

FRIENDS IN SAN ANTONIO

7052 North Vandiver at Eisenhower

JUNE 2017

AFSC

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), one of the best known and most respected Quaker organizations, is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Quakerbooks is delighted to feature Greg Barnes' hot off the press history of the AFSC.

A Centennial History of the American Friends Service Committee

Devised in 1917 as a means of providing young Quaker males and other pacifists alternate wartime service, the American Friends Service Committee has gone on to become, in the 21st century, a major peace-building and community-building organization.

Gregory Barnes's centennial history consists three major sections parts:

Part I explores the AFSC's early and occasionally heroic service in rebuilding France and feeding German and Russian children at the climax of World War I, followed by its unprecedented feeding in Spain of refugees on both sides of that country's civil war and similar relief efforts in Depression-torn Appalachia, and more.

Part II explores the AFSC's often-controversial efforts in the period 1950-1990 to bring justice to the underserved both overseas and in domestic arenas.

Part III focuses on the modern organization's shift in focus to work behind the scenes in lessening ethnic and other tensions, such as work on immigrants' rights at home, alternative-to-violence projects in Africa, youth exchanges between Cuba or Puerto Rico and the United States, and service in "unlikely places".

A Centennial History of the American Friends Service Committee also includes maps, photos, bibliography, and a thorough index.

Available today at QuakerBooks & More!

Calendar

2, Friday, FCNL visit to Sen. Cornyn re immigration., 2.00 pm

4. Sunday Potluck lunch at 11.30 a.m..

11. Sunday Forum – FMSA & Sanctuary 11.30 am.

18. Sunday..... Meeting for Business, 11.30 am.

25, Sunday Forum – Topic to be announced.

28. Wednesday Midweek Meeting, 7.00, Gary's home.



And FCNL! – FCNL’s capital campaign is already helping engage young adults, expand our presence on Capitol Hill, and increase the effectiveness of our Quaker lobbying in Washington, DC. Now more than ever, our country needs the principled, nonpartisan, Quaker voice that FCNL brings to promote peace, justice, and a sustainable planet. Andrew Silva: Andrew@fcnl.org or 202-903-2526.

Personal News

Bill W told us Jocelyn was graduating on May 13 from the University of Kansas with her master’s degree in museum studies. Others may address her as Master Jocelyn, but to Friends she’s still just our own Jocelyn. James G has returned to meeting after his illness.

Crystal R drew a poster which won an award from the State Science Fair. Congratulations, Crystal! Gretchen appreciated all the help of Friends and volunteers for the Quaker Festival!

We would like to know your leadings on the subjects covered in Friendly conversations and in this newsletter. Please don’t hesitate to write to us at jksouthwood@grande.com . net

Friends Festival, 2017

“Every year just keeps getting better.” Faith Hightower

This sentiment seems to sum up the experience we shared, with the exception of the two who took care of the children. They expected four volunteer students when only one showed up. The other negative was an accident in which a helper was scalded, but fortunately a registered nurse was on hand to treat the injury. Other than these, and a visit from the city Health Dept., it was a notable success.

The Interfaith Welcome Coalition, the Peace Center, RAICES, and Celebration Circle were all represented with tables and handouts for fair-goers. A new addition was SNIPSA, an animal rescue group, which had three adorable puppies to tempt us to adopt or foster their dogs. The children’s playground under the trees provided simple games, face painting and a garden to dig in, as well as the farm animal petting zoo and pony rides. On the last ride, Evelyn, Suzanne’s granddaughter, ran up calling, “Take me! Take me!” She got the ride.

We earned \$1120.81 [before ex-

penses], an increase of \$300 over last year, and the response from vendors and visitors was gratifying. The addition of hot food for lunch was a big hit, with Friends and visitors sitting at tables under the tree. As last year, the pony rides drew many families who wandered over to the tents as well. Guest vendors, Urban Farm Stand, Soil/Nature and Munch On all did well in sales and contributed 15% to the Meeting.

The sense of the evaluation was to hold another Festival in 2018, with questions of the date [May is hot, so maybe a different month would be better] and location [we could move down to the breeze way for shade and ease of set-up and serving]. These questions will be resolved in January, 2018, when we ask Friends if there is enough enthusiasm to go forward.

Re-Centering the SA Community

San Antonio peaceCENTER’s planning a reCentering for Community on Thursday, June 8, 6-8 pm, at Rock House at the Oblate School of Theology, on Oblate Drive just west of San Pedro. It is a *Peace Potluck,* free and open to the Public. The peaceCENTER has decided to create a monthly reCentering for Community.

