

FRIENDS IN SAN ANTONIO

7052 North Vandiver at Eisenhower

March 2014

Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities

AGLI, in Africa, is just developing this program which takes ten people from one side of the conflict with 10 people from the other side and has a three day workshop to restore normal relationships between the two sides. In Rwanda, this means Tutsi survivors of the genocide and the families of the Hutu perpetrators of the genocide. In Burundi, this also means 10 Tutsi and 10 Hutu in each workshop.

Philosophy and Approach:

The HROC program is based on a set of key principles and assumptions. First, HROC believes that in every person, there is something good. This is a radical notion in societies where most members have witnessed neighbors and even family members committing gruesome acts of violence.

Secondly, the program is based on the belief that each person and society has the inner capacity to heal, and an inherent intuition of how to recover from trauma. Healing from trauma requires that a person's inner good and wisdom is sought and shared with others. It is through this effort that trust can begin to be restored.

Third, both victims and perpetrators of violence experience trauma and its after-effects.

Fourth, the violence in Rwanda and Burundi was experienced at both a personal and community level. Therefore, efforts to heal and rebuild the country must also happen at both the individual and community level.

Lastly, healing from trauma and building peace between groups are deeply connected; it is not possible to successfully do one without the other. Trauma healing and peace building efforts must happen simultaneously.

HROC slowly builds trust within the group. It is common for participants to be wary of attending workshops fearing they might be a trap where they will be attacked, sent back to prison, or killed. Through experiential activities and cooperative exercises, participants begin to relax. Ground rules are set to increase the "Sense of Safety," the first stage.

The second stage is "Remembrance and Mourning." There are two Rwandan proverbs that emphasize the importance of speaking out about one's pain: "The family that does not talk, dies" and "The man who is sick

Calendar

2. Sunday
Potluck lunch at 11.30.
9. Sunday
Forum – Imagine San Antonio: Improving the Quality of Life in Our City .
16, Sunday.....
Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.
19, Wednesday
Compassionate San Antonio Symposium 9 a.m., Oblate School.
23, Sunday
Forum – The Depth and Insight of Buddhist Meditation, with Bo Tep.
26. Wednesday
Midweek Meeting, at Gary's home, 7.00pm.
29, Saturday,
Property workday 9am - 1 pm, lunch provided.
30, Sunday
No Forum

must tell the whole world.”

Traditionally, “Rwandans and Burundians must tell the whole world.” Traditionally Rwandans and Burundians talk about their losses and talk through their grief with family and neighbors. Broken trust and dismantled families have impeded that intuitive process of healing, but it is widely accepted in the cultures here as an important step in the journey toward healing.

In the workshops a forum is created for participants to pay tribute to their losses and to share their grief with others. This process helps to humanize the “other” thereby laying the foundation for the third and final stage, “Reconnection.” Many program participants report having felt very isolated in their grief and their reactions to the trauma they have experienced. The workshops become an important first step in realizing that they are not alone. Those who seek the second level of training to become peer counselors begin to see how they can use their own painful experiences to help others. As one recent participant wrote in her evaluation:

“ I was thinking that I have nothing in me, but I found that I can even use my wounds to heal other people and I found that there is a good thing in every person even though he/she is full of trauma and problems.” – a genocide orphan

Another important aspect of reconnection is the process of rebuilding relationships across the lines of “Hutu” and “Tutsi”, thereby strengthening the fabric of communities torn apart by a long history of violence.

Methodology Grassroots workshops are AGLI’s primary methodology. Our workshops are experiential, active and evocative, involving the participants as agents in their learning process. Each lesson aims to teach on three levels: the heart or emotional level, the head or intellectual level, and the hand, or practical level. Using popular education methodology, the workshop content is drawn from the participants’ own lives, acknowledging that participants are the experts about what is needed in their own communities.

Dave Zarembka, African Great Lakes Initiative



Personal News

What a difference a week makes. We’ve been sick and now are well, two weeks late..

Bill has sold his motorbike to Dan and Ken formally handed over the Parafernalialia of Treasurership to Bill. Watch out for a change in the format of the monthly report. And listen out for Dan. Marian tells us that her daughter Susan, who has had such severe medical problems, is now in comfortable quarters, and being cared for. Dan is helping.

