

FRIENDS IN SAN ANTONIO

7052 North Vandiver at Eisenhower

November 2017

1600: The Flushing Remonstrance

In 1645, Flushing, then called Vlissengen, was granted a charter by the Dutch West India Company and became a part of New Netherlands. It was settled largely by English families, similar to English settlements at Gravesend, Hempstead, and Jamaica, Long Island.

At that time, the first known Quaker in the United States, Richard Smith, lived in Southampton, Long Island. He, with other Quakers, visited Boston in 1656, but all were put in jail as soon as they arrived and sent back to England. This action of the authorities caused many English Quakers to feel a call to go to the New World. Religious persecution of these zealous souls only seemed to convince Quakers of the need for their message, "that the Spirit of God, dwelling in man, is the supreme authority."

Other Quakers came, and their religious teaching found wide acceptance throughout Flushing and Oyster Bay, despite continued opposition on the part of the government and heads of the Reformed Dutch Church. At that time, Peter Stuyvesant was the governor of New Netherlands. He issued an edict forbidding anyone in the colony to entertain a Quaker or to allow a Quaker meeting to be held in his or her house under penalty of a fine of fifty pounds.

A respected Flushing colonist, Henry Townsend, held a Quaker meeting in his home and was fined and banished. This prompted a protest from Flushing citizens, which is perhaps the earliest demand for freedom of religion made by American colonists to their political superiors. It is dated December 27, 1657, and is drawn up and signed by Edward Hart, the Town Clerk, Tobias Feake, the Schout (sheriff) and twenty-eight other citizens. This document, known as the Flushing Remonstrance, respectfully but firmly argues the cause of religious freedom: "for if God justifie who can condemn; and if God condemn who can justifie... And because our Saviour saith it is impossible but that offenses will come, but woe unto him by whom they cometh, our desire is not to offend one of his little ones, in whatsoever form, name or title hee appears in, whether Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist or Quakers, but shall be glad to see anything of God in any of them desiring to doe unto all men, as wee desire all men should doe unto us, which is the true law both of church and state." It goes on to quote the original Flushing Charter, which grants Flushing the right "to have and Enjoy

Calendar

1. Wednesday,
Support Group 7.00

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

9 Mid-Week Worship,
soup 6:00, worship
7:00

12. Sunday
Forum – Interfaith
Welcome Coalition
report.

14 Tues.Excel Beyond
the Bell, training 10 –
11:30

16, Thursday
16 – 19

Representative
Meeting at Greene
Family Camp
Midweek Meeting, 6-8
with soup.

19. Sunday....9.00,
Quaker Questions
Meeting for
Business, 11.30.

26, Sunday
Forum – Jesus' Birth
Stories compared;
Quakers & Christmas

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

30- Dec 3 Silent Re-
treat at Lebh Shomea

1600s to the 21st Century.” We understand her talk was extremely good.

Gloria, from Colombia, says : At 10 am this morning I meditated and joined you spiritually. I miss our Friends meeting.

Do you have a poem for the newsletter? Send it in.

Business Meeting

Meeting for Business commenced with words of Ron Mock, FRIENDS PEACE WITNESS in a TIME OF CRISIS, 2005:

“We cannot coerce our way to the Peaceable Kingdom. We can only convince our way there. People will come freely, or they won’t come at all. Or worst, if we try to force-march them there, we will only be setting up a new evil empire to replace the old ones.”

The Treasurer reported that income and expenses continue to match expectations. Ministry & Oversight accepted with regrets the resignation of Doug Balfour for health reasons. They talked about ways to provide more information about Quakers to newcomers and attenders and will offer “Quaker Questions” before Meeting on third Sundays. To increase visibility of the Meetinghouse, they propose forming an ad hoc committee to design new signage, in consultation with Property Committee. Further, they are considering changing our website host to the Quaker Cloud.

Meeting agreed to join with Ann Arbor Meeting in asking Friends Fiduciary Corporation to expand its investment screen to exclude investments in companies that profit from the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

In Property Committee Security issues were reviewed, with a request for self-monitored video & two-way audio measures. The Committee asked Meeting how to proceed.

Friends pondered the intended purpose of meeting space, and how it relates to vandalism. It was suggested that the whole issue belongs more properly with the Long Range Planning Committee. Nominating Committee has asked each of the named committees to forward names for Long Range and noted that two others have expressed interest in serving.

