

QUAKER NEWSLETTER

GAINESVILLE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
702 NW 38th Street, Gainesville, FL 32607; (352) 372-1070

www.gainesvillequakers.org

It has been my experience that folks who have no vices have very few virtues.

Abraham Lincoln

Hold in the Light: Hap Taylor, Anne and Phil Haisley, Connie and Tim Ray, Arnold and Amy Von der Porten.

Calendar of Events: (online at www.gainesvillequakers.org)

Every Sunday: 11:00 am Meeting for Worship; 11:15 am First Day School

Every Monday: 5:30 pm Yoga with Gary

Every Monday: 7:30 pm Candlelight Witness at Bo Diddley Plaza to Support Immigrant Justice

Sunday, January 7

9:30 am Library committee

9:30 am Meetinghouse committee

Saturday, January 13:

Guatemala Friends Scholarship Dinner

Sunday, January 14

12:45 pm Meeting for Worship for Business

Tuesday, January 16

12:00 pm Friendly Lunch - at the Meeting House

Sunday, January 21

12:45 pm Earthcare Witness Committee

Wednesday, January 24

Deadline for newsletter items. Email to Bonnie Zimmer at gfquakernews@gmail.com

Saturday, January 27

9:00 am: The Great Invader Raider Rally

Sunday, January 28

9:40 am Peace and Social Concerns Committee

1:00 pm Bible Study

Friends are reminded that it is the responsibility of the entire community to assist with cleaning up the kitchen area after the social hour.

Saturday, January 13 Quaker Market Dinner

The first Quaker Market Dinner of the year will be held on January 13. The menu will consist of South and Central American foods. Proceeds from the January dinner will benefit the Guatemalan scholarship fund.

SEYM Winter Interim Business Meeting

SEYM WIBM and Michener Lecture will be held at the Orlando Meetinghouse on January 12 - 14. Executive committee will meet Friday evening and the winter business meeting will occur on Saturday. The Michener Lecture, presented this year by C. Wess Daniels, is entitled "**Remixing the Quaker Tradition: Renewal in a Participatory Culture.**"

Guatemala Friends Scholarship Program - PROGRESA

The scholarship program was founded by members of Guatemala's small unprogrammed meeting in 1973. Over the last decades it has grown from supporting one student in 1973 to 114 in 2008. It has grown since 1987 with the help of Redwood Forest Meeting in Santa Rosa which co-sponsors it by receiving financial support from a small number of Quaker Meetings and a large number of Quaker and non-Quaker friends. The Guatemala Meeting administers the co-clerk and staff whose mission is to "provide in-country educational and community opportunities in order to bring choice into the lives of poor Guatemalans and enable them to participate in their country's growth and development".

Who We Help – All of the students come from very poor families. Over 90 % are Mayan and the majority grew up in rural areas of the country. We support their higher education at public and private institutions within Guatemala. Very few of our students are able to obtain a higher education in their home communities. Some travel long distances in order to attend special "weekend programs". Others must leave their families and pay for room and board closer to the university. Sometimes they are working and are able to pay part of the expenses themselves. Sometimes their families are able to provide limited financial assistance. Often, however, they need us to cover all the expense. We meet each student's specific financial needs using a combination of scholarships and loans.

Something About Guatemala – The country is slightly smaller than Tennessee. It was the Mayan empire before its collapse in the 900's when it was taken over by the Spanish. It has three main regions: the cool highlands with the highest population, tropical area along the Pacific and Caribbean coasts, and the tropical jungle in Northern highlands. The Mayan (56% of the population) live below the poverty line and 71% are illiterate. (There are 22 different languages.) From 1960 to 1996 they endured a civil war where there was mass murder with 200,000 deaths. The indigenous peoples were picked out for special brutality by the U.S. backed government. On November 7, 2012, a 7.4 earthquake destroyed houses, schools, roads, and government buildings. Today the rural population has only 50% access to safe water and 50% adequate access to proper sanitation.

Some Students – To give you an idea of the needs of students and the community: Ana is a 25 year old single mother from the western highlands. In order to get to her small town one needs to travel 9 hours from Guatemala City. The population of her town is almost 100% indigenous and many don't speak Spanish, just the local language. Ana and her 2 year old son live with her parents and she shares the expenses of the household with her father, who works as small farmer. Ana works as a secretary in a health clinic and earns \$370, enough to cover the baby's expenses and the expenses of her 4 younger siblings, as well as putting food on the table.