Ashley has sent out a message: “MODEL NEEDED for a 1940's project! My challenge is to recreate the look of an actress from that decade.” He’ll be [well, was] doing a photo-shoot on March 6th. Prepare your well-groomed and toned hair. And those actresses are in their 90s now, so we’re all eligible.

John has photos on his facebook page of the “drones” he is building. Heli-things, a frame wheeled vehicle. No robots. John can’t you design a robot to make the coffee every week?

A small group of Friends meets for midweek meeting at Gary and Vivian’s home at 7.00 p.m. There’s room for more – come on Wednesday (once Woden’s Day) the 26th.

Sharon has settled into a comfortable home in Berkeley and found the local Meeting. She has sent a bell to call us to Forum. Nominating Committee, who should ring the bell?

Henry is in Pennsylvania searching for a home where he can retire. Can we come to visit? But not right now. Perhaps in another few months.

And Carol B is comfortably settled in her apartment in La Fiesta, conveniently close by.

Business Meeting

Meeting for Business commenced with:
*"If I am not for myself, then who will be for me?
And if I am only for myself, then what am I?
And if not now, when?"*

---Hillel the Elder, 32 BCE – 7 CE

Leilah Powell, Religious Education committee clerk said that there is no schedule of children's queries since the children vary every week. The children are working on a play based on the book "The Quilt Maker's Gift." to be presented in May. The book is being used to direct the weekly discussions / queries.

Tessa proposed a way of hiring childcare staff - after long discussion it was decided that Bill and Leila lead, ensuring that Friends' concerns are included in the decisions. If a nanny agency is used, it will take care of the necessary background check.

The M&O report was by Tessa, and Suzanne, who presented the State of the Meeting Report," including a poster that is part of it.. This will be left up in the Meeting room before going to yearly meeting. Tessa and Suzanne were thanked for their work.

The Outreach report was read by Beth. The committee proposes that hospitality be separated from the Outreach committee. The clerk of the meeting will get together with the nominating committee to discuss this.

James asks that updates to the web site should be sent in a timely fashion; as it is updated monthly.

There was little of note in the treasurer's report except that two large contributions had been made in January and an unexpected distribution from Friends Fiduciary had been received.

The Property and Nominating Committee reports were postponed to next month.

There will be a property workday on Saturday, March 29th, 9 to 1, lunch provided. Bring your own tractor and plowman.

Meeting closed in silence.

Visit of Bo Tep

Bo Tep will be coming to speak to us on Sunday the 23rd of this month. He was born and raised in a Buddhist family in Cambodia. He became a refugee in the US in 1966. He continued to study and practice the Buddha Teachings of the Theravada, Mahayana, Pure Land, Vajrayana traditions, and other wisdom teachings. He is an oblate of the Community of Joseph at Santa Clara University since 2008; ([//communityofjoseph.wordpress.com](http://communityofjoseph.wordpress.com)), a community of contemplative with interfaith orientation (Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Islam, Native American...)

Bo Tep was employed for 28 years in the telecommunication industry.

He completed his Masters of Arts in Management in 2000 and his Master of Art in Human Development in 2003 at JFK University. In 2004 he completed his PH.D in Human and Organization Systems and was inducted as a Creative Longevity and Wisdom Fellow in 2005, The Fielding Graduate University.

His passion and devotion is following the Buddhist way in mindfulness and insight. He has coordinated many retreats in Pure Land Buddhism, centering practice and mindful meditation. He has served as superintendent of the Concord Buddhist Fellowship, was president of the Bay District Dharma School Teacher's League and a contributor to the Wheel of Dharma, the Buddhist Churches of America publications.

His practice has only intensified since retirement and most recently he completed a retreat on, "Ignatius and Buddha in Conversation."

He came to know Ruth on his arrival in America and visits her regularly, joining us in

Meeting on these occasions.

Miscellany

Given that we are Friends, are we therefore BoyFriends and GirlFriends?

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We have recently seen on PBS TV, "The Amish Shunned." This is the story of seven Amish who chose to leave their rural communities for the challenge of the modern city. As a result they faced shunning, the rejection by their communities of any further contact. They were ambivalent, missing the closeness of their communities in the impersonality of the city.