Signage for Meeting property: Persons for the ad hoc committee will be named by the clerk to implement the M & O proposal, above. Making permanent “This is a placar of ...” signs in windows along the breeze way was approved, with periodic changes to keep them eye-catching.

Meeting closed in silence.

SC Yearly Meeting

The time for 2017 SCYM Representative Meeting, November 17-19, is drawing near. All Friends are welcome to attend. We hope at least one Friend will attend from each meeting and worship group. Please announce RM at your meeting and ask Friends to register at www.scym.org.

Quaker activist not guilty

Activist Sam Walton and Rev Daniel Woodhouse have been acquitted after breaking-in to BAE Systems factory in Britain to ‘disarm’ Typhoon fighter jets. These are being used by Saudi-led forces in the ongoing bombardment of Yemen.

They were found not guilty at Burnley Magistrates Court. The judge found them honest and eloquent. Sam and Daniel successfully argued that their intention was to save innocent lives and prevent war crimes, by physically disabling the warplanes.

The court heard evidence about the scale of the brutal bombardment.

In a joint statement, Sam and Daniel said: “We did not want to take this action, but were compelled to do so in order to stop the UK government’s complicity in the destruction of Yemen. Thousands of people have

been killed in the brutal bombardment, while companies like BAE Systems have profited every step of the way.

This vindication from the Courts is further evidence of the hypocrisy and moral bankruptcy that underpins so much of UK foreign policy. It is time for the government to stop putting arms company profits ahead of human rights. We do not regret taking action, and would do it again in a heartbeat. The only thing we regret is that we were not able to finish the job.”

Austin Tan Cerca de la Frontera

This is your personal invitation to join us for a FREE weekend festival of community, crafts, music, and food at our 14th Annual Women & Fair Trade Festival!

Meet and connect with 8 women-led fair trade cooperatives from around the world whose very existence under global capitalism and colonialism is an act of resistance and rebellion. Learn from their communities, cultures, and their political struggles for dignity, justice, and autonomy in 2017. Vendors include cooperatives from Guatemala, Austin & San Antonio, Texas, Coahuila & Chiapas, Mexico, Palestine, Ecuador, and more!

Enjoy free music, delicious food made by a local immigrant-led cooperative, and a speak out about resistance movements from Texas & Chiapas to Palestine & the U.S.-Mexico border. For more information go to <http://womenandfairtrade.weebly.com/> and for updates follow us on Facebook.

Friday, December 1st at 6:00-9:00pm

Saturday, December 2nd at 9:00am to 7:00pm

St. James' Episcopal Church

1941 Webberville Rd, Austin, TX 78721

Want to volunteer at the festival? Email robert@atcf.org.

Want to be a sponsor? Email bianca@atcf.org.

In Solidarity,

Austin Tan Cerca de la Frontera

<http://www.atcf.org/>

Quakerbooks

Welcome to the November issue of BookMusings, created for Native American Heritage Month. Our Quaker classic this month is Twenty-First Century Penn, in honor of William Penn's vision of European migrants living peaceably and respectfully with the continent's First Nations peoples. We've included a list of book titles that shed light on Native American heritage and promote right relationship with indigenous communities, and are pleased to offer a review by Ellen Michaud of 2017's Hiking Naked, Friend Iris Graville's memoir of her sudden decision to move her family to a remote mountain village in the North Cascades mountains.

Worship

Newcombers may be confused about what happens during meeting for worship. What is worship, anyway? No kneeling involved, no rites. Ruth has proposed this quotation from George Fox:

“Friends, be alert and careful when you are in Meeting. Remember that when you are in a silent meeting, you are entering a different state of being. There is a risk that you will bring your usual ways of the world with you and you must be watchful that this does not have you acting rashly. So when you join with others in the silence, become settled and aware of how you are in yourself, and cool down your overheated ways. . . . enter into that state that transcends usual worldly concerns, and you will see yourself and others more clearly, and therefore reach into that of

God which is in everyone.”

Quakerbooks recommends:

October *Friends Journal* book selections include two books focused on different aspects of family. *Faithful Families* provides ideas for relationship strengthening and celebrating, underscoring the foundation that we can grow our families to become. Historical fiction *Lilli de Jong* tells the compelling story of a young, Quaker, unwed mother in 1800's Philadelphia, and includes an author's note that shares fascinating details from the historical sources used. As autumn's harvest bounty turns our thoughts to festivals, nature's cycles and seasonal holidays, this month's selections will point the way to finding time to hunker down, and . . . read!

Middle East War?

