting.
In the current debate over euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, it is tempting for Friends to frame those issues in terms of our traditional support for individual freedom in matters of conscience. Recent articles in FRIENDS JOURNAL (October 1997) examine these concerns through the lens of individual autonomy, presenting them as something that anyone with a concern for the dignity and worth of human life would naturally support; as a logical extension of our traditional concern for freedom of conscience; or even as an extension of hospice philosophy. While recognizing that there are good people and good arguments on both sides of this debate, I am also concerned that Friends fully examine the ethical and spiritual issues at stake. It may be that our traditional support for freedom of conscience will need to be balanced with other Quaker concerns: reverence for human life as a gift from God; commitment to a community that affirms the worth of all persons, even the elderly and infirm; and our sacred responsibility to protect the most vulnerable among us.

I first want to briefly review the kind of arguments (both for and against) that have been made in the public debate about assisted suicide, because I think it is important to begin any discussion with a solid understanding of the issues as seen by the wider secular culture. Second, I want to explore how we, from our unique perspective of Quaker faith, can respond to those arguments in a way that might prophetically challenge, rather than simply emulate, the highly individualistic assumptions of the wider culture. Finally, I want to address some of the larger underlying issues, which I believe have been ignored in the current narrowly focused discussion.

Tom Gates is a family physician who lives and practices in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Among other things, he coordinates the curriculum in medical ethics for the Family Practice Residency at Lancaster General Hospital. He is a member of Lancaster (Pa.) Meeting. © 1997 Thomas Gates
debate about legalization.

In the wider public debate the twin issues of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide have been discussed extensively in medical and medical ethics literature. I can summarize that discussion by saying that there are four main issues on which proponents and opponents disagree: the nature of autonomy, the duty of beneficence, the distinction between active and passive euthanasia, and the public policy implications of legalization.

Because individual self-determination is so highly valued in the U.S. legal and cultural tradition, advocates of assisted suicide usually base their case on an appeal to the principle of autonomy. Decisions about the end of life are among the most intimate and personal issues that anyone will ever face. Proponents contend that no one can possibly be more qualified than the individual to make those decisions, and that persons therefore ought to have unlimited freedom to decide for themselves when the burden of suffering outweighs the benefits of continued life. Even those who are opposed to assisted suicide need to acknowledge how deeply this argument resonates with the average citizen. To question the individual's freedom to choose seems almost un-American.

Opponents of these practices argue that whatever the status of autonomy, it is not sufficient to override absolute prohibitions against the taking of life. Their reservations can be expressed as questions about the true nature of autonomy. First, is autonomy, in the classic Enlightenment sense, the same as the modern idea of "doing your own thing," of subjective preference as the unchallenged measure of morality? Is it logical to say that autonomy is our highest principle and then appeal to that principle to justify an act like assisted suicide, which permanently does away with the condition for all future autonomy? (A dead person has no autonomy; anything that promotes death cannot be said to increase autonomy in the long run.) Finally, if autonomy is really the highest ideal, then on what basis can we deny any sincere request for assisted suicide—not just from the terminally ill, but from the chronically ill, or even those whose suffering is not physical but mental or even existential?

The second controversy has to do with the requirements of beneficence, the duty to do good. In the context of this debate, doing good means the physician's duty to relieve suffering. Proponents contend that sometimes euthanasia or assisted suicide provide the only way to prevent unbearable pain or suffering. Furthermore, since suffering is so subjective, only the patient can judge whether it worsens and eventually outweighs the possible benefits of further treatment.

Opponents do not deny that there are cases when death, when it finally comes, can only be seen as a blessing. Yet all of us should be troubled by the notion that the way to deal with suffering is to do away with the sufferer. Those who hold this position seem to blur the distinction between physical pain, which can and should be aggressively palliated, and existential suffering, which is an inescapable aspect of human mortality and not necessarily amenable to the quick fix of a lethal injection. Euthanasia advocates would also seem to undermine the premise of hospice care, which is that there is value in "suffering through" an illness and not cutting the dying process artificially short (as beautifully illustrated in the October article by Mary Waddington). Furthermore, suffering is ubiquitous and not confined only to those with certain medical diagnoses. If relief of suffering is our primary concern, assisted suicide logically cannot remain restricted to the terminally ill; eventually some will argue that the handicapped, demented, and retarded deserve the same "rights" (exercised through surrogates) as the terminally ill.

The third area of disagreement is the distinction between active and passive euthanasia. Here it is important to remember that 30 years ago, the idea of passive euthanasia (i.e., withdrawing life-sustaining treatment) was accepted only when it was clearly differentiated from active euthanasia. This took time, but eventually
By omission, my father found a window of opportunity to die with dignity, and he opened it with our help.

...continued...
About Choice and Suicide and Susan
by Caroline Balderston Parry

Death. I have met it already in several forms, in my almost 53 years. In childhood, death claimed my grandparents, who were ill in predictable, elderly ways, and my father, who was cancer-ridden in an unfair, too-early encounter. Then there was my mother, who struggled with breast cancer and lost—she at almost 52, I almost 22. In our 40s, my brother and his wife were killed in Canada. The truth is, they were murdered, and theirs was a grisly death, but it is not appropriate to say so in polite circles. (If I decide not to bite my tongue, and I do say “murdered,” there is always a slight pause in the conversation.) More recently, death tapped the shoulder of my husband, and he died of a sudden heart attack—also at too young an age.

Last year death confronted me anew. I had not made the close acquaintance of suicide before, and now I have. On May 7, 1997, my good friend Susan, aged 41, apparently chose to give up her struggle with an inner darkness that was consuming her; she threw herself in the churning spring-runoff waters of her favorite river. In her turn, Susan had dealt with many nasty variations on death, including early abuse and the accidental death of her five-month-old son some years ago, losses of self and child that always haunted her. Evidently she did not want to endure those pains any longer.

For all my exposure to this trickster, death, I find it hard to respect Susan’s choice, to acknowledge that she seems to have embraced her death.

I am sad about Susan’s suicide, enormously so; sad for all that we who loved her have lost; and sad for the family she left behind her. I am grieving, but I am also bemused. I can’t quite believe how silent we all are about the truth that Susan committed suicide. And for all my exposure to this trickster, death, I find it hard to respect Susan’s choice, to acknowledge that she seems to have embraced her death.

On Sunday afternoon, there was a memorial service for Susan at the meetinghouse, a meeting “to celebrate the grace of God in the life of our Friend...” Poems and anecdotes about Susan’s life were shared, and many people affirmed how much she had meant to them. A young girl quoted “The road goes ever on and on,” from Tolkien. One woman spoke of “No blame,” but that was as close as we came to the S-word.

On Monday afternoon there

assisted suicide becomes not just an option but an expectation? In the minority community in which I practice medicine, people who have historically been denied access to medical care are understandably suspicious of affluent white people who want them to assert their “right to die.” Perhaps instead of advocating euthanasia, Friends should be asking why access to assisted death seems to be a higher societal priority than access to basic healthcare for the 40 million Americans who lack health insurance.

These are the issues and controversies that have dominated the public secular debate about assisted suicide and euthanasia. What can Friends contribute to this debate, from their unique perspective of Quaker faith? Although I cannot claim to speak for all Friends, my reading of our Quaker and Christian tradition leads me to question the prevalent assumptions of the wider culture in each of the four areas of controversy.

To begin with, people of faith (even the highly individualistic faith of liberal Quakerism) do not necessarily accept the premise that autonomy is the highest ethical value, especially autonomy in the modern sense of the unencumbered self, free to decide without constraint. I would argue that autonomy, in the classical sense of self-government, the responsible exercise of our capacity to make difficult decisions free from coercion, does have a respectable place in the hierarchy of Chris-
was a second gathering in a community center near Susan's home in the country. The room was again filled with people of all ages who had loved Susan, though this time there was a central table covered with flowers, candles, rocks, and photographs of this vibrant woman who had loved us. Again, people spoke out of the silence about what they would treasure about Susan, about her gifts, her passions, and their memories. This second memorial celebration, although secular and longer, was basically very similar to the first in format and flavor. A bosom friend quoted from Women Who Run with the Wolves and said that Susan had taught her to pay attention to her wild side. Her women's group sang two favorite songs. Another woman told a story of walking at night with Susan, and on meeting a large wild animal, how Susan had stood her ground. "She was not afraid of the dark," the speaker said. And that was as close as we came to the S-word for a second time.

Life, as they say, goes on, and I have resumed my usual routines, but I am still puzzled by death. How is it seldom spoken of frontally, rarely invited, and seen as especially shameful if self-inflicted. I will miss Susan, yet I will try to see the natural world around me, see its rhythms and beauty, "with Susan eyes" as one of her celebrators put it. I guess that includes seeing that some of my fellow-travellers do choose to leave this earthly life, do choose death.

Christian values—but not the highest place. I could support that contention with any number of scriptural references, but let me offer just one: "We do not live for ourselves, and we do not die for ourselves. If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord" (Romans 14:7-8).

What about beneficence, or the relief of suffering? The Christian community has a 2,000-year tradition of working to relieve the temporal suffering of all people; indeed, one of the roots of modern western medicine is in this Christian concern for the relief of suffering. But although suffering is for us an evil, it is not the ultimate evil. God does not promise to save us from the suffering of the world, but instead saves us in and even through that suffering. Suffering, we believe, can serve the higher purpose of redemption. At the heart of our faith, we have the example of Jesus, who suffered unjustly in body and spirit, yet he killed neither himself nor others, but instead bore his suffering and transformed it into new life.

Having said that, I also want to emphasize that this attitude toward suffering can easily degenerate into a kind of "Christian masochism," where in our rush to affirm the value of suffering, we are too quick to overlook oppression and injustice. Part of what it means to be a Christian is to live out this tension, on the one hand working to alleviate the suffering of the world, and on the other hand learning to accept suffering not only as inherent in the human condition but also as the medium of God's action in the world.

Debates about the distinction between active and passive euthanasia have emphasized hypothetical cases where the difference is anything but straightforward. Regardless of these hypothetical cases, I think there does remain a valid spiritual distinction between the two practices. When a physician decides (with a patient or a family) that the time has come to discontinue life support measures and allow the patient to die, it represents a humble recognition of the limits of medicine and a submission to forces beyond our control. By contrast, administration of a lethal injection, even to a consenting patient, would seem like an act of hubris, an attempt to wrest from God something that is not properly ours. Some have argued that for the physician, assisted suicide lies somewhere between passive and active euthanasia, but the fact remains that for the patient, the act still has this quality of seeking to preempt God.

Finally, what of the social consequences of legalization? I could discuss this from many perspectives, but let me touch on just one that should have particular resonance with Friends' Peace Testimony. The Roman Catholic ethicist James Breshnahan talks about "medical pacifism" as a possible response to assisted suicide, analogous to pacifism as a stance toward military conflict. He argues persuasively that even within the Catholic tradition, alongside the dominant "just war" theory, there is also a provision for pacifism—specifically, for clergy and medical personnel. I would suggest that this may be a fruitful line of thinking for those of us in the tradition of the historic peace churches.

What advocates of legalization are really proposing is that society create a new category of "justified killing," in addition to the categories it already accepts (self-defense, capital punishment, and killing in the context of a just war). The ethicist Daniel Callahan has called this new category "mutually consenting adult killing" and rightly asks if our society is really prepared for the radical step of extending the idea of "justified killing" to a whole new class of people.

If we compare this new category of killing to the idea of killing in a just war, Quakers and Anabaptists would be quick to say that just war theory throughout history has in fact been used not to honestly wrestle with the issue of the legitimate use of military force, but instead to disguise and rationalize and apologize for blatant aggression. The "just war" is an ideal that seems to be honored only in the breach. Once Augustine and others broke with the tradition of Christian pacifism and put forward the novel idea that some wars could be just, then virtually all wars quickly came to be seen as just. In the same way, I fear that once we accept the idea that inflicting death for medical reasons is sometimes justified, there is a real danger that it will come to be seen as routinely acceptable. Given the sad history of just war theology, we have every right to be cynical about claims that proposed safeguards will prevent abuses in the realm of assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Finally, I would like to say a word about what I see as some of the underlying issues behind the current controversy. I think that if we insist on viewing this as simply a disagreement about whether or not to legalize assisted suicide, then the debate will inevitably become sterile and polarized. The key to avoiding that polarization, I believe, is to see that assisted suicide is not the ultimate issue, but rather is only symptomatic of a wider disorder. According to public opinion polls, millions are so alienated from the U.S. medical care system that they would choose...
Living Our Faith unto Death

by Lucy McIver

Modern drugs and technology give us hope for prolonging life without the truthful acceptance that death is a common familiarity for all of us. This power of modern medicine deludes us as well into thinking that we have the privilege of controlling the timing of our death. Because we place such importance on outward assistance we neglect looking to our pure Source for guidance.