Quakers have not been immune to this solution to the problem of drawing up boundaries around communities which are "different." Two hundred years ago Friends who "married out," finding love with outsiders, were "read out of Meeting." Some of our own members would have been read out by this standard. In fact, this Meeting might not exist. This is not a new problem. Those Friends of yore discovered the same, that their practice threatened their very existence, and stopped it. Marrying out brings new Friends in as often as it drives older ones out.

And the Amish had an escape valve. Shunning was for limited periods, after which the leavers could return and rejoin their communities, not always successfully.

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We see that Sufi Muslims have been attacked in Pakistan. There is a sense in which Sufis occupy a position in Islam like Quakers in Christianity. They are mystics, but Sufi seekers after God must practice solitude, silence, sleeplessness, and hunger, follow the fast and prayer disciplines required by Islam, have a correct creed, and "turn away from sins, love of this world, the love of company and renown, obedience to satanic impulse, and the promptings of the lower self." Service to the needy is required, under the direction of a master. Masters are important. Western Sufis have mixed-gender meetings with a lower emphasis on the Quran.

Ataturk banned Sufism in Turkey in his zeal for modernizing. There have been many recent attacks on Sufi mosques, shrines, etc., in Sunni Pakistan. Their persecution is vastly greater than that experienced by Quakers, 300 years ago. And they are much more strongly bound by such Islamic codes as the sharia, the law laid down by Mohamed.

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Three peace activists, one an 84-year old nun, were arrested in February for breaking and entering a nuclear storage site that contains the United States's stockpile of weapons-grade uranium. It was clearly not too difficult to do, though terrorists fortunately did not discover this first. The news sparked a vigorous exchange of views, and epithets, on the Washington Post web. It is sad that the U.S. still feels it needs nuclear weapons for protection. Or is it for intimidation, another term for law and order?

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Watch out. Brackenridge Park tells us that we could be harboring skunks, coyotes, raccoons, bobcats and even deer. But it seems to mean we should enjoy their company. Leilah, we have seen a coon walk past our committee meeting in the library once, regarding us critically and walking on. Had it been a skunk we might have given our own critical glare. (Not having Catherine, Carolyn, Lauren or Piper there, who would probably have run outside to welcome it.)

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Mary Taylor Previte was interned by the Japanese in a camp in China at age 9. She says, of catastrophes that destroy everything, "War and hate and violence never open the way to peace. Weihsien shaped me. I will carry Weihsien in my heart for ever."

We see this in Syria. Whoever wins will inherit a country destroyed, in part by their own hands.

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The Nicene Creed was drawn up in Nicea in 325. It had a pretty clear purpose, to define those who disagreed with it as non-Christian, in particular those who believed Arius's creed. Arius held that Jesus was created human, not divine. This threatened the belief in the Trinity. We think George Fox would not have passed the Nicene judgment as Christian.
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Funny, back there – Woden's Day. But that's the reason early Friends took to calling it Third day, and objecting to calling their meeting day after the Sun, also a god. Nobody else took it up, so Friends became strange people, speaking in different words from anyone else. We remember a stickler in Illinois who recorded a message on the phone explaining "Firstday classes," and that "Yearly Meeting" would be held on fourth Firstday of Sixth Month. Did any caller understand what he was talking about?  
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We are short of water. The question is, where are we to find more water? This is a question which has faced cities at various times, but usually with answers. In my own city of Plymouth, Sir Francis Drake constructed a "leat" in 1591 to carry water from the river Meavy in the higher lands of Dartmoor. Plymouth must have been short of water at that time, but the leat, perhaps periodically improved, apparently provided enough for the next three centuries. In 1898 a new reservoir farther up on Dartmoor was opened to satisfy the city's lack of water. It still operates, with a "service reservoir" nearer the city. As much as the city drank it and washed everything with it, the heavens replenished the water in Burrator. But where is San Antonio to find enough water when the heavens refrain from a new supply?