The organization Jewish Voice for Peace sent these words of Rabbi Joseph Berman: “The Iran Deal isn’t perfect, but it’s infinitely better than Trump and Netanyahu’s shared agenda of escalating conflict.

The Israeli government and the U.S. both have an investment in preserving Israel’s military edge. Israeli officials, AIPAC and other pro-Israel advocates have been drumming up fear of Iran’s nuclear program for decades. Meanwhile Israel, the Middle East’s principal nuclear power, has been quietly maintaining a nuclear program of its own and refusing to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

And, . . . it’s Trump who is not in compliance with the deal— he has already violated it by privately encouraging other nations to boycott trade with Iran. And now, by refusing to certify the Iran Deal, he is triggering an expedited consideration of snapback sanctions in order to advance that agenda of escalation, drastically increasing risk of another catastrophic U.S. war in the Middle East.”

We must hope that this is an exaggeration. What kind of catastrophe might be looming?, The message was urging public pressure on Congress.

Meanwhile, the magazine *Foreign Policy* reports: Armageddon by Accident: U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s brinkmanship raises the danger of an accidental conflict on the Korean Peninsula,

Quaker Peacekeeping

“In Burundi, after a period of unrest after an attempted presidential coup, dialogues were organized in Bujumbura as well as upcountry between local elected leaders from various political parties to help them prepare the ground to reinforce coexistence of the community by improving communication between those political leaders who were divided by the 3rd term issue for the presidency and to seek peaceful conflict management instead of violence. The peace dialogues became spaces where stakeholders envisioned reinforcing their collaboration and confidence together.

According to participants’ testimonies that were supported by the evaluation report conducted by a private consultant, the result of these peace activities initiated by the [Quaker] IPB/HROC program is the core of the peacefulness that is now there.

Peace dialogues helped to overcome fear and improve the communication between the local government heads of a quarter including the security forces and the population.”

By Elie Nahimana, Coordinator IPB/HROC Program. (Innovation in Peace-building – Burundi/ Healing and ??? Our Communities.) If only we could make such a contribution across the world.

Miscellany

John Kelly has essentially said that America is divided between those who have served in the military and understand the consequences and those who have not and don't. The former are a very small minority. The implication is that a draft would do away with this division in the country.

Friends, of course, are opposed to the draft, But when, during the Vietnam war, there was a draft, public objection to the war grew because its children were involved willynilly. The draft did help, though that does not change our objection to it. It assumes that war service is necessary. War, we say, is not the answer.

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AFSC said on Octo 18, "Today, Muslim Ban 3.0 was set to go into effect. It has been blocked for now by a federal judge, but it's still crucial that we all take a stand and speak out against the Trump administration's racist policies targeting Muslims. Join AFSC and . . . [many others] to say #NoMuslimBanEver."

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So, we read, "the war on terrorism will expand with more aggressive rules of engagement." (E-N,10/21/17)

What happened to "hearts and minds?" Do the more aggressive rules of engagement include more aggressively persuading Arabs and Somalis that the US is a helpful, friendly, nation? Can drones drop food, bedding, and clothing? Can we help them escape fear? We hope tht the lack of reporting on such acts is due to their lacke of drama.

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We are reminded that failed attempts to repeal Obamacare. The open enrollment period is now the shortest it's ever been--November 1 to December 15--and the program's advertising budget had been cut.

There is no widespread information for how to sign up for Obamacare to get health insurance for 2018. And you have less time to get enrolled.

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In an article on the power of the fruit fly in research, "a major engine of modern biological discovery," David Bilder quotes William, Blake:

“Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art thou not
A man like me?”

The little fruit fly operates on DNA just as we do and breeds rapidly, conveniences for researchers. But Blake's verse precedes such concerns. When I (Ken) see a roach and move to kill it, Blake's lines, with "roach" substituted for "fly" takes on a special meaning.. It's lifestyle differs from mine, yet surely we share common desires,, appetites, comforts, needs for sleep and exercise, and fears? As he, or she, runs from me I hesitate, and it (he, she?) gets away.

I feel a strange comfort. I have not taken a life. Am not I a roach? Yet was it not stealing from me and soiling my food?

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Known today for their pacifist and quietist ways, Quakers had an altogether different reputation in the seventeenth century: belligerent and boisterous rabble-rousers. Fueled by evangelical zeal, and asserting radical ideas for that time, the Quakers were aggressive proselytizers. As a result, they faced violent persecution in England and, to a lesser extent, in the Netherlands, where many migrated.

