It’s in the Air

With change in the air these days, I find myself reassessing my commitments of time and energy—and I sense that many others, perhaps even across the globe, are doing the same. Our perceptions seem to be shifting about what is needed; what matters most, for ourselves and for the well-being of our planet. Simply put: there seems to be more interest in community, and (at least in our aspirations) less self-centeredness.

For me, the articles in this issue offer some evidence from the world of Friends:

- In “Crossing the Border” (p. 6), Heidi Blocher experiences a sudden transformation at the U.S.-Mexican border when she connects emotionally with a stranger.
- In “Listening to Lincoln” (p. 9), Burton Housman is called to heightened awareness, sensitivity, and involvement with veterans who, in increasing numbers, are surviving war with severe wounds.
- In “A Peace Education Sabbatical” (p. 14), Susan Gelber-Cannon, during a school year of travel, learns rich lessons on how to be an active peacebuilder.
- In “My Spiritual Journey” (p. 17), Mary Margaret McAadoo, whose meeting asked her to present her spiritual life story, writes of how the presence of acceptance and of forgiveness—which she found in a 12-step program, and which she sees as elements of peace—have empowered her. (Many meetings are asking their members to present their spiritual journeys; more such accounts will appear in future issues.)
- And in “Happy Birthday, Mercer Street Friends” (p. 19), Andrez Lehman tells how 50 years of Friends service to Trenton (N.J.) Meeting’s surrounding population has changed lives.

From January 13 to 17, I attended an ecumenical Peace Gathering at Arch Street Meetinghouse in Philadelphia, and I experienced a similar sense of shifting and growing engagement in the work of community. FRIENDS JOURNAL plans to present some highlights of that gathering in our May issue.

—Robert Dockhorn

In a letter sent to our subscribers last November, we told you we needed to raise $48,186 by December 31 from individuals and meetings, in order to stay on budget. We are delighted to report that we received a very heartening response to that message and we are, in fact, still on budget for this year. We thank everyone who has given us gifts above the price of their subscriptions. The benefits of the generosity of our donors accrue to all the people touched by this magazine—our readers, their families, meeting members, seekers who come across friendsjournal.org on the web. Subscription and advertising income alone cannot support our work and the ministry it performs. We are very grateful for the generosity of our donors, who make it possible for us to bring you this magazine. Thank you!

—Susan Corson-Finnerty
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Cover photo courtesy of Susan Gelber Cannon: Susan with a group of students in Japan during her peace education sabbatical
A prerequisite for nonviolence

In his article “The Power of Fearful Faithfulness” (FJ June 2008), Steve Chase writes that he has seen the writings of several Quakers who “harden themselves against the transforming power of fearful faithfulness by finding a ‘spiritual’ justification for ignoring the healing call to help build up the reign of God’s love and justice in our communities.” He urges us not to wait on inner peace or spiritual maturity before becoming active and following our leadings.

I must agree that waiting for inner peace and spiritual maturity can be a lifelong dream that never comes to fruition. However, what I did not see in this article was the prime prerequisite for undertaking nonviolent action, especially civil disobedience. I believe that in order to be effective I must respect those with whom I disagree. They have a lifetime of experience that has led them to their present beliefs and actions. They are human beings with the same needs as mine. I may not agree with them, but I need to be open to learning from them. Although I am clear about what I want to see happen, I cannot be so wedded to the outcome that I will feel I have failed if they refuse to change their beliefs or their behavior. After all, as Friends we believe that if an action is the will of God, “way will open.”

Deborah Wood
Sleepy Hollow, N.Y.

The consequences of a war live on

While the need for reparations for slavery [see “Quakers and Reparations for Slavery and Jim Crow” by Jeff Hitchcock (FJ June 2008) and subsequent Forum responses—eds.] has entered our consciousness and conscience, our nation’s greatest land grab was stealing northern Mexico. The U.S.—Mexican War (1846–1848) goes unremembered and largely unrecompensed. The shameful treatment of Mexican migrants just adds to the ways white Christians have dealt with slavery as well as with American Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and other immigrants.

This “dirty little war” (so called by a Washington Post reporter at the time) has been ignored by all but a few historians and most history teachers. President James Polk planned the expansion of U.S. territory into the Southwest and California. Polk and his cronies wanted to solidify Texas as a slaveholding state and extend slavery all the way to the Pacific Ocean through Mexico, which prohibited slavery. So he sent Zachary Taylor to cross into Mexican territory and a flotilla of ships to lie off California until the war started.

Atrocities committed by Yankee troops were so egregious that a significant number of Irish Catholic soldiers deserted and fought with the Mexicans as the San Patricio Brigade. Henry David Thoreau wrote Civil Disobedience in response to the war and refused to pay his taxes.

The first battles were fought before Congress had an opportunity to declare war. Ulysses S. Grant fought there and declared in his memoir 40 years later that, “We were sent to provoke a fight, but it was essential that Mexico should commence it.” Polk lost the House of Representatives during the midterm elections over “his war.” The war produced a large number of trained officers ready for the Civil War.

For $15 million, the U.S. got the present states of New Mexico, California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming and parts of Arizona, Kansas and Colorado. The rest of Arizona was purchased for $10 million. Consider the amount of wealth rightfully belonging to Mexico that has been taken out of these states over the years. At least 90 percent of the Mexicans who stayed in New Mexico lost their land. Their Spanish land grants are still being adjudicated.

Shouldn’t Mexicans have the opportunity to make a living in the land that we norteamericanos have plundered?

More information can be found at <www.pbs.org/kenusmexicanwar>.

Perry Treadwell
Atlanta, Ga.

Thank you, colonists

In his article, “Nairobi Impressions of a Newcomer” (FJ Jan.), David Morse makes the sweeping statement that “Much of Kenya’s so-called ‘tribalism’ is a legacy of colonial rule.” Native peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa were organized into tribes long before Europeans colonized that part of the world, and bloody tribal conflicts already were part of the landscape when they arrived. Dr. Albert Schweitzer, recipient of the 1951 Nobel Peace Prize who spent a great deal of time in the French Colony of Gabon, writes in My African Notebook (1937):

When long-resident natives of the district express to me their discontent at being ruled by the whites, I answer that without the white man they would no longer be in existence, because they either would have slaughtered each other or ended in the Pahouin [a cannibalistic tribe] cooking pots. To this they have no answer. In general—manifold and heavy as is the guilt of the white people all over the world in the matter of colonization, yet they may claim on their own behalf that to the races they have subjected they have in so far brought peace that they have put an end to the senseless wars which constantly raged among them.

Two legacies of colonial rule in former British colonies like Kenya (although often flouted) are representative democracy and the rule of law. Other colonial legacies include exposure to Western innovations such as antibiotics, electrical power, and modern modes of transport. Common languages (e.g., English and French) made communication more efficient, the rule of law made life safer and more predictable, and democratic principles gave ordinary people a say (at least in theory) after independence. Africans’ respect for the cultures of their former colonizers is such that millions have flocked to Britain, France, Spain, and Germany which are, in turn, being colonized by immigrants from the Third World.

Howard Fezell
Shepherdstown, W.Va.

News/Views launches a website

Over 28 years ago, the Atlanta (Ga.) Meeting printed the first issue of News/Views, a selection of articles on national and international issues clipped from the mainstream press. Our choices have been based on the determination to present articles reflecting the following objectives:

• A world free of war and the threat of war
• A society with equity and justice for all
• A community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled
• An Earth restored and protected for future generations

Over the years, using only word of mouth, this totally volunteer venture amassed a readership in 44 states and 5 other countries. For me, its editor, it has brought the welcome realization that we were fulfilling a need as well as forming friendships of lasting joy.

However, the rising cost of postage and

March 2009 FRIENDS JOURNAL
Healthcare not warfare

Dave pulled up to our “Eyes Wide Open—Ohio” exhibit at dawn on a Sunday morning. Dave, a Marine veteran of the April 2005 assault on Fallujah, had just finished night shift on his factory job. He walked slowly, looking at the names on the empty combat boots arranged in formation on the courthouse steps of our small town. Visibly upset, his walk is unsteady, like one weak at the knees from unexpected emotion. I go out to greet him.

“What is this about?” He is now collected, a Marine, ready to fight those who do not value his service, do not value the war he gave so much for. My friend Tom has noted that our Eyes Wide Open/Cost of War exhibit has been a safe place to talk about the war. Good: that is why these empty boots and shoes are here, to be seen and felt with open eyes and heart. Many have been angry, use one-finger gestures, yelling, “They died for you! That’s why!” Tom, Jake, and I quietly respond to these affronted ones that we are sorry they died at all, and that so many Iraqis died.

Dave’s fists are clenched but his eyes are lost. He relaxes visibly and the words come when he sees my Veterans for Peace hat, as I tell him that I had served with the U.S. Army 256th Evacuation Hospital. Granted, I saw no wartime action; but I was trained to treat the casualties. I think of Ruth gleaming in the fields.

I write Rose a month’s prescription for blood pressure medicine, one I know is on Wal-Mart’s four-dollar list. I send her home from the ED, knowing her month of meds is a temporary Band-Aid. Without insurance, no primary care doctor will see her or her husband for the ongoing care they both need. Rose and her husband can both be expected to die early from entirely preventable complications of their high blood pressure and diabetes. Before dying they will live sicker, less productive lives. The Institute of Medicine estimates that 22,000 like Rose and her husband die yearly from lack of health insurance.

The cost of the Iraq War will be well over $3 trillion. The Supplemental Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) that President Bush vetoed would have cost less than ten days of the Iraq War. I confess I am rarely at peace in meeting for worship. I am led to action, for Dave and Rose’s sake.

Brad Cotton

Brad Cotton, a full-time emergency physician and activist, is convener for Circleville (Ohio) Worship Group.

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National borders are a strange phenomenon within the fabric of human life. They can be crossed with a single step, often effortlessly or even inadvertently, yet they often separate entirely different worlds.

A little over a year ago now, I found myself sitting in a small, dry arroyo, one of the many flash flood canyons in the desert of Arizona, just a few yards below the desert floor. The moon was out, I was alone with the dog of my companion who had gone down the little ravine to look for the trail we had lost. Our moon shadows beside us, the dog and I waited. Just beyond the canyon’s edge was an immaculately painted cement block wall and beyond it, a swimming pool shimmering in the lovely light of a few lamps, and a house. Silence. I imagined myself as one of the migrants from Mexico or Central America who, night after night, journey in small groups through these immense deserts on a secret march to a “better” civilization with hopes for a better future, and money. In my mind I became one of those who had lost their way and had fallen exhausted and dehydrated, while their coyote (guide), having promised to find water and bring it back, abandoned the group to die. Hundreds perish every year on these treks. It was easy to imagine, sitting there in the perfect stillness, how, as such a migrant, I could die in this night only yards from comfortable citizens safely settled in their homes and...
without their knowledge, simply because there was a boundary. A wall. National borders, for countless people the world over and all throughout human history, have often been, and are, the boundary between life and death.

It was through my companion of the arroyo, a young Quaker who, with his wife, housed me during a two-month visit with my son's family in Phoenix, that I awoke to the concern of the U.S.-Mexico border. Active in the matter of "illegal immigration" and its humanitarian aspects, Jason had served for several summers in an organization called National summers in an organization called Friends, on the U.S. side.

Inset: The Nogales Project provides services including food, water, medical attention, and human-rights abuse documentation for as many as 800 deportees per day.

Above: This shrine was built for Josseline, a 16-year-old migrant whose body was recovered by NMD volunteers in 2008.

Right: Humane Borders Water Tanks maintained by Humane Borders, a group that works in close cooperation with No More Deaths.

No More Deaths whose volunteers, from a base camp in the desert, search the land on foot for migrants in distress and place barrels of water along the trails. Only in cases of emergency may they bring suffering persons to a hospital. Twice Jason's group had come upon corpses, once of a 16-year-old girl. Jason also devotes himself to the problem of spontaneous deportations the local sheriff conducts in the city of Phoenix.

My central experience in this cause came when Jason took me for a visit to the border town of Nogales. There I saw the wall that for some years now has been separating Nogales, U.S., from Nogales, Sonora (Mexico), extended so far to about 700 miles in sections throughout the three border states, replacing the wire fence that was much easier to cross. The wall, so far erected primarily in border towns, where the bulk of the migrants used to enter, forces them to go around it and cross in remote places without roads or water, then hike for several days, often through rugged mountains and canyons where they are less visible to the Border Patrol, to reach a U.S. town. This has greatly increased the number of people dying in the crossing. There seems much agreement that the wall does little to diminish the stream of entrants. The poverty in the South is stronger.

Left, large photo: the border wall at Nogales, on the U.S. side.

Inset: A sign on the wall in a long row, accompanied us. The sun's rays are represented as daggers. A warning to migrants? Expression of protest? The Berlin Wall comes to my mind.

In the quiet of that little arroyo I was brought to reflect that the borders inside ourselves, the fences and walls we erect in our hearts against others, have the same effect. They become a border between life and death. How such a line can be crossed, and how the wall between me and my neighbor falls, I experienced on this visit to Nogales, and it's of this I wish to tell, using the journal account I wrote the next day.

We are in a van driven by a non-English-speaking Mexican man between Phoenix and the border. Desert; desert; desert—a vast, flat plane, formerly an ocean floor, flanked on either side in the distance by a seemingly endless succession of mountain ranges in breathtaking shapes and constantly changing colors, and moving cloud shadows on their sides like dark blue patches of new denim on worn jeans. Some peaks are covered with snow. I try to imagine the migrants walking through these landscapes this very moment, tiny figures lost in the gigantic space.

After about three hours, we suddenly are in Nogales: piles of cars; crowds of people milling hectically. A fast current of walkers with large shopping bags picks us up and channels us toward a turnstile flashing in the sun, and we are on the other side. No one has checked our papers. "Nobody cares who goes into Mexico," my companion murmurs at my side. "It's the other way they give you trouble."

All at once, we are in a radically different world. A small paved road takes us directly along the Wall, lined densely on the other side by tiny hotels and shops, many of them farmacias where medications are sold at a fraction of the U.S. cost. I'm surprised at the wall's shabby look: old, fatigue-colored strips of metal tightly joined together—in their second use, Jason explains, having served already in Vietnam to help war planes land on the soft floor of burnt-down forests. A reminder of the border's growing militarization.

Gripping images and symbols of the desert deaths, painted on the wall in a long row, accompany us. The sun's rays are represented as daggers. A warning to migrants? Expression of protest? The Berlin Wall comes to my mind.

Lots of men stand around idly, children run and play, dogs are straying. Jason's long legs reach out: he's anxious to get to the place where No More Deaths has installed a primitive aid station, primarily to receive deportees from the United States. Despite the guards, flood lights, and sensors on the U.S. side of the wall, many turn around without delay for another possible death march, or, often, to be caught on their way by the Border Patrol and returned. Many have several such treks to look back on. Some, Jason says, even risk climbing the 14-foot wall, its top portion bent toward Mexico.

I don't want to go so fast. Assaulted and overwhelmed by a wave of disturbing impressions, I need to stand and wait to find some ground in myself. The poverty presenting itself is beyond anything I have seen. Jason is surprised by my reaction. "That's rich!" he exclaims.