“Everyone is invited to bring a simple offering of food to share. Given the context of our mutual times, Community is essential in holding together the center of our beings with the Being of the Center of all things.”

Business Meeting for May

Meeting for Business commenced with silent worship. The Treasurer then gave his report, which principally was of an increase in the value of Meeting’s funds with Friends Fiduciary. An unexpectedly early bank termination of its monthly return had prevented the inclusion of some April income and expenses,

which will appear in next month's report.

The Property Committee's report was given by Bill S, and it principally concerned various tree problems. Meetin approved expenditure of \$980 for the necessary work. Estimtes for repair of roof decking on the meetingroom are awaited. Graffiti and a mess apparently left by an ovrnight sleeper were removed.

Gretchen gave a report on the Quaker Fair, which had resulted in income of \$1121 for immigrant relief. The experience was better than last year and led to an enthisiastic feeling that it should be repeated next year. Details of income from the various activities were given. Few problems were experienced and several suggestions for changes will be discussed.

The Spiritual Deepening program will complete its current fcus this month and will continue in September. The matter of building accommodation for a resident Friend was raised and will be refered to the appropriate committee..

Meeting closed in silent worship.

Miscellany

News from Austin Tan Cerca La Frontera: At the same time that the Texas House of Representatives was passing SB4, also known as the "anti-sanctuary cities" bill, four women from the Comité Fronterizo de Obrer@s drove up from Piedras Negras and Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, Mexico on a delegation to Austin. Given the political turmoil on both sides of the border, their visit brought hope and also a sense of history: struggles against injustice span generations.

During their trip to Austin, they spoke at a standing room only forum on a binational panel with immigrant and labor rights activists, organizers, and scholars from Mexico and the U.S. at the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies.

And on the 16th: Last week, the Trump administration notified Congress of its intent to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), triggering a 90-day countdown to NAFTA renegotiations between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. While Trump's

corporate cabinet prepares to renegotiate NAFTA, we're ready to stand with maquiladora workers on both sides of the border.

Right now, a delegation of U.S. students, labor, and migrant rights activists are on their way to northern Mexico to meet with the workers who have been fighting an uphill battle for jobs with dignity under NAFTA.

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And from Peace Direct: Escalating violence and the threat of famine in Somalia will likely push more people to desperation. On the brink of survival, joining armed groups who offer money and shelter can seem like the best option.

Feeding starving people saves lives. Solving war saves more. Together, we can help local people tackle the roots of conflict, stop war and build long-lasting peace.

[www.peacedirect.org](http://www.peacedirect.org).

Peace Direct offers ways to work and earn, diverting young people from the lures of Al Shabab.

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Quakerbooks recommends *The Firebrand and the First Lady: Portrait of a Friendship: Pauli Murray, Eleanor Roosevelt, and the Struggle for Social Justice*

It is the story of Pauli Murray, "an activist and lawyer, a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, a member of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, the first African American to earn a JSD from Yale Law School, provider of Ruth Bader Ginsburg with the argument used to persuade the Supreme Court that the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution protects not only blacks but also women, the first black woman ordained a priest by the Episcopal Church in 1976, and who would today be identified as transgendered." What more would she need to be memorable?

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What do we mean by peace? In 1917, when there was a call for arming to protect democracy, Friends called for peace. But it was not for inaction. It was for active medical aid, and discussion with whoever on the opposite side was willing to sit down and talk. Can we sit down with the North Koreans? They are the last remnant of the Cold War with the USSR. Surely they no lon-

ger pose a threat. Are we not their threat? Can we sit down with ISIS? They do not threaten our way of life, or of government. So who is the threatened? Can we sit down with Iran, with the Taliban, with al Qaeda, with Assad, and Putin? Peacemaking requires talking, even living and letting live though we may disagree.

But how do we talk? By inquiring first of the other's needs? Do they fear us more than we fear them? Should we deal with that first? Are we, the US, warmakers rather than peacemakers? What basic argument do we have with ISIS? Perhaps they and we have different issues. Why do they fear us?

What do you think? Let us know.

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From FCNL: President Trump's new budget wishlist is immoral. Instead of investing in programs that prevent violence, ensure clean air and water, and protect the health and well-being of millions, it increases Pentagon spending and funds massive tax cuts for the wealthiest people in our country.

But the president doesn't have the final word on how the U.S. spends its money. Congress will ultimately decide whether this dystopian vision for our country will become a reality. So now Representatives and Sens. Cornyn and Cruz need to hear from you.

Quite apart from global warming.