The truth is that making the decision to die is implicitly personal, based not totally on measurable facts but rather on intuitive knowing that we are ready for this transition. I suggest that such a decision is akin to following our spiritual leadings and should be approached in the same Quaker fashion as following any leading. Dying is at once a physical and spiritual process.

Three years ago I was in the circle of close friends and family who supported and witnessed Joe Havens’s decision to stop eating. Joe, in his 70s, had for several years talked of this leading. Partially due to his progressive Parkinson’s disease, he questioned his own strength to follow this leading when the time came. Along with family and friends from Multnomah (Oreg.) Meeting, Joe worked with a clearness committee for a year prior to starting the fast. We all were concerned with the questions raised by the right to die. But as the fast approached Joe spoke of excitement and joy in beginning. Throughout the fast, each day was an opportunity for discernment. Always Joe came back to knowing intuitively that God was calling him.

Like so many stories of those who supported another at a time of death, Joe’s dying brought us all closer to knowing our own faith and deepened our relationship with God. Our compassion for Joe opened us to understanding hunger on a global scale as Joe witnessed his Quaker faith in choosing not to eat and joining the suffering of those who had no choice. For those of us who knew Joe well, his dying was, in truth, a part of his living. His decision seemed only natural. We knew Joe was following his leading, that it was not depression that guided him.

Joe’s death confirmed for me that dying can be a spiritual leading, and I wondered if there truly was a Quaker way of living our dying. As always, whenever I am faced with matters of faith, I find their words become like mirrors reflecting images of faith and practice that help me discern my own thoughts. I was particularly drawn to read the dying ministry of 17th-century Friends. Their final words described not only their attitudes toward death but also the fundamental characteristics of following a leading.

Early Friends believed that death gave advance warnings. 17th-century Quakers professed a personal relationship with the Divine and intuitively knew, as an inner reality, when death was approaching. They honored their dreams, visions, and other mystical experiences and saw dying as a time of opening into larger divine realms.

Such inner premonitions shaped how they experienced God’s work upon them. Initially they spoke of a sudden awareness of an idea contradicting ordinary impulses of will. This impulse was beyond familiar boundaries of self, and they identified the Light as the source. After the first intimation the impulse steadily grew in strength and was colored by an emotional tone of joy and power. Early Friends considered such an experience a gift of grace. Finally, as with all leadings, it was strongly suggested that one engage in a period of seasoning, particularly with other Friends who could support one in discerning God’s will from one’s own personal desires. They asked themselves if this leading was consistent with God’s divine nature, knowing that such impulses could arise from other sources than that of God.

Joe’s journey reflects so many of these characteristics. First, Joe simply knew that it was his time to die. He could have

suicide over standard medical care. They are literally “scared to death” of what modern medicine has in store for them at the end of their natural lives, and those of us in medicine must accept a large share of the responsibility for those fears. Viewed from this perspective, the proposal to legalize assisted suicide conforms to a pattern that is all too common in U.S. medicine. It is a proposal to give a pill—in this case a suicide pill—to treat the symptoms, while ignoring the underlying disease, which is our culture’s very dysfunctional attitude toward human mortality. On the one hand, we seem to believe that since everyone dies of some specific disease, and since science at least in theory can potentially cure any disease

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considered other paths but chose self-starvation. Not eating, however, was contrary to Joe's nature, as he loved the rituals and social aspects of community around meals. This was the source of his fears, not so much of death itself, but of failing to complete the fast. When his leading was seasoned with family and Friends over time, Joe felt great joy in accepting this path. Living this leading intensified not only Joe's last days but changed the lives of all who surrounded him.

As Joe exemplified, are not these 17th-century parameters, then, good for guiding us in considering the question of the right to die? Should we not similarly query ourselves and season our impulses in the same Quaker tradition? How we speak of and live our faith reflects our faith and our relationship with God? A gift that, when the time comes, is widely available, interviews with those requesting euthanasia have shown that physical pain is almost never the main motivation. Rather, patients consistently report that fears of "being a burden" or "losing dignity" are what lead them to seek help in ending their lives. We have responded to those fears by proposing more efficient ways to rid society of what these people represent: a constant reminder of our own human mortality. Perhaps instead we ought to be asking: what would we have to do to become a truly loving and supportive community, where the old and ill among us were not compelled to see themselves as burdensome and without dignity?

In the end, perhaps this debate is not so much about death as about life and the attitude of faith toward life. Not only in Quakerism, but at the heart of every great religion, is the sentiment that our lives are not our own: not our own to extend indefinitely into the future, as modern medicine would have us believe, and not our own to dispose of in our own time, as the proponents of euthanasia advocate. Despite their differences, these two positions have something in common: the ideology of control, an obsession with managing the details of life and death at any cost, an unwillingness to accept limits to human agency. It is this ideology that is responsible for modern medicine's problem with death in the first place; to the extent that the movement to legalize euthanasia arises from the same source, it is more likely to exacerbate than solve that basic problem.

The issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide force us to confront some very fundamental questions. Is life a commodity like any other, to be bought and sold, grasped and hoarded, and then disposed of when its usefulness is gone? Or is life a gift, given to us in trust, to be cherished and valued not as an end in itself but as the means of service to others and to God? A gift that, when the time comes, can only be relinquished in the spirit of Jesus in the Garden: "Not my will but thine be done"? These are questions that only faith can answer.

Joe Havens and Lucy McIver share a dance.

(Joe Havens would not in the future, then death must therefore be avoidable, unnatural, a failure, a medical mistake. On the other hand, we act as though we believe that human dignity, the value of our lives, depends on us being completely and obsessively in control of our bodies and all the details of our lives and, failing that, the details of our deaths.)
This spring, the Peace and Social Justice Committee of our monthly meeting sponsored a panel discussion with two Quaker gay men at which we discussed their life experiences and ways our meeting can be a welcoming place for gay men. On the way home from that discussion, my partner Beth observed that we often set up such formal events where we can ask relative strangers the kinds of intimate questions we don’t often ask each other. Among other things, we asked these two men about their experiences as gay youth, about their religious histories and conviction as Quakers, about the impact of AIDS on their lives, and about the intertwining of their sexuality and spirituality, but to my knowledge we’ve had no parallel discussion among ourselves. I’d like to talk a little bit about what has made me feel welcome at Red Cedar (Mich.) Meeting, particularly since at the panel discussion I felt we were expressing an implicit thesis that doesn’t entirely fit my experience.

The expression “critical mass” was used fairly often, and the thesis implicit in it was that gay men feel comfortable when there are other gay men around, and lesbians feel comfortable when there are other lesbians. Unfortunately for any meeting hoping to open its doors to a new demographic, this thesis further implies a hopeless circle wherein we must have, for instance, gay men attending our meeting if we are to attract gay men to our meeting.

As a lesbian, I won’t deny that there is safety in numbers, or that the visible presence of lesbians at Red Cedar made it easier for me to come through the door on my first day. Beth and I arrived late for our first meeting for worship and stood befuddled in the hallway outside the meeting room. Could we go in and sit down, or would we be interrupting? A woman I knew slightly from the lesbian community came to our rescue, performing a pantomime in the United Methodist Church when I was seven or eight, burnt out by the church’s demands on her time and disillusioned by what she saw as the hypocrisy of the so-called faithful. The religious map she passed on to me had only two territories marked on it: Protestants, lying control-freak hypocrites who would take over your life with committee assignments while your spirit shriveled and died (hence my panic upon receiving my first call from the Nominations Committee), and Catholics, evil idolatrous dupes of the Pope led by drunken fornicating priests.

My further education in religion came under the auspices of the Women’s Studies Department at the University of Michigan, where I learned that the patriarchal Judeo-Christian tradition subjugated women, contributed to the imperialistic destruction of indigenous cultures the world over, and fostered violence throughout history to the present day. My previous discomfort with organized religion ossified into full-blown hostility, not unmixed with fear. This hostility and anger was reinforced by my lesbian community, which in my experience is generally open and accepting of nearly any spiritual practices but those which draw on Christian roots.

I don’t remember what prompted me to start thinking about spirituality, or what made me brave enough to mention it to Beth, so that she could, in turn, suggest I try attending Quaker meeting. The attitudes I inherited from my mother and the beliefs I adopted as a lesbian and feminist made admitting I was thinking about religion feel shameful. In fact, it was much harder for me to say, “I want to explore my spirituality” than it was for me to say, “I’m a lesbian.” After all, I was raised in close proximity to my spinner great-aunts Hazel and Doris, often spending weeks at their home in the summers, and it was my mother who told me about Lillian, Hazel’s “companion” of more than 20 years, who had died before I was born. And in high school, lesbians taught me math three years running; one of them is a close friend to this day. So, coming out as a lesbian was in a real way joining the women I had loved most as a child—in fact, I delayed coming out by a good two years, putting myself in the catch-22 position of having to find a girlfriend first to “prove” myself, because I was afraid I only wanted to be a lesbian to be more like my beloved aunt and math teacher.

But coming out as “spiritual”? Not a role model in sight, no one waiting on the other side to welcome me with open arms, and a great deal of baggage that told me nothing good could come of it.

So when I first attended meeting for worship, I was vulnerable in certain ways but not in others. I was strong in my identity as a lesbian, had a great deal of experience coming out among predominantly straight folk, and was solidly a part of my lesbian community. But as a “spiritual seeker,” I was both reluctant and eager, ashamed of my desire, hostile toward institutions, frightened, resistant, and confused. What was I looking for? By what method might it be sought? How would I know it when I found it? I was afraid to ask anyone these questions, so I could only hope that God, in whom I did not believe (and couldn’t have admitted it
if I did), would provide the answers out of the silence.

My enjoyment of the silence kept me coming to meeting the first few months, though the common topics of my meditation, "If I am waiting here on God, who or what exactly am I waiting for?" and "Do I have a faith, and if so, in what?" were not particularly comfortable. But about six months later, the meeting gave me one of life's perfect gifts: the thing you've always wanted and missed without knowing it. In June of that year, Beth and I announced in meeting that we were celebrating our first anniversary, and at rise of meeting we were swarmed by straight people sincerely congratulating us.

One straight man, married himself, pointed out to us that the meeting performs same-sex marriages and would be happy to marry us. "Uh, we're not quite ready for that," we mumbled and left the meeting in a kind of happy daze. Beth and I have always been lesbians of the in-your-face variety, with a history of separatism, and it had never occurred to me that the approval—or, not exactly approval, but matter-of-fact acceptance—of heterosexuals was something I wanted or would even be willing to accept. But it felt good. What the meeting offered us was not the forced tolerance I've been able to wrest, for instance, from my parents, or the continued support I've gotten from straight friends who knew me before, but acknowledgment of our relationship—even promotion of it, from the Friend who was ready to marry us off—by heterosexual people who hardly knew us.

So one piece of my feeling welcomed at meeting is explicitly about being a lesbian, but it's not about there being enough other lesbians in attendance to create a "critical mass" for safety. It's about the heterosexuals and whatever work they did in the years before I arrived (with the help of the lesbians, no doubt) so that I could come into an accepting place.

That has helped me most to settle into the meeting and feel at home, however, has been Friends' willingness to talk with me about all that "other stuff," the stuff that's hard for me. I'm normally a highly verbal person; I process everything by talking about it, but the fact that I am regularly participating in an Organized Religion still feels like one of those topics it's slightly improper to discuss in company, like one's finances or bathroom habits. I have been remarkably reticent (for me) on the subject, even among Friends, as if we're doing something a bit shameful together and ought not to acknowledge it even to each other. The feeling reminds me of the boys I petted with in high school. But in my first 18 months or so of attending meeting, each of my tentative attempts to talk with Friends about why I was there and what was going on for me was met with attention and respect. I remember talking with Melanie at a retreat about my discomfort with Quaker jargon: my inability to say words like hold in the Light, God, spiritual path (I still don't like that one much), ministry, and meeting for worship. I have no idea what Melanie said to me in response; I just remember her listening.