"Nogales is rich! Don't you see? These houses are painted!" Some day, he says, he wants to show me the colonias, slums
built of cardboard and corrugated metal, grown up in the last 30 years when Nogales, Sonora, became the site of large U.S. factories—the so-called maquiladoras—taking advantage of the cheap labor provided by the stream of young people flooding up from the South.

Every now and then I notice a flat iron grate built into the road. It's hollow underneath. “That's where the tunnel kids live,” Jason explains. “Whole communities of them, orphans often; they have their own world down there. Living on crime. We know some of them by name, they come to our place for handouts.”

I feel something hard forming in me. “What are the tunnels for?” I ask, with unmoved voice, leaving the children aside.

“Flash floods. To keep the city from being flooded in hard rains.” The more Jason explains, the less I want to understand. I glare at a mountain of garbage blocking one of the tunnel entries.

Finally, we arrive at No More Deaths—a small, flat plot of hard dirt near the wall. I notice a group of white people from the United States with travel bags, led by a white-haired woman—a volunteer, it turns out, of the organization Borderlinks, which seeks to bring U.S. citizens to the border to see for themselves. They are high school teachers from North Carolina who wish to inform themselves firsthand about the circumstances of the many Latino children in their school. They are here for a week. They will stay with Mexican families tonight. I'm impressed.

I notice the face of the Borderlinks guide: an open friendliness coming toward us, a warmth, light and tender. The constraint around my heart relaxes a little: I feel again the way that is open. No wall between this woman and us, no wall between her and the people the group has come to see.

Only then do I notice the men who singly stand around on the little lot, of dark skin and small size, clearly formed by a hard, rural life in poverty. Some are wrapped in blankets; the air in early February is ice cold. On the far side of the lot, on top of a rough clay wall, more men, similar to the ones below, are standing between parked old cars. “Who are these?”

“These are the coyotes,” Jason explains. “We get along with them fine. Most are nice guys.” However, he warns me not to go there. “They don't like it. We keep apart. They have their place, we have ours.”

When Jason hears that the drinking water on the site has run out, he storms off and after a long time returns with his arms full of heavy bottles. While I wait for him, freezing in my winter coat, I secretly accuse him for not having made me bring warmer clothes. I refuse to let the situation touch me, clinging to my needs and “rights.”

We enter the large trailer marked “No More Deaths,” staffed by a Mexican volunteer who, Jason later informs me, came to California at age 13 and, about a year ago, was separated from his wife and children by deportation. I notice the open expression of his dark, deeply sad face. Jason gives him the red meat he has bought along the way in one of the tiny shops, because, he said, the man has been very sick and needs better food. We hear that through some local political change the aid station has fallen under the authority of men who are in cooperation with the smuggling cartel controlling the area; the donations for the needy, blankets, shoes, water, food are now being taken away—stolen, Jason says. He and his friend fear that the station is in jeopardy. Perhaps it can be transferred to a group of sympathizing, feisty nuns nearby. Jason (who currently is in nursing school to be more effective on the border) makes arrangements for medical help for the volunteer. Then we enter a large, open tent next to the trailer where some men are boiling coffee on a primitive gas burner and passing it out to others standing around.

Here is where I have my conversion.

On a chair sits a young man, a kid almost, with close-cropped, deep black hair and narrow brown eyes. His upper body is wrapped in a blanket; he is shivering with the cold. As we stand before him, Jason reaches, almost inadvertently, for an old crumpled jacket lying in a corner and drops it discreetly over the refugee’s knees. We ask for his story. He has lived in Phoenix for the past five years with his family; today he was picked up at his place of work, without warning, and deported as he was in a van with others.

I suddenly realize I have not believed Jason's stories of the sheriff's crackdown in that city—not viscerally.

“What’s next?” I ask the young man, in alarm. It is no longer an interviewer's question, or that of an interested tourist. The “wall” is suddenly gone. This is my concern, as if he were my child.

He says he has relatives in Nogales and is waiting to be picked up. I'm relieved. “What about the others who came with you?” “They went back.” Gone with one or two of the coyotes across the divide, on another long, dangerous trek, in the freezing night.

The absurdity of it all is too much. But there is a humanity in it. Human life that is constantly pushing, pushing to seek its way. To live. “Keep on, Jason,” something whispers in me. “Don't be deflected.” He has often told me about feelings of discouragement in his work.

We greet several other men in the tent. Humble handshakes, rough peasant hands. One man, somewhat older, with a very dark, grieved face, tells me he was deported over a year ago from the States after many years there and cannot visit his children. Later Jason tells me this man, washed up in Nogales, joined No More Deaths, working faithfully in this purpose, but eventually he crossed over to the coyotes. “To do what?” I ask.

“I don’t know. We don’t ask questions like that,” Jason smiles. “It’s considered bad form in the world of organized crime to ask questions.” He says the man now lives with another woman and her children; he got a house. He needed money. Who can blame him? He's a nice guy.

On our way back to the turnstile

Continued on page 36

March 2009 FRIENDS JOURNAL.
Listen by Burton Housman

Let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the Nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and for his orphan.

—Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address, Saturday, March 4, 1865

Nearly a century and a half after he said them, Lincoln's words call us once more. But the nature of combat has changed. The line between combatants and civilians is blurred. The range of weapons exceeds what the eye can see. Even heavy, high-speed vehicles are little protection against improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) aimed at their most vulnerable spots. IEDs, cheap and easily triggered by a cell phone, have enough power to leave vehicle-size craters in the ground while mixing infectious contaminants into the cauldron of injury.

Unlike the huge numbers lost in the warfare of the last century when, beginning in World War I, millions of young men simply never came back to their homes, these days many more U.S. combatants return from war. More and more of those with terrible wounds—lost limbs, traumatic brain injuries, guilt that cannot be shed, a lost sense of distinguishing right from wrong—now survive. The press keeps track of fatalities; however, swifter responses of more skilled medical care mean that those with life-altering injuries far outnumber those who die. Whereas some 40 percent of those wounded in World War II died and some 30 percent died in Vietnam, in Iraq the fatalities have been reduced to 10 percent.

We are desperately learning how to bind up wounds. Our capacity for averting death far exceeds our ability to restore to health.

A woman who might once have been a mourning widow—but ultimately available for another fulfilling relationship—may find herself now at a military hospital in a strange, distant, expensive city waiting to welcome home a mutilated stranger. She is starting an unanticipated career as an unpaid, overworked, distraught, lifelong caregiver in a life that now is in a shambles. Her likely preparation: little education, a baby on the way, and all the wisdom of 20 years.

Children are orphaned, but far more often they have a father they do not recognize. These discoveries don't always come at homecoming. Often they may be delayed for months, disrupting with unexplained behavior what everyone had
expected would be a prolonged but calm adjustment. Awareness is slowly sinking in, prompted by the invisible wounds of acute combat stress that still abide 40 years after the Vietnam War. And combat still vomits forth more wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Combat has changed; the trauma has not.

Time—that we once thought heals all wounds—doesn’t.

The senior medevac dispatcher at San Diego’s Naval Medical Center, where the combat wounded arrive from Iraq and Afghanistan, says: You don’t get back the one you sent. The family members of survivors add: You don’t know how to live with him when he gets here.

And they’re coming. They’re on the way. Many are here. An estimated 20 percent of the 1.7 million men and women who have rotated through Iraq and Afghanistan are back already—or coming back to a land that may no longer know them. We are talking about a third of a million individuals coming back to settle down among us. That’s only so far; more are on the way. Are we going to say that receiving them is someone else’s job?

PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), made familiar to us by its frequent appearance in the press, is the latest term for what was called soldier’s heart 150 years ago, shell shock 100 years ago, and battle fatigue 40 years ago. But PTSD is a stigmatizing term soldiers and Marines absolutely hate, reject, and deny. Why? It is laden with the term “disorder,” implying a permanent maladjustment that is incurable and permanently debilitating.

Even worse, the term is capable of implying an innate condition completely unrelated to combat. The preferable term to replace it is combat stress injury. Our knowledge of stress has changed sharply and “injury” retains the promise of some recovery. If you can’t do anything else, at least refuse to use the term PTSD and say, instead, combat stress injury.

**Combat**

It is almost impossible to overstate the complex emotional toll of combat for those who have not experienced it. Here is what I have learned from two years of close association with returning wounded patients and their families:

The combat veteran who comes home cannot look at daily life in the same way he once did. He has looked death in the eye and the stare abides, it still haunts. You’re back. You came by medevac helicopter from a combat zone. Then you stopped at a world-class hospital in Landschul, Germany, until you were stabilized for the journey. Following that came a long trip by air transport to one of three receiving hospitals in the U.S., likely in a strange city far from home. Perhaps the IED, which lifted

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**Cure**

You can’t say post traumatic stress disorder in a poem although said one way it scans trochaic.

But you can say terror. You can say hate.

Simon went to Iraq to save democracy and thought he had. The families served him tea.

Kissed him good-bye. Until every street became unsafe. Every Iraqi willing to kill. Don’t, don’t Simon thought.

I’ll have to kill you first and did.

When he fell apart, he went to therapy, then college.

But no one said, Join the Muslim Student Association.

No one said, Tell them who you are, ask questions, get there early, hold the door.

play Frisbee on their team, organize their S-K, take walks with Yusef the Iraqi in the dark by the river, talk.

Simon took Yusef home to Michigan on spring break. They looked at video footage from the war days. Just a bunch of guys in fatigues joking around in down time.

What’s the difference between a dead skunk in the road and a dead Iraqi? Answer: Skid marks in front of the skunk.

Simon looked at Yusef, looked at his eyes. Yusef looked back, forgiving, said, Yeh, that’s war.

Maryhelen Snyder lives in Vienna, Va.

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Maryhelen Snyder lives in Vienna, Va.
your Humvee off the ground and threw you out, killed those on either side of you. Maybe the person you respected most in your unit was mortally wounded and, despite excellent care on the way, died in your arms. You were spared. Others more experienced or even more useful to your unit than you died. You didn’t.

Or you may have fired at the shadowy figure in the direction of the shots aimed at killing you—only to find later that the target you hit was a ten-year-old girl scurrying for cover.

You are still alive yourself only because you were extremely watchful. All the time. On patrol, and off. There was no nuance about the life-or-death interval that you have survived. Nothing was “a little dangerous” or “maybe okay.” Everything was either black or white, friend or foe. Staying alive depended on this. Without hypervigilance—constant, highly intensive observation—you were lost. That vigilance kept you alive. You don’t want to let go of it. You can’t.

The simplest hint of danger overlooked could mean death. You might endure a mutilating injury; a jaw shot off, a knee shattered; you were lefthanded, but that arm and hand are gone, or even worse, useless; or an eye lost forever along with the depth perception so essential for vigorous physical activity. Disfigurement—for a 20-year-old perhaps more feared than death—could await you if you relaxed.

This adrenaline-fed state, once started, does not shut down easily. Empathy has been switched off. The emotions by which you identify with others—their needs, their helplessness, their vulnerability—have been freeze-dried and set aside. Yet the adrenaline that feeds this elation and keeps it alive is still as present as the air you breathe. You no longer have control of this energizing voltage galvanizing your system.

Daily life at home, meanwhile, now seems as bland as oatmeal seven days straight compared to your favorite breakfast. The past peak experience of adrenaline pumping in a life-or-death situation simply cannot be matched.

And here’s the catch: this sense of aliveness and power from the past has no connection with now, back home, the present moment.

These contrasts don’t become clear immediately, but often become so only after a prolonged time of reflection. This could take years. Meanwhile the state of hypervigilance persists, as does an outrageously vivid sense of justice.

These youngsters—19, 20, 21—have touched the “third rail” of life, surviving the voltage and current usually fatal for us. That core experience from the past is still immediate—and here right now. Compared to it, daily life pales, doesn’t engage. Daily life’s lack of “juice” craves additions you have to provide.

Back then, there was no time for grief, for apology, for forgiveness. Not only was it not possible, it could have been fatal to try to take time for it. There may appear to be time now to “catch up,” but the deeply instilled habits crucial for survival still leave no room for anything else.

Most of those who have known acute combat stress will never admit it, never ask for help. Instead, a combat veteran may come to you through another person—a loved one, the relative of a colleague, a family member of a casual acquaintance. The first healing step is with that contact person; the messenger needs and deserves help.

Further, it’s virtually impossible to overstate the strength of bonds formed among comrades facing combat together. We all know how much even a few words—stand down, have a look, give them a hug—mean to a wounded veteran, just returned to the family he loves, to decide abruptly to leave for a time to go see and help a buddy with whom he faced death and who now calls for help.

**Stress**

Recognition of these invisible wounds has helped provoke a rethinking of the meaning of stress itself. It is now assessed on a continuum of severity of stimulus, recognizing that everyone faces stress, and measurement by degrees opens the way not only to recovery but to the hope that makes it possible.

Stress injuries are literal injuries that involve a loss of centeredness and a loss of function. Repeated samples, tests, and reports show that 20 percent of those deployed will show its effect. Stress injuries do provoke a protective healing response, but the injuries cannot be undone. They include moral injuries composed of remorse, guilt, shame, disorientation, and alienation from the remainder of the moral community.

It is important not to confuse combat stress injury with traumatic brain injury (TBI)—commonly known as concussion: the injury resulting from a powerful blow to the skull that moves and shocks the brain enclosed. Their symptoms often partially overlap. Combat
stress injury symptoms of acute combat stress, however, are distinguished from TBI (although both might have occurred) by avoidance, emotional numbing, and hyper-emotional-arousal symptoms.

Injury

What are the injuries caused by combat stress? It upsets assumptions and beliefs about safety, fairness, and identity. It endangers one’s sense of control. Life is over or can’t last much longer. The future isn’t years, it’s days or hours— even less. We and our world become strangers for those with acute combat stress as the trauma threatens the very essentials that make up the self.

Acute combat stress makes a victim vulnerable to the events of daily life that can trigger recall of the trauma. A taste, a fragrance, the first few notes of a popular song can quickly transport any of us back to a previous time. In this manner, a shape, a configuration, a smell, a sound can send the combat stress victim back to the warfare setting he thought he’d left behind.

Further, the healing capacities of the body stimulate the repeated recalls and reliving of the event as an atavistic attempt to “fix” or “repair” something from the past, something that remains broken.

Injury may take the form of guilt, which could have many sources: responsibility for accidental U.S. or civilian casualties, driving on without stopping after a pedestrian stepped in front of a military vehicle, ignoring and leaving behind—as a mission required—an accidentally wounded civilian, violation of a personal pact or agreement to cover the back of another, being the sole survivor of an explosion that killed your superiors and your friends.

The experience that emerges from those who share with each other their tales of combat is that healing may require not weeks or months, but years. In this complex and persistent mix, fear and anxiety can combine with anger, rage, guilt, shame, sadness, and loss resulting in a deep sense of betrayal, shattering of beliefs, extreme disconnectedness, and acute moral injury. Character that we may have thought well established faces threats to assumptions about right and wrong, decision-making, and acting out. The very sense of connectedness to anyone other than one’s unit is under assault.

The injuries don’t go away. Forty years after the Vietnam War, a third of those who knew combat still have combat stress injury. The Veterans Administration reports that the average interval between exposure and seeking treatment is ten years. (That’s not a misprint: ten years.)