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The Peace Center gets humorous: A Buddhist monk walks up to the hot dog truck and says, "Make me one with everything." The monk pays with a twenty dollar bill, and the vendor sticks it into the cash box. "Don't I get change?" asks the monk, puzzled. The hot dog vendor replies: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

One with everything . . . . .

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Many decades ago Nigeria fell into a civil war between East and West. The East, naming itself Biafra, wanted independence, with the consequent income from the oil deposits there. When the West won, AFSC sent representatives to foster reconciliation. A leader of this effort, after two years wrote back to Philadelphia, saying that it was no longer necessary. The spirit of reconciliation between the

two sides was so strong, he said, that AFSC was not necessary.

This spirit is so much needed everywhere, even in Nigeria. How can we foster it?

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Ilana Lerman, of JVP, says, "And like every year, I know I'll be coming with questions: what does a world without oppression look like? What does a world beyond walls and borders look like? What would make such a world possible? What actions can we take to create a world of safety and liberation for all?"

Let us hope it comes into being. Her words speak to us from her Jewish center.

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How infuriating for people like Churchill for the King-Emperor in India to be defeated by a half-naked fakir.

But this one was different. He had a law degree from London. And, "Winston Churchill loathed Gandhi. Gandhi loathed none." Vikas Kamat

Death With Dignity?

Our new Supreme Court justice, Neil Gorsuch, is opposed to "death with dignity," aid in dying for those in terminal illnesses. He says, "all human life is fundamentally and inherently valuable" and "the taking of human life by private persons is always wrong." This raises the issue of liability by public officials, by whom it is implicitly not always wrong . . . The armed forces, police, and public executioners are required to take human life but only under certain conditions. A lone Marine in Afghanistan may have no immediate command to shoot a suspected Taliban but he (or, nowadays, perhaps she) understands that it is his duty to shoot the man in his sights.

But we are aware that these officials act under normally clear laws. We are constantly being reminded of the police duty to be sure he (or she) is under threat, before shooting and killing, a suspect. An executioner can only execute those persons condemned to death and placed before him. That condemnation is itself subject to legal definition of the circumstances under which it can be declared and by whom.

It should therefore be possible to define the circumstances under which a “private person” may take another’s life for benign reasons, and this has been done in several states. It is usually intended to provide mercy for someone dying in pain, but might be extended to someone in physical or psychological pain but not dying. And it normally requires that that person’s wishes for such a situation, normally written down, be followed. How are you led on this subject?.

Sanctuary

The Unitarian Universalist Church hosted a packed meeting on creating a S. A. Sanctuary Network, in cooperation with the Interfaith Welcome Coalition. Over 90 people attended from 42 different faith communities and organizations. They organized a steering committee of seven that will jumpstart a more orderly network. They heard from Travis Park United Methodist Church which is contemplating expanding their already broad support for homeless people in providing a safe place for refugees and asylum seekers. RAICES reps outlined a variety of steps a congregation can take in support of sanctuary, short of actually housing people. And Austin Sanctuary Network described how they got started with one mother and son and gradually grew to a city-wide support network.

FMSA has had one forum exploring this challenging topic to learn of the many support steps available. These include holding “Know Your Rights” workshops, with help from RAICES, for local people who may be affected by current policies. We might assist sanctuary campaigns by petitions, calls, visits to public figures; helping refugees and asylum seekers stay in their community by accompanying them to ICE or other court appointments; and by tutoring in English and U S customs.

We can support public figures in their opposition to Texas Senate Bill 4 that compels local law enforcement to become arms of the Federal enforcement against the undocumented among us. This law, signed by Gov. Abbott on May 7 and taking effect Sept. 1, allows local law officers to ask people they

detain about their immigration status and to hold them until ICE can arrive. Our police chief and county sheriff stood on the Capitol steps to protest the bill before it was enacted.

We will pursue the question of the extent of our participation in this growing movement in a Forum on June 11. Do we want to have a representative on the S. A. Sanctuary Network? For more information: sanantoniowelcome@gmail.com

Revisoning the Nursery of Truth

Consider the very early first queries from London Yearly Meeting to be shared with meetings imploring them to gauge the health of their meetings and the Religious Society of Friends:

“How does Truth prosper among you?”

“How many Friends have suffered for Truth in the past year? ” (T. Hamm, email corr’nce).

Unlike most YMs today, these earlier monthly meetings were expected to respond in written form as a community to how Truth was prospering among them.

And consider the shift that has happened around queries, which tend to function more individualistically today. What was once a plural you, or a “y’all,” which I think I can use now that I live in the South, as in:

“How does Truth prosper with y’all?”

Is now often read primarily as a singular you as in,

“How does truth prosper with you , Wess? Or “What is your truth?”.