And I remember Beckey taking time out of her very busy week at Friends General Conference Gathering in Kalamazoo to listen to me rattle on about my experiences there, which were of a typical first-timer's head-expanding intensity. But it's only coincidence I think of two lesbians first; Paul performed the same service for me at another time during the week of FGC (in fact, if I remember right, he made a special point of finding me to see how I was doing), and though one hates to presume, I'm pretty sure Paul's not a lesbian. What Paul was, and Beckey, Melanie, and others have been, was willing to talk to me about religion as if it were the most natural, normal, and healthy thing in the world. I have always known my love of women is not a perversion, but I am only just figuring out, with the meeting's help, that love of God might not be either.
ANATOMY OF A LEADING

Growing in the Darkness

by Connie McPeak

WINTER 1997-1998

This is the irrational season
When love blooms bright and wild.
Had Mary been filled with reason
There’d have been no room for the child.

—After Annunciation
by Madeleine L’Engle

October 1997

One of the remarkable qualities of life here is the more direct connection to the elements. There is an immediacy to the demands of the climate. Each season has dramatic elements that cannot go unnoticed. Summer was full of energy, literally. The light was almost constant, the plants bursting forth from the ground, flowering and going to seed at an amazing pace. Folks were busy every minute tending gardens, camping, hiking, canoeing, going to picnics, berry picking, building things, all with a knowledge that time was short before the cold winter would come again. Suddenly it is autumn and the pace has changed. The squirrels are frantically collecting spruce cones. I have found myself almost as frantically picking cranberries. I have hung little lights in my windows and from my cabin to the outhouse for comfort in the long darkness. I took my screen doors down to theouthouse for comfort in the long darkness. But how can I move toward forgiveness when I have so obviously been hurt? In my experience the only way is through divine assistance. I usually try everything else first. However, it is through prayer and surrender that I find peace. Only when I am truly tired enough of the poison the anger and resentment cause in me, willing to give it all up and to do anything that God requests, is there movement toward healing. This often takes longer than I would like as there is something very compelling about “justifiable” anger. I must be willing to change. Here is movement into forgiveness and love. Until I can forgive there is no hope for healing and I will be blocked from the sunlight of the Spirit. I have been assured and have learned that in the beginning I needn’t pray from love but from willingness. The love will come.

November 1997

Perhaps because of the dark I have been particularly aware of moments of luminosity. One of the benefits of having an outhouse is the trips outside at night. When other folks are sitting in front of a tube watching Masterpiece Theater or something, we rustics are going outside to visit the “necessary room.” What I have found on my excursions is often very gratifying. One evening I met a little boreal owl perched persistently on a spruce branch. We studied each other for quite a long time before I went on my way as he stayed contentedly on his branch. I caught my first look at the northern lights while on my way to the outhouse. I hope I never tire of seeing the Aurora Borealis. It seems such a consolation for the cold nights here.

The Aurora fills the sky with dancing curtains of light. I always feel somehow connected to all of the people of the north, from the beginning of time, looking in awe at this amazing display. I wonder at the mystery of the Aurora moving beyond scientific explanation into myth, offering blessing in the cold night sky. I feel somehow put in my proper place when I look up at the lights.

About a year ago I became aware of how uncomfortable I was with children and in my prayers asked for help with this. I have been spending time on First Day evenings with younger members of the meeting while their parents shape note sing. We have been reading C.S. Lewis’s The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. One of the children, Peter, is a very bright seven-year-old. He is a total innocent and is enchanted by each word in the book. The time flies as we read the story, snuggling under lap blankets speculating on what will happen next. Peter’s delight and excitement are freely shared. It has been an incredibly sweet time each week. I see my prayer about children being answered.

December 1997

The cold, snow, and darkness make me more aware of the people and animals who call this frozen land home. I have been feeding the little birds who stay all winter in this inhospitable climate. In my own silly human way I feel the chickadees and I have a friendship. I have spent some time learning more about the Native Americans who have lived all their lives here, winter and summer, living off the land; hunting moose, caribou, grouse, and ptarmigan; harvesting berries and firewood. I wonder at the heart necessary to survive here for 70 years or more.

Over time, the greatest gift I have been given is knowledge of God’s unconditional love for each of us. This knowledge transformed my life, crystallized my intention, and continues to be the touchstone of my day-to-day existence. When I first experienced this gift, I also understood that I was
given the gift of being able to love back. What God yearned for was that I listen and follow. Thus began my personal relationship with this all loving, ever present God. My love of God is as imperfect as God's love of me is perfect. I feel no sense of failure or shame in my limitation. The inequality illuminates the gift.

How do I listen to God and how do I follow? This is an ongoing dynamic process. First I try each morning to remember that this is what I wish to do. When I allow myself the time it takes to remember, before I rush headlong into the day, I say a prayer dedicating myself and the day to God's plan. The most powerful prayer for me for several years now was a gift from my son. He learned in a religion course at college that this prayer was said by a famous rabbi each day of his life. The prayer is "God, send me anywhere to do anything. I am ready." After starting the day this way I try to remember as often as I can in whatever way I can that I am indeed in God's presence and that my intention is to do God's will. As soon as I remember this truth the quality of the moment changes. As the day unfolds I act "as if," expecting that what comes is of God. I expect that each encounter with another person is an opportunity to be a part of God's work.

January 1998

As January has moved along I have felt low on energy, somewhat shut down, and happy to stay put in my cabin. My prayer life has felt flat, my interest in various activities and groups has diminished, and life has had less sparkle. I have found the part-time home nursing I have been doing interesting, and I still find pleasure in the beauty of the country, the ever changing and now increasing light, and the amazing climate, but my energy is turned inward. In talking with others I keep hearing, "Oh it's January, this is normal." I have been told and have heard people encouraging each other to "cut themselves some slack, don't try anything too strenuous, take it easy." It seems in this country where the natural world is so much more evident in daily life, the natural time of dormancy has a compelling call. I am grateful to be living in circumstances where I can be quiet and introverted during this season.

As I went into meeting for worship one Sunday I had this same flat feeling, a feeling of alienation from the Spirit. As I sat in the silence I became aware of the gift of the coming together of our individual intentions to listen to God. There is great power in this gathered yearning toward God. An awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence washed over me. Our need for each other in this life of the spirit was made so very clear. To know that in times of spiritual disconnection I can be nurtured by the work of others encourages me to remain faithful even when the results are not evident. It seems that the intention of each of us is of importance in the world whether we know this experientially or not. We do transform the world!

And so in this time of dormancy there is so much to be grateful for. I experience the seasons of the soul, the waxing and waning of my energy, and the reality that all is well even when I am not at my most vibrant. God's love prevails!

February 1998

We have had an ongoing moose encounter this month. A two-year-old moose with a bad leg has made our yard his gourmet garden. He started with the compost pile, an irresistible concoction of lovely frozen fermenting vegetables. Then he went on to browsing on our trees and bushes, doing a nice job of pruning the snow-laden branches. It has been thrilling and a little dangerous to be able to be so close to a moose. He has been surprisingly tolerant of our presence in his dining establishment. I wonder how long he will survive with his malformed leg. This is a hard place to survive in the best of circumstances. I'm secretly glad that we have such tasty morsels to offer.

The neighborhood birds' antics continue to delight me. The comical ravens are always around expressing their opinion about almost everything. My favorite of their calls is one that surprisingly sounds
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during the gathered time of meeting, but I was leaving a client's home after spending 30 minutes checking her recovery from pneumonia, she startled me by saying that her grandson had died in a hit-and-run accident last year. Her comment was surprising because we had just met. Nevertheless, I took off my coat and sat down. Even though I was a complete stranger she needed to tell her story, and I was there to listen. We held her grief together for a little while. On the same day an elderly Athabaskan man told me of his experience in the Air Force on the Aleutian Islands during the Second World War. He also shared rather modestly that he was a fiddler and promised to play for me. I was a bit wealthier at the end of that day.

Several months ago I was beginning to think that I would stay here for more than this year. Then one Sunday morning in meeting for worship I heard clearly that I was to return to Cleveland. I usually trust the thoughts that come from deep inside during the gathered time of meeting, but I resisted. I wanted to know more. What was my purpose? Why did I need to go back? This month I have found a new sense of peace and clarity about this. I now see that I need to complete the circle, that I have been sent and need to return. I need to see how what I have learned, both articulated and still beneath the surface, manifests in my ordinary life in Cleveland. Will life be more intentional? What more is there to learn in the coming home and reintegrating into life there? It seems clear that in returning to my old life I will more completely see what I have learned and have to share. This is an exciting new piece for me.
Conscience and Tritium Don’t Mix

by David Gracie

Harry Rogers, a member of Columbia (S.C.) Meeting, is an electrician who works for a power company in Columbia, South Carolina. When he found out that his company, South Carolina Electric and Gas (SCE&G), was considering a request for proposals from the Department of Energy that would involve SCE&G in the production of tritium for nuclear bombs, he knew he had a problem. And he knew the problem was not his alone. A Quaker electrician contributing to the maintenance of the U.S. stockpile of nuclear weapons was a moral contradiction that could be resolved by resignation. But connecting the power company and all its workers and consumers to our government’s reliance on nuclear weapons required more than that. “Why, every time someone turned on their light switch,” Harry says, “they would be participating in preparations for nuclear war.”

There was a time when Harry genuinely believed in nuclear power as the peaceful side of the atomic equation. He used to give talks to high school classes in which he made a sharp distinction between the development of bombs, which he opposed, and the generation of nuclear energy, in which he participated. Indeed, it was government policy to maintain a clear line between the two—until now.

As Harry describes the present situation, the DOE is concerned that in the early decades of the next century the tritium in the U.S. stockpile of nuclear bombs will decay and need to be replaced. Tritium, the “H” in “H-bombs,” is the radioactive isotope of hydrogen that provides the fusion reaction in nuclear weapons. It is a waste-by-product of nuclear energy production. Through the insertion of lithium rods, the tritium can be captured (as a gas) and put in containers. To test this procedure, prototype rods were loaded in a reactor at Watts Bar, Tennessee, in December. DOE used to manufacture tritium in its own reactors, but these have been closed because they became severely polluted and unsafe to operate. (The Savannah River Plant in Georgia has produced no tritium since 1988, when it was shut down due to citizen pressure. There are hundreds of Superfund sites at this plant.) Now DOE is crossing the line between military and civilian nuclear production by asking civilian power companies to submit proposals to supply tritium for bombs from their reactors. After reviewing the proposals, the DOE intends to select one civilian power company for this purpose.

The president of the United States has signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and supports its ratification in the Senate, but that does not mean that the U.S. has abandoned its nuclear defense policy. Testing will continue in weapons laboratories, with “subcritical” testing underground at the Nevada Test Site, and billions of dollars are being invested in these and other means of assuring that the bombs are ready to use. The tritium supply is part of what is being euphemistically called “stockpile stewardship.” The fact that DOE reports there is presently enough tritium to maintain bombs at a Start II level until the year 2024—longer, of course, if we proceeded to Start III—indicates how far ahead they are thinking.

Harry is convinced that this action on the part of DOE is to gain broader cultural acceptance of nuclear weapons. The more we are involved in our everyday use of electricity in the maintenance of the nuclear arsenal, the more accepting we are likely to be of its continued existence. Civilian involvement in the nuclear death dance is being solicited at the very moment when public opinion polls are registering broad support for eliminating the weapons altogether, when generals and admirals are coming out for nuclear abolition, and when large majorities in the UN General Assembly are calling for a nuclear weapons convention that goes beyond reducing the number of weapons to the denial of any right to their manufacture, possession, or threatened use.

So when a worker finds out his company has been asked to vie for participation in this tritium plan, he has a lot to think about. The weight of this came down heavily on Harry Rogers. “It was overwhelming,” he says, “It was hard for me to go in each day and do my work with the feelings that were churning inside me.” Harry had two resources to which he turned, and he says they served him well. One was his meeting and the other was the American Friends Service Committee.

Columbia Meeting was the critical resource. A clearness committee brought helpful skills and experience to their deliberations. One was skilled in electronic media; another, a professor at University of South Carolina, had been a nuclear freeze organizer in the state; two had long experience in anti-death penalty organizing. A high school teacher on the committee was able to help Harry keep from being consumed by all of this, “to remember who I am—the person not the struggle.”

