

December 2018

The Friendly News

San Antonio Quakers

7052 N. Vandiver (at Eisenhower), San Antonio, Texas 78209

Message Phone: 210.945.8456

Website: www.sanantonioquakers.org

Facebook: @saquakers



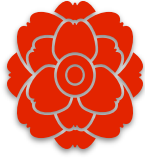
December Calendar

SUNDAY Dec 2	10 am—Meeting for Worship 11:15—Potluck Lunch & Book/Media Exchange 2pm—Memorial for Ruth Lofgren
MONDAY Dec 3	4:30-5:30 pm—Yoga with Peggy
THURS-SUN Dec 6-9	Silent Retreat at Lebh Shomea
SUNDAY Dec 9	10 am—Meeting for Worship 11:30 FORUM: “My 5 ways for advocating change” w/ Greg
THURSDAY Dec 13	6 pm—Soup and Conversation 7 pm—Mid-Week Meeting for Worship
SUNDAY Dec 16	10 am—Meeting for Worship 11:15—December Birthdays!! 11:30—Meeting for Business
MONDAY Dec 17	4:30-5:30 pm—Yoga with Greg
SUNDAY Dec 23	10 am—Meeting for Worship 11:30 FORUM: Worship-Sharing: “Why do we sit in silence?”
MONDAY Dec 24	6:30pm—Christmas Eve Worship 7:30pm—Tamale Supper 7:30
SUNDAY Dec 23	10 am—Meeting for Worship 11:30 FORUM: Worship-Sharing: “Our wishes for the New Year”

Inside

- p 2: - December Query
- About Ruth Lofgren
- pp.3-4: Upcoming Events
 - Yoga & Midweek Soup & Worship
 - Book Exchange
 - Silent Retreat
 - December Forums
 - Christmas Eve Worship & Tamales
 - Marches in January
- pp 4-5: Recent Events:
 - Married!!
 - Thanks
 - Forum on Migration
 - Forum on Gratitude
- pp 5-6: Other News
 - Clothing for Women’s Shelter
 - FGC Gathering Speakers
- pp 6-7: Essay
 - “Silence in the Noise”, by Mary Braden

December Query:



How can I best participate in holiday season activities but maintain the Quaker testimony of simplicity?

Memorial Service for Ruth Logren:



Ruth Lofgren

1916-2018

*Memorial Service
December 2nd, 2-3pm*

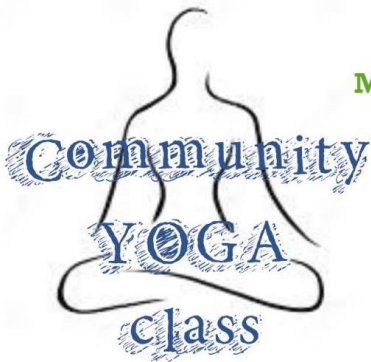
*Friends Meeting of San Antonio
7052 Vandiver Rd
San Antonio 78209*

Dr. Ruth Lofgren led an extraordinary life that left a mark on all who knew her. She was born near Salt Lake City, Utah, where she spent her early years on a small fruit farm and was home-schooled. She learned to explore, study, observe and assimilate the natural world around her. She had a sharp and curious mind, which led her to obtain a Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Michigan in 1944. She was a pioneer in electron microscope research. Ruth then taught at the City University of New York's Brooklyn College until 1976. She was active in Friends Meetings in New York. On retirement, she moved to San Antonio to provide science enrichment at a local school. She was very active among San Antonio Quakers, serving as Meeting Treasurer for many years.

Ruth was actively promoted science, justice, education, and the environment in the San Antonio area. She helped the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center from its very beginnings. She was the first San Antonio Peace Laureate. She received a lifetime achievement award from the AACOG in 2014, having served on their Criminal Justice Advisory Committee for 25 years. She worked to restore the wetlands of Mitchell Lake wetlands and establish an Audubon center there, for which she received the 2017 Terry Hershey Award. She was inducted into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame in 2017.

Please join us for a celebration of Ruth's life on December 2nd, 2pm, at the Meetinghouse

Upcoming Events:



1st & 3rd Mondays of the Month

~
4:30 - 5:30pm
~

September 3rd & 17th
October 1st & 15th
November 5th & 19th
December 3rd & 17th
January 7th & 21st
February 4th & 18th



6pm - 7pm
Soup

&



7pm - 8pm
Silent Worship

2nd Thursday of the Month

October 11th
November 8th
December 13th
January 10th
February 14th

Book/Media Exchange – Dec 2, 11:30-12:30 (at monthly potluck)

Bring your unwanted books, CDs, DVDs, magazines for others to read/hear/view/gift. Take what you fancy. Or take something even if you don't bring anything to put on the table. It's all good. And just in time for the holidays

Silent retreat Lebh Shomea, December 6-9, 2018.