A summary of the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic Symptomatic Manual’s (DSM-IV) criteria for PTSD (which we’re all trying, instead, to call combat stress injury) reveals these essential features:

- Exposure to an event or threatened death or serious injury with a response of intense fear, helplessness, or horror
- Persistent re-experiencing of the event, avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, and a numbing of general responsiveness
- Continuing symptoms of increased emotional arousal not present before the trauma

In a military culture compounded of honor, courage, and duty, the stigma associated with admission of such symptoms or seeking treatment for them has overwhelming power. The label PTSD, especially the D for disorder and its implication of permanent weakness, occasions widespread fear among wounded soldiers and Marines—that they will never gain the useful civilian employment they will seek after discharge if PTSD ever appears in their personnel records. The armed services work hard to remove this stigma, but it remains alive and vital in the grapevines that so often guide decisions.

Toward Recovery: Our Role

There are not enough professionals to respond to the number of patients. The rest of us will find ourselves in positions of potential response. The strongest element we can provide outside military circles to aid recovery is social support. That is the case if we can be nonjudgmental—if we’re willing to listen, perhaps we can establish a trusting and caring rapport that makes it safe for a combat veteran to talk. Nevertheless, we will not be comfortable with what we hear. We may wish we had never offered to listen. We will be sorely tempted to make the session far shorter than what the speaker craves. But there is a connectedness that arises from non-judgmental intimacy. Putting words to stress can make it more manageable, making it possible for us to learn to manage it.

Indeed, if we can recognize the spiritual presence of witnesses in our own lives, we can work to summon this forth in others as a healing presence. We know there are persons and historical figures whose guidance and affirmation have made us who we are. These 20-something valiant young bundles of courage may not have had occasion to review the enormous power of those others who have shaped them.

For years we have built habits about feeling helpless and hopeless in regard to this war. Such habits are terribly hard to change. If you feel helpless to care for those who have “borne the battle,” remember that helpless is precisely the hole you have to climb out of to start.

Helplessness has three great allies. One is sloth, right out of the lineup of the seven deadly sins. Its motto: tomorrow trumps today. The next is communalization. Just about everyone we know feels just as helpless as we do. The herd instinct abides. Number three is that pervasive conviction framed as the question, what difference can one person make?

Here are three obstacles I have found that we have to avoid. First, we have to stop thinking about ourselves. Second, we have to stop thinking about what we cannot do. Third, we have to hold at bay the fear we naturally feel about stepping into the unknown.

Stop doing these and you will be
What Not to Do

As for language, here are some things not to say: Talking about “support of our troops”; “Did you kill anybody?”; “Time to move on”; “Let’s try to get back to normal” (Life is forever changed, forget any return to “normal”); “I don’t think we have time to keep going on this, let’s take it up another time”; “Win some, lose some”; “I know what you mean”; “How could you possibly have done something like that?”; “Everything’s going to be okay”; “How many times do I have to tell you? You shouldn’t have gone.”

Finding Meaning

All of us add meaning to our lives by organizing our experiences into narratives. We all need to do this about our life trajectories. Those injured by combat stress injury weave narratives that often reveal a loss of faith. Over half of interviewed combat veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan report this loss. Over half feel God is punishing them for sins or lack of spirituality. Halfness is overwhelming. Research shows that over three-fourths have not forgiven themselves or others. Rage and anger from combat stress injury is often directed not at others, but at God.

David W. Foy, the respected director of a 60-day residential PTSD treatment program, reports that major spiritual issues needing to be handled include these:

Suffering: Why does God allow the innocent to suffer?
Forgiveness: How can we forgive, that is, manage to give up the right to resentment when we or others have been harmed?
Meaning: What can I do to strengthen perception and interpretation to shape my story and make meaning of my life?

Us

The combat isn’t over. The numbers injured are greater than we know. Those returning are going to be closer to us than we realize, through friends, associates, even family. The injuries are deep, sinister, and lasting. The wounds fester, bleed, and infect. They’re invisible but have drastic power. If you are called to strive on to finish the work we are in, remember that it’s our war, not their war. Those who have gone into battle have done so to faithfully carry our orders from officials we have put in office and kept there. Whatever your rage about the waste and carnage of this war, those who have borne the battle don’t deserve the blame for what they did in the service of our country—our country.

Finishing the work we are in will probably take at least the next two generations. Nothing you or I do will achieve anything quickly. Reminders of the decision to undertake this war and the triumphs of advanced medical practice will be among us for the next 50 years.

My fear is that we are pitifully un-prepared to face the existence for a couple of generations of many walking monuments to the folly of this war among us, so that the war and its consequences will retreat to the background of our collective consciousness. I fear that the presence of apparently able-bodied men and women unable to perform basic hygiene, schedule-keeping, memory-recording, and chore obligation tasks at work or at home will make them the target of resentment, disdain, and blame.

The unpalatable truth that I didn’t dare write about in my earlier essay (“Unpalatable Truths,” Fj Sept. 2007)
Learnings From My Father

I believe in the culture of peace. I believe in daily peacebuilding on a personal, institutional, national, and international level. I believe in regular, not random, acts of kindness. I believe in the power of teachers and students to be peacebuilders.

In March 2006, as a middle school teacher in an independent school outside Philadelphia, I was on sabbatical. Convinced that we everyday people are the key to creating a culture of peace in the world, I was preparing to travel halfway around the world to share my ideas on peacebuilding with teachers and students in Japan, China, Canada, and Denmark.

In many ways, this journey of thousands of miles started at home with my father, Fred. From my earliest memories, I can see images of my father in uniform. There were the tiny photographs (fading even in my childhood) that he shot in Italy in World War II. There he was holding up the Leaning Tower of Pisa, or posing with a buddy in a foxhole. In my memory, I can hear the stories, often funny, of how he and a buddy jumped waist-deep into a pigpen under orders to take cover, of getting stranded up a telephone pole when he was stringing wire as his jeep buddies sped away under German fire. My father told these stories over and over again, and they always ended with his loud belly laughs, as if he were trying to persuade us that the war had been fun.

But, I also hear the screaming. My father screamed in his sleep often, sometimes nightly, especially after watching a war movie. “Don’t let him watch it,” my mother would plead. “He’ll fight the war all night if he does.” But my dad always wanted to watch; it was as if he had to. He paid for each viewing with refreshed images in his nightmares. He would awaken my mom as he kicked and twitched, flailed and yelled, working the covers off his bruised and purple legs, battle-scarred and discolored from freezing in the Italian Alps in the winter of 1944.

My father had written my mother every day during the war, and we have over 1,000 letters she sent him, full of love, loneliness, and longing, but missing any mention of war’s horrors. He never talked seriously about the war until he was in his 80s, when my sixth-grade son conducted a video interview for a school project. Again, my dad told the funny stories, but suddenly, after two hours, he got serious, calling for his Army-issue Bible, a battered leather-covered copy that he had kept in his pocket every day of the war. He read the 23rd Psalm aloud. “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.” I read that verse every day in battle,” my father confided, looking straight at the camera, telling the truth even though he knew we could not fully understand it:

War is hell. That first battle was my baptism by fire. I was one of the walking wounded. ... Those times weren’t a vacation and it wasn’t a game. There were thousands of dead people lying around—not just one—but thousands. ... There were dead soldiers everywhere. ... War is hell. I don’t wish it on my best friends or my worst enemy. May my children, and my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren be spared from it, forever. Amen.

“Okay,” my father concluded. “Now you can shut off the camera.” Unfortunately, we couldn’t shut off the war in his mind.

The Secret World of War

The combat veteran lives in a world apart. The civilian co-woker, friend, wife, husband, child, parent—knows nothing about this world. Aware of our ignorance, countless poets and writers have tried to translate the soldier’s and veteran’s inner life to the rest of us. As I went searching for peacebuilders during my sabbatical year, I encountered two of them early in the process, at Wilmington College’s Westheimer Peace Symposium. Contemporary war correspondent Chris Hedges writes compellingly about war’s horrors in two books, War is a Force that Gives Us Meaning, and What Every Person Should Know About War. His work does much to help ordinary citizens like me understand the realities—not the myth—of war. Here is an excerpt from a newspaper commentary by him, “The Myth and Reality of War” (Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 18, 2005):

War, it must be recognized, even for those who support the conflict ... distorts and damages those sent to fight it. No one walks away from prolonged exposure to such violence unscathed, although not all come back disturbed. Our leaders mask the reality of war with abstract words of honor, duty, glory, and the ultimate sacrifice. These words, obscene and empty in the midst of combat, hide the fact that war is venal, brutal, disgusting.

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Learnings from a Sabbatical

A sabbatical is an opportunity for a teacher to do research in a field of interest, away from the demands of the classroom. For my sabbatical during the school year 2005/06, I researched, wrote, created the website <www.teachforpeace.org>, and taught and traveled overseas. My field of interest was and continues to be peace education.

Peace education aims to change an existing belief system—acceptance of war as a method of solving international problems—to a new paradigm—one in which human rights, social justice, sustainable development, and creative di-

- I learned that the modern, built-up city of Hiroshima, Japan, with its parks, shops, and skyscrapers, still has the eerie feeling of the dead, those who were incinerated by the atomic bomb. But life goes on. People work, shop, and picnic; children play and laugh.
- I learned that hibakusha, a-bomb survivors, speak every day to groups of school children from middle schools all over Japan, about the perils of nuclear weapons and the horrors of war.
- I learned from one hibakusha, Michiko Yamoake-san, that she would keep speaking to group after group of children even though she was ill, reasoning, “If I speak to 100 children, and I reach just one... that one might make a difference.”
- I learned that if I also speak up, and if even one student feels moved, that is a good thing.

Sue Cannon with Japanese public middle school students, Toyohashi, Japan

As a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, and a teacher, I want to know why we are allowing this as a global society. I have not raised my two sons to kill other mothers’ sons. I am not teaching diplomacy are promoted as effective paths to national and international security. Peace education helps young people see themselves as integral parts of one human family and as capable actors for positive social change on a local and global stage. In short, peace education helps kids to think, care, and act.

Upon my return, it was important for me to share my thoughts and experiences with the middle and upper school students at my school. Many were inspired, referring to my ideas in later talks of their own. Here are some of the things I told them:

John Crawford, an Iraq War veteran, was a senior in college when his Army Reserves unit was sent to Iraq. An accidental soldier, he published his war writing in his book The Last True Story I’ll Ever Tell. Reading it and talking with John, I understood more clearly the transformation from student to soldier he had undergone. “They wanted me to act like a man, but I was feeling like a little boy,” he said. “I never wanted to hate anyone; it just sort of happens that way in a war.”

After my father’s death, I asked my 90-year-old mother, “How did Dad go through all he did and still carry on a normal life?” “He fought the war every night,” she replied, and turned away. He wasn’t alone. Millions of veterans of combat, soldier and civilian alike, are still living with the demons of war both in their daily lives and in their nightmares. And every day, in numerous countries around the world, more men, women, and children are becoming living and dead casualties of war, military and civilian alike.

As a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, and a teacher, I want to know why we are allowing this as a global society. I have not raised my two sons to kill other mothers’ sons. I am not teaching
pressed throughout their school careers, having to take exam after exam, and worrying about getting into college, just like my U.S. students.

And I learned that once they get there, they feel worried about getting jobs and good houses, and have no time to worry about issues such as equality and peace.

From these students, and others in China, I learned that it is important to teach my students how to balance their lives so they can think about important issues, while doing the things they need to do to succeed personally.

• I learned in Toyohashi, Japan, that private school students in Sakaragoake Middle School could choose a global education track that would enable them to travel and learn about countries around the world for the next five years of their schooling. This was their school’s answer to the horrors of Japanese military aggression during World War II.

• I learned that in Japan, once the home of innovative peace education, nationalism is on the rise. Teachers who buck country-wide proposals to teach “patriotism” in Japanese schools find their job security threatened. Teachers who refuse to rise for the singing of the national anthem, for example, have been fined, suspended, or sent by their school districts to distant schools as Japan begins to remilitarize.

• Knowing how quickly patriotism turns to nationalism and then to militarism makes many educators—like me—apprehensive. I determined that I would teach teachers in the United States, and other countries I visit, about ways to teach for peace and an inclusive commitment to local, national, and global citizenship during our daily lessons, even at the risk of losing popularity or job security.

• I learned in Toyohashi, Japan, that artists and educators can work together on peace projects, even when they cannot understand each other’s languages, to create beautiful works of art for peace.

• I learned how inspiring the work of a small group can be to others. One Japanese artist wrote, “You taught us how to express our own opinion. You gave me energy. We have to start some action like you. The Toyohashi Peace Event was a great lesson for us.”

• I learned in Xinglong County, China, how comforting it feels to be treated to wonderful food and caring guidance in a new country, and that hospitality is a gracious talent at which my Chinese hosts were masters. I vowed to be a better host when people visit my home, my school, and my country.

• I learned in Xinglong County, in Beijing, Shanghai, and countless cities in China, how curious many Chinese people are about people in the United States, and that they will open their homes and schools to meet these visitors and make new friends.

• I learned that Chinese middle school students can be just as energetic, noisy, fun, smart, kind, and naughty as my U.S. middle school students, and I felt at home teaching them.

• I learned how important it is for people in the United States to learn about Chinese culture, history, and development, and that the future of the world may well be found in the quality of the relationships among these two peoples. I made a website to help U.S. students learn about life in China, and another one to help Chinese learn about life in the United States. Many of my students are pictured on the website, and teachers and students all over the world have enjoyed their writing and art work about their hopes and dreams.

• I also learned that many people who

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A spiritual journey is such a personal thing. I was hardly aware I was on one until I had traveled far from the starting gate. I think there is a difference between a spiritual journey and a religious one, and I have been on both. For years I assumed they were the same thing and at times they are. For me, the experience defines the essence of each. But the experience also separates them.

Religion provides an established belief system complete with a calendar, and rituals prescribing what to do and what not to do, what to think and what to accept, how to pray and what to pray for. Often there is a special place dedicated to worship: great cathedrals, intimate chapels, shrines, temples, and mosques that all are dedicated to the glory of God. There are definitions of God, great schools, and incredibly beautiful music. Enwined in all this, there is the drama. In many ways, modern Christianity has become a big business and great theater; it has moved a long way from going into a small room and closing the door in order to pray. On the other hand, the spiritual experience is simpler and unscripted, often serendipitous. It does not require a system of doctrinal edicts or rituals, only the openness to welcome it.

When I was small, I attended a Lutheran Sunday school in the neighborhood and began to learn Christianity. This would qualify as my first religious experience. I loved the Bible stories, the simple hymns and prayers, the candles and stained glass windows in the church. After a few years, I wanted our family to attend church together, “like everybody else.” I prevailed upon them until they gave in, and we began to attend the Unitarian Church of my paternal grandmother. That was fine. I enjoyed it very much, but I actually missed hearing the familiar hymns and the stories I had learned from the Lutherans, such as the ones about Jesus and the lost sheep, Noah’s ark, and Daniel in the lion’s den. So I was very eager to accept an invitation to accompany my Presbyterian girlfriends to their big church a block down the road. I loved it and attended faithfully. After Presbyterian church school, I would walk down Collingwood Avenue to the Unitarian Church and sit with my family in my grandmother’s front row pew. I was about 10 at the time. When I was 12, I announced that I had joined the catechism class with my girlfriends and soon joined the church. From that time on I was happy as a very active Presbyterian, and the family followed me there.