When a plan was agreed upon, the southeastern regional AFSC office referred Harry to the national Peace Education Division and the New England office of AFSC for needed information. Having decided to talk to the top management of the company, Harry wanted to know the published stands of the Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches on nuclear war and preparations for war, since one of the top officials was Catholic and another was Methodist. AFSC supplied that information, as well as information of technical nature from national peace and scientific groups. A significant part of Harry’s strategy was to ask others to examine the issue from their own faith perspective, so he researched the positions of other religious bodies (Lutheran, Southern Baptist, Episcopal) and found that they consistently advocated the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Working with members of the meeting and other concerned people in Columbia, Harry was able to bring local newspaper attention to the issue and ultimately a public meeting on September 4, 1997, for which he enlisted the support and participation of Brian...
Harry and a few others who work for SCE&G had decided they would leave their jobs if the tritium connection were made. Harry thinks there were others who would have left, judging by their remarks after the company’s decision was announced.

All told, this had turned out to be a model of conscience-guided citizen action. But it can only be a model, Harry knows, if it is replicated elsewhere. And it needs to be, since other power companies, including Southern Company, Augusta, Georgia, have submitted proposals. Will other Friends meetings serve by and in proximity to nuclear power companies respond to his challenge? This article was written to spread the word and to stimulate thought and action by Friends and other people of conscience who are dedicated to the abolition of nuclear weapons and who are willing to confront the nuclear menace in their own communities and places of work.

Update
Utilities nationwide have retracted or declined to submit tritium production proposals to DOE. The only utility with a standing proposal is Tennessee Valley Authority, of which the Watts Bar test site is a part.

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**June 1998 FRIENDS JOURNAL**
Life in the Meeting

A Look at the Role of Overseers
by Julie Shaull

Committee of Overseers. It’s not the most self-explanatory name. Probably most Friends think of Overseers as the ones who convene clearness committees and appear with casseroles in time of need. How, then, do Overseers end up sponsoring potlucks or delving into the meaning of membership in meeting?

After several years of service on this mysterious committee, I think I know what it is that lies at the center of such diverse activities. “Helping people” is not the center. The center is love. Overseers carry the charge and privilege of making opportunities for love to work in our Quaker community. And we keep our eyes open for places where more love needs to flow.

Making more space for love may require the traditional hot dishes and hospital visits. Or it may require discernment of the way to approach a difficult situation. Sometimes we are called to provide rides to meeting. Then again, we may be called to create a setting in which rides to meeting arise out of our community. We may be led to reach out to assist. Or we may be led to encourage independent effort. Often we function to build community and support natural connections that bring people together.

Over the past year or two in Madison (Wis.) Meeting, Overseers have initiated new projects. At the same time, we have maintained our usual coordination of nurturing activities. The following list may help Friends understand what Overseers in one meeting do, and what we find difficult to do, in carrying out our mission.

1. Friends keep discovering new ways to use clearness committees. These small groups, led by the Spirit, have helped Friends make decisions and gain clarity concerning vocational, relationship, spiritual, and parenting issues, among others. They may help us test our leadings and our missions against Quaker testimony and practice and the leadings of other Friends. Some meet a single time, while others form an ongoing support committee. We are seeing more every year. Although we welcome and advocate the use of clearness committees, we sometimes find it hard to staff all that are requested. A second challenge is developing our ability to provide helpful clearness processes. In the past, we had little or no training or guidelines in this challenging work. We have begun now creating and finding written resources. We are considering what other educational opportunities will be helpful.

2. Overseers hope to create and maintain a sense of connection and welcome in our very large Quaker community. We have been writing follow-up notes to first-time visitors for some time. Overseers sponsor the Make New Friends potlucks, which have become a lively institution. Two years ago we held a focus group and several discussions on how to be more welcoming. We experimented with new methods of after-meeting welcoming. Although we received very positive response to one experiment, we couldn’t find a way of implementing it at the time. We realize that we lack time to plan and energy to carry out many worthy projects that would help people feel part of our community. We have, therefore, created a minute proposing an ad hoc committee to give attention to how our meeting does and does not welcome people.

3. Keeping in touch takes many forms. Sometimes Overseers visit people we think might need contact. When people seem to have stopped attending meeting, we want to know if it is because of some reason that needs our attention. It’s hard to know who’s stopped attending, as well as whether they simply don’t want to be part of our meeting anymore. Recently we have found a loving volunteer who has taken on the work of calling those we suspect may want someone to reach out. Another Overseers project is the Joys and Sorrows column in our newsletter, which helps Quakers know what’s important in the lives of Friends.

4. Overseers often arrange assistance for those who have difficulties attending meeting for worship or other Quaker functions. We may find rides for elders and others. Recently, Overseers initiated a Ride Exchange, which by happy synchronicity had also just emerged as a Friends in Unity with Nature project. Sometimes we take the meeting to a person’s home. We may need to find ways to make someone comfortable attending meeting, for instance by helping the person who is intimidated by a large meeting to develop more personal contacts. Formerly, we helped people find extra care for children with special needs during meeting functions. We wrote one newsletter article featuring a child with special needs so that people in the meeting could better relate to him and support his parents.

5. This year Overseers joined the other committees in recommending the formation of the Nurture of Children Committee, which now handles such requests for childcare as those mentioned above. This committee also handles other concerns that once fell under Overseers, who had the charge of making sure that children were included in, and supported by, our community.

6. Overseers often coordinate support in times of crisis such as hospitalizations, births, convale­ cences, difficult pregnancies, and deaths. Care often includes meals and visits. In the past year we have provided attendants for several people during the days immediately following surgery. Short-term care, and care that doesn’t make a commitment to provide practical nursing, lies within our ability. However, we have in the past felt unable to guarantee shifts of attendants to be with people if the need might continue for a long time or if nursing care were needed. Will we ever find...
Reflections on a Defining Event in American Quakerism

From the Introduction:
What follows are the proceedings of an amazing gathering of the alumni, and spouses of alumni, of the Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps which were operated at the time of World War II. Participants in CPS camps offered an extraordinary witness for peace at a time of grave crisis and devastating war...

The purpose of the Pendle Hill gathering of CPS camp alumni was to allow an opportunity for reflection on the experience, and all it came to mean subsequently, while direct participants in it were still available in significant numbers to participate. The exploration which occurred was both historically significant and deeply moving in human terms as the pages which follow show.

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ourselves able to provide such service?

7. Overseers occasionally seek to bring the Light into problems that arise within our community. We have at times dealt with problems such as addiction, mental illness, issues of personal safety, and unresolved conflict as they affect individuals and our meeting community. Responses have included educational presentations, support committees, conflict resolution, clearness committees, and planning peaceful response. Such matters require our combined wisdom and the guidance of the Divine. We also may seek the guidance of outside or meeting professionals who are specifically skilled in working with such problems. Sometimes we feel that we have risen to a challenge and allowed a loving solution to emerge. Sometimes we find it difficult to feel that we have met the situation in the best way.

8. Overseers are responsible for membership procedures and policies, as well as convening membership clearness committees. Recently we were asked by meeting for business to facilitate a conflict resolution process in connection with a request for membership. Overseers responded by producing recommendations for next steps, as well as insights into issues concerning membership that we wished our community to consider. We are convening a committee of support to the ministry of the applicant, which may help him move closer to membership. We are grateful for the sense of leading that allowed the process to become a joyful exploration. Overseers will continue to help our community become aware of membership as a significant step in our spiritual lives.

9. Health of members is certainly a concern of Overseers. And we would prefer to offer more wellness support, rather than responding to crises. We have talked with one member about her parish nurse ministry and helped set up a support committee for it. Out of that has come a survey of health- and wellness-related needs in our Quaker community. Overseers are aware of some requests for health-care coordination assistance that we have not been able to serve. Recently a member of Overseers began seasoning a mission to provide a wellness self-help group especially for elders within the meeting.

Work on our committee depends on the openness of each member to leadings. We take each opportunity as a new one and intend to respond to it in its uniqueness. Sometimes we feel overburdened in the face of how much needs to be done. Mostly, we feel incredibly blessed to be in the presence of the love that flows through the activities of this gentle gathering of Friends.

June 1998 FRIENDS JOURNAL
North Carolina
Tercentenary Celebration
To Friends everywhere,
The Steering Committee of the North Carolina Tercentenary Celebration sends loving greetings to you all. As we experience the onset of spring we feel a profound sense of gratitude for the spirit that blossomed at our joyous 300th session of both North Carolina Yearly Meetings held at Guilford College, Greensboro, North Carolina, last August.

We note with some sadness that the programs that made up our five-year celebration have ended. As we contemplate what we have experienced, we would like to share with you a conviction that grew out of our worship, discussions, and fellowship as well as two challenges given us by Landrum Bolling, one of our keynote speakers.

A primary tercentenary goal was to try to discover what we are uniquely qualified to contribute as we enter our fourth century as Friends. All our meetings and individuals had the opportunity to respond to a series of queries and to participate in discussion groups addressing this among other topics. The most frequent response was that we would be most effective in peacemaking, in working for non-violent solutions to all problems.

Landrum Bolling has devoted a lifetime to peace and reconciliation in the Middle East and elsewhere, through his service as advisor, mediator, author, college president, and teacher, most recently and currently in Bosnia, developing peace initiatives for Mercy Corps in Sarajevo. The first of his challenges applies particularly to Friends in the United States and others whose countries have armed forces. The second is one with which we are all familiar.

1. "One of the things we have needed for the last ten years is a national debate about military policy... on the peacetime uses of our armed forces... What is the purpose of this vast military machine?... Quakers, pacifists, people who are concerned about peace ought to be willing to get engaged in that debate. What is a proper use of the military?" In spite of our aversion to military might, "we will find it necessary and right to get involved in the great debate that I think has got to take place."

2. We need "a debate about how we preserve a peaceful world in the midst of a time of anarchy, a time of disintegration of old governments, political parties, and economic systems, when the rules are tossed out of the..."
window. A world in which absolutely lawless thugs can take over. That’s what has happened in Serbia, Croatia, Rwanda, Congo. We have to address the issue of creating some kind of international police force, international law, and court system that can be made to work. Because these tragedies in Rwanda, Congo, and Somalia do not just affect those local people there. They affect the whole fabric of international relations; they affect us. Because one way or another we get drawn into it. So let us think together as honestly and seriously as we can about peacemaking as an ongoing mission. How can we develop the inner spiritual resources to live through this and be supporters of peace and decency and forgiveness and, at the same time, build up intergovernmental, even military, resources to help to keep the peace.

These are the challenges. How do we respond? We appeal to you to do the following:
1. Make a list of notable Quaker teachers, writers, peacemakers, and media personalities who might help further such a debate.
2. Identify “professionals” associated with Quaker organizations (Friends World Committee for Consultation, British Friends Service Council, American Friends Service Committee, Friends Committee on National Legislation, the Quaker United Nations office, etc.) who could be called upon.
3. Devise a plan to involve them.
4. Create or designate a group in your yearly meeting who could serve as a creative task group to carry forward this concern.
5. Share your ideas with us. Send them to: Joint Peace Committee, North Carolina Yearly Meetings, 5506 West Friendly Avenue, Greensboro, NC 27410, USA; fax: (336) 292-1905, e-mail: NCfriends@uno.com, who will serve as a clearing house for your ideas.

May the Light within us all inspire us to work as one to reduce the violence that so warps and distorts God’s plan for love, forgiveness, wholeness, and health.

Yours in Christian love,

—Joan N. Poole, coordinator

Japan Yearly Meeting

To Friends everywhere,

The annual gathering of Japan Yearly Meeting was held November 8–9, 1997, at the Tsuchiura Meetinghouse, Tsuchiura, Ibaraki. Forty-nine members and friends and four visitors from overseas attended. The theme of the gathering was the same as that of the Triennial of the Friends World Committee for Consultation held in Birmingham, England, in July 1997, “In Answering God’s Love.”

We learned about the Spirit-filled atmosphere of that meeting, the importance of exchange among the Friends, and the meaning of Quaker practices observed world over. Too often the report given by those who took part in the Triennial.

“A History of the Religious Society of Friends in Japan—1957 to the Present,” product of the long and hard work by the Historical Record Committee, has seen its completion.

An ad hoc “Yearly Meeting Review Committee,” formed a year ago, has met several times to consider questions such as how to best restructure the organization and how to help enrich the activities of member monthly meetings. The outcome of these deliberations will affect the future of Japan Yearly Meeting.

The members of Shimoigusa Monthly Meeting decided a year ago to dissolve after 33 years of existence. Their decision was approved at the yearly meeting. It is hoped that close association with the remaining members be maintained.

Two Friends told us about their life stories. We were all touched by the sincerity and strength of faith they held even in adversity. It was these qualities that helped them hear the divine call that enabled them to overcome many difficulties faced in their lives.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the awarding in 1947 of the Nobel Peace Prize to the American Friends Service Committee and Friends Service Council. It was decided to translate into Japanese and publish lectures given on the occasion, “Drawing on Sources Eternal.” A call was made by the members of Tokyo Monthly Meeting to send food to famine-stricken North Korea.