Meeting is sponsoring a Silent Retreat at Lebh Shomea, an ecumenical Catholic Silent Retreat Center near Sarita, Texas. Normally, we arrive on Thursday and leave on Sunday. It is perfectly acceptable to have only a two-night retreat if that works best for you. For most of us it takes a day or more to unload from the noise of the world in order to settle into "true self" and into a silence that allows us to hear with a "listening heart." The Center has beautiful grounds, peaceful wooded walking trails, and a coastal bay. Silence is observed at all times, except in our group gatherings. Accommodation is in individual rooms or cabins with private bath; meals are simple and nourishing. The cost is around \$60 per person per night which includes 3 meals a day.

Please see David or Gretchen if you are interested in joining us. Or make reservations directly with Lebh Shomea, phone #: (361) 294-5369.

Future Forums – Dec 7, 23 & 30, 11:30am

Dec 7: Greg C. will lead a forum on "My 5 Ways I Impact & Advocate Change"

Dec 23: Jim will lead a **Worship-Sharing** on "Why do we sit in silence?" *This traditional Quaker practice encourages participants to speak honestly and genuinely from their own experiences. It provides an opportunity for deep, non-judgmental reflection.*

Dec 30: Friends will lead a **Worship-Sharing** on "What do we wish wishes for the New Year?"

Christmas Eve Worship & Tamale Supper.

We will have our annual Christmas Eve Meeting for Worship on Monday, December 24th at 6:30pm. We will follow it with a supper of tamales, black beans, and whatever you choose to bring. Join us!

Two Marches for Social Justice in January!

Members & attenders of Friends Meeting invite you to participate in two marches for social justice this coming January.

- The San Antonio MLK March will start at 10am on Monday, January 21st. It is one of the nation's largest and FMSA has long been well-represented by Friends. We typically meet about an hour before the march and walk together with our t-shirts and our banner. We will announce details at Meeting and in the January newsletter.
- There may be a Women's March in Austin on either January 19th or 20th. A group of Friends has proposed arranging a round trip bus ride from the Meetinghouse. Once they know the date, they will have a sign-up sheet posted soon in the community room with an estimated per person cost. If necessary, we can open the seats to other groups who meet in the Meetinghouse and others in the neighborhood via Nextdoor.com. Katherine F. and Pam S. will be working on the logistics.

Recent Events:

Married!!



John Rayborn and Greg Casillas were married on Saturday, November 3, 2018 at the Emmie Seele Faust Library at the Sophienburg Museum in New Braunfels.

Our best wishes to them both!!

Thanks from Thrive Youth Center

Thrive Youth Center would like to thank Gary & Viv, Michelle, Gretchen, Pam, Debbie & Colin, Kellie, and Jillian for their Thanksgiving Meal Basket contributions. I was able to provide seven youth a wonderful Thanksgiving meal in their first apartment. The basket included a small turkey breast, corn, green beans, cranberry sauce, stuffing, dinner rolls and an apple pie. The youth were very appreciative and excited to celebrate the day with gratitude. With the Members of FMSA, Thrive youth experience a genuine kindness they have rarely experienced before, thus enabling them to build trust, feel cared for and alive. Thrive Youth Center appreciates the dedication FMSA has for our work. <https://www.thriveyouthcenter.com/> -- Greg

A Forum on the Immigration/Asylum 'Crisis'

On November 11th, Val, Margaret, and Sara led a forum on the current situation for immigrants and asylum seekers on our southern border. They talked about the reasons people are fleeing violence in Central America, the laws surrounding asylum, and what San Antonians can do help.

Friends who wish more information can consult reports at: <http://hondurasresists.blogspot.com/2018/11/central-american-exodus-first-press-13.html> and <https://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/how-you-can-help-as-migrant-caravans-arrive-at-the-us-border-20181115>

Those who wish to help can support the San Antonio Interfaith Welcome Coalition (<http://interfaithwelcomecoalition.org/>) and the Migrant Center for Human Rights (<https://migrantcenter.org/>).

A Forum on Gratitude

On November 25th, Peggy led a forum on gratitude. She led about 20 participants through a discussion of what being grateful means to them, what they are grateful for, and the barriers to gratitude. She then gave us some exercises, designed to help us embody gratitude in daily life.

Other News

A Call for Winter Clothing

Oliver G. is collecting winter clothing for a local battered women's shelter. Please bring your contributions to Meeting any of the next few Sundays.