And we know that we would be hardput to tolerate George Fox's tirades these days.

Would he be eldered?

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We received a message from Ipswich (in England) Meeting: “White poppies available at Friends Meeting House.”

In England! The poppies are for Remembrance (Armistice) Day in England, when people wear red poppies to remember the dead soldiers. The white poppies stand for peace. We need not, here, go to Ipswich to get any white poppies for peace.

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“Why Nazis are so afraid of these clowns” Clowns have an impressive track record of subverting Nazi ideology, de-escalating rallies and bringing communities together in creative resistance. Using humor and irony to undermine white supremacy dates back to the days of the Third Reich, from jokes and cartoons employed by Norwegians against the Nazi occupation to “The Great Dictator” speech by Charlie Chaplin.

In recent years, humor has continued to be used as a tactic to undermine Nazi ideology, particularly in the unlikely form of clowns — troupes of brightly-dressed activists who show up at neo-Nazi gatherings and make a public mockery of the messages these groups promote.

Sarah Freeman-Woolpert

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Ben Franklin was not a Quaker, he went to Philadelphia, at 17 in 1723, from Boston. He did many worthwhile things reported by David Brooks (*NYT*). “He helped build the University of Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Fire Department, the Pennsylvania Gazette, the American Philosophical Society, the Pennsylvania Hospital and much else.” How would Friends have managed there without him?

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There is a nice quotation in the Express-News “Pub Theology,” allegedly from St. Francis of Assisi:

“Preach the gospel and, if necessary use words.”

Apparently George Fox found it necessary.

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Iran and North Korea. Do we need more? Both developing nuclear weapons, probably defensive, as both must fear obliteration if the US weapons were fired at them. We may now be entering situations again of mutually assured destruction to scare us all away from the first strike. This is almost certainly what they’re hoping for, N. Korea with the US and Iran with Israel.

We prefer mutually assured loving concern.. That would prevent strikes. Let’s try it. (We guess FCNL has been working on this for some time.)

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FCNL used strong language to describe the President’s policy on Iran: “Trump is working with Senators Tom Cotton (AR) and Bob Corker (TN) on legislation that could strike the final blow to the Iran deal, by attempting to unilaterally impose ultimatums on Iran and European allies. Such a dangerous gambit would tell the world the U.S. won’t live up to its word, and can’t be trusted as a negotiating partner.”

We hope that by the time you read this his “gambit” will have been scuppered by Congress.

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Michael Resnan says, in *Friends Journal*, “I’ve concluded that everyone goes to heaven; that we will spend eternity with those we have loved, helped, and harmed; and that we will be confronted with the consequences of all we have done .”

What is your understanding?

Severe Punishment

Thai Law professor Prathan Watanavanich, an expert in criminology and justice procedures, citing findings of a research study, said that imprisonment was not an effective deterrent to prevent crimes.

Severe penalties had “only a little deterring effect” on criminals, Prathan* noted.

“Also, there has been no proof that capital punishment can deter prospective perpetrators of murders,” Prathan said, citing statistics collected over the past five decades.

He said the study found that the certainty of getting arrested was “very effective” in deterring people from committing crimes. “The certainty of getting arrested is a deterrent that is even more powerful than getting punished,” the law professor concluded.

* We use his first name not as Quaker practice but because we understand it is Thai practice.

Democratic Decline

Political scientists at a gathering at Yale have pointed to breakdowns in social cohesion (meaning citizens are more fragmented than ever), the rise of tribalism, the erosion of democratic norms such as a commitment to rule of law, and a loss of faith in the electoral and economic systems as clear signs of democratic erosion.

While we use a different method of making decisions, we recognize the value of the US democratic constitution.

Joy

Do you wish to cultivate more joy in your life and in the lives of those around you?. In *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, two spiritual leaders who exude joy, share their understanding of the qualities of joy and how to sustain it. Joy, they describe, is “much bigger than happiness”; joy is “a way of approaching the world.”

Of course, we don’t agree with the DL being titled “His Holiness,” more than anyone else, nor do we much like the title Archbishop. But we do recognize these two men as having been inspirations and leaders for peace, joy, freedom, and equality. And we do appreciate leaders from two different religions working together. They do get a bit analytical, delving into “the eight pillars of joy.” The book has a cover on which the two leaders present noses to each other. The review in the *Friends Journal* is highly favorable.