At a worship gathering the facilitator remarked that “the current of God’s spirit is running through the hands of us all who are gathered here in a circle.” Those who were present felt that God’s love is being poured over us all.

Epistles from several yearly meetings overseas were read. We were especially struck by the remark of one: A yearly meeting is the place “where we grow by listening and being transformed.” We will keep this remark as our guide in our future work.

—Mamoru Hitomi, outgoing clerk, Yukiho Backet, incoming clerk

Australia Yearly Meeting

Greetings to Friends everywhere from Australia Yearly Meeting, gathered on the sandy and spacious campus of Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia, in January 1998.

We met in a time of uncertainty. Our yearly meeting has faced many difficult issues,
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Steve Pedigo (left) will speak Thursday.

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Gretchen began her work as a fundraiser by organizing the development program for Friends General Conference in the mid-1980’s. Prior to joining Henry Freeman Associates she worked for ten years as a management consultant operating her own business, which served both corporations and non-profit organizations.

An active Quaker, Gretchen has served on staff and numerous committees of local, national, and international Quaker organizations where her commitment and energy have earned her positions of leadership. Joining Henry Freeman Associates, Gretchen integrates her interest in fundraising, training, and organizational development.

A graduate of Earlham College, Gretchen received her M.Ed. from Temple University in Psychoeducational Processes, with a focus on training and organizational development. She has also received training in fundraising management and campaign planning through the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.
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not all of which have been resolved. But we feel that we are a part of a healing process.

As Harvey Gillman said, yearly meeting is a seedbed wherein growth comes through listening and transformation. At our Summer School we listened to the stories of Aboriginal people telling of the forcible separation of children from their families and culture, suffering, grief, survival, and enormous courage. We have shared our responses to these stories, and we have expressed our sorrow in a statement of apology as a step towards reconciliation.

Injustices against Aboriginal people continue today. We heard of the imminent desecration of sacred and beautiful Mirrar land and the culture of its people by the mining of uranium.

We have heard that some Vietnam veterans shed tears for the first time as they watched a musical play reflecting images of Vietnam. We have been moved by the plain speaking of the truth by our young people who wish to be included in the life of our meetings. Through our representatives on the National Council of Churches in Australia and Friends’ World Committee for Consultation we realize the need to listen creatively and sensitively to those who use different language to express their spiritual beliefs.

These shared experiences expose us to the healing power of true community.

The importance of community in times of uncertainty and change was the theme of the 1998 Backhouse Lecture given by Charles Stevenson. The theme of uncertainty was with us through the week—uncertainty about how to share our religious experiences inside and outside the Quaker community, uncertainty about the appropriateness of some of our structures and conventions, and uncertainty about the future.

Some like to feel the exhilaration of standing in a place of turbulence and change, where sand meets ocean and wind. Others find that uncertainty is a threat, but when we have waited as a community in silence we have felt the power the Spirit.

We realize that spirituality is not only a search for personal serenity but also a struggle for justice in society. We have experienced this tension and at times have become angry and impatient because we have not known what to do. At other times, the Spirit has moved us to respond with urgent action, in our tradition of speaking out against wrong. We have found joy in following the leading of the Spirit.

-Patricia Firkin, presiding clerk
**News**

Australia Yearly Meeting issued an apology to the indigenous people of Australia. The yearly meeting approved the following minute at its January sessions:

Quakers believe reconciliation between indigenous Australians, the original custodians of the land, and nonindigenous Australians to be the cornerstone of a nonviolent, inclusive Australian society.

Australia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) acknowledges the injustices suffered by the indigenous people of Australia since 1788. We are ashamed that we have failed to recognize the extent of the dispossession, deprivation, and trauma over the past 200 years. We have been a part of a culture that has dominated, dehumanized, and devalued Aboriginal religious, cultural, and family life.

For this we are deeply sorry and express our heartfelt apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. We commit ourselves to working towards a reconciled Australia.

David Hartsough, a Friend from San Francisco, was arrested with a team of Peacemakers in Kosovo, Yugoslavia. The Peacemakers were invited by the Independent Student Union to help them organize nonviolent protests to open the university to all students. On March 26, the group was charged with over-staying their permits and sentenced to ten days in jail. David Hartsough was leading a team of five students when they were arrested. While the team was in prison, an agreement was reached that will open all schools to both Serbian and Albanian students by June 30. On March 23, the Peacemakers were taken to the border of Macedonia and released.

Quakers in France are organizing against international arms trade. The EuroSatory Arms Fair will take place at Le Bourget near Paris on June 2-6. Over 800 arms companies will gather to sell weapons to over 130 countries. The arms fair is closed to the public but open to industrial groups. Advertising for the event cast it as "the world wide rendezvous for land and air-land defense professionals." The European Network Against Arms Trade, French Quakers, and other European peace organizations will stage a protest on June 1-3. The protest will address three main directives: stop all arms sales to repressive regimes and regions of tension; close down EuroSatory; and retrain military export workers for civil production.

Des Moines (Iowa) Friends helped defeat the return of the death penalty to Iowa. At a hearing on February 4, Claire Cumbee Drake of Des Moines Meeting gave one of over 50 statements opposing the death penalty. Also presenting statements were Bev Reddick for the American Friends Service Committee and Deb Fish (a Friends Journal board member) for Iowa Peace Network. Other opponents included Amnesty International, Catholic Peace Ministry, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. There were only 11 statements presented in favor of bringing back the death penalty. (From the March 1998 Friendly Line)

Kara Newell, executive director of the American Friends Service Committee, was part of a delegation to Iraq. The interdenominational delegation traveled to Iraq during Easter week to deliver medicine to those suffering as a result of UN sanctions. "The journey is an opportunity to reach out and make compassion visible during the Christian Holy Week through a humanitarian effort that demonstrates our spiritual concern and commitment," Newell said. The delegates traveled from Amman, Jordan, to Iraq and spent five days, including Good Friday and Easter, in Baghdad. The trip was sponsored by Church World Service, the relief, development, and refugee assistance ministry of the National Council of Churches. Other members of the delegation are representatives of Lutheran World Relief and the Middle East Council of Churches.

Priscilla Adams of Haddonfield (N.J.) Meeting will appeal the court's decision rejecting her right to refuse to pay taxes. The case went before the Philadelphia Tax Court, where Adams presented an extensive outline of Quaker history and beliefs related to war tax objections. The court's decision states, "Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 does not exempt Quaker from federal income taxes, despite taxpayer's religious opposition to military expenditures." Since October 1997, Rosa Packard of Purchase (N.Y.) Meeting and Gordon and Edith Browne of Plainfield (Vt.) Meeting also have filed complaints in federal district courts seeking to protect their conscientious acts of war tax refusal.
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Movement into Stillness:
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Betsy Chapman & Dorian Abel

August 7-11
Clay, Myth and Fairy Tale
George Kokis
Sacred Images
A Photography Retreat
Dana Cornick

August 12-16
M.C. Richards
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Opportunities

- Living the Story: 50 Years of Brethren Volunteer Service is the theme of BVS's anniversary celebrations. There will be several regional and national events throughout the year. For more information contact BVS at (800) 323-8039.

- Nonviolent Alternatives announces three programs for 1998-99: 3-4 weeks in India (July), 3 weeks in Lakota/Dakota communities (June), and 3 weeks in India (January 1999). Contact: Nonviolent Alternatives, 825 4th St., Brookings SD 57006, (605) 692-3680.

- The Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron needs material assistance. Their "wish list" includes ink/jet cartridge (HP51633M); film, any speed; 8mm videocassette tape; financial pledge to cover a phone bill ($75 a month); and a financial pledge to cover Internet service provider fees ($30 a month). If you can help with any of these items, contact Christian Peacemaker Teams, P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680-6508; phone: (312) 455-1199; e-mail: cpt@igc.org.

- In preparation for its centennial in the year 2000, Friends General Conference is collecting information and memorabilia on the role of FGC in the lives of Friends. The History Harvest will include an oral history component as well as any posters, tee-shirts, films, photos, scrap books, or other items. The FGC Centennial Committee will collect information and memorabilia at the 1998 Gathering in Wisconsin, or you may contact Michael Wajda at 1216 Arch St., 2B, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 561-1700.

Resources

- The Friend, Britain's independent Quaker publication, can be found on its new web site at www.quaker.org.uk

- Northwest Yearly Meeting's web site includes areas such as "Who we are," " Resources," "Ministries," and "churches," which includes information about and directions to local meetings. Visit the NWYM web site at www.nwfriends.org.

- Alternatives for Simply Living is an organization dedicated to promoting sustainability and helping people live more simply "for the sake of God's Creation." For more information or to order their resource guide contact Alternatives for Simply Living, 3617 Old Lakeport Rd., P.O. Box 2857, Sioux City, IA 51106; phone (712) 274-8875; e-mail: AltSimLiv@aol.com.

- Volunteers for Peace 1998 International Workcamp Directory lists over 1,000 opportunities for meaningful travel throughout Western
and Eastern Europe, Russia, Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The directory is $15, including postage. To order or for more information, contact VFP International Workcamps, 43 Tiffany Rd., Belmont, VT 05730; phone: (802) 259-2759; e-mail: vfp@vfp.org; website: www.vfp.org.

Upcoming Events
• June 4–6—Nebraska Yearly Meeting. Contact: David Nagle, 423 S. Tinker Ave., Hominy, OK 74035-4067
• June 7–13—1998 Natural Building Colloquium–East at Dodon Farm, Davidsonville, Maryland. This event will gather experts in the field and participants will experiment with such alternative building materials as strawbale, cob, bamboo, recycled materials, and more. Contact: NBC-East, c/o Green Logic Design, P.O. Box 2249, New York, NY 10009; phone (212) 769-6387; e-mail: ketsie@sol.com; website: www.planetwoodstock.com/nbc.htm
• June 11–14—Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Contact: John Howell, LEYM, 7745 Clarks Chapel Ln., Athens, OH 45701
• June 11–14—Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting. Contact: Errol Hess, SAYMA, P.O. Box 1164, Bristol, TN 37621-1164
• June 17–21—Intermountain Yearly Meeting. Contact: Penny Thron-Weber, 6739 Momview Blvd., Denver, CO 80207
• June 25–27—Friends Church Southwest Yearly Meeting. Contact: Charles Mylander, P.O. Box 1607, Whitter, CA 90609
• June 25–28—Norway Yearly Meeting. Contact: Vennenes Samfunn Kvekerne, Skovveien 20, N-0257 Oslo, Norway
• June 28–July 4—Friends General Conference Gathering. Contact: Bruce Birchard, FGC, 1216 Arch St., 2B, Philadelphia, PA 19107
• July—Evangelical Friends Church Eastern Region. Contact: John Williams, 5350 Broadmoor Circle NW, Canton, OH 44709
• July 1–5—Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting. Contact: Stanley Perisho, 3350 Reed St., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
• July 8–12—North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Contact: Deborah Shaw, NCYM, 1009 W. McGee St., Greensboro, NC 27403
• July 15–19—Wilmington Yearly Meeting. Contact: Rudy Haag, Pyle Box 1194, 251 Ludovic St., Wilmington, OH 45117
• July 15–19—Fellowship of Reconciliation

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FRIENDS JOURNAL June 1998
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World Wide Web: http://www.scattergood.org
E-mail address: SFSInfo@scattergood.org
Fax number: 319-643-7485

National Conference, “A Future of Nonviolence,” will take place in Milford, Indiana. Activists from around the world will gather to discuss how nonviolence can transform injustice and oppression. Issues include Israel/Palestine, South Africa, gay/lesbian rights, youth and violence, death penalty, and worker justice. Contact: FOR, P.O. Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960; phone (914) 358-4601; e-mail: formembers@igc.org

• July 16-19—North Pacific Yearly Meeting. Contact: Madeline Moore, 2227 NE 18th Ave., Portland, OR 97212
• July 16-19—22nd Annual Quaker Lesbian Conference, “How Can We Keep from Singing?” will take place at Westtown School. QLC is a conference for Quaker women and women familiar with Quakerism, who are lesbian, bisexual, or moving toward those lifestyles. Contact: Susan, (609) 443-4706 or e-mail: QLCConf@aol.com
• July 18-24—Northwest Yearly Meeting. Contact: Joe Gerick, NWYM, 200 N. Meridian St., Newberg, OR 97132-2714
• July 24-31—Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. 27th International Congress will be held in Towson, Maryland. Contact: WILPF, 1213 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19107; phone (215) 563-7110
• July 25-27—Central Alaska Friends Conference. Contact: Art Koeninger, Box 22, Chitina, AK 99566
• July 26-August 1—New York Yearly Meeting. Contact: Rona Keilin, 15 Rutherford Pl., New York, NY 10003
• July 27-August 1—Pacific Yearly Meeting. Contact: Eric Moon, PYM, 2314 8th St., Apt. B, Berkeley, CA 94710
• July 28-August 1—Mid-America Yearly Meeting. Contact: Bruce A. Hicks, 2018 Maple, Wichita, KS 67213
• July 28-August 2—Iowa (Conservative) Yearly Meeting. Contact: Bill Deutsch, IYM, 1478 Friends End Rd., Decorah, IA 52101
• July 29-August 2—Illinois Yearly Meeting. Contact: Mary Nurenberg, IYM, 60255 Myrtle Rd., South Bend, IN 46614
• July 31-August 9—Central Yearly Meeting. Contact: Jonathan Edwards, 5592 West County Rd. 700, North Ridgeville, IN 47380

June 1998 FRIENDS JOURNAL
Quakers on the Move: A Storybook of Quaker History from 1652 to Today

This is an unusual little book. We understand from the introduction that most chapters are based on the actual experiences of successive generations in the family of Caroline Nicholson Jacob, beginning with hearing George Fox in 1652 and continuing for over 300 years. Each child's story neatly represents a subsequent generation whose situation—the move to the new world, the war of independence, the struggle over slavery, the rise of pastoral meetings, the First World War—provides a theme for that child's chapter.

