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*“He showed me the ant hills they found. The way he spoke about the experience with wonderment was touching. I can see the impact of the great respect with which children are treated at Junior Gathering and it inspires me as a Quaker parent. Thank you for your ministry.”*

Sprout Parent

Happy Fall!

It's hard to believe we were at the University of Toledo just 2 short months ago. We thank you all for your hard and dedicated work during the week of July 1st. There were some awesome times, and some challenging times.

In the words of **parents**, in answer to the question, ‘What worked **well** for your children in Junior Gathering this year?’

- *I really can't speak highly enough of the work and attention y'all provide for the Acorns. Kindest Thanks.* Acorn Parent
- *The wonderful staff! They are so loving and helpful.* Pinecone Parent
- *Great staff! Fun activities! She was very happy to attend.* Sapling Parent
- *She connected with other kids and developed beautiful friendships. She was engaged with the different activities* Pinetrees Parent

In the words of **participants**, in answer to the question, ‘What was **great** about the Junior Gathering Program this year?’

- *I liked doing sidewalk chalk. I liked skipping. I liked making the Harry Potter fort. It was amazing!* Saplings Participant
- *My friends, swimming, crafts, big Parent, Ribbon, friends again and much much MORE!* Pinetrees Participant

- *I enjoyed all the friends and games and kites! All the freedom that we get.*

Oaks Participant

But Junior Gathering is more than children and parents. In the words of your **colleagues**, in answer to the question, ‘What was really great about working with Junior Gathering this year? What fed your spirit?’

- *Being surrounded by small Quakers.* Sprouts Staff
- *The camaraderie of the staff.* Family Place Staff
- *Junior Gathering Staff Worship was great as usual. I loved getting to know fellow staff.* Saplings Staff
- *They resisted a game I brought in on Day One, loved it on Day Two, and I saw them playing it independently by Day Three.* Pinetrees Staff
- *My co-leader was talented, warm, and funny, and guided the Oaks well. We worked well as a team. The Group Coordinators were welcoming and supportive.* Oaks Workshop Leader (morning staff)
- *I really loved working with my support group. It was great to see them bond with each other.* Oaks Evening Staff

We continue to look for ways to increase the attendance of youth and their families and welcome all suggestions. Please reach out to families in your Meeting and encourage them to come to the 2019 FGC Summer Gathering, at Grinnell College June 30 - July 6, 2019. We hope you plan to come. Please let us know if you are planning to attend and in what capacity.

In gratitude,

*Laura*

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As you all know, my retirement is imminent. This will be my last formal message to all of you. I hope you know how grateful I am for your service to Junior Gathering this year, and for some of you for many, many years. I truly believe that the children who attend Junior Gathering are the future of the Religious Society of Friends. If we can touch them in some small way, we have a better chance at a stronger future. Thank you for your support of me in this role, for the lovely party at the Gathering, for your sweet messages in my memory book, for the beautiful tablecloth and napkins, for the books, but most importantly, for your friendship.

I'll close with the song I wasn't able to sing on July 8: [The Gathering of Spirits](#).

In Love and Light,

*Patsy*

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