Autumn song

orange woods red woods yellow and gold
blaze
aged autumnal children
sigh at open graves
not knowing why
the heart must bear the cold caress of falling leaves
and all held close must fade

Mark H

Wise Words

"In the long run the people who only do that for which they get paid will also never get paid for more than for that which they really do." Halford Reddish.

"I know everything there is to know about law and politics. Now I should like to know something about real life." Sir Hartley Shawcross.

"If Moses had been a committee the Israelites would still be in Egypt." Viscount Massereene. [Friends' committees?]

"There really ought to be a law to prevent converts from one church in Christendom to another from writing a book about it for at least three years, which might give them time to reflect that, however awful their old love was, it did train them to know our Lord and to say our prayers." R.L. in *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*.

"Frontiers between people are not frontiers which can divide Christian communities, and, according to God's will, there are meant to be no walls of separation in the midst of mankind which

belongs to God. That is why we want to testify in the world, and to proclaim when people ask where they should go. We must finally come towards each other, rather than marching against each other.” Martin Niemoller.

From *Friends Journal* July 13 1957.

Compassionate San Antonio?

On Wednesday 19th of March, there will be a symposium at the Whitley Conference Center at Oblate School of Theology from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Diego Bernal, Imam Omar Shakir, Patti Radle, and Cappy Lawton will be “Thought Catalysts.” Following each, there will be table conversations among participants.

No pre-registration is needed. Registration starts at 8 a.m. with a suggested door donation of \$10 to cover expenses and lunch, catered by The Chow Train.

By the end of the day it is hoped to have a concrete plan for San Antonio to be recognized as a world class compassionate city.

Which must presumably mean increasing the amount of compassion shown here every day by all of us.

The P.E.A.C.E Initiative

The mission of the P.E.A.C.E Initiative is to educate about domestic violence issues, to build collaborative partnerships to this end and to train people to reduce violence. It works at community organizing, advocacy, and systems change work with the media, artists, policy makers, survivors, community leaders, etc. The Meeting is a member of the Initiative.

The Initiative works in a variety of ways to educate the public, including college classrooms. It has worked with women’s organizations to learn about the extent of family violence, and it has engaged men to encourage responsible fatherhood. It has worked with first-time offenders to promote healthy relationships and reduce recidivism. And it has worked to improve the criminal and civil response to domestic violence. It is a positive force in San Antonio life.

Here is a list of phone numbers it provides for helpful resources:

SAPD Emergency	911
SAPD Non-emergency	207-SAPD
SAPD Special Victims Unit	207-2141
Women’s Shelter	733-8810
Family Justice Shelter	208-6800
Batterer’s Program	930-3669
Child/Elder Abuse	1-800-252-5400

It has changed its web address to www.thepeaceinitiative.net.

Best Choices in Fish

Many of us are not quite ready for the full vegetarian commitment. We still enjoy fish in our diet, but which fish? The Environmental Defense Fund sends a pocket-size list for shoppers.

Best are “healthy, well managed populations, where fishing or farming methods cause little harm to the environment.”

Worst are “overfished or caught or farmed in ways that do considerable harm to the environment.”

EDF “has a direct stake in some fisheries. They partner with these fishermen to improve management & restore our oceans”:

Best Choices: Alaska halibut & salmon, Albacore tuna [US & Canada], Arctic Char, Atlantic

mackerel; Clams, mussels, oysters, scallops [farmed], Oregon shrimp, Pacific sardines, Snow, stone or Dungeness crab [US] & Trout [farmed US].

Worst Choices: Atlantic salmon [farmed] Bluefin tuna, Caviar [imported], Grouper [imported] Mahimahi [imported], Marlin, Orange Roughy, Shrimp, & Snapper [imported, & [my favorite] Swordfish.

EDF Choices: Chesapeake blue crab, Grouper [Gulf of Mexico], Haddock & Hake [New England], Pacific rockfish & sole, Pollock & Redfish {NE} Red snapper[Gulf], Sablefish/Black cod.

Farmed vs wild? According to this list, it depends on where. So another reason to ask at the fish counter or restaurant. If the fish is not labeled, here are some easy questions to set your mind at rest: is it wild-caught or farm-raised? What country or area is it from? If wild, how was it caught? Your server may not have all the answers, but it helps to let them know you care. The more of us who ask will send a conservation message that we'd like to see more sustainable seafood choices.