Reading it through from cover to cover, as I did, raised many questions: Who's speaking here? Is it a child or an adult describing their childhood experience? Why do all their voices sound the same? Would a child really be interested in the events being described, or only an adult looking back on significant milestones? It is difficult to find appropriate language to describe complex events to children, especially when the events concern concepts like jailing and hanging individuals for their religious beliefs. It is even harder to put such a story into the mouth of a child (Chris, 1661) who voluntarily visited the prisoners and then gracefully accepted being beaten by the jailers.

There is Aaron "protesting the Gulf War" in 1991, who begins by saying that he was in third grade in 1990 when Saddam Hussein "invaded a little country next door called Kuwait." Later in the same chapter he tells us he's "now in junior high," which makes both his ability to reflect on his actions and his political sophistication a little bit more credible to a critical adult reader.

As a teaching tool in First-day schools, I think that Quakers on the Move would be very useful and successful. The story chapters are followed by an equal number of "Ideas for Parents and Teachers," each of which is well organized with thoughtful background material, interesting quotations, creative activities, useful questions for discussion, even suggestions for the following session. When I imagine an older person reading the stories aloud to a group of elementary school children, I can hear the parent/teacher dramatizing the events, and the continuity glitches

Quaker Quiptoquotes

by Adelbert Mason

The following is an encoded quote from a famous Friend. The letters have been transposed for your puzzling pleasure.

...XANWM MVABOW EAL QNIZY LVI MKOIEUI, QBL UAEKBE KL. RAN LVI WKSKEI OKRI XVA XZM TKEKMLINKEH LVNABHV LVI TIWKBT AR MKOIEUI KM LVI MZTI OKRI ZM KM EAX TKEKMLINKEH LVNABHV XANWM.

—Answer on page 36
Arriving June 1998!

1998-1999
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As the Seed Grows:
Essays in Quaker Thought

The essayists in this book appear to strive to express a distinctly Australian Quakerism, but Friends elsewhere will be struck by the generic nature of their concerns. They do not dodge the hard issues, and this makes As the Seed Grows a book that would lend itself well to Quaker discussion groups.

In dealing with the issues that tend to dichotomize Friends into spiritual and social action camps, the writers find the two inseparable. Mark Deasey, in his essay on "Quaker Service," begins by stating that it is easier for Friends to talk about what they do than what they believe. Years in Lebanon and Cambodia enable him to emphasize that "any real Friends service is a corporate act" in much the same sense that Quaker worship moves beyond the sum of individual devotions. There are no "lone heroes." The "Quaker saints" did not march alone; the gains they made were achieved through the efforts of a body of Friends. In conflict situations, when Friends must act quickly, they are "upheld in trust," that is, in the belief that they will follow the Light given them. In upholding them in trust, the meeting also is assuming responsibility for their actions and must review the latter when the crisis is past.

Changing times are forcing Friends to go about old concerns in new ways. Peter D. Jones points out that conscription has outpriced itself and the internee conflicts that have succeeded traditional wars can no longer be opposed by protesting the draft. Many Friends have shifted their response

more important.

Finally, I have to say that what I like best about Quakers on the Move is the back cover. The children who characterize each chapter are portrayed in a family tree. I found myself turning often to mentally make the link between the drawings within the chapters themselves and the small portraits on the back cover, and thus to experience for myself the wonderful movement of Quaker history.

—Claire E. Gorfinkel

Claire E. Gorfinkel, who recently wrote and published a new haggadah for Passover called Because We Were Slaves, is on the staff of the American Friends Service Committee. She attends Orange Grove (Calif) Meeting.

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WESTTOWN

June 1998 FRIENDS JOURNAL.
to the Peace Testimony by addressing more local concerns (Alternatives to Violence) or providing relief (Friends Service Committee), where there is some possibility of alleviation or small achievement. Writing from her experience as coprincipal of a Friends school in an era of competing values, Stephanie Farrell says that the task is no longer to communicate a set of values to students but rather to help them learn to judge values for themselves and to make plain to them that this must be a lifelong process. David Parnell, a Friend with much experience in the organizational side of Quakerism, discusses the meeting for business in an “instant” era, when some Friends do not spend enough time together to feel supported. If too much is glossed over to avoid controversy, and too much is predetermined before business meeting to save time, there will not be enough understanding to provide a base for true unity. All of the writers emphasize respect for the Inner Light that is given to others, including those others whose religious beliefs, interests, life experience, values, and behavior are very different from Friends’ own.

While these are concerns that could be called “generic” to the larger Religious Society of Friends, even an essay that clearly addresses a local situation, such as Helen Holm’s paper on cultural sensitivity to Aboriginals, speaks more broadly. The North American reader is likely to substitute “American Indian” for “Aboriginal,” find it does not fit, and then try substituting the other diverse groups he or she knows. The culture Holm describes is too different from them all, although the need for a certain amount of Euro-Caucasian humility is not. In the end, Helen Holm moves to the hard questions. Indigenous peoples are in their own process of cultural change, and they are making their own solutions. She asks who is to decide what is appropriate and whether making cultural allowances does not relegate them to the “status of outsiders in perpetuity.” Her formula is her title, “Tread softly and listen.”

In the final essay, Elizabeth Stevenson gives a clue to the title. She speaks of the small seed of the kingdom that rises up in the heart in the deepening silence. For her, Isaac Penington’s seed is the essence of Quakerism and its roots are in Quaker meeting. It thrives in the silence of waiting and deep listening.

---MaryGwynne Schmidt

MaryGwynne Schmidt is a member of Manasquan (N.J.) Meeting and an attender at San Diego (Calif.) Meeting. An emeritus professor of social work, she is currently a research associate at San Diego State University’s Center on Aging.
Quaker Lite “Reflections”

The Lite Co., Indianapolis, Ind., 1997. 67 pages. $8.95 (spiral bound).

Recapping a session presented in Indianapolis, Indiana, during the 1996 Friends United Meeting Triennial, local pastor Stan Banker puts into print those fast-paced puns and much, much more. In celebration of his own silver anniversary in service to the Society of Friends, he invited seven other Hoosier Quakers engaged in various ministries to contribute to his tome. The artistic design talents of former Quaker Life staffer Jeff Dowers complement to perfection the printed word. The resulting 67 spiral-bound pages are jam-packed with countless allusions and illusions guaranteed to produce everything from slight smiles and chuckles to uncontrollable laughter for anyone who has had the slightest exposure to the wider family of Friends. One’s enjoyment index may be directly related to the amount of involvement experienced over time. The estimated two hours required for an initial reading cannot immediately lead one to predict accurately the number of times in the future that the “reference value” of this light-hearted, well-intended compilation will be useful. Reading aloud portions to like-spirited Friends could also prove an enjoyable and enlightening activity. As the well-designed map of “Quakerland” shows, all portions of the kingdom are subject to jest.

Warning: Not recommended for the faint of heart or those unable to laugh at themselves.

Thanks, Stan, for providing a thought-provoking look at our “wonderful expression of faith—Quakerism.”

—Peggy Hollingsworth

Peggy Hollingsworth, a member of Western Yearly Meeting, participates in the wider family of Friends through the United Society of Friends Women, Friends United Meeting, and Friends Association for Higher Education. She is a high school librarian.

Answer to Quiptoquote

... Words should not break the silence, but continue it. For the Divine Life who was ministering though the medium of silence is the same life as is now ministering through words.

—Thomas R. Kelly (1893–1941)
Two long-term projects are having an impact worldwide: workshops inside prisons, many people, both Conflict and concern in life. Since joining Meeting. As a result of AVP, which is still attached to New America (ALCOA). He later was a counselor for of Friends in 1953, he was active in a peace such as two large corporations, Raytheon and Celanese. Larry once wrote of a mystical experience he had in early adulthood: "The name of Jesus had been dedicated to finding nonviolent solutions to conflicts. Among the project’s activities were the training of marshals to help keep the demonstrations against the Vietnam War nonviolent and training programs directed at improving police/community relations. Two long-term projects are having an impact worldwide: the Children’s Creative Response to Conflict and the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), which is still attached to New York Yearly Meeting. As a result of AVP, which began with workshops inside prisons, many people, both
leaders and participants, ascribe the transformation of their lives to Larry and the program. He wrote two books that describe his work in nonviolence: *Transforming Power for Peace* (1960), and *Follow the Light for Peace* (1991). He was a good listener, always ready to help the person, and to help the person put off by anger, opposing opinions, or unfamiliar backgrounds. He was preceded in death by his wife of 60 years, Virginia Whittingham Asey, and by his daughter Marjorie. Larry is survived by a son, Peter; and four grandchildren.

Baker—Muriel Estry Baker, 95, on Nov. 18, 1997. Muriel was born in Newton Centre, Mass. In 1923 she graduated from Simmons College in Cambridge, Mass. She married Clyde Nelson Baker in 1926 and for 65 years shared his adventures—sometimes as co-pilot in their plane on trips to Mexico and Cuba, or as copilot of the "Jim" in Vermont, in which they explored the waters of Lake Champlain each summer with family and friends.