This is not to say that I believed every word of doctrine or creed; I did not. During some of the overly long sermons, I would let my mind and spirit drift up into the stained glass and meditate. Today I would say that I was going to my own meeting for worship. For quite a while, we went to church as a family. This was very important to me then, as it is today.

Of course there were other influenc-
es. Nature and music have always resonated deep within me from the time I was very young. My response is sensual, emotional, and spiritual. Then I went off to college where I tried on atheism and ended up as an agnostic. There were many other churches to try, religions to study, philosophies to ponder, and in the calm of nature, I’d try to sort it all out. Eventually I settled on the Presbyterians and was active in every aspect of the church: choir, fellowship, women’s circle, Bible study, youth work. I did it all. Bill and I were married there and had our children baptized. My experience was largely religious and intellectual. I loved it.

The times I would categorize as spiritual were nearly always private and personal. They would occur at the occasional retreat during long periods of silence, or they would appear as little epiphanies, totally unexpected. They would unite two souls in an intimate moment. They would etch forever in my memory the perfection of a single snowflake, the sounds of the loons in the north woods, and countless shore birds facing the wind. I would be enveloped in a sense of awe and gratitude that would give me the deep inner peace of knowing it was all part of God’s handiwork. I was and am drawn to things mystical.

In 1968, after we had moved to Florida, we intended to transfer our membership to one of the Presbyterian churches in town. I, having signed on as an elementary school room mother, accepted an invitation to Sarasota Meet-

ing. This had come about when my younger daughter’s second grade teacher and the other room mother, who were both Quakers, had invited me to attend meeting for worship. I went out of curiosity, unaware that I was still seeking, but I found myself settling in to my first silent meeting for worship as if I had finally come home. I loved it from the start and have never looked back. It has changed my life.

The silence spoke to me, but in addition, I could unite with the testimonies of Peace, Justice, Simplicity, and Equality. Within the meeting there were both very Christ-centered Friends and broad-minded liberals who were universalists. So my own looser brand of Christianity was welcome. I loved the concept of continuing revelation and the immediacy of God within.

That what I believe is according to the Light that is in me at this moment, makes sense to me, and as George Fox admonished, I shall endeavor to “walk cheerfully over the Earth answering that of God in every one.” Because of this standard, I am more able to accept others’ expressions of their faith, as being where they are at this moment on their own journeys. This is relevant and accessible Christianity. And to use a contemporary concept, it is interactive and profoundly spiritual.

About two years following the first visit, after reading voraciously, and experiencing both the local meeting and yearly meeting, I applied for membership and was accepted.

Finding Quakerism meant finding a spiritual religion I could call my own. Friends’ way has brought peace to my soul. I am still on my journey but it is not so solitary and I am now more grounded. I’ve met companions, fellow seekers along the way. The depth and dimension of my experience is ever more spiritual. This simple form of Christian worship is authentic, pure, and honest. It is direct and intimate. It satisfies my needs for both individual meditation and corporate worship. Stripped of the trappings of ritual, it is deeply powerful, and I find that I live it both consciously and unconsciously. I seek to live it daily, not just on Sunday mornings.

I realize that in telling this story I have omitted one of, if not the most important, spiritual experiences of my life. So in all honesty, I feel a need to include it in this account. For the past 26 years, I have had the great good fortune to be active in a 12-step program. Because of its spiritual basis, its openness and honesty, and my Quaker experience, I took to it like a duck to water. As a result, I have experienced what a real spiritual community can be, and what a real spiritual connection feels like. I discovered the shift from intellectualizing to spirituality, and how to make it. I know what it is to practice the presence of a higher power within a committed group of fellow travelers from a wide variety of religious and nonreligious backgrounds.

We accept one another as we are. I know the gift of a safe place where we all speak the same language, and are trusting and trustworthy. I have been sustained by a love and support that is reciprocal, solicited or unsolicited as determined in the moment. We have learned and grown individually and together through sharing our gratitude, our experience, strength, and hope. This is also where I learned acceptance, where I became able to forgive. Acceptance and forgiveness are the keys to serenity and inner peace. Profoundly spiritual, they are all about doing, not merely reading or talking about it. It’s about an action and the practice of a changed way of thinking. It is very simple and extremely powerful. It is akin to what we call transforming power in AVP, the Alternative to Violence Project. It is life on a new plane.

Many Friends meetings are capable of achieving such true community, and from what I have heard, many do. At this point, I must stress that I am certainly not suggesting that we become a 12-step group. They have their own place. However, we ought to reflect on many of these positive aspects in our care and concern for one another. My own meeting has shown glimpses and possibilities from time to time in the past, so I know it can happen. All that is needed is a little intentionality and letting go. It is trust in that of God. Maybe we risk that and flourish from now on. This is my prayer.
Mercer Street Friends (MSF) in Trenton, New Jersey, turned 50 in 2008, a milestone that for people typically marks a time of pausing, taking stock of what’s been accomplished and what is yet to come. Though it is fitting to reflect on MSF’s impressive first half-century, there has certainly been no slowing down for this vibrant human care agency. As energetic and compassionate today as it was when it was founded, it offers an array of programs that were not even dreamt of when the Mercer Street Friends Center first opened its doors to the neighborhood. What has been, and what will remain a constant, is an understanding of the considerable needs of the greater Trenton and Mercer County area, together with a dedication to providing services to meet them.

Mercer Street Friends began with the healing of an old wound. After over a century in which the Religious Society of Friends was split into two major branches—the Orthodox and Hicksite Friends—the rift was mended in the mid-1950s. Two Trenton meetinghouses were no longer needed, but because of its adjacent burial ground, the unused 1857 Orthodox meetinghouse on Mercer Street was unlikely to attract a buyer. Members of Trenton Meeting, concerned by the decay of the Mill Hill neighborhood in which the meetinghouse was located, decided to open a community center.

The first order of business was to make the old meetinghouse suitable for its new purpose. Privies made way for modern conveniences like running water and a heating system, and the interior was reconfigured to house classes and other gatherings. Following the model of Friends Neighborhood Guild in Philadelphia, the young Mercer Street Friends Center became a place where Trenton’s forgotten people, many of them recent immigrants, could learn the skills to succeed. Donors and volunteers, especially members of Trenton and Princeton meetings, provided both resources and time to the fledgling center.

Many of MSF’s early programs were specifically for women and children. Classes ranging from nutrition to English were offered, as was a babysitting coop for working parents. Woodworking skills were taught in the basement with donated equipment. Clothing and food were given to those in need. The Friends Homemaker Service provided job opportunities for local women, and friends of the center who had houses with swimming pools opened their hearts and their homes to an informal summer program that gave urban children a safe recreation option. When neighbors expressed concern that young people were playing and hanging out in the center’s cemetery, the practical Quakers laid the headstones flat and paved them over, making way for a playground and, eventually, the garden that now grows on the building’s upper terrace.

It wasn’t long before the center’s all-volunteer work force no longer sufficed, and Wilbur Kelsey, the first director and paid employee, was hired. Executive directors and dedicated staff members too numerous to name have all left their mark. With an entrepreneurial spirit, they accomplished many great things and weathered hard times, including a fire and the sudden departure of one director. According to Odie LeFever, a former board chair associated...
with the board for 20 years, "The quality and longevity of the staff is extraordinary. The understanding and love they have for people is so beautiful."

Ironically, the Mill Hill neighborhood that was disintegrating in 1958 is stable, desirable, and thriving today, while other areas of Trenton and Mercer County have not fared as well. Though a rear addition was put on 151 Mercer Street to house a Head Start program, eventually the need for new services—and the need to locate them near the people who required them—made the old meetinghouse an inappropriate home for MSF programs. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in the 1970s, it now houses the agency’s administrative offices, while services are offered around the capital area.

Other notable initiatives in MSF history include help in getting Trenton’s Village Charter School, modeled after Friends schools, off the ground in the 1990s. Today Mercer Street Friends’ four divisions—Children and Youth Services, Parenting and Adult Services, Home Health Care, and the Food Bank—offer childcare, food distribution, recreational opportunities, nutrition education, the teaching and modeling of nonviolent conflict resolution, home health care, literacy and job training, parenting support, counseling, mentoring, and advocacy. Lunch and Learn events, open to all, are great opportunities to learn about Mercer Street’s programs.

Fifty years since its humble beginnings, Mercer Street Friends is still helping neighbors in need raise themselves up, and building futures by rebuilding lives. Thanks to its dedicated staff and volunteers and generous donors, MSF has built a strong foundation for its own future. Though all would be happy to see a capital region that no longer needs the agency by 2058, that seems unlikely. In the present economic climate, the challenges have never been bigger. With sharp rises in the cost of necessities like food, people who used to donate are now coming to food banks. The need for a high school diploma or GED in order to obtain work is greater than ever. Collaborating with other local organizations, Mercer Street Friends is dedicated to addressing the issues facing the area’s disadvantaged—child health and well-being, hunger, family development, the health needs of seniors, and increasing youth violence—and being on the lookout for new ones. As long as the need exists, so will Mercer Street Friends.

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50 Years of Success Stories

"We know we’ve made the difference in the lives of a lot of people."
—Bob Applebaum, one of Mercer Street Friends’ founders

In a half-century of helping the community one person at a time, Mercer Street Friends has received countless much-appreciated gifts. Among the most treasured are stories of people whose lives have been changed for the better, thanks to MSF. Here is a small sampling:

It was you who taught me my first notes on the piano. It was you who took me on my first trips to Philadelphia and New York, piquing my curiosity about the world. You have helped me cultivate my dream." So wrote Sanford Livingston to Mercer Street Friends, 30 years after he attended after-school and summer programs and got his first summer job with the agency in the 1970s. Growing up in Trenton with his sister and struggling single mother, he not only benefited from MSF programs but he found a mentor in longtime staff member John Conley. A vice president of Wells Fargo Bank, Sanford attributes his success at least in part to the early assistance of Mercer Street Friends: "Because of your help, I have grown to become a leader and steward of my community."

In 1997 Bailah Dainkeh was a 17-year-old student living in war-torn Sierra Leone, when a harrowing series of events, including his near-capture by rebels and the destruction of his home, caused him to flee. By 2000 he had found his way to Trenton, where he realized he would need a high school diploma to get a decent job. For eight months he attended daily MSF classes with the goal of obtaining his GED. While improving his English, science, and social studies skills, he learned about U.S. culture from his teacher, with whom he had long discussions. He was accepted into Mercer County Community College, where he earned a degree in Applied Engineering. He was then hired by PSEG, which sponsored him to attend Drexel for a master’s in Engineering; and all the while stayed in touch with his Mercer Street Friends teacher, Lesley Feldstein, whom he considered one of the "pillars that support me."

With six children and recurring stints on welfare, Knibibi Bolt was determined to change her life. Having dreamt of becoming a nurse, she enrolled in three Mercer Street Friends programs—parenting support, basic skills and literacy, and job readiness services—that helped her in several different and important facets of her life. With extensive mentoring by MSF staff, Bibi became a certified home health aide (with an eye toward getting her GED and enrolling in a nursing program), and she also became a better parent, improving the lives of six youngsters as well as her own.
A Conference on Banning Depleted Uranium

by Candace Andrews-Powley

Central America’s tumultuous history provides many opportunities for raising awareness about human rights and social justice. The Friends Peace Center, a small nonprofit organization in Costa Rica, was founded in 1983 by a group of Quakers and Latin American human rights activists looking for constructive methods of promoting peace. Throughout its existence, the Peace Center has maintained a close connection with the Costa Rican Quaker community and has adhered to the community’s goals. This year we are celebrating our 25th anniversary.

Our main goal is to promote human rights and peace through the practices of active nonviolence and peace education. Over the past year, we have held workshops and forums on human rights focusing on marginalized groups such as the Nicaraguan immigrant community, supporting indigenous rights, coordinating with environmental organizations, and training various women’s groups about their legal rights. Other programs the center promotes include an urban renovation project, painting murals in central San José on the themes of peace and equality, participating in a recycling program, and partnering with other organizations to create a bike path through the city. Through our history of projects, we have established and maintained relationships with various national and international human rights organizations, and we promote the general cause of peace through networking and mutual support. We also provide a meeting place for various local organizations, including the weekly San José Quaker meeting. Over the years, we have become a resource for information and training on nonviolent techniques as an alternative to resolving conflicts, and a place of community among our mix of Costa Rican and U.S. members.

Currently, we are collaborating with the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) to work toward an international ban. Depleted uranium (DU) is a cheap byproduct of uranium refineries and nuclear power plants that makes military weapons more effective. For the past two decades, the United States, United Kingdom, and other governments have used DU in military operations. Weapons containing DU were deployed in Iraq and Kuwait during the Gulf War of 1991, in Kosovo during the conflict of 1999, and currently in the Iraq War. These arms have also illegally found their way into the hands of international weapons dealers.

DU’s long-term effects are devastating for both the people and the environment in the impacted areas. It has chemical and radiological toxicity that targets the kidneys and lungs, causes severe birth defects, and greatly increases the incidence of cancer and other related diseases among those affected. Worse yet, soldiers and civilians working and living in the affected areas are not informed of the risks.

In March 2009, ICBUW and Friends Peace Center will be hosting their yearly conference in San José, Costa Rica. As the only Latin American organization that is currently a member of ICBUW, the center will be coordinating this event. The coalition’s objective is to ban the use of depleted uranium weapons at the United Nations by 2010, and the goal of the conference is to raise awareness about the use and effects of depleted uranium throughout the international community with an emphasis in Latin America. The goal of Friends Peace Center is to bring at least one representative from each country and provide them with written and visual information in Spanish about DU, which we have been producing.

To learn more about ICBUW and depleted uranium, or find out more about Friends Peace Center and its other current projects, please call the organization’s director, Isabel Macdonald, at (506) 2222-14-00 or (506) 2223-61-68, or e-mail her at <ducongress@amigosparalapaz.org>.

Candace Andrews-Powley is a volunteer at Friends Peace Center in San José, Costa Rica, and a recent graduate of St. Mary’s College of Maryland.

Burdened by a Leading

by Elizabeth Eames Roebling

Friends in the Southern Appalachian region are talking about leadings. I want to share a bit of my journey with Asheville Meeting as I struggled with the pull to leave the United States and venture out to the island of Hispaniola, “where no Quakers had ever been before.”

(In fact, as I found out, in “ancient times” Friends were responsible for sending freed slaves down to the Samana Peninsula, and American Friends Service Committee has had a project in Haiti. And when I picked up my
A 19-year partnership of American Friends Service Committee and Intermountain Yearly Meeting sponsoring work projects to meet community needs is in a period of transition. The AFSC has announced that it will not support the Joint Service Project (JSP) after this year; the IMYM hopes to have a new partner and a new name for the Joint Service Project from then on.

"The AFSC is withdrawing from the program because of budget concerns," said Karen Fleming, presiding clerk of the Joint Service Project Oversight Committee, which includes representatives of both AFSC and IMYM. "We will cut back on some of our service projects. Our goal now is to continue on a reduced level until we have a relationship with a new partner.

