

September 2020



The Friendly News

San Antonio Quakers

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Dear Friends,

The COVID-19 pandemic is easing in San Antonio. The latest City Dashboard shows the current risk level on the border between “Safe” and “Moderate” (<https://bit.ly/3qWSKRq>). The Health Department recommends that people continue to stay home when possible and to avoid gatherings. It recommends that schools continue to teach remotely, to avoid spreading virus. But the trends are in the right direction. If they continue, then we may soon be able to meet for in-person outdoor worship on our Meetinghouse porch – suitably distanced and masked. We do not want to spread the virus further in the San Antonio community.

It is thus time for us to begin to prepare for in-person Meetings. I have already spoken to a few Friends about helping plan the physical arrangements. We need to decide how many people we can accommodate at a distanced porch meeting. We want to keep the option for Friends to attend by Zoom, so we need to decide what tech we will need. We need to practice the setup, to make sure that Friends can participate both remotely and in-person. If you are interested in participating in this conversation, please write me at clerk@saquakers.org.

This group will not decide when we will resume in-person meetings. That is Ministry and Oversight’s job. This group will figure out how to do so.

In the meantime, we do have a special event planned for September 10th. We will have a “Friends Tailgate Party” in the Meetinghouse parking lot. RSVP so we can plan spacing, then bring your own food, table and chairs, etc. We will greet and eat – suitably distanced – then have a Meeting for Worship. *See page 3 for details.*

— Jim Spickard, *Meeting Clerk and Newsletter Editor*

Sign up to receive an email when this newsletter is posted at the Meeting website.

Write us at newsletter@saquakers.org if you wish a snail-mail copy.



September Query

How can we remain vital and sustain a sense of community in the Meeting during these times?

Weekly Events (by Zoom)

Here are the direct links for our weekly events. You do not need a Zoom account to join.

- **Meeting for Worship – Sundays 10-11am**, followed by check-in and discussion:
 - Join URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87952863787>
 - **Course in Miracles discussion – Tuesdays 7-8pm**; led by David Hayes
 - Join URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82876792511>
 - **Midweek Events – Wednesdays 7-8pm**
 - Join URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83760992196>
 - September 2 & 9: **NO FORUM**
 - September 16: "Looking toward South Central Yearly Meeting" (*see below*)
 - September 23: **Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business** (*see below*)
 - September 30: "What the Election Means for Immigrants and Refugees" (*see below*)
 - **Friday Morning Meeting for Worship – Fridays 8-8:30 am**
 - Join URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81709613253>
- (Read how to call in by phone on our website: <https://SanAntonioQuakers.org/calendar/>)

Special Events

- **Sept 10th: Friends Tailgate Party, Meetinghouse Parking Lot** **See page 3**
 - **6:30-7:30:** Greet & Eat; **7:30-8:30:** Meeting for Worship; **RSVP to** dialpsd@sbcglobal.net
- **Sept 24th-27th: South Central Yearly Meeting (by Zoom)** **See page 9**

Midweek Forum Topics

- **Wednesday, September 16th: "Looking toward South Central Yearly Meeting"** led by Val L.
 - Val will talk about the role that Yearly Meetings play in Quakerism and will give us a taste of this year's SCYM program (*See information about Yearly Meeting on page 9.*)
- **Wednesday, September 30th: "What the Election Means for Immigrants and Refugees"** led by Sara R. & others
 - Join us on September 30 to learn how the results of the 2020 elections will affect both documented and undocumented immigrants, as well as U.S. citizens across the nation.

Please share your ideas for future forums with Ministry and Oversight or with the Clerk

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Special Event

FRIENDS TAILGATE PARTY



When: September 10, 2020
6:30pm - 7:30pm Greet & Eat
7:30pm - 8:00pm Silence Worship
Where: Meetinghouse Parking Lot
7052. Vandiver Road

RSVP: REQUIRED for planning purposes
By Sept. 7, 2020

dialpsd@sbcglobal.net



The Plan

- Cars will be parked for appropriate distancing. You will be directed upon arrival.
- Everyone will bring their own food, drinks and tailgate setup.
- The Meetinghouse & ALL facilities will be closed including bathrooms.
- MASKS are REQUIRED when not eating or drinking.
- Keep to 6' distancing at ALL times.

Our Quaker Community

Contributed by Peggy Dial

get to know your Friends

Friends Meeting of San Antonio

Pam Spurgeon has been an attendee of FMSA since 2014 when Catherine Schneider brought her for the first time. She is a member of the Property committee and has played a key role in turning the FMSA grounds into a Butterfly sanctuary. Pam grew up in St Louis, Mo. and has lived in San Antonio since returning from 4 years in S. Korea. She is a retired Systems Analyst (USAA) and a retired Recreation Specialist (US Army Recreation Centers and MWR Library). Her favorite pastimes are birding, gardening, spending time with friends, and cuddling with 4 calico cats: Spritzel, Skeeter, Sooky and Butter Creme. Prior to Covid-19, she enjoyed swimming, tai chi, yoga, taking piano lessons, and contra dancing classes. Pam is an active member of NPSOT (Native Plant Society of Texas) and lifetime member of San Antonio Audubon.



What is your favorite comfort food?

Potato chips and dark chocolate, the darker the better

How many states and/or countries have you lived in?

4 states ~ Missouri, Georgia, S. Carolina & Texas

5 countries ~ Germany, Switzerland, Italy, South Korea & USA

What was the last book you read?