Muriel and Clyde were both active in the World War I Veterans Association of Boca Raton, Fla. She was an involved member of the Congregational Church of Boca Raton, where she served as president of the Women's Fellowship. During the summers, Muriel was a supporter of the Charlotte Congregational Church in Vermont. In the winters, during her stay with her son Clyde and his wife Jeanette, she worshipped at Evanston (Ill.) Meeting. As the mother of three children, Muriel was active as a den mother, Girl Scout leader, Boy Scout supporter, and transportation engineer. She could always be counted on as a resource, whether it was homework (especially Latin), or sewing costumes for school plays. Muriel's creativity was displayed in many ways: flower arranging (for which she won awards), quilting, oil painting, and cooking. Her leadership and organizational skills were evident during her terms as president of the American Association of University Women Queens Branch (1951–1953), the Flushing Garden Club, the Flushing High School P.T.A., and the World War I Veterans Women's Auxiliary. Muriel enjoyed an active life and will be missed by all. Her grace, optimism, and strength will live on in the lives and hearts of her children, grandchildren, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her sister, Elizabeth; her brother, Clement; and her husband, Clyde. She is survived by two sons, Clyde Nelson Baker Jr and Clement Ellery Baker; a daughter, Roberta Baker Stenson; 11 grandchildren; 15 great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Bromley—Ernest Bromley, 85, on Dec. 17, 1997, in Boston. Ernest was born in Maine and raised in New England. He attended music school for two years in Boston and later attended Boston University, where he was influenced by his philosophy professor who was a pacifist. He attended seminary at Duke University in North Carolina and, like his father, was ordained a Methodist minister. He had difficulties with his congregation and the Methodist Church because of his political views. In 1942, Ernest was arrested for not paying an automobile tax, the proceeds of which would have gone to help pay for the expense of World War II. As a result of his difficulties in North Carolina, he moved to New York where he attended Union Theological Seminary. Ernest became the Youth Secretary for the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a Christian pacifist organization. It was there that he met Marion Coddington, who was FOR director A.J. Muste's secretary. In 1947 Ernest took part in the Journey of Reconciliation, sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). The Journey was a team of white and black men who organized the South to integrate bus lines. In 1948, upon returning from his journey to the South, he and Marion were married. They moved to Ohio to form a pacifist group known as Peacemakers, formed with the idea of living in intentional communities in order to provide support for members' radical political work. Ernest and Marion were evicted from their first house in Wilmington, Ohio, because of their opposition to school segregation. They then moved near Cincinnati and formed a land trust with other Peacemakers so they could live without harassment. Throughout the 1950s Ernest worked with other Peacemakers on local and national political issues, including integration, opposition to nuclear weapons testing, and war tax refusal. Ernest developed his skills as a small-scale organic farmer. He and Marion had three children: Daniel, Caroline, and Stephen. The family began attending Community (Ohio) Meeting, in the 1960s he and Marion became editors of The Peacemaker magazine, which supported the absolutist pacifist position in respect to the war in Vietnam. Ernest and other Peacemakers became strong advocates for draft refusal and served as counselors for those who refused to be drafted, including his son. In the 1970s the Internal Revenue Service attempted to take their house away. Their resistance to this effort brought them to the attention of President Richard Nixon and Attorney General John Mitchell. Ultimately, they kept the house because it belonged to the land trust. During the last 15 years of his life, despite failing eyesight, Ernest continued to correspond with peace activists and war tax refusers throughout the country. He was arrested for protesting U.S. policies in Central America, nuclear weapons work at a uranium plant, and at General Electric. In 1991 he and his friend Maurice McCracken climbed the White House fence and threw blood in the fountain on the White House lawn to protest the Gulf War. In his last years, Ernest explored and advocated a range of alternative medical practices, with which he experimented in his battle with cancer. He maintained his communication with tax refusers, continuing his lifelong radical pursuit of peace and justice. Ernest was preceded in death by his wife, Marion; a daughter, Caroline; and a son, Stephen. He is survived by a son, Daniel; and two sisters.

Minges—John Minges, 78, on July 24, 1997, in Milwaukee, Wis., of cardiac arrest. Born in Milwaukee, John served with the Coast Guard in the North Atlantic during World War II. In 1956, he started his own structural engineering firm. In 1980, upon retirement, he followed his leadings into a new post-career life. He became a Quaker, earned a master's degree in kinetics from the University of Wisconsin, ran and biked in marathons, and began putting his engineering skills to work for Habitat for Humanity. On the last day of his life, he had worked a full day at Habitat. Executive Director Jean Leslie observed that "he stood for... peace and peace education and helping humanity. And his eyes always seemed to twinkle." John was a regular meeting attendee.
as well as greater. His hugs were famous and generously given. John was active in Friends prison visitation at Waupun Correctional Institution and is missed by many of the men there with whom he met monthly. His skills proved invaluable when it came to keeping the meetinghouse in good repair.

Other outreach programs in which he was involved include service in a shelter for homeless men, providing food at the Gathering meal program, and working with others in meeting with the APSC. Material Aids to Brittany Village Holiday Gift Shop. John was not big on speeches, but when he spoke, it was always with love, conviction, and respect. Despite all his accomplishments, he remained humble. Despite tragedies in his life, he retained his sense of humor. Some time ago, as Milwaukee Friends began to put together an album of member and attendee photos with accompanying biographies, John placed in it a picture of himself, with hair and beard shining and blue eyes smiling at the corners. He had torn off a scrap of paper and written on it this caption: 

"Not as curmudgeonly as he looks." Friends already knew that. John’s warm goodness was felt from the very beginning. He was preceded in death by a son, Mitchell, and his long-time companion, Nancy Scott; a son, John, a daughter, Heidi; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Taylor—Valerie Taylor, 84, on Oct. 22, 1997, in Tucson, Ariz. Born in Auburn, Ill., Valerie attended Blackburn College in Carlinville, Ill., and completed her work there in 1937. She taught in a rural school for two years, covering all eight pre-high school grades in one school room. The published author of twelve novels and one book of poetry, Valerie was considered one of the pioneers of literature for lesbian women. Valerie was published as Velma Nasella Young Tate, Nasella Young, and Francine Davenport. Her book of poetry was published in conjunction with Jeanette Foster, another pioneer in this genre. Valerie was an active and effective community speaker, especially on antiracist and lesbian issues. She came to Tucson, Ariz., in 1979 from Margarettville, New York. She joined the Pima (AZ) Meeting in 1982. Valerie was brilliant and well-read. Her humor was never a pretext for political work there in 1937.

Valerie was considered one of the pioneers of literature for lesbian women. Valerie was published as Velma Nasella Young Tate, Nasella Young, and Francine Davenport. Her book of poetry was published in conjunction with Jeanette Foster, another pioneer in this genre. Valerie was an active and effective community speaker, especially on antiracist and lesbian issues. She came to Tucson, Ariz., in 1979 from Margarettville, New York. She joined the Pima (AZ) Meeting in 1982. Valerie was brilliant and well-read. Her humor was never a pretext for political work there in 1937.

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Worship in Song: A Friends Hymnal, 335 songs, historical notes, indexes, durable hardcover. $25/copy (U.S. funds) plus shipping/handling. Softcover available. Large print, softcover, no notes, $25/copy. Call for quantity rates. Order FGC Bookstore, 1216 Arch Street, 26, Philadelphia, PA 19107 or call (800) 765-4256.

Douglas Gwyn’s new book, Words In Time, speaks prophetically and eloquently to current Quaker possibilities and tensions. A renowned scholar and writer, Douglas Gwyn has travelled and ministered widely among pastoral and unprogrammed Friends. $7.95 (plus $2.75 shipping). To order call 1-800-742-3150, or write Kimo Press, P.O. Box 82, Belhaven, NC 28609.

Read Without Apology by Chuck Fager. Assurgent, liberal Quaker theology for today. Historian Larry Ingle calls it "an important addition to any Quaker library, I know of nothing else quite like it..." 190 pages, $11.70 postpaid. Orders: (800) 742-3150; or from Kimo Press, P.O. Box 82, Belhaven, NC 28609.


F G C

Bookstore. Serving Friends and seekers worldwide with Quaker-related books, tracts, and curricula for all ages. Friends to meet needs and interests of individuals, religious educators, and meeting communities. Free catalog of over 500 titles. Religious education consultation. Call, write, or visit: Friends General Conference Bookstore, 1216 Arch Street, 26, Philadelphia, PA 19107, M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. EST, (215) 363-5656, fax: (215) 363-5657. E-mail: bookstore@fgc.org.

Books—Quaker spiritual classics, history, biography, and current Quaker experience. For ordering information, call the Friends General Conference Bookstore, 1216 Arch Street, 26, Philadelphia, PA 19107, M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. EST. To order, call 1-800-742-3150, or write: FGC, P.O. Box 82, Belhaven, NC 28609.

Two recent Quaker financial swindles cost victims over $40 million! Get the inside story by Chuck Fager. Read Without Apology is an exciting in-depth report by Chuck Fager. For ordering information, call the Friends General Conference Bookstore, 1216 Arch Street, Richmond, IN 47374. Write for free catalog.
For Purchase

For Sale
Quaker Gift Items for personal enjoyment, or for sale: assorted letters, banquet decoration, favors, fundraiser items, special events. Write for brochure.
Quaker Heritage Showcase, 10711 N. Kittanning, Tuscarawas, Ohio 44673 (or 330) 357-2445.

Opportunities
Community Experience/Homeless or Legal Advocate: Full-time volunteer placements while living in intentional community are available with City 488, a free restaurant for people without homes, opa Deaconess Project, a criminal defense and social rehabilitative service provider for indigent individuals. Send bio, health insurance, monthly stipend.Age/race disagrees encouraged. Contact: Volunteer Coordinator, Community of P.O. Box 89129, Atlanta, GA 30323-0125, phone (404) 529-2378.

Consider a Costa Rica Study Tour January 23–February 8, 1999. Write Roy Joe or Ruth Stuckey, 1126 Hombred Road, Sabine, OH 45109, or call on your fax (317) 524-2900.

Exploring the past, present, future. . . .
AFSC North Central Region's 50th Anniversary Commemoration Events September 12–13, 1998
Friends House, Des Moines, lowa
Saturday 9:00–5:00 A.M.—Open House
6:00–8:00 P.M.—Banquet
Sunday 8:30 a.m.—Breakfast
Travel-Study for the Socially Concerned
Join Quaker educator Robert Hershaw in Nova Scotia.
Sept. 3–15 or Guatemala Feb. February, Quaker owners of Dunrobin Farm on Cape Breton assist with the Nova Scotia farmers. Robert's 35 years among Maya Indians enrich the Guatemalan Itinerary. For study vacations with an anthropological focus write Hershaw Tours, 2596 W. 160 Terrace, Stillwater, MN 55085 (612) 885-2808.

Summer at Pendle Hill: Spiritual Life Enrichment
Hungarian for a weekend at the sacred Hill. A richly structured program includes individual spiritual direction; solitude; small group workshops in prayer, journaling, etc.; community life and daily worship; access to craft studio. One or more weeks, June 21–July 18. Contact: The Registrar, Pendle Hill, 338 Plush Mill Road, Wallingford, PA 19086. (610) 569-0507 or (610) 742-3160 x 142.

Castle and Cathedral Tours
Guided tours of Britain's historical heritage
Cathedrals and Castles—Stately homes Pre-historic. English Quaker offers guided historical tours.
Maximum of 6 on each tour ensures high degree of individual attention. Itineraries are flexible to your group interests. Travel byways as well as highways. Time to explore antique shops and stop for tea. Price per person per week of $1195. Includes meals, accommodations at a 4-star hotel, all travel within the UK, expert guided tours, and all entry fees. Details from David Birney. 12 Nursery Gardens, Ilkley, West Yorkshire, England. Tel. (011 341 622444, e-mail: bic20yr@nursery-gardens.denmark.co.uk.

MEXICO CITY: Volunteer Opportunities: one-week service-learning seminars, 3–12 month internships, positions managing Quaker center Casa de los Amigos, Ignacio Mattafort 132, Mexico DF 06330; (52-55) 705-0521; amisgos@anet.org.mx; www.laneta.org.amigos
Quaker House intentional community seeks residents. Share living and meal arrangements in historic Friends meetinghouse meeting in spirituality, and social concerns. One- or two-year terms. Directors, Quaker Hill, 3395 Woodruff Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657. (773) 288-3066; quakernnw@ix.netcom.com.

Personal
Single Booklovers, a national group, has a book to exchange, or join for worship. We will share interesting history and stories about the North Central Region. Everyone is invited; so please let us know that you are interested. Contact: Bev Reddicic, AFSC, 4211 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50312. (515) 747-4651, bevredde@afsc.org.

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MEXICO CITY: Volunteer Opportunities: one-week service-learning seminars, 3–12 month internships, positions managing Quaker center Casa de los Amigos, Ignacio Mattafort 132, Mexico DF 06330; (52-55) 705-0521; amisgos@anet.org.mx; www.laneta.org.amigos
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Friends Helping Friends — Marriage Certificates: Send for free samples of wedding certificates, invitations, artwork, ideas, tips, more! Gay and lesbian couples, non-Friends. A Quaker-owned-and-managed travel agency. To these ends, we will offer spiritual, practical, and financial support as we open. "Help build an inter­national network of creative, spiritually rooted, socially engaged people. Membership: $15/year. FQA, P.O. Box 5865, Philadelphia, PA 19102. E-mail: info@qa.org. Our Web Page: http://www.qa.org/qa.
NEW MIDDLETOWN—Meeting for worship and First-day school Sundays at 10 a.m. 267 William Street (second floor), Middletown, Connecticut.

NEW HAVEN—Meeting and First-day school, Sundays, 10:30 a.m. 225 East Grand Ave., New Haven, CT 06513. (203) 468-2398.

NEW LONDON—Meeting for worship and First-day school ten a.m. (or 8:30 a.m.) 11 a.m. Friends Meeting House, Oswegatchie Rd., off the Niantic River Rd., Waterford, Conn. 536-7249 or 189-1924.

NEW MILFORD—Meeting for worship, 10:30 a.m. (203) 379-2741.

STAMFORD-GREENWICH—Meeting for worship at 520 Bedford Rd. (corner of Westover). Stamford.