Already suggested as a new name for the JSP are the words, "Western Quaker Work-camps." No commitment has yet been made, however, to any new name for the JSP; Karen Fleming, a member of Fort Collins (Colo.) Meeting, said. She added, "We certainly want a name to suggest immediately who we are and what we do, and Quaker is a name well known among the public.

According to Marielle Oetjen, associate regional director in the AFSC office in Denver and supervisor for the Joint Service Project Oversight Committee, most of the AFSC support for the Joint Service Project came from AFSC's Central Region, including most of the Midwest, and from the Pacific Mountain and the Pacific Southwest regions, including California, Arizona, and New Mexico. Other programs, not yet clear, are in mind for these AFSC regions. Marielle Oetjen said, "There are changes coming in the future for the project from both AFSC and IMYM perspective. But the short term perspective is that the project continue, and outreach is a major focus."

In addition to her work with the Oversight Committee, Marielle Oetjen also works with Mike Gray, project coordinator in planning and overseeing projects. The work on projects, whether to meet community needs such as a community center or a medical facility, repair homes after storms, or to assist with agricultural needs, is done by volunteers. They include students, adults, retirees, and skilled workers, all who pay their way, from $600 to $900, depending on the particular project and its location, whether in Mexico, or South Dakota, or Louisiana.

Mike Gray, also a member of Fort Collins Meeting, has been project coordinator for JSP for 14 years. JSP was formed in 1990 after IMYM in dialogue with AFSC expressed concern about the lack of opportunities for Friends to participate in service projects. "The Quaker reputation for service projects is well known. Work camps are a familiar activity among Quakers, and our identity is made clearer to the public by what we do," Mike Gray said.

Tom Kowal, a member of Mountain View Meeting in Denver, has been a member of the JSP Oversight Committee for five years and is regularly one of a team of volunteers working on a project. "As AFSC ends its sponsorship of JSP, we will seek a new partner, other support. Yearly Meeting will continue with the program. It's what Friends should do," Tom Kowal said. —Telephone conversations with Marielle Oetjen, Karen Fleming, Mike Gray, Tom Kowal; websites of AFSC and IMYM

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**Upcoming Events**

- April 8–12—Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting
- April 12–14—Philippines Evangelical Friends Church Yearly Meeting
- April 12–15—Ireland Yearly Meeting

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Sandy’s Orders
by Mary Ann Downey

Sandy Mershon grew up in a large Catholic family, one of eight children, all brought up in the faith of the Church. She took vows to become a nun with the Sisters of Saint Joseph when she was 18, and with the help of the order she became a high school teacher devoting her life to helping children learn and enjoy history. Finally, conflict within her order, church politics, and doubts about church teachings caused her to leave the order and the Catholic Church. She met John, a professor of geography at Georgia State University who attended a Unitarian church, and they were married one day on their lunch hour by a justice of the peace. Sandy and John came to our Quaker meeting looking for a spiritual home that they could share and become dedicated members involved in the life of the community.

Unlike many Quakers, Sandy was good at giving orders and did not hesitate to let me and other Friends know what she thought was needed. I grew to love her plain speaking and directness, and never doubted her caring honesty. Her first order for me came one day as we sat talking about her struggles with treatment for breast cancer. She asked me about my recovery from the loss of my husband four years earlier and about Bill, a Friend I’d begun dating. I told her about the love and joy I’d found with Bill. Sandy looked at me sternly and said, “Mary Ann, you should marry that man.” When I laughed she said, “I’m serious,” and let me know this was an order to obey. And I did.

About a year later, the meeting needed a new clerk and I was asked. I declined the offer because I did not have a clear sense of being called by God to this work. At the close of one business meeting where I was acting as presiding clerk, Sandy came up to me looking like Uncle Sam on the Army recruiting poster, pointed her finger at me and said, “Mary Ann, you have to be clerk.” I saluted, said, “Yes, sir,” and laughed. And she responded with “I’m serious, and I’ll help you.” After more prayer and discernment, I decided that Sandy was a messenger, my angel, and her order was as close to a direct call from God as I was likely to get.

Soon after Sandy’s second order to me, she began losing her battle with cancer as it spread throughout her system. During her last two years, I was part of a group of Friends who helped her husband care for her. As options for treatment were exhausted, Sandy gradually accepted and planned for her death. She studied with Buddhist monks to learn detachment and how to make a good death. One Sunday, I sat with her at home during our meeting for worship a few blocks away. She was failing, but aware of the day and the time of worship. She opened her eyes long enough to give me a stern look and her final order. She said, “Mary Ann, you have to tell them to let me go.”

With tears, I took her hand and said, “Okay,” but didn’t move. That brought another brief stern look and the order: “Now.” I went to meeting and delivered her message through my tears with a trembling voice. I realized how hard it was for me to tell other Friends to let go because I was not ready to let her go, and she knew.

Sandy’s life and death taught me many lessons, some of which I’m still trying to learn. Her clear orders, forceful plain speaking, and firm integrity always came to me as a message of rough love from a wise teacher. She loved and struggled in a place close to God and reminded me that God sends us messages through others. Too often I’m not listening nor ready to hear, and Sandy’s orders always made me pay attention. In her last request—“tell them to let me go”—I realized how strong her love was for our Friends community and how our support during her battle with cancer held her tightly. We needed to hold her with open, caring arms, knowing that we would lose her presence with us. I miss her orders but sometimes have a sense of her spirit still offering direction for this journey.

Mary Ann Downey is a member of Atlanta (Ga.) Meeting.

The Light Within
by Henry Swain

The Religious Society of Friends has created some unique expressions to explain our beliefs to others unfamiliar with our practice. They frequently refer to the Inner Light or the Light Within. This description refers to our belief that there is “that of God in every one.”

Little is ever said regarding the brightness or wattage of this light. It must vary from person to person. For some highly regarded Quakers their light shines as a flood light that illuminates a large area. Some Friends have the mystical gift for prophecy. Their light would cast as a beacon. For most, I suspect, their illumination might be closer to the wattage of a refrigerator bulb. In fact the thirstiest of Friends only open the door when they feel the need to check their spiritual path. When satisfied they are still on it, they shut the door and the light goes out.

They are very conscious of the environment and want to conserve the power that makes the light. They might be designated Green Quakers.

I’m not certain they know if the light goes out when they close the door. They believe that it does. Few of us ever stay inside to check it out. I’m willing to take it on faith that it does. I take a lot of things on faith that I can’t prove, like God.

I suspect the term Inner Light is a metaphor for some kind of universal energy or power that is available for our use. It may come from God, or it may just be there. But it is there for everyone, and must be downloaded so that it can work through us to become of practical use to us and to others.

If there is that of God (or Spiritual Energy, if that better describes God for you) in every person, then I think we must also acknowledge that there is evil in every person. This is an observable fact. I suspect this universal energy is neutral by nature and absent of conscience. Like electricity, it can warm a cold house or blow it up depending on how it is used. This comparison suggests our Inner Light comes with a switch, and that it is our finger, and only ours, that moves the toggle.

Another interesting human factor, temptation, is thrown into this switching practice. Why is it that the seductive nature of temptation always appears so alluring and immediate, while its negative consequences appear so well camouflaged as to seem improbable?

We are constituted as creatures of reason and emotion. Temptation is the messenger that challenges us to keep the two in balance. This is a difficult task, for many of our emotional responses such as pleasure and fear are both glandular and natural. This suggests that if we do not maintain a balance between our reasoning ability and our emotional desire for immediate pleasure, we may, in a moment of emotional high, move the switch to our own detriment and plunge ourselves into darkness.

Error is a given part of our nature. Is it possible to find the switch and restore the light again? I think it is, but it comes with a high interest penalty for the misspent energy used in the brief misguided choice. The process by which we restore our energy credit rating is called forgiveness. The choice not to make the same mistake twice is the path to wisdom.

Henry Swain is a member of Bloomington (Ind.) Meeting and the author of Leaves for the Raking and Why Now? The Evolution of a Conscientious Objector.

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Unapproved Minutes from the Peaceable Kingdom

by Chel Avery

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the ass, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11: 6-9)

The Peaceable Kingdom is not Quaker heaven. Most Christians have an image of heaven that is exclusive—only the people we would like to spend eternity with are there. But in the Peaceable Kingdom, we have to rub elbows with everyone: those we are fond of, and those we wish would go away. The late conflict resolution educator Bill Krider made this observation in a 1991 lecture to New York Yearly Meeting about the paintings of Quaker folk artist Edward Hicks. Hicks produced 70 or more depictions of the Peaceable Kingdom during his life, even as he grieved over the discord and separations that were taking place in the Friends community. Those paintings may be the closest thing we have to a “Quaker emblem.” Once, walking through the offices of Friends Center in Philadelphia, I counted 27 variations of them hanging on walls and decorating calendars, magnets, tote bags, and note cards.

As I look at those images, I often wonder what the various creatures are really thinking and saying to each other. Perhaps they have evolved through the stages of community development that M. Scott Peck describes in The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace. This book was widely discussed among Friends when it was first published in 1987, and I often see dusty copies on the library shelves of meetings I visit. According to Peck, we pass through four stages on our way to becoming a “true community.”

Stage I: Pseuodomunity (the honeymoon period—in which conflict never occurs):

Calf, Lion, Ox: “I am so lucky to be here. This is the most blessed place on Earth.”

Lamb, Asp, Suckling Child: “How lovely it is that we all get along together so well and accept each other so completely.”

Bear: “We have returned to the Garden of Eden.”

Stage II: Chaos (in which members anxiously try to fix emerging problems and restore the sense of perfection):

Lion: “How was such an unseasoned person as the Little Child appointed to lead us? I mean no criticism of her, but what was the process? Was it consistent with our testimonies?”

Leopard: “That little goat is going to give me fleas. Who is responsible for supervising it?”

Asp: “I have noticed that there is playing going on over my hole. We need some guidelines for the use of property.”

Cow (to Ox): “The Wolf simply does not fit in. It is not his fault, but if he would just transfer to one of the unpeaceable kingdoms where his views would be more appreciated, then it would be idyllic here.”

Ox (to Cow): “Our ancestors on the Ark followed the practice of keeping the clean and unclean creatures apart. We should return to that tradition. I am not being prejudiced—but I value the wisdom of the early creatures.”

Stage III: Emptiness (in which members let go of illusions, pretense, and the hope of control):

Cow, Cockatrice, Leopard: “Let’s stop kidding ourselves. This place is nothing like what we thought it would be.”

Little Child: “These creatures have no respect for leadership—I don’t know what to do with them.”

Fatling: “Who are these other animals?”

Stage IV: True Community (in which members accept one another as they really are; it can be distinguished from pseudocommunity because at times conflict is openly expressed):

Wolf: “I have to give these creatures credit for putting up with me most of the time.”

Weaned Child: “The Cockatrice is annoying, but I’ve grown accustomed to his face.”

Asp: “I’m pretty comfortable here, I just wish they would respect my hole.”

Leopard: “Yo! Ed! I have something to say to you about these!”
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Living as Friends, Listening Within:
Report on the 2008 Conference for Young Adult Friends

"We are rising up, like a phoenix from the fire, Broth­ers and sisters spread your wings and fly higher We are rising up, we are rising up." —Song from New Eng­land Friends Camp

"Be not conformed to this world, but be trans­formed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." —Romans 12:2 NRSV

One hundred nine Friends gathered together for the Living as Friends, Listening Within young adult Friends conference that took place at Earlham School of Religion, May 23-26, 2008. Friends traveled from across the U.S. and Canada, representing a diversity of yearly meetings from programmed and unprogrammed traditions. This conference was jointly sponsored by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Friends General Conference, Friends United Meeting, Earlham School of Religion, Earlham College, and the New England Friends Camp.

The conference arose out of a leading from the 2007 YAF conference in Burlington, N.J., when Friends asked to have a conference that intentionally brought together young adults from across our many branches to explore our diversity. With that request in mind, we carefully assembled a planning committee of FGC, FUM, EFI, Conservative, and Independent Friends to plan such a conference. These nine Friends began working together with the intention to create a gathering where YAFs could come together to explore leadings and callings in their lives, go deeper in our faith, and to play, laugh, and worship.

Coming Together

In worship, in small groups, in conversation, we have been transformed. Friends affirmed their love for one another again and again. The act of coming together physically was a first step to enacting loving unity. We are hungry for con­nection and growth in grace with one another, and the healing of our divisions. —Excerpt from the 2008 YAF Conference Epistle 1

As a community we engaged with each other in many different ways. We joined together in programmed, semi-programmed, and unprogrammed meeting for worship. Friends played Frisbee and hiked, went to a Bible study, performed in a talent show and sang songs around a campfire. Laughter rang out through the weekend, beginning on the first night when we performed the skit A Short History of Quakerism in Ten Easy Points, which was written by one of the conference planners. Small groups of ten Friends met each day to check in with each other, play games, and build community in a more intimate setting. Workshops on spiritual discernment, Quaker theology and hymnology, and many other topics were offered by the Earlham School of Religion, and participants led an assortment of interest groups ranging from ministry in Iraq to work camps at the William Penn House.

During evening plenary, Friends shared about leadings and callings in their lives, going into depth about what it was like to listen, discern individually, and, with their meetings and churches, be faithful and wrestle with what faithfulness looked liked. Two Friends who were asked to speak on Sunday night, Betsy Blake and Callid Keefe-Perry, challenged us to live our faith every day and left us with the query, “What are you waiting for?”

Friends were respectful of how we use different words to express our beliefs. Many Friends eloquently articulated how the diversity of language around our experiences of the Divine did not threaten or take away from our own experience, but put new words to the awesomeness of Spirit. We learned from the differences and similarities of our experiences.

I felt overwhelmed by the presence of the Spirit and awed at the many forms in which all of us have lived its testimony. I see so much more breadth to God that I am humbled to have thought I understood so much about the Divine.

—Stephanie Speicher, conference participant

As a community we asked what it meant to see that of God in every person. We questioned how we build relationships and love someone who doesn’t share our beliefs, and how do we do this in the world if we can’t do it within our own Religious Society? On Sunday night, one Friend shared her experience of the weekend that brought us back to why we were there. She had heard others speak of God or Jesus loving them, and how amazing that felt, but she had never experienced it herself. She believed that the things that had happened to her in this life were an indication that God did not actually love her. She was so thankful for the love and acceptance she felt over the weekend, and shared with us that for the first time in her life during that meeting for worship, she heard God say “I love you.”

All were humbled by the experience of coming to know the Divine through each other’s words and form of worship. Many felt this conference was just the beginning of exploring the ways in which our own spiritual journeys can be deepened and strengthened through sharing our traditions and building spiritual friendships. Many of us are returning to our home communities with a renewed interest in coming to know the beliefs of the Friends we worship with each Sunday, recognizing there is diversity of beliefs within our own Friends meetings and churches.

The YAF conference was one of the most challenging and formative ways for me to connect with the Spirit across the diversity of our faith. One can feel a visceral sense of purpose and Spirit urgently awaiting realization in our generation. —A conference participant

The gathered community felt held by a much larger body of Friends. We knew that individuals and meetings were praying for the weekend to be a container for God’s love. A pastoral care committee of young adult and older Friends from the different branches grounded the group and provided listening ears and open hearts to Friends. On Sunday morning, we worshiped with three local Quaker meetings, and invited Friends to join us for lunch and an afternoon service project (writing letters to Congress and going clean-up recommended by Richmond mayor, Sally Hutton).