Sunday, January 21: EarthCare Witness

Susan Nugent, a Climate Reality Project leader, will talk about the Citizens' Climate Lobby's approach to lobbying, which starts with building relationships, and calls for finding for areas of agreement before opening conversations with legislators.

Saturday, January 27: The Great Invader Raider Rally:

Give our local plants a chance. Gather at the meeting at 9:00 am on Saturday, January 27, 2018 in warm clothes, shoes that can get muddy, and prepare to collect exotic invasive plants and trash from our woods to make them a better place for the creatures that live there. With buckets, trash bags, and latex gloves provided by the City of Gainesville, we spend two hours enjoying the woods and each other's company while taking bright red berries off Coral Ardisia (*Ardisia crenata*) plants before digging them up or pulling them up by the roots. We collect the bottles, cans, food wrappers, balls and occasional oddities we come across. We bring them all back to put in garbage cans by the meeting mail box for the city to collect later in the day. We will have tickets available for a post-collection celebration after at Morningside Nature Park.

See also <http://www.cityofgainesville.org/ParksRecreationCulturalAffairs/NaturalResourcesandPrograms/NatureHeritageEvents.aspx>

Information on the Committee of Clerks for the Meeting

The Nominating Committee proposed that the Meeting be clerked by a committee. That proposal was approved at the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on December 9, 2017. The Committee of Clerks met on December 17 (two members were unable to attend) for a period of worship and to develop a basic organizational plan. While the details are still being finalized, some of the tasks of the clerk have been assigned to various members of the committee. Further details will be available in an upcoming newsletter. One of the important goals of the committee is to insure that not only is the business of the Meeting conducted in good order, but that continuity is maintained throughout the year.

Bonnie Zimmer will act as the contact person for the Meeting. The email listed on our website already goes to her and that will continue.

Agenda items for Business will be emailed to Annie McPherson, as well as the recording clerk, to ensure that they are included on the agenda.

The clerks for the first nine months of 2018 are scheduled to be:

January	Jean Larson	June	Annie McPherson
February	Bonnie Zimmer	July	(usually no meeting)
March	Peter Harrell	August	Bonnie Zimmer
April	Jean Larson	September	Annie McPherson
May	Bonnie Zimmer		

Meeting Holiday Party

We held our annual Christmas Party on December 17 at the rise of Meeting. After a selection of delicious food, we sang Christmas carols and talked about times when Quakers did not celebrate 'the day called Christmas.' David Cook and Annie McPherson provided music.



Quaker Organizations

From time to time we provide information on various Quaker organizations. Some of them are financially supported by the Meeting; others are not. This month we are providing information on an organization helping to provide clean water.

Friendly Water for the World: friendlywater.net

Friendly Water for the World is now taking on "the long walk to water." In January, Friendly Water held a seven-country training in Gisenyi, Rwanda, to train people to fabricate rainwater catchment systems using ferrocement tanks. These tanks—from 1,000 to 25,000 liters—cost a fraction as much as plastic ones, last much longer, and can be tailored to the exact size needed. Smaller ones—called "water hives"—can be built in a single day and are useful in wetter

climates where nonetheless rainwater must be captured, or for hygiene stations at schools. Sizes are tailored to carry a family through the dry season. Besides the country representatives, Friendly Water trained two teams of unemployed youth in Rwanda who will travel throughout east and central Africa to provide training assistance.

Combined with BioSand water filters, Friendly Water will now be able to provide the gold standard in both water access and quality, employing hundreds of people in the process. In two years, Friendly Water's partner group in Rwanda, Hand in Hand for Development (formerly God in Us-Africa), has trained 49 groups of unemployed youth and widows (often with HIV), totaling more than 700 people, who have fabricated and sold 18,500 BioSand filters, providing clean water to a quarter million people.

New from QuakerBooks

Beginning January 1, 2018, QuakerBooks will no longer be at Pendle Hill. It appears that Quaker texts will primarily be available through Amazon. The stock at Pendle Hill has been sold, except for a few titles. Pendle Hill pamphlets will still be available through Pendle Hill.

***An Indigenous People's History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz**

The first history of the United States told from the perspective of indigenous peoples

(Review by Friends Journal, January 2017)

Today in the United States, there are more than five hundred federally recognized Indigenous nations comprising nearly three million people, descendants of the fifteen million Native people who once inhabited this land. The centuries-long genocidal program of the US settler-colonial regimen has largely been omitted from history. Now, for the first time, acclaimed historian and activist Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz offers a history of the United States told from the perspective of Indigenous peoples and reveals how Native Americans, for centuries, actively resisted expansion of the US empire.