I Want You to Be: On the God of Love

Reviewed by Tom Paxson, FJ

Tomáš Halík was a psychoanalyst and “a hidden priest” of the Roman Catholic Church during the Communist years in Czechoslovakia,.. In reading this fine book, I have come to see him as a theologian for Friends, especially Friends in the unprogrammed worship tradition . . .

I Want You to Be is all about love— . . . the deep love in which the ego is transcended and we come into the power that unites without destroying or appropriating. . . .

Friends have learned by experience how attentive, patient listening in the course of deep sharing can build loving connections among people with manifestly different understandings and commitments. . . .

Halík writes for a European audience and works to reconcile two European traditions that seem to have drifted into mutual antipathy: Christian and secular humanisms. He sees them as linked, like quarreling brothers, each with something valuable to offer the other, but each no longer seeking the truth the other holds. Their reconciliation, he thinks, is critical for Europe’s future.

I regard Halík as a theologian for Friends because much of what he has to say will resonate with many ...: his appeal to spiritual experience, his recognition of the importance of silence and waiting upon God, the emphasis on love as the doorway to God, recognition of several varieties of atheism, the role of science as “a necessary ally” of theology, and the necessity of a socially engaged spirituality. He writes of continuing revelation, the imperative to love one’s enemies, of apprehending things in the light, and of being oneself searched by the light. The book is not written in professorial language nor does he write as a theologian addressing other theologians. The theme of each chapter is addressed by a collection of discontinuous but deeply connected reflections replete with many highly quotable sentences. It was a joy to read *I Want You to Be*.

Death by Law

The Florida Supreme Court rejected arguments that constitutional flaws with the state’s death penalty should benefit all 362 inmates on death row. President Trump has threatened to wipe out North Korea.

And, a member of the Iranian regime's parliament referring to the regime’s judiciary emphasis on more executions and that 5,300 people are on death row in the regime's prisons, said: “The trafficker who has 500 million dollars in Tehran and elsewhere is released, but we will execute the poor drug mule or offender.”

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, Asma Jahangir, has expressed outrage at the execution of a young man who received the death penalty as a child.

Meanwhile men continue to be employed by us, by you, to kill people, legally. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, executioners.

SOA, DACA, Borders

“I’m the Development and Operations Coordinator for the School of the Americas Watch. A couple years ago, I had the opportunity of participating in SOAW’s vigil in Ft. Benning to protest the U.S.’s role in perpetuating direct violence against communities in Latin America.

This year I have the privilege of attending this year's Encuentro at the Arizona/Mexico border.

The violence of U.S. policies is very real to me as an undocumented Colombian. Not only have I seen firsthand the role of U.S. foreign policies in the destruction of entire countries, I have seen how deeply they impact those who make it past the inhumane borders of this country.

. . . . It might be hard to comprehend how violent U.S. policies in Latin America are, because we are taught to think that war is the only significant cause of devastation. But economic and trade policies have wreaked significant violence and essentially caused forced migration – something the U.S. is not willing to admit.

This year, I will be at the Encuentro on the border of Arizona and Mexico because I feel a sense of responsibility to my family and community. . . .

My dedication to the Movement is stronger than I ever thought possible as now I am fortunate to be able to stand on the other side of the border as a DACA recipient, and share in the same struggle with those inside, fighting for their basic human rights. I dream of the day when there are no borders that get in the way of mediating humanity. “

That must await people not objecting to large numbers of people in their cities speaking foreign languages. The Know-Nothing party was a U.S. political party in the 1850s. It grew out of the strong anti-immigrant and especially anti-Roman Catholic sentiment then. A rising tide of immigrants, primarily Germans in the Midwest and Irish in the East, seemed to pose a threat to the economic and political security of native-born Protestant Americans.

That was before the Statue of Liberty beckoned to such people, suggesting they were welcome... but still with flesh-and-blood people objecting to their entry.

Centering

Entering meeting,

Sitting.

Center down,

relax.

Still.

...

Silent.

Emptiness.

Suspended.

...

Someone coming in.

Who?

No.

...

...

Darkness. Empty.

Peace of nothingness.

...

...

...

Tires are smooth; I must check.

Where shall I go?

No.

...

...

Where did I put the hammer?

Not there.

...

Focus, deep, on spirit,

Deep summoning deep.

...

...

Peace.

Still.

Yard needs weeding?

Today.

No.

...

...

Center, down,

Within.

In.

Down.

Down.

...

Peace.

...

...

...

Ken

Query for November: Community

As we strive to build a loving community, do we practice the art of listening, even beyond words?

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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