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Staying Together

When you love someone or someone—a partner, your family, a community, an organization—there has to be a willingness to do the hard work. The first step is to know one another, which I think these conferences (at Richmond and Burlington, N.J., last year) and other events and intervisitation of similar flavor, accomplish. They are just the beginning, and I am so grateful to Friends who open that door. But then you do the hard work. In my opinion, the start of the hard work is to speak our own truth, and listen—listen—to others speak theirs. Friends, I think we’re ready to do the hard work. —Blog entry by Angelina Conti

Our journey as a planning committee was both a joyful and very challenging experience. It included the hard work of speaking truth and listening to others’ experiences that Angelina speaks about in her blog entry. As planners, our goal for the conference was to create a loving space where Friends could come together to share their experiences as Quakers. We hoped that we could engage in conversations about our similarities and differences as a community grounded in God’s love. When we began this work, we did not realize how fully that work would begin with our committee of nine. We struggled at times to build trust, to overcome stereotypes, to move beyond the organizational labels that divide us. We asked for support from older Friends to help us come together when conflict arose. With the help of other Friends, we voiced our anger and pain, cried, worshipped, and held each other. God was not just asking us to bring Friends together, but to struggle with the differences ourselves; to begin creating the loving community we hoped would form at the conference.

The YAF conference was an amazing experience for all of us, and we can definitely say that it was worth doing. We felt God’s love in the planning process and as a whole community during the gathering. Now, as we return to our daily lives, we continue to nurture these relationships. We might have different beliefs, but we are all a part of a whole community of Friends. Although we recognize that there are a number of controversial issues among Quakers, we look forward to continuing to meet each other, talk about the hard stuff, play, pray, laugh, worship, and embrace all of our diversity with God’s love at the center.

—Sadie Forsythe and Emily Stewart

Sadie Forsythe is Young Adult Friends Coordinator for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Emily Stewart is Youth Ministries Coordinator for FGC. You can find the skit A Short History of Quakerism online at <www.fgquaker.org/div/bp>. 
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BOOKS

Stand Alone or Come Home: Mark Hatfield as an Evangelical and a Progressive
By Lon Fendall, Barclay Press, 2008. 200 pages. $18/softcover.

The right wing of the culture wars of the last 30 years brought forth a mixture of faith and politics that many found to be toxic. Ideology and belief replaced knowledge and reason; one's views on narrow issues like abortion and same-sex marriage became litmus tests for elected and appointed office; schools were assailed for teaching biological evolution instead of creationism; the environment was seen as a gift from God to be exploited rather than protected; and serious efforts were underway to make the United States an officially "Christian nation."

While it is too soon to write the obituary of this movement, there is light on the horizon. Well-placed progressive evangelicals like Jim Wallis and Rick Warren are preaching a gospel of Christian stewardship to which young evangelicals are responding positively. Love for one's neighbor, service to the poor and less fortunate, and stewardship of God's creation are the pillars of this evangelical social gospel, while conservative social values regarding right-to-life, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage are less central. It is at this juncture that Stand Alone or Come Home's exploration of the political life and conscience of U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield (Republican from Oregon, 1967-1996) is of interest. Hatfield not only demonstrates how progressive evangelicalism might work in the political arena, he is an exemplar for Quakers (both liberal and conservative) on how faith and politics can be practiced together rightly.

In this well-written political biography, Fendall portrays Hatfield as a person of reasoned faith who became convinced to follow Christ in a considered manner. He steeped himself in the Bible on an ongoing basis and used biblical and secular knowledge to inform his life and political choices—as was the case with early Quakers and is still the case with many today. The important positions Hatfield took were developed through deep personal discernment.

Hatfield defied conventional categories because he was faith-driven, not politically driven, and because his faith was reasoned, not arbitrary. Pacifists who appreciated his opposition to the Vietnam War were disappointed in his stances on other military actions, such as his support of the most recent war in Iraq. Anti-choicers were disappointed in his stance on abortion, which accepted exclusions and...
STAND ALONE OR COME HOME
As both evangelical and progressive, Mark Hatfield separated himself from the political crowd
by Son Tendall
forwarded by Joe Walke

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Self-Supported Ministers:
Lest We Forget
Almost from the beginnings of Quakerism, Friends wrote and preserved memorials of ministers and other leading Friends. These were sometimes lengthy, sometimes brief, sometimes the work of family members or associates in ministry (Margaret Fell Fox’s account of husband George immediately comes to mind), sometimes the work of monthly meetings. They were largely spiritual biographies that drew on the writings of their subjects and often included extended accounts of the pious and weighty sayings that dropped from their lips in their last hours. From the early 18th century until the late 19th century, Friends published volumes of these accounts with titles like Piety Promoted in a Collection of Dying Sayings of Many of the People Called Quakers. (After that, Friends apparently lost their taste for deathbed scenes.)

Billy Britt, the longtime superintendent of North Carolina Yearly Meeting, revives this
defined life as beginning at the point of egg implantation on the uterine wall. He was often vilified by fellow evangelicals (“not a true Christian”) and by those on the left (“not liberal enough”). Yet Hatfield was willing to stand alone not because he was a maverick by nature, but because of his deep abiding faith that Christ would lead him to the right answer if he worked diligently and deeply to discern God’s will. We, as Quakers, can take a lesson from Senator Hatfield. At each juncture where our religion and our politics cross, do we simply cite chapter and verse from the testimonies or Faith and Practice, or do we work deeply and diligently to discern God’s will and act accordingly?

—Greg Moschetti

Greg Moschetti, a member of New Haven (Conn.) Meeting, currently lives in Dummerston, Vt., where he attends Putney Meeting.

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tradition, inspired by recorded ministers of his yearly meeting who served meetings while supporting themselves in secular jobs. His focus is on ministers in the pastoral system that a majority of the U.S. Friends embraced in the late 19th century. The rest are divided between pioneers of the system born between 1850 and 1880, and those born after 1880 who were called to pastoral ministry when the system was well established. Most are men, reflecting the proportions typical of the Quaker pastorate before 1970.

Most of the subjects were born Friends, North Carolinians who spent their lives close to their birthplaces. Britt's decision to describe these ministers as "self-supported" is well-advised. Although many received financial support from their meetings, it was minimal (and sometimes paid in farm produce). The first two generations were farmers and storekeepers; while those born after 1890 included educators and other professions; still, many had limited higher education.

Pastoral ministry became one of the definitions of Quaker division between programmed and unprogrammed in the 20th century. Many unprogrammed Friends, particularly in Friends General Conference, see a paid pastoral ministry as irreconcilable with Quakerism. Most Friends around the world in the last century, however, have decided otherwise. North Carolina Friends will read this volume to remember them of dedicated pastors who were often little known outside their own communities or yearly meetings. Other Friends can read this to gain an understanding of U.S. Quaker pastors from the 1890s to the present day.

—Thomas D. Hamm

Thomas D. Hamm, a member of First Friends Meeting in New Castle, Ind., is an archivist and professor of history at Earlham College.

Quakerism: A Theology for Our Time

By Patricia A. Williams, York: Sessions of York, 2008. 198 pages. $30/paperback.

The back cover of this book asserts that this is "the first substantial work of Quaker theology since Robert Barclay's Apology appeared in 1676." This is a striking claim, since it dismisses many valuable theological works across the centuries: Phipps' Essay on Man, Scott's Salvation by Christ, Gurney's Observations, Jones's Social Law in the Spiritual World, Grubb's Christianity as Life and as Truth, Cooper's A Living Faith, and Punshon's Reasons for Hope, among others.

This book is an intelligent and very per-
sonal statement of the author's interpretation of Quakerism's central message, which she seeks to present in contemporary terms while demonstrating logical and experiential continuity between modern and traditional statements of Quakerism's meanings. Perhaps the paramount concern is to reconcile the faith preached by early Friends with the statements of modern science and scientific method. If Quakerism is an articulation of Truth, such a reconciliation is necessary; in this Williams is in good company with George Ellis, Hugh Barbour, and many of the theological Friends named above.

The reader, however, must keep alert, for while Williams is often trenchant and even eloquent in some places (her summary of the "basic core" of Quaker belief is a very interesting few paragraphs), she is also capable of breathtaking oversimplifications and debatable assertions. For example, "The Light the Quakers encounter seems to be the same Light people see who undergo near death experiences." Williams makes a simplifying assumption that mirrors that of John Punshon's in *Reason for Hope*—he does not address liberal Friends, she does not address orthodox Friends. Her characterizations of early Quakerism, Christ-centered Friends, orthodox Christianity, modern biblical criticism, and even modern scientific ways of knowing are also problematic, as is her tendency in these pages to assume that modern is better and that the "scientific saga" is the standard of truth.

As a scientist, I find Williams's version of science interestingly mystical, in a way that is common enough these days. We are told that the universe exists "to provide the conditions for life to evolve and survive." This sounds rather like the anthropic principle that, in the heyday of the Enlightenment, Voltaire put in the mouth of Dr. Pangloss. We hear that "the divine is all-pervasive as sees sue and quantum strings sing." Like many others, Williams reaches to the apparent mysticism of theoretical physics to find a way to unify the language of the Spirit and the language of science. This tendency is understandable and well meant, but there is more than one kind of science, and more than one philosophy of science (for example, see Ernst Mayr's *What Makes Biology Unique?*, John Dewey's *Experience and Nature*, and William James' *A Pluralistic Universe*).

This work could provide the basis for a whole course of study in theology, Quakerism, comparative religions, and some kinds of philosophy. It includes good clear statements that are correct, oversimplifications that can be misleading, erroneous assumptions and interpretations, fair assumptions that need to be identified and evaluated, and opinions whose value depends on the reader's point of view.
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Brian Drayton, a member of Weare (N.H.) Meeting, is a plant ecologist working in science education.

An American in Gandhi's India: The Biography of Satyanand Stokes

As an American whose admiration of Hinduism predates my experience with Quakerism, I was delighted to encounter this readable and well-researched biography of Satyanand (born Samuel) Stokes, an American of Quaker heritage who spent most of his life in India fighting for political, economic, and social reforms and deepening his spiritual life. Stokes is better known in northern regions of India (although mainly for his agricultural impact) than in the U.S.; it's about time this intrepid truth seeker got his historical due. First published in 1999 by Penguin India as An American in Khadi: The Definitive Biography of Satyanand Stokes, the book was written by granddaughter Asha Sharma, a Columbia University Journalism graduate and historical research fellow.

Born near Philadelphia in 1882, Stokes' Quaker roots ran deep: Eighth-generation ancestor Thomas Stokes was a contemporary of George Fox and William Penn who was frequently jailed in England for his beliefs before emigrating to Pennsylvania. Although earlier generations on both sides of the family had been "read out of meeting"—one for joining the military and two for an unauthorized marriage—Stokes was raised in a Friendly household that respected Quaker values such as honesty, integrity, and service.

Stokes attended a Friends school and a military academy before setting out for a leper's colony in the Himalayas at age 24. Disgusted with the racist attitudes of the missionary community, he lived in a cave as an ascetic before founding a Christian monastic order, which he later disbanded. He also joined Mahatma Gandhi in the fight for Indian independence, becoming the only American ever jailed for the cause and one of a few of Gandhi's companions who dared to gently question some of his tactics.

Stokes built a house in Kotgarh, a village in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh, and married an Indian Christian, Agnes, with whom he raised six children. He also studied Hindu philosophy, founded progressive schools, wrote poetry, fought for farmers' view. Because of its personal, not to say idiosyncratic, quality, it is not the substantial work of Quaker theology that it claims to be.

—Brian Drayton
rights, and transformed regional agriculture, earning him the nickname "the Johnny Apple Seed of the Himalayas." (When Stokes introduced Delicious apples, 25 acres were cultivated; today there are 235,000.)

This U.S. expatriate consistently honored his Quaker roots, albeit in a strange culture, which he described as "vistas which, though in an unfamiliar setting, contain much that would have appealed to my Quaker ancestors—the followers of 'inner light.'" He considered his forefathers "Christian Yogis and Yogins, seeking ever in the long silent meditation of their public meetings and private devotions the divine illumination from within."

Like early Friends, Stokes held fast to his beliefs: he refused to post bail when he was imprisoned, instead using his time as a "guest of the British empire" to write a book. His belief in the equality of all people led him to confrontations with British and local authorities, but he gained respect from his adversaries for the strength of his convictions and his consistent willingness to walk the walk. While I can only imagine the repercussions of some of his more dramatic decisions on his near and dear ones (his conversion to Hinduism in 1932, for example, isolated Agnes and hopelessly polarized the family), it's hard not to admire his willingness to follow his leadings wherever they might take him.

During more than four decades in India, Stokes strove to merge the best of occidental philosophy with the wisdom of the East. "From my Western temperament ... I have come to feel increasingly ... the vital significance of personality and individuality," he wrote. "The East, on the other hand, has filled me with an overpowering sense of the essential oneness of existent reality." Friends, especially those with an interest in Eastern philosophy, will appreciate the spiritual journey described in this book; it may also inspire activists interested in better understanding and championing members of another culture or social group.

Catherine Wild, a member of Chappaqua (N.Y.) Meeting, is a freelance writer and FRIENDS JOURNAL's book review editor.

FRIENDS JOURNAL March 2009
Crossing the Border  
continued from page 8

Jason greets and hugs several other dark, small men emerging singly from the night. One, a young kid, shows us where his money was taken from under the sleeve of his sweatshirt and the waistband of his battered pants held together by string—in the desert, by bandits. His shoes, too, he says, were stolen, but he was given new ones here that are better. Jason gives him his contact address for when he gets into Phoenix, and finds a few more crumpled bills for him in his pocket. The young man smiles and chuckles with pleasure, even happiness, in the sudden presence of Jason’s friendship; for the moment all his burdens seem fallen away. I see no guile in his eyes.

Our recrossing of the border turns out to be quick and easy. The woman who checks our papers smiles at me very sweetly, as if to congratulate me for my good fortune of possessing a U.S. passport.

Are borders necessary? Border controls? Border-crossing regulations?

Is cruelty necessary?  
The collapse of my inward defense in the Nogales tent came when I looked into the young man’s eyes and, for a fraction of a second, recognized in him: my son. Clear eyes, still vivid before me. This encounter, eye to eye, soul to soul, is very different from the understanding and sympathy we may gain through hearing or reading about the suffering of others. It occurs on a different plane within us.

On our drive back, when Jason and I talked some more about the threat of discouragement in the activist’s work and his growing feeling that the good in humans that he sees and believes in may not be enough to turn around the course of events, I opened to him my experience in the tent. A story of Aldo Leopold, the U.S. conservationist and ecologist, who in the first half of the last century conceived of a communal relationship between people and land, came to my mind. As a young man Leopold participated in a government-sponsored effort to exterminate the wolf as the enemy of man and beast. One day he bent over one of these animals he had shot that was still alive and met its eyes. It changed everything for him. He suddenly knew that a wolf is not what it was made out to be, an enemy out to diminish the life of man. He saw the life that was made to live, as his own life was made to live. He saw—I venture this term—the “brother.” He never shot another wolf.