To go back to the image of the nursery of truth, I believe that early Friends understood that you have to be apprenticed to the truth and that apprenticeship comes through ongoing participation in a community of practice. Truth can only be understood within the context of an ongoing tradition and the various communities that make it up.

Wess Daniels, “Revisoning the Nursery of Truth.

Israel & Palestine

It is a sad feature of today’s world

that descendants of those Jews who perished under Nazism, now live free in Israel while Palestinians suffer under Israeli occupation. This has caused AFSC to criticize Israel, and Quaker support in general to move from Israel to Palestine, to the anger of some Israelis. Jennifer Bing, of AFSC, is joyful at public concern for the Palestinians:

“I’m excited that in 2017, more people are engaging their elected officials about issues that are meaningful and important. When I was in Washington, D.C. earlier this year, the phones in Congressional offices were ringing off the hook, thanks to constituents calling on elected officials to do the right thing – on health care, immigrant rights, stopping wars, and protecting our environment.

I hope that you will help us keep those phones ringing and email inboxes full on an issue that I think we both care deeply about: Palestinian children. Join us in urging members of Congress to attend our “No Way to Treat a Child” congressional briefing on June 8 to learn more about the impacts of military occupation on Palestinian children.

It’s been nearly 50 years of military occupation of the occupied Palestinian territory. And the conditions for Palestinian children have never been worse.

Last year proved to be the deadliest in a decade for West Bank children, with 32 child fatalities at the hands of Israeli forces and security guards. In just the first four months of 2017, Israeli forces killed six Palestinian children, according to Defense for Children International - Palestine.

In Gaza, which has been under Israeli military blockade for the past 10 years, children slip deeper into poverty, and many have been displaced for years. Justice and accountability are needed for the deaths of the 547 Palestinian children killed during the 2014 Israeli military assault on Gaza.

Children under 18 years old now represent 46 percent—nearly half—of the 4.68 million Palestinians living in the occupied Palestinian territory. This generation has grown up in the shadow of failed negotiations—their

futures stifled by the blockade, systemic discrimination, and repeated military attacks.

On Thursday, June 8, AFSC will co-host a congressional briefing in Washington, D.C. featuring experts who will examine how persistent grave human rights violations, systemic impunity, discrimination, and a hyper-militarized environment affect the lives of the Palestinian children growing up under a military occupation with no end in sight.

Please contact your member of Congress, and urge them to attend this important briefing to learn more about the challenges facing Palestinian children.

Join us as we engage our elected leaders, urging them to end support for military occupation and to help build a future where the dignity, freedom, and rights of all children are protected.

Jennifer Bing” 5/18/2017

Israelis fear further oppression and having to rely on others for military protection.

Pendle Hill

As Spring becomes Summer, many friends come to visit Pendle Hill to learn and grow with others (and, maybe, to sit underneath the shade of blooming trees as petals fall). The presence of our visitors is a blessing because you let us know what has evolved and what has remained constant here. You bring curiosity, seeking, new ideas, and unique voices, helping us to learn how we can do what is needed and do it better. We feel glad and well-used when you express gratitude for the sacred stillness of daily worship in the Barn, the careful stewardship of the grounds, and for the pamphlets and programs we provide.

Music for peace

Working in one of the most divided conflicts in the world, Heartbeat brings young people from across Israel-Palestine together to make music, build understanding and promote peaceful social change.

Heartbeat aims to help the next generation of Israelis and Palestinians to un-

derstand and respect each other, harnessing the power of music to bring them together. They organise music-based workshops and camps, as well as developing performance ensembles in Haifa, Jerusalem and Jaffa-Tel Aviv.

Since 2007 when they were founded, over 100 youth musicians have participated in Heartbeat workshops, retreats and overseas exchanges and have toured around the world. The staff are trained dialogue facilitators and professional musicians, and develop students' skills in song-writing, music theory and improvisation.

Heartbeat also work on students' communication and leadership abilities – helping them to engage with each other and the

conflict issues that involve them, while quite literally amplifying their voices to help spread the message of peace.

As graduates, Heartbeat activists lead workshops in their communities and do outreach sessions in local schools. The musicians perform in local communities and in prestigious venues around the world, including some of the world's most celebrated universities and music halls.

At each event, Heartbeat musicians share their experiences of growing up amidst the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and highlight their creative effort to promote equality, empathy, and nonviolent action.

From PeaceDirect



AFSC, with woman volunteer, founded during WWI

Query for June

When decisions have to be made, are you ready to join with others in seeking clearness, asking for God's guidance and offering counsel to one another.?

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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