STORRS—Meeting for worship 10 a.m. Corner North Eagleville and Hunting Lodge Rds. Phone: 429-4459.

WILTON—Worship 1st, Meeting 2nd—First day school 9:30 a.m. (203) 748-0748.

WOODBURY—Litchfield Hills Meeting (formerly Watertown), Woodbury Community House, Mountain Rd. at Watertown. Worship and First-day school 10 a.m. Phone: 255-4527.

NEWARK—First-day school 9:30 a.m.

NEW MILTON—Housatonic Meeting. At 7 at Lanesville Bldg. #439, Seminole, FL 34642. (813) 854-2242.

MIDDLETOWN—Meeting for worship and First-day school, 11:30 a.m. (or 10:30 a.m.) 1 mile east of Carnden-Wyo Ave. (Ale. Wilton—Worship Aug.)

HOCKESSIN—Worship 1st, Meeting 2nd—First day school.

NEWARK—First-day school 9:30 a.m.

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MIDDLETOWN—Meeting for worship and First-day school, 11:30 a.m. (or 10:30 a.m.) 1 mile east of Centreville on the Centre Meeting Rd. at Adams Dam Rd.

HOCKESSIN—Worship 1st, Meeting 2nd—First day school and F irst school.

NEWARK—First-day school 9:30 a.m.

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NEWARK—First-day school 9:30 a.m.
BUFFALO—Worship 10:30 a.m. 72 N. Parade near Science Museum. (716) 882-8645 for further information
BULLS HEAD RD.—Worship and First-day school 10:30 a.m. N. Duchess Co., 1/4 mile E. Taconic Rk. (914) 266-3223.
CANTON—Lawrence Valley Friends Meeting. (315) 386-4648.
CATSKILL—10 a.m. worship. Rt. 56, Ghianville. November-April in members' homes. (914) 685-7409 or (914) 434-3494.
CENTRAL FINGER LAKES—Peru Yan, Sundays, Sept. through June. 270 Lake St., near adult and child's study 10 a.m., worship 11 a.m. June-Aug., worship in homes. (716) 526-5196.
CHAPPAQUA—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school. 10:30 a.m. Rte. 120 Quaker Rd. (914) 238-3170.
CLINTON—Meeting, Sundays, 10:30 a.m. Kirkland Art Center, On-the-Park. 863-3035.
CORNWALL—Worship with childcare and First-day school, 10:30 a.m., Quaker Ave. Phone: 633-7474.
EASTON—Unprogrammed worship and First-day school 11 a.m. Rt. 40. (518) 664-6667 or 777-3669.
ELMIRA—10:30 a.m. Sundays. 155 West 6th St. Phone: (607) 734-8989.
FREDONIA—Unprogrammed meeting 10 a.m. Call: (716) 743-1247 or (716) 822-0222. Summer season Chautauqua Inst. 9:30 a.m.
HAMILTON—Worship 10:30 a.m. Upperpine Meetinghouse, Route 80, 3 miles west of Smyrna. Phone: Marjory Clark. (706) 741-3841.
Hudson—Taghkanic-Hudson Friends Meeting. Unprogrammed meeting 10:30 a.m. Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Telephone: (518) 537-6619 or (518) 537-8671 (voice mail: e-mail: bruckwith@delphi.com).
LONG ISLAND—Conscience Bay—Friends Meeting. Worship 10 a.m., First Days, unless otherwise noted.
PECOGIC BAY—Southampton, Administration Building, Southampton College. (516) 283-7593 or 283-7591; Sag Harbor, 66 Hempstead Rd., 10:30 a.m., (516) 283-2524; Greenport, call (516) 765-1132.
FARMINGDALE-BETHPE—second and Fourth First-days, proceeds by 10:30 a.m.
FLUSHING—Discussion: 10 a.m., First-day school 11 a.m. 137-16 Northern Blvd. (718) 788-9386.
JERICHO—Old Jericho Tpke., off Rte. 78, just east of Duckworth Aves. Phone: 334-7245.
LONG ISLAND—QUEENS, NASSAU, SUFFOLK COUNTIES—Unprogrammed meeting for worship 11 a.m., First Days, unless otherwise stated.
MOUNTAIN—Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting.
NORTH CAROLINA
ASHVILLE—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., forum and childcare 11 a.m. 227 Edgewood Rd. (704) 258-0974.
BURLINGTON—Unprogrammed worship, 9 a.m. (707) 585-4310.
CHAPEL HILL—Meeting for worship 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. 1 sunny days, Sunday in May to mid-August, worship at 9 a.m. and August, worship at 9:30 a.m. (919) 488-8657.
CELO—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., 283-7593; 2nd and 4th First-days, proceeds by 10:30 a.m.
CHARLOTTE—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., forum 1st Sundays, Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church, 400 N. Sharon Road, (704) 399-4665.
DAVIDSON—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., (919) 262-2200.
GREENSBORO—New Garden Friends Meeting, 1103 New Garden Rd. Worship 10:30 a.m. Call: (910) 234-2805 or 864-6156.
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HICKORY—Unprogrammed meeting for worship, First-day school 10 a.m., forum every Sunday at 10 a.m., 1408 New Garden Rd. (704) 258-0974.
MOREHEAD CITY—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., 283-7593; 2nd and 4th First-days, proceeds by 10:30 a.m.
RALEIGH—Unprogrammed meeting, First-day school 10 a.m. Call: (919) 677-7819 (first Sunday of the month), 5155 Western Blvd. at I-95, Raleigh, NC. (919) 677-7819.
WOODY—Stafford Friends Meeting.
ROCKY MOUNT—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., 6010 Quaker Rd., Raleigh, N.C. (919) 727-0890.
SARANAC LAKE—Meeting for worship and First-day school at (518) 897-6938.
RUTHERFORD—Unprogrammed meeting for worship and First-day school 10 a.m., 6010 Quaker Rd., Raleigh, N.C. (919) 727-0890.
SARANAC LAKE—Meeting for worship and First-day school at (518) 897-6938.
SARATOGA SPRINGS—Worship and First-school 10 a.m. (518) 585-0103.
SCOTTSMOOR—Meeting for worship and First-school 10 a.m., year round; First-day school, third Sunday in Sept. through second Sunday in June, 11 a.m. 133 Popham Road, (914) 472-1807. John Randall, clerk, (914) 475-6866.
SCHEMENITACY—Meeting for worship and First-day school, 9:30 a.m. Albany Avenue. (518) 374-2166.
ST. JAMES—Meeting for worship and First-day school 11 a.m. Information: (800) 720-6045.
SYRACUSE—Worship 10:30 a.m. 821 Eudale Ave.
Pennsylvania

ABINGTON-First-day school (summer-outdoor meeting) 9:45 a.m., worship 11:15 a.m. Childcare. Meetinghouse Rd./Greenwood Ave., Jenkintown, Pa. (215) 684-2809。

BIRMINGHAM-First day school 10 a.m., worship 10:15 a.m. 1345 Birmingham Rd. S. of West Chester on Rte. 202 to Rte. 927, then 0.5 mi. to Birmingham Rd., turn 0.1 mi. north. BUCKINGHAM-Worship and First-day school 10 a.m., 6854 York Rd. (Routes 202-223), Lansdale. (215) 794-8302.

CARLISLE-First day school, meeting 10 a.m. 225 A Street, (717) 249-6895.

CHAMBERSBURG-First-day school 10:30 a.m., 630 Lindle Drive, telephone (717) 261-5767.

CHELTENHAM-First day school, meeting 11 a.m. 110 East Oakdale Ave.

DUNNings Creek-First-day school/meeting 11 a.m. 1150 Ashland St., Lancaster, Pa. (717) 393-3021.

EDGEWATER-First-day school 10 a.m., worship 10:30 a.m. 25th St., (717) 296-3949.

FISHHKA-Meeting for worship 11 a.m., 11th and Union Sts., P.O. Box 168, Oxford, PA 19363. (610) 426-4851.

FRIENDS (Quakers)-Community Meeting, 1st and 3rd Sundays, call (610) 436-0143.

GERMANTOWN MEETING-Courthouse St., P.O. Box 277, Philadelphia. Worship and school 9:30 a.m., meeting for worship and First-day school 11 a.m. Conestoga and Orthodox Sts., on 1st and 3rd Sundays.

GREENCASTLE-Chester Meeting for worship and 1st day school 10 a.m. on First Day at Swede and Jacoby Sts. Telephone: (610) 279-3795, 482-5149.

GREENFIELD-Chester Meeting for worship and 1st day school 10 a.m. at Historic Neighborhood House, 3000 S. 2nd Ave., Portland, First-day school 10 a.m. Contact Chris Cradler (503) 287-6001.
STATE COLLEGE—Worship and children's programs 11 a.m. Also, on most Sundays, early worship at 8:45 a.m. and adult discussion forum from 11:15 a.m. Close to Valley Forge, King of Prussia, Audubon, and Devon. (610) 688-5757.

STATEWIDE—Meeting and childcare 10:30 a.m. Sundays at 1600 Main Street, Morgantown, WV 26505-

WILLIAMSSP—Unprogrammed worship, P.O. Box 460, Colonial Beach, VA 22443. (804) 224-6847 or Sash@sheridan.com.

PHOENIX—First-day school 10 a.m. Sundays, 1445 N. 4th Ave., Flagstaff, AZ. (520) 773-2820.


WESTON—First-day school 10 a.m. Sundays, 136 W. Washington St., Weston, IA 52693. (319) 647-2000.

CHATTANOOGA—Meeting for worship 10 a.m., First-day school 10 a.m., and seniors' program 11 a.m. at 2218 E. 12th St., Chattanooga, TN 37404. (423) 625-7000.

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ABILENE—First-day school 10 a.m. Sundays at 1401 S. 1st St., Abilene, TX 79605. (325) 672-6483.

ARDMORE—Meeting for worship 10 a.m., First-day school 10 a.m., and seniors' program 11 a.m. at 2218 E. 12th St., Chattanooga, TN 37404. (423) 625-7000.

ASHEVILLE—First-day school 10 a.m. Sundays at 1401 S. 1st St., Abilene, TX 79605. (325) 672-6483.

ATHENS—First-day school 10 a.m. Sundays at 1401 S. 1st St., Abilene, TX 79605. (325) 672-6483.

ATLANTA—Worship 10 a.m., First-day school 10 a.m., and seniors' program 11 a.m. at 2218 E. 12th St., Chattanooga, TN 37404. (423) 625-7000.

AUSTIN—First-day school 10 a.m. Sundays at 1401 S. 1st St., Abilene, TX 79605. (325) 672-6483.

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Medford Leas is pleased to announce its development of
LUMBERTON LEAS
offering a whole NEW concept in active adult living.

Lumberton Leas has much to offer those contemplating a move to an adult community. What distinguishes Lumberton Leas is its size and its setting – only 110 homes situated on an 89-acre Arboretum and Nature Preserve. In addition, the community will offer the innovative choice of three residential/financial alternatives.

THE SETTING - Set on a beautiful 89-acre site just 5 miles from Medford, New Jersey, approximately 40 acres of the site will be preserved as a natural setting and arboretum along the main branch of Rancocas Creek with extensive walking trails throughout its impressive woodlands and wetlands.

THE HOMES - To be built by Gary Gardner, one of South Jersey's most respected builders of quality homes, Lumberton Leas will offer 110 clustered homes in one, two, and three-bedroom designs with full basements, attached garages and an array of custom options.

THE COMMUNITY - Residents and their guests will enjoy a sizable community center featuring a fitness center and facilities designed for meetings as well as social and catered events. An outdoor swimming pool and tennis courts will also be offered.

THE INNOVATIVE CHOICE - Lumberton Leas offers three residential/financial alternatives.

- A traditional continuing care contract with coverage for all the superior health services and facilities offered by Medford Leas for those 65* and older.
- A "membership" agreement that provides a wide range of amenities and services, and access to Medford Leas' health care services and facilities on a fee-for-service basis for those 55** and older.
- An optional conversion from membership to continuing care contract. Residents with a membership agreement may be placed on a waiting list to convert to a continuing care contract at a future time while remaining in their original Lumberton Leas home.

* Spouses may be 55 or older
** Spouses may be 50 or older

Initial occupancy is projected for late fall 1998.
For additional information please call:
(609) 654-3030

(Information office located at Medford Leas, Route 70, Medford, NJ 08055)

Medford Leas and Lumberton Leas are conducted by The Eistengh, a Quaker-related not-for-profit corporation founded in 1914.