Since the encounter in the tent the concern of the U.S. border has not left me alone. After my return to Massachusetts, I came upon books on this subject in our meeting library, including two written by the daughter of one of our meeting members. That is how close to

my fingertips this concern was, in which I am now immersing myself further through this literature, with a wounded heart without which the concern would have left me cold.

I’m currently returning to the area. Without knowing what I am to do there—I didn’t know it this previous time, either—I hope to let myself be seized by the river of love that flows there, which has touched me through the engagement of this committed young Friend.

A reading suggestion: Luis Alberto Urrea, The Devil’s Highway: A True Story. A fascinating, detailed, carefully researched report about the tragic death of 14 migrants (part of a larger group) in the Arizona desert in 2001, including all aspects of the case, from the background and identity of the victims, the smuggling operations, and the multifaceted work of the Border Patrol, to the tortuous process of dying by dehydration and overheating, how the law dealt with the young coyote as scapegoat, and how the dead are processed.
was facing the admission that in the middle of the night, after a dreadfully tiring day of providing care and with no prospects of any kind of improvement by the impaired patient who "survived" the war, the question arises about one's dearest loved one: Wouldn't it have been better that he had died than that he came home as crippled, helpless, and unrecognizable as he is? Rage is going to be tapped as this question gathers strength.

We can say "What a shame!" We can shake our heads in despair. We can try to close our eyes and ignore the several hundred thousand who will affect the lives of all those around them. Or we can let these circumstances ask us with the prodding and provocative power prompted by Quaker-inspired queries:

• How can we seize opportunities to offer to provide time, attention, and support to strengthen the quiet caregivers who provide heroic care for their injured loved ones?
• How can we gain the courage to urge family and friends to be aware of the signs of combat stress among those we encounter among veterans, or caregivers at work, or while traveling, or hear about in a beauty parlor, bar, or coffee shop?
• What can we do to be more vigilant and alert to ways we can become part of the resources that will help us bind up the wounds?
• How can we help one another to free ourselves from thoughts about only ourselves, about what we cannot do, about our fear of stepping into the unknown, that shackle any urging to offer help to the invisibly wounded?
• What will help us trade head-shaking for hand-shaking, and helplessness for helpfulness?
• How can we respond to George Fox's epitaph, Let your Lives Speak, when faced with, "What can only one person do?"
• What prevents us from seeing that binding up these invisible wounds is not simply a task for professionals but is indeed the work we all are in?

Nearly a century and a half later, Lincoln's words call to us once more.
used to look at the United States with admiration now look at us with fear. “What is going on with your country?” was the most common question we were asked in Japan, China, Denmark, and Canada. However, another comment we heard quite often was, “We thought all Americans were arrogant and selfish—until we met you.” I realized the power of personal connection in a global society.

- I learned from one Japanese woman that her post office was powered by solar panels on the roof. In Yangzhou and Ruzao, China, I saw massive solar water heaters on every rooftop. I learned from my Danish hosts about water-conserving toilets. “Why can’t you Americans do things like this?” they asked. We can. Our new toilet works beautifully and saves water.

- I learned that my Chinese teacher friends walk, ride bikes, or take long bus rides to get to their schools each day, yet I knew they wish they could drive to work as I usually do. I saw Chinese cities developing at a seemingly unsustainable pace and wondered how our two countries will solve problems of pollution and competition for resources in a sustainable manner. The point is: We must.

- I learned in Canada, at an international conference of peace researchers, that all over the world, in any country I could name, people are working on projects big and small to promote peace.

- I learned from Johan Galtung, Norwegian peace mediator, that many citizens of the world want Americans to walk humbly, to realize that we are a nation among nations, and that we need to cooperate with the world community.

- I learned in Denmark that in a climate of distrust, reasoned, responsible free speech can promote dialogue and understanding, while flippant, irresponsible free speech can destroy dialogue. I learned that ignorance of the culture of your neighbor can lead to violence with your neighbor.

- I learned in Norway, at the Nobel Institute, that everyone can be a peacebuilder. I interviewed Anne Kjelling, chief librarian, and asked her what my students most needed to know. “Tell them anyone can be a Nobel Peace Prize winner. They are just ordinary people, educated and uneducated, doctors, lawyers, housewives, volunteers. The thing is, they have done something for the cause of peace. Everyone can, but no one does,” she said. I vowed that I would tell my U.S. students that.

- I learned from Irwin Abrams, Nobel Peace Prize biographer, U.S. historian, peace educator, and Quaker, that peace education leads to an “unseen harvest.” He was emphatic. “There are consequences” of the peace work we do. Big and small efforts yield fruit, whether we are the ones to harvest it or not. He encouraged me to believe that my efforts as a teacher are meaningful and important, even in a culture of war.

- Finally, I learned that in Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian Fred means Peace. I was visiting the Nobel Fredcenter when I figured it out.

**Being an Active Peacebuilder**

My father’s name was Fred. While he didn’t have peace in his life, his name, his experiences, and his love for people propel me to work for Fred, for Paz, Heiwa, He Ping, Shalom, Shanti, Peace.

I want my students to believe in the value of active peacebuilding: the belief that socially just policies and structures are more lastingly effective methods of solving global problems than violence and war. Finally, I want them to know that such pacifism is not passive. It is active, hard work, and it is not for the faint of heart.

I ask that my students be peacebuilders, encouraging them by saying, “Use your critical judgment when you watch TV or read the news. Walk, take the bus, carpool. Buy less stuff. Be a good host. Do regular acts of kindness. Study about other cultures, religions, and countries. Make friends with people who are different from you. Care about your families and classmates, and also care about the billions of people who are your global neighbors. Learn how to select a cause worthy of your energy and work for it. Make time for peacebuilding. Think, Care, Act. ‘Everyone can, but no one does.’ Be the one who does.”
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Deaths

Allen—Ruth Batchelor Allen, 91, on June 16, 2008, at home in Santa Rosa, Calif. Ruth was born on November 4, 1916, in Englewood, N.J., to Elise Pagenhart and Charles Batchelor. She became a Friend in 1919 at the request of her parents. Ruth spent her summers at a camp on Lake George founded by her father, a teacher and businessman. Her mother was a nurse and social worker. Ruth graduated from high school at 15 and attended Northfield Seminary in Massachusetts and graduated from University of Minnesota in 1937. After earning a bachelor’s in Architecture from New York University in 1943, she worked as a hospital and school planner. She belonged to New York Meeting from 1942 to 1949. In 1949, Ruth married architect Rex Whittaker Allen and moved to Mill Valley, Calif., with Rex’s two young children, Alexandra and Frances, and they had two more children. Mark and Susan. Ruth was a member of San Francisco Meeting from 1953 to 1963 and participated in an allowed meeting in Mill Valley, Calif., for a few years. She resigned from San Francisco Meeting in 1963 when she joined the Episcopal Church, although she said that she considered her membership in the Episcopal Church an enrichment of, rather than an aberration from, the ways of Friends. She designed several homes together with Rex. The marriage began to dissolve in 1968, and they were divorced in 1972. In 1969, Ruth worked briefly as a health facilities planner for the city of New York, but then moved back to the Bay Area, focusing on spiritual and physical healing. She became a member of Redwood Forest Meeting in Santa Rosa in 1977. In 1982, Ruth helped create Santa Rosa Creek Commons, a limited-equity housing co-op for all ages. She lived there until her death. Ruth participated in est, Esalen, dream and other healing workshops, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation Co-Counseling program. She earned a license in massage therapy, working with battered women and seniors. She published two volumes of poetry, Inklings and A Wild Sunshine, and a biography of her parents. Throughout her life, Ruth cultivated a keen sense of the wonder, beauty, and mystery of life, and she loved walking, especially in the natural world. At age 91, she walked 2.5 miles around Spring Lake with two of her daughters. She read widely, remembered lyrics and sang hundreds of songs, and danced often. She was deeply committed to spiritual practice, drawing from world religious teachings and focusing on what she called “this eternal moment.” She delighted in naming plants and animals and enjoyed tusting wild edibles. She supported the Sierra Club, Environmental Defense Fund, and the Public Land Trust. Ruth was survived by her children, Alexandra Allen, Frances Dunn, Mark Allen, and Suzi Lechner; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Brown—Alice Hannah Brown, 92, on July 20, 2008, in Asheville, N.C., in the presence of her children and grandchildren. Alice was born on October 15, 1915, in Cass, W.Va., to Laura Susan and Bock and Uriah Hevenr Hannah, a country doctor. The third of five daughters, Alice attended local schools in the Greenbrier River Valley of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and was active in the Presbyterian Church as a child and young woman. She
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Draper—Elizabeth Louise Thayer Draper, 88, on June 22, 2008, at home in Santa Rosa, Calif., 11 days after breaking her femur. Betty, as she was known in her youth, was born on July 21, 1919, in Salem, Oreg., to Elizabeth Thurman Lewis and Darwin Greene Thayer. She spent her early years in Corvallis, Oreg.; Mill Valley, Calif.; and Pacific...
Thy spent time in Elk Grove, Calif., and Gridley, Calif., a great joy for Liz was the two or three years in the same time Betty prepared six sack lunches for the Methodist youth organization, where she became a vegetable garden. Betty cooked delicious, nutritious meals, and spent each summer canning the bounty of the gardens, making as many as 80 quarts of cherries from one tree. Every morning she or John prepared a hot family breakfast, and at the same time Betty prepared six sack lunches for the family to take along to school or work. When she began her job as part-time laboratory technician, she transported their youngest child to kindergarten on the back of her bicycle. She worked at University of California at Davis for many years. In the early 1970s she went to college and earned her AA degree in medical assisting and worked in that field for several years. Betty enjoyed backpacking, bicycling, gardening, camping, silk-screen printing and other arts, woodworking, and furniture reupholstery and refinishing. She knit many sweaters and was an excellent seamstress, sewing much of the clothing for her family. For the last 20 years of her life she designed and sewed beautiful quilts. In these years she shortened her name to Liz. A great joy for Liz was the two or three years in the early 1980s she and John spent as forest lookouts in the Yolla Bolla Mountains, where Liz spent hours making quilts on a treadle sewing machine, stopping every ten minutes to scan the horizon for fires.

The family began attending Davis (Calif.) Meeting in the early 1960s and John and Liz became members a few years later. Liz was active in peace and social justice issues throughout her life, including her activities with the meeting, the League of Women Voters, and in numerous peace marches. She once helped blockade a train carrying armaments bound for Vietnam. She and John were founding members of Santa Rosa Creek Commons, a Quaker co-housing project, and helped in the founding of Friends House, a Quaker assisted living facility for the elderly. John and Liz moved to Santa Rosa in 1990, sharing a house with their daughter Phyllis in order to help her cope with multiple sclerosis, and Liz transferred her membership to Redwood Forest Meeting. She began showing signs of confusion in 1999 and had nine years of declining health due to dementia and strokes. Liz was preceded in death by her husband, John, in 1992. She is survived by her sons, Jim, Richard, and Paul Draper; her daughters, Phyllis Draper and Caroline Swift; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

McAllister—Francis Burt McAllister, 97, on August 3, 2008, in Flagstaff, Ariz. Francis was born on September 17, 1910, in Los Angeles, Calif. She and her late husband, John Vickers McAllister, began a shared interest in Friends in the late 1930s. Her visit to Pendle Hill (Pa.) in 1948 led her to apply for membership in Orange Grove Meeting in...
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Pasadena, Calif., in 1949. Frances was widowed early in her life, and she credited her husband with helping her to learn about business and how to manage her affairs. In Pasadena she was a founding member and acting president of Pacific Oaks College and Children's School, where she taught preschool. She also taught at Occidental College and University of California at Los Angeles. After her move to Flagstaff, she was a founding member of Flagstaff Meeting in 1968. She served her meeting as clerk and led many committees. She helped to found Intermountain Yearly Meeting and served twice as clerk. She was active in Arizona Half-Yearly Meeting and helped to establish the Arizona Area Office of AFSC in Tucson. Frances was also a participant in national and international committees of AFSC and FCNL. She was a member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, where she volunteered as a translator and worked with Eleanor Roosevelt. Her efforts for peace earned her the distinction of being on Richard Nixon's "Enemies List." She helped endow the Social Action/Social Witness program at Pendle Hill, and she supported children's programs and education her whole life. When she moved to Flagstaff, she was the staff trainer for the Head Start program and helped establish the Coconino Coalition for Children and Youth. She endowed an annual doctoral research stipend in Northern Arizona University History Department, supported the Biology Department, and established the chair in Community, Culture, and the Environment. In 2002 the university awarded her an honorary Doctor of Human Letters degree. She counseled young men about alternative service during the Vietnam War, provided support for the Sanctuary Movement, and nurtured individuals during times of hardship. Frances served as a role model and mentor to many people, and provided scholarships and tuition for training. She provided a grant to Flagstaff Unified School District to incorporate the "Creative Response to Conflict" curriculum into schools for a year. Her concern about the environment led her to establish the Transition Foundation and to endow the Arboretum at Flagstaff. Frances was also interested in art and science and supported the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Flagstaff Symphony Association, Lowell Observatory, and many other state and local organizations. She did not seek recognition and made it clear that her gifts represented her husband John's legacy. Frances' vocal ministry often touched upon experiences with the people she encountered in her travel and work. These leadings brought her to a life of service to her meeting, to other Friends activities, and to her community. In her last year, Frances had difficulty speaking and expressing her ministry. Her continued presence at meeting, until a week before she died, was inspirational. Frances was preceded in death by her husband, John Vickers McAllister. She is survived by her son, John McAllister, her twin grandchildren Michael and James McAllister; three great-granddaughters, Nicole Williams, Katie McAllister, and Lauren McAllister; her sister, Jeanette Kastoff; and beloved cousins and many friends.