Speakers Announced for FGC Summer Gathering

Friends General Conference has just announced its list of Evening Plenary speakers for the 2019 Summer Gathering. The Gathering will take place from June 30th to July 6th at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa. The 2019 Theme is "Peace in Our Hearts, Justice in the World." The plenary speakers are:

- **Beverly Ward, speaking on “How I Get Over: My Journey towards Peace and Justice in Care for the Earth”**
 - Beverly serves as the co-clerk of Quaker Earthcare Witness's UN Working Group and as South Eastern Yearly Meeting Secretary for Earthcare. She is a member and past clerk of Tampa Monthly Meeting.
- **Tuesday Night Special Event: Report Back: Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism**
 - Learn about FGC’s Institutional Assessment on Systemic Racism and the continuing work of the implementation group that will be guiding the transformation of Friends General Conference into an anti-racist organization.
- **John McCutcheon: Wednesday night music extraordinaire!**
 - John is a master instrumentalist and song writer. His commitment to grassroots political organizations has put him on the front lines of many of the issues important to communities and workers. So has his apprenticeship to many of the legendary figures of Appalachian music. His songs and playing have a sense of community and rootedness, while being exciting performances as well.
- **Tony Fish, speaking on “Prisoner Re-Entry, Making a Difference”**
 - Tony is an enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and serves as Director of the tribe's Reintegration Program.
- **Diane Randall & Hannah Graf Evans: “Love Thy Neighbor (No exceptions): Advocating for Welcome, Not Walls”**
 - Diane is the Executive Secretary of the Friends Committee on National Legislation.
 - Hannah co-chairs the steering committee of the Interfaith Immigration Coalition.

Silence in the Noise

By Mary Braden

Friends Journal, February 2017, p5.

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I came to Quakerism in 1995, a new mom overwhelmed by the gobsmacking spiritual earthquake of having brought a brand-new human being into the world. Religion and I had long since shown each other the door, but I felt my soul hungering for a way to engage with a world that now seemed so crammed with layer upon layer of miraculous meaning. After some initial experimentation I found myself at a traditional unprogrammed Friends meeting and realized I had found my home. The absence of liturgy and creed allowed me to experience uncoerced worship, which in turn allowed me to confront the inward raw and broken places that most needed the healing of the Light. I found the silence of meeting for worship both provocative and comforting, a space that rewarded courage and exploration with comfort and peace.

I’m a highly verbal, quick-witted person with a strong and arrogant ego. The silence of meeting for worship stripped away my customary barriers against uncomfortable truths and held me up as I faltered toward an understanding grounded in something deeper than words,

deeper even than thought. In the next decade I deepened my spiritual practice and participated in Friends activity in all the places where I lived.

Upon becoming a nurse, I stopped going to meeting because I worked on Sundays, but my spiritual growth continued, firmly anchored in the Quaker teachings and traditions that had answered my call initially. Those years were ones of great personal upheaval; pain and grief became my intimate friends, and the lessons they taught became integral parts of who I am. Silence was hard to come by, and when it arrived, I was often unable to lower my defenses enough to reap its solace. It became a stealthy friend, available at 3 a.m. or in hospital waiting rooms late at night, or in the car. I gradually learned to embrace it even when my heart was in turmoil, sipping from it some potent combination of perspective and respite. I learned to see trouble as the thing that happens between the silences, and I grew stronger.

A few months ago, I started working at a job that leaves my weekends free, and after some fearful reticence, I have returned to meeting. My life is very busy, but from the moment I first stepped back into that quiet room and felt the familiar stillness enter my spirit, I have known that this must be a part of whatever I do from now on.

The world is so noisy, especially now. Those of us who want to fight against ignorance, prejudice, war, and poverty are surrounded by so much racket that it's hard to discern how we are to proceed. The institutions that wield power over our lives announce their agendas so loudly that we are unable to hear the details. The suffering of others is so vast and so deeply rooted in our fundamental culture that the dissonance is deafening. We are bombarded with voices that lure us to paranoia, to oppression, to denial. In the midst of this cacophony, silence is not only golden, it is oxygen, food, and water. In the midst of voices that interrupt and contradict and harangue each other, the Spirit starves. We must learn to make silence for ourselves, to turn off the TV, shut down our computers, calm the endless conversations in our brains.

The still, small voice doesn't clamor for our attention very often; its ways are subtler and more nuanced and easy to overlook. We know we are drifting from the Light when we feel our spiritual lenses darkening, when despair and anger and frustration drive our thoughts, when we find ourselves unable to dislodge the claws of fear in our guts.

Although instinct drives us to push harder, to run and fight or curl up and hide, this is the time to simply stop. Listen. Trust. Our task is not to fight like soldiers, aspiring to victory through brute physical or mental force. Our task is to obey the still, small voice that speaks love and wisdom into our hearts, to recognize the humanity we share with all our fellow travelers regardless of their opinions, and to answer the call of justice, equality, and peace. For me, this is impossible without returning to the silence whenever I can.

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