With growing support for movements such as the campaign to abolish Columbus Day and replace it with Indigenous Peoples' Day and the Dakota Access Pipeline protest led by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* is an essential resource providing historical threads that are crucial for understanding the present. In *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, Dunbar-Ortiz adroitly challenges the founding myth of the United States and shows how policy against the Indigenous peoples was colonialist and designed to seize the territories of the original inhabitants, displacing or eliminating them. And as Dunbar-Ortiz reveals, this policy was praised in popular culture, through writers like James Fenimore Cooper and Walt Whitman, and in the highest offices of government and the military. Shockingly, as the genocidal policy reached its zenith under President Andrew Jackson, its ruthlessness was best articulated by US Army general Thomas S. Jesup, who, in 1836, wrote of the Seminoles: "The country can be rid of them only by exterminating them."

Spanning more than four hundred years, this classic bottom-up peoples' history radically reframes US history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.

***Being Hindu: Understanding A Peaceful Path in a Violent World* by Hindol Sengupta**

(Review by Jo Ann Lordahl)

Some books make you feel good. They reinforce your vague ideas. Some books name an ideal you'd like to see. Or share completely new information. Such is the brand new Hindol Sengupta's, *Being Hindu: Understanding A Peaceful Path in a Violent World*.

Talk about inclusiveness and allowing each their own:

- Swami Vivekananda felt that religion was something personal and unique to every person. He emphasized: "The end and aim of all religions is to realize God. The greatest of all training is to worship God alone." If each man [or woman] chose his [or her] own ideal and stuck to it, all religious controversy would vanish.

Not only were my Quaker sensitivities not disturbed by Being Hindu I found myself happy reading of Hindol Sengupta's personal journey and learning of his prayer from when he was a

little boy: "God, please give me devotion, (good) intelligence / Set my mind on you, grant me wisdom."

A take-away for me (Jo Ann) is to focus on my own spirituality, own wisdom, and how I can grow a better me in a better world. And that I'm to do my part in creating this better world.

A Walk in the Quaker Woods — Jean Larson, with photographs by Bill Mitchell

(We didn't manage the walk this month, because of Jean's finishing the end of the semester and getting ready for Christmas. Here are some pictures taken with my new macro lens.)



Scorpiontail (*Heliotropium angiospermum*) in front of the meeting



I don't remember what this is. It is blooming nicely (or, at least, was when I took this) below the top end of the ramp in front of the meetinghouse.



Beach sunflower (*Helianthus debilis*) near the foot of the front ramp.

Noyau vine or Alamo vine. According to the Atlas of Florida Plants, this is now Distimake dissectus, previously Merremia dissecta. This was previously listed as nonnative, but is now considered native (but 'aggressive').

There is a persistent colony under the hackberry tree near the corner of 38th St. and 7th Ave.; now I can let it go.



Queries for the First Month:

Are our meetings for worship held in expectant waiting for divine guidance, with a living silence in which we feel drawn together in the Light by the presence of God? ■ Do we respond to the Spirit's prompting to minister, whether in silence, through the spoken word, or through action after the meeting for worship? ■ Are we sensitive to one another's needs in meeting for worship? ■ Are the spiritual gifts within the meeting fostered and encouraged? ■ Are our meetings accessible and welcoming to everyone? Are our meetings a source of strength and guidance for daily living? ■ Is the vocal ministry in our meetings exercised under the leading of the Spirit?

Advices for the First Month:

Be prompt and diligent in attendance at meetings. ■ Come to meeting with expectant hearts and minds prepared for communion with God. ■ Be faithful, be patient, and persevere in our service as messengers of truth. ■ To everyone is given a share of the responsibility for the meeting for worship, whether through silence or through the spoken word. ■ Quiet our hearts and minds for worship prior to entering the meeting room, so the whole group can be knit together in spiritual fellowship. ■ Do not assume that vocal ministry is never to be our part. ■ Be ready to speak under the leading of the Light. ■ Learn to recognize when a message felt within is from God and if it is a message intended for the group to hear. ■ Pray that our ministry may arise from deep experience of the Divine. ■ Let our spoken ministry be audible and free from unnecessary words. ■ Avoid speaking in a manner that brings a sense of discussion or debate. ■ Allow for a period of silence after a message has been spoken, so the group can reflect on what has been said and continue to be grounded in silent worship. Overly long or too-frequent messages can hinder the worship of others present. ■ Receive the ministry of others in a tender spirit. Treat every newcomer as one sent by God.

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