Mikesell—Alfred Hougham Mikesell, 94, on June 25, 2008, at home in Eugene, Oreg., of congestive heart failure with family at his side. Alfred was born in San Diego, later moving with his family to Eugene, Oreg., and then to Fresno, Calif. His
father was professor of business at Fresno State University and a real estate developer. His mother was the Kansas daughter of a highly religious teacher with strong suffrage and prohibition convictions, and Al felt that his grandfather's beliefs were handed down to him through his mother. Al received a BA in Astronomy from University of California and worked as an astronomer at the U.S. Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C., for 34 years, continuing as a consultant after his retirement. He helped design large telescopes and used them to research stars, asteroids, and solar eclipses. His research interests led to a balloon flight eight miles high (to investigate star twinkling) and an eclipse expedition to the Sahara Desert. In 1937 Al (then known as “Mike”) married Mary Hill, and together they raised eight children. In 1940, Al and Mary became Quakers, and both remained active for the rest of their lives. He and Mary were divorced after more than three decades, and in 1971 he married fellow Quaker Marjorie Dean Risley. Al revolved in the stories generated from people's lives, including his own, and he was interested in everybody and everything. He inherited 160 acres of conifer forest near Eugene, Ore., on which he developed a successful tree farm. He read voraciously in science, philosophy, religion, history, politics, and literature. He and a friend built a 24-foot sloop, which he sailed for many years with his family. He loved photography and anything mechanical. During meeting for worship at Friends Meeting of Washington (D.C.) he helped his children through to the handshake by riskinng dolls from a nickel knotted in his handkerchief. He also helped start Friendly Eights. In 1961 he and Mary and other couples started Bethesda (Md.) Meeting in their living rooms. He was clerk from 1962 to 1964 and active in the First Day School. During his life he participated in Washington (D.C.), Bethesda (Md.), Pima (Ariz.), Tucson (Ariz.), Olympia (Wash.), and Eugene (Oreg.) Meetings. Al’s vocal ministry was frequent and eloquent, and when, shortly before his death, he was “eldered” for long ministries including too many themes, he pointed out that his different themes were, like life, all connected. He once wrote that he was most comfortable among Quakers, whose “concept of God as inherently a part of every human being renders natural an experimental outlook and approach to life, along with recognition of the limitations of humanity.” He integrated Quakerism and astronomy to shape his most deeply held beliefs. Not long before his death, in a conversation with one of his children about belief in God, he said simply, “It’s not a matter of believing or not believing. God is.” Al is survived by his wife, Marjorie; his daughters, Margaret Tabb, Kathryn Hornbein, Barbara ten Wolde, Rebecca Mikesell, and Elizabeth Thibideau; his sons, Gerald Mikesell, John Mikesell, and Stephen Mikesell; his stepdaughter, Rachel Boyer; his stepson, Darly Risley; and his sister, Mary Burton.

Mills—Janie Houk Mills, 77, on July 19, 2008, in Santa Rosa, Calif. Janie was born on November 30, 1930, in Newark, N.J. She grew up attending a Presbyterian church and graduated from Douglass College at Rutgers University. Janie began her working life as a home economist, becoming a wife and mother when she married Jerry Mills, an engineer. She and Jerry eventually settled in San Diego with their two children. At home, Janie was a wel-
coming presence to friends who enjoyed her munificent garden, wonderful cooking, and gentle humor. She also served generously in the San Diego community. In 1968, Jane and her family participated in a three-year community action effort funded by the Methodist Church called the New Adult Community, an effort to bridge the gap between young adults and their elders by addressing issues of poverty, racial violence, particularly in urban communities. Jane worked with young adults to create better communication between generations, foster leadership, and develop greater awareness about issues of social justice. In 1969, Jane and Jerry separated. In the early 1970s, Jane was supervised in deepening of the Religious Society of Friends, and she eventually joined La Jolla (Calif.) Meeting. She later spent a year at Pendle Hill, counting her time there as "a deep, rich gift." Jane welcomed opportunities to stretch and grow in creative activities. After studying improvisational dance with Barbara Mettler in Arizona, she shared her love of dance with friends on her nearby beach and with students at the West Coast Association of Religion and Psychology and at Grossmont Community College. She also loved hiking and backpacking and led family and friends on many memorable adventures in Mexico, Alaska, and Europe. After completing a MA in the Great Books Curriculum at St. John's College and earning a teaching credential in English, Jane taught at San Diego and Torre Pines high schools and was hired by Jerry to develop her in 1983. In 1988 Jane took early retirement from her high school teaching job to move to Monan's Rill, a Quaker-based intentional community in rural Sonoma County. There she had a special love for the gardens and the orchard. During this time she taught English at Santa Rosa Junior College and supervised student teachers for Sonoma State University. After living in Santa Rosa for a year Jane transferred her membership to Redwood Forest Meeting, where she served the meeting as clerk, as treasurer, and on many committees. She often served as a mentor to younger people in the meeting, providing practical advice with love and humor. She was active in Pacific Yearly Meeting, including serving as assistant clerk. John Woolman School welcomed her as a member of their board of directors. In 2002 Jane moved to Friends House. Devoted to this Quaker-led retirement community, she served on the board of Friends Association of Service for the Elderly and made a presentation to the staff about concepts and values of Quakerism. Jane said in her biography in Who's Who at Friends House that she was spending her time "watching for clues to the next turn of events in my lucky life. I hope it will include continuing deepening of the spiritual aspects of Quakerism as well as service wherever I am drawn." Jane is survived by her son, Richard Mills; her daughter, Betty Acciani; and six grandchildren.

Stoffregen—Jean Elizabeth Stoffregen, 88, on August 21, 2008, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Jean was born on October 14, 1919, in Chicago, Ill., the first child of Emily Jameson and Glenn McGrew. She lived in the city until she was a teenager, when her parents moved to Evanston, Ill. Later the family moved again, to New Castle, Ind., and became convinced Friends. She attended University of Illinois for two years, and then transferred to Indiana University graduating Phi Beta Kappa in 1940 and earning a law degree in 1942. During the 1940s she worked for peace and racial justice as a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. In 1946, she served as a law clerk to one of the American judges at the war crimes trials in Nuremberg, Germany, an experience that remained vivid throughout her life. In her free time during this period she visited displaced persons camps throughout Europe and helped dozens of refugees immigrate to the United States. After she returned to the U.S., she frequently spoke to service organizations and church groups, describing her experiences in Europe. At one such event she met her future husband, David Miller Stoffregen, of Cincinnati. They were married in a Quaker ceremony on June 18, 1949. Their son Philip arrived in 1951, followed by Emily in 1953, Roger in 1954, and Thomas in 1957. Like many women of that era, Jean put aside career aspirations to concentrate on homemaking. Nevertheless, she found time in the 1960s to earn a Master's in Social Work and to continue her lifelong work for peace and racial justice. After David retired in 1981, he and Jean settled into a rewarding retirement of travel and volunteer projects. They traveled all over the United States, including Hawaii. After David passed away in 1998, Jean continued to live in Cincinnati. She attended concerts and plays, sketched, dabbed in foreign languages, and shared many happy hours with her children and grandchildren. At the age of 80 she returned to Europe, after an absence of more than 50 years, for a two-week visit to some of her old haunts in France. Her mental faculties and intellectual curiosity remained undimmed as she aged, and she regularly attended all comers at Scrabble until the end of her long and fruitful life. Her gentle disposition, quiet sense of humor, and lifelong love of learning for its own sake continue to inspire her children and grandchildren and her many friends. Jean was preceded in death by her husband, David. She is survived by her three sons, Philip, and Thomas Stoffregen; her daughter, Emily Abernathy; and eight grandchildren.
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Join the Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts (FQA), and share your work with friends in this exciting quarterly, "typical and Shadows." Seeing short fiction and non-fiction, poetry, drawings, B.W.W. and process of AQA, you'll find a wide variety of writing. Create a new chapter in Quaker history! For more information, contact the Education Office at FQA, 800-220-0725, Extension 7223.

You may also visit our website to download the application form: www.fqa.org/education/index.htm and click on "Mary Jo Leigh/Anna Township Grants Application."

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Opportunities

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Friends Homes, Inc., founded by North Carolina Quakers, is the largest nonprofit Quaker-sponsored retirement community in the eastern United States. We have been providing retirement options since 1985. Both Friends Homes at Guilford and Friends Home at Woolwich are Quaker-sponsored retirement communities offering independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing care. Located in Greensboro, North Carolina, our communities are close to Guilford College and several friends groups. Enjoy the beauty of four seasons, as well as outstanding cultural, intellectual, and spiritual opportunities in an area where Quaker roots run deep. For information please call: (336) 729-9999, or write: Friends Homes, P.O. Box 1000, W. Fisher Avenue, Greensboro, NC 27410. Friends Homes, Inc. owns and operates communities dedicated to the letter and spirit of Equal Housing Opportunity. For more information: <www.friendshomes.org>.

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CALIFORNIA

ARCATA-11 a.m. 1920 Zeilinher, (707) 326-1948.

BERKELEY-Unprogrammed meeting. Worship, 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. 2151 Vine St. (510) 444-0720.

BERKELEY-Strawberry Creek, P.O. Box 5605, Berkeley, CA 94705. (510) 524-9186. Unprogrammed worship and study groups. 9:30 a.m. at the Berkeley Technology Academy, Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Derby Street.

OAKLAND WORSHIP GROUP-5 p.m., Sundays at the home of Pamela and Kent Johnson, 3709 McAVE. For more information call (510) 336-9650.

CHICO-9:30 to 10:15 a.m.; singing, 10:30 a.m.; unprogrammed worship, children's classes. Hemlock and 16th Street. (530) 345-3753.

CLAREMONT-Worship, 9:30 a.m. Sundays for children. 727 W. Harrison Ave., Claremont.

OAKLAND-For meetings: First Days, 9 a.m. 495 a.m. 345 L St. Visitors. (510) 332-8404.

FRESNO-Unprogrammed meeting, Sunday, 10 a.m. 2219 San Joaquin Ave., Parcel 624. (559) 237-4145.

GRASS VALLEY-Meeting, 6 p.m., discussion/sharing, 11 a.m. Worship, children's classes. Between Mendocino and Hwy 49.

HARRISON-10.

MARLOMA LONG BEACH-10 a.m. meeting place, 3657 Atlantic Ave. (562) 451-2525.

MONTEREY PENINSULA-Friends School of Monterey. First Days, 10 a.m. Phone: (831) 373-2800.

MARIN COUNTY-10 a.m. Meeting for worship, Center). For info call (415) 383-7575.

ORANGE-Weekly worship and adult study, Colorado St. and 10th Street, West Hollywood. For information call (323) 656-7501.

RIVERSIDE-Meeting for worship, 11 a.m. at 144 S. University Ave. Phone: (714) 771-6235.

SAFETY HAVEN-11 a.m. Meeting. First Days, Sundays, 10 a.m. Phone: (714) 559-4757.

SANTA CRUZ-Meeting, 10 a.m. 225 Royce St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060. (831) 459-1855.

SANTA MONICA-Meeting for worship, 11 a.m. 1440 Harbor Blvd. Phone: (310) 826-1744.

SAVANNAH-Weekly meeting for worship, 11 a.m. 317 E. Central Ave., Savannah, GA 31401. Phone: (912) 232-5754.

SAN FRANCISCO-Meeting, 9 a.m. at 1010 2nd St., San Francisco, CA 94110. Phone: (415) 496-5951.

SAN JOSE-Meeting of First Days, 11 a.m. Phone: (408) 295-0722.

SARASOTA-10 a.m. meeting place, 3825 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Kodog Arts Bldg. Worship, 10 a.m. Phone: (202) 352-1738.

SARASOTA-Weekly meeting for worship. For information, call (202) 327-7270.

SOUTH BEND-Meeting for worship, 10:30 a.m. at 838 E. Main St., South Bend, IN 46617. Phone: (219) 235-0731.

TALLAHASSEE-Sunday worship at 10 a.m.; midweek worship and Bible study. Phone: (850) 573-0033.

TAMPA-Meeting and First-day school, 10 a.m. 1502 W. Sihg Ave. Phone: (813) 253-3244. <www.tampaquakers.org>.

WINTER PARK-Meeting 10 a.m. Alumni House, Rollins College. Phone: (407) 894-9989.

WASHINGTON-10 a.m. Meeting, 3306 NE 42nd Ave., Seattle, WA 98105. Phone: (206) 524-1300.

ATHEMS-Unprogrammed worship and First-day school. 9 a.m. 3032 Locust Ave., Perryton in the parsonage of Coonose St. Methodist Church. (706) 533-2850.

ATLANTA-Worship and First-day school 10 a.m. 701 W. Howard Ave., Decatur, GA 30030. (404) 377-2474.

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Unprogrammed worship in 10 a.m. Friends meetinghouse, Cambridge, Corner Elysian Sq. and St. Mary's Sq., Cambridge, MA. Monthly worship morning on the third Sunday, 10:30 a.m. (207) 343-5684.

INDIANAPOLIS-North Meadow Circle of Friends, 1710 N. Talbot. Unprogrammed worship 10 a.m. Children's welcome. (317) 256-7652.


RICHMOND-Courthouse Meetinghouse, St. George's Cemetery Street Meetinghouse, on the campus of Earlham College, unprogrammed, 9:15 a.m. (765) 935-5448.

SOUTH BEND-Unprogrammed worship with concurrent First-day school, 10:30 a.m. (574) 255-5781.

VALPARAISO-Duneland Friends Meeting, Unprogrammed worship in South Service Bureau, 255 W. Lincroft Rd. (219) 926-7411.

WEST LAFAYETTE-Unprogrammed worship at 10 a.m. at 170 E. Stadium Ave., West Lafayette.

Iowa

AMES-Worship 10 a.m. Sunday, 121 S. Maple. (515) 232-2763.

DEERFIELD-Friendship Meeting, Deerfield, 611 Main St. (217) 238-2808.

NEWTON—Meeting 10 a.m. Every 1st Sunday of month. First-day school 9:30 a.m., Children’s worship at 10 a.m. Free. (319) 248-8833.

SOUTHERN IOWA—Meeting 10 a.m. First-day school 9:30 a.m., Youth meeting 10:30 a.m. All worship held at the Meetinghouse of the South Eastern Iowa Yearly Meeting, 431 Central Park Ave., Keokuk, IA. (319) 225-2400.

ORANGE CITY—Worship 10 a.m. 2nd Sunday of the month, First-day school 9:30 a.m., Call to worship 10 a.m. (712) 453-3885.

SIOUX FALLS—Meeting 10 a.m. with concurrent First-day School 9:30 a.m. First-day school closed for summer. (605) 334-4747.

SHELBYVILLE—Meeting 10 a.m. First-day school 9:30 a.m. (812) 949-2543.

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Our website is Westburyquakers.org.

Oxford- Unprogrammed worship and First day school, 10 a.m. (510) 523-1061.

Pennsylvania-

Philadelphia- Meeting for worship 10:30 a.m., for 1st and 4th Sundays at 10 a.m. at Lower Merion Presbyterian Church. Information: (215) 662-7633.

Haverford- Meeting for worship 10:30 a.m, for 1st and 4th Sundays at 10 a.m. at the Haverford Friends Meeting House. Information: (610) 662-0051.

MIDDLETOWN- Meeting for worship 10:30 a.m. and First-day school at 10 a.m. at Longwood Gardens. Information: (540) 476-2000.

Pennsylvania-}

 reads and First-day school 10:30 a.m. at 10 a.m. at the College Common Room, Box 292, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

March 2009 FRIENDS JOURNAL
An invitation

Resident Program
2009-2010

Guided study
Spirit-led discernment
Community support

Strengthen what is most alive within yourself!
Explore new practices, prepare for leadership or service. Discover and live into God's calling for you now.

Through daily community practices of Quaker worship, work, study, and service, Pendle Hill's Resident Program offers opportunities for spiritual deepening to all who seek personal and social transformation. Seekers, artists, activists, those on sabbatical... 

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2009-2010 Term Dates
Fall: October 2 - December 19
Winter: January 8 - March 20
Spring: April 2 - June 12

New!

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Spiritual Discernment in a Time of Change
Marcelle Martin, Carol Sexton, Walter Hjelt Sullivan
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Martha Kemper and Marcelle Martin
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Using writing, movement, voice, theater, drawing, guided meditation, and prayer, discover and express the deep passions of your life.

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800.742.3150 ext. 161
610.566.4507 ext. 161
dwalker@pendlehill.org

More information at www.pendlehill.org