Gretchen

Gardening Classes

Leilah suggests we see the list of gardening classes at, or starting from, the Botanical Gardens, at <http://www.sabot.org/ama/orig/At a Glance Spring 2014 rev.pdf>:

Such as:

Texas Tough Landscapes Series

The benefits of replacing turf grass with other options, beautiful perennials.

A garden that will thrive in our climate.

A beautiful Japanese garden of your own --

The superpowers of native plants!

Drip Irrigation is such a "Water Wise" practice

Tai chi uses gentle flowing movements

Add beautiful and useful herbs

Paint watercolors of flowers and plants.

Family Crafts:

Recyclable Plant Pots

Planters from repurposed household items.

Why some plants have pungent odors

Savor an edible and useful landscape!

The aesthetic power of flowers.

Landscape design issues

Landscapes to thrive in a hot climate.--

Enjoy watching butterflies, birds and other animals.

Enjoy birds in native habitats,

Explore the Texas Native Trail with a Master Naturalist! Through Hill Country, and South and East Texas.

Detroit Friends School

Carol R sends us this note: Although it is a little after the season, I think this note from my Uncle, Hali Giessler (former Headmaster, Friends School in Detroit) can apply at any time of the year and of life – “When we were first married, Dot and I made contributions at the end of the year from funds ‘left over.’”

We later realized that this could not fill the need. Together, we began to read reports of services rendered by agencies, committees and groups that worked to promote peace, justice and equality, and to reduce hunger, poverty and poor health, and made decisions about our giving early, and lived on what was left. “ From the school’s History:

“An inspirational man, an accomplished judge and a parent that only settled for the best, has left his mark at Friends School in Detroit. Founder and African- American pioneer, Judge Wade H. McCree, Jr.'s legacy continues decades later.

When the McCrees moved from Boston to Detroit in 1947 with their first child, Kathleen, finding a school that mirrored their values was one of the their top priorities. In 1961, a family friend pre-registered Kathleen at a private school. On her first day of 8th grade, the school learned that Kathleen was a woman of color and she was then denied admission.

Several similarly concerned families and friends of the McCree's were outraged at the injustice. Inspired, the friends and families formed a committee to approach the Quakers to establish a school that would welcome any child, regardless of race. And in 1965, McCree and his wife, Dores McCrary McCree, and others founded Friends School in Detroit.”

A note added below says that “The Religious Society of Friends has 85 schools in the United States and more than 1,500 worldwide. President Barack Obama's daughters, Malia and Sasha, attend Sidwell Friends School in Washington D.C.

Judge McCree has said, ‘Friends School in Detroit is an urban school that draws parents and children from all walks of life, as it remains one of the true anchors in Lafayette Park. I think one of the biggest attractions is that it is not restricted to affluence and that creates a rich diversity. Its doors are open to all.’”

The school was opened by Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting in inner Detroit after being approached by the Detroit families, some of whom had been educated in Friends’ schools. [Janet and Ken were at that Quarterly Meeting and saw it decide that every level of the school should be fully inter-racial, students, teachers, administrators, and office staff.]

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What did the Quaker ghost say to the Anglican ghost?

-Do you believe in Quakers? --

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Gretchen’s Forum:

If I were an animal, what would my life be like? Thoughts of three Friends::

My life would be wet, scary, fun, food hunting, color blind, gills working, good hiding places, migrating, survival, following currents, staying with the school, having a little brain, no sense of God(?), not knowing future.

A gibbon, swinging, grasping, calling, through great trees, hearing, feeding, eating fruit, high, through space.

I would be a squirrel. I’d store food for the winter, find and make cozy a living space, and view other animals from a distance. There would be cold days when I’d go exploring briefly . . .

Who could have known we’d be so different?

Meeting for Worship is held on Sunday at 10 a.m., followed by refreshments and a Forum discussion at 11.30, usually lasting until about 12.45. Children are invited to join worship for the first fifteen minutes, after which they may go to join with the Young Friends program. Child care is available during Forum.

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Meeting telephone for meeting times or to ask for other information: (210) 945-8456