The Living Reed by Pearl S. Buck

Where did you attend your first Quaker Meeting?

Friends Meeting of San Antonio

Which of the Quaker testimonies speaks to you?

Integrity ~ I like people whose actions match your words.

Name one positive outcome from your Corona experience.

"Getting the garage renovated and the "Catio" built so ButterCreme has a permanent safe place to live."

Peaches or Strawberries

1

PEACHES

Dogs or Cats

2

CATS

Chocolate or Vanilla

3

CHOCOLATE

Book or Movie

4

BOOK

get to know your Friends

Friends Meeting of San Antonio

Greg Koehler is a member of the Religious Society of Friends. He serves on the Religious Education Committee and was FMSA's coordinator for Cielo Grande Quarterly Meeting. He is a writer and ethicist. He enjoys trees, cold weather, campfires, bagpipe music, mid-grade whiskey, and books.



What was your favorite childhood toy?

Pen and paper

What was the last book you read?

I read alot... The last book I finished reading was the Bible [Revised Standard Version]. Currently reading the Bible [New English Bible], "Many Lives, Many Masters" by Brian Weiss, "The Sacred Pipe" by Black Elk & Joseph Epes Brown, "King, Queen, Knave" by Vladimir Nabokov and Poems of Emily Dickinson

How many states and/or countries have you lived in?

5 states ~ Wisconsin, Illinois, Florida, Virginia & Texas

Where did you attend your first Quaker Meeting?

Austin Friends Meeting Austin, Texas 2004

Which of the Quaker testimonies speaks to you?

Simplicity ~ Simplicity in my answer is the Why of why Simplicity is my favorite Testimony...

Name one positive outcome from your Corona experience.

"I am enjoying the time to stay quiet and think with a clear head and get lots of reading done."

Roses or Daisies

1

DAISIES

Ocean or Mountains

2

MOUNTAINS

Modern or Vintage

3

VINTAGE

Winter or Summer

4

WINTER

More Conversations

Contributed by Gretchen Haynes

Petra and Lidia Ramirez have been visiting Meeting from time to time and are now on a regular watering schedule – every Thursday. Petra has been focused on her garden with tomato plants that she grew from heirloom seeds, and hot peppers. She learned that the oil from basil leaves will keep mosquitoes away and has tried it with her own plants. She turned to house cleaning and found ceramic bowls she made while teaching kids to make pottery. They are now out for show. It reminded her of other skills, including watercolors and writing, now that she has time for these also. Lidia works mostly from home but goes out on the job occasionally. They miss seeing people and worshipping together.

Mimi Moore is using this time to grow and expand her range of skills in art. She became part of a class in “gesture drawing” at Univ. of Incarnate Word led by Raquel Beechner and applies this to her series of the Walking People. “Accuracy is not enough.” Has become a new direction. She considers herself a student of anthropology, examining people’s lives and culture through art. It’s a breakthrough, using a series of brushes and India ink for drawing. She is having more fun and is more prolific now that there are no other demands on her time. But not having to be on her feet teaching a class means much less pain. In the past she needed silence and solitude to cope, but not anymore. Life is simpler and the art is for her own enjoyment.

Carol Balliet writes: “I do stay in touch with f/Friends from Meeting, although I’m not much of a Zoom person. Son George and I are under the same roof, and he and his girlfriend take excellent care of me and we all are good company -- not to mention our wonderful dog Cassie. To me, dogs make life worthwhile! I stay in weekly Skype touch with my daughters, one in Pittsburgh and the other in St. Albans, England. Thanks to modern communication, we can all stay in touch in spite of the current worldwide nightmare. Stay safe.” -- Carol



Meeting Business

A Message from the Nominating Committee

by Kellie Price

In normal times, the Nominating Committee seeks to engage with Friends and regular attenders, and in the context of that engagement, determine how our community can help someone grow

through deeper and more meaningful involvement in the life of Meeting. The role of Nominating is not simply to plug people into vacant positions, but to enrich both the lives of our members/attendees and as a result, the life of the Meeting itself.

But these are not normal times. The burden that reality places on Friends is palpable and multifaceted. It is evident in the fact that Zoom Meeting for Worship attracts about half of the number of people who used to attend Meeting in person. It is evident in our sparser attendance at forums. It is evident in the fact that several committees have found too few of their members available to conduct committee business. All of us miss our normal contacts with Friends and the vibrant life that face-to-face meeting bring. The pandemic has added to our individual and collective stress.

We are not comfortable with trying to conduct Nominating work as usual. The needs of our community have shifted, and we as Nominating Committee are led to shift with them. We met on August 18 with the intention of reviewing our contacts with Friends and the vacant positions on the Roster. After deep contemplation about our collective reality, we reached unity around three main conclusions, which we will bring to the September Business Meeting.

First, our Meeting has been functioning on a virtual platform, and while attendance is not as robust as in-person Meeting, it is still steady and heartfelt. We do not believe that our Meeting is at any risk of falling apart. Therefore, we believe that we can continue to function even with some vacant roster positions. Of those position essential to a healthy Meeting, all but two are filled, subject to unity at Business Meeting. We therefore will be proposing to move forward with an interim roster that will likely have committee vacancies until such time as we can safely meet in person again for worship and committee work.



Second, to alleviate stress and burden on Friends, it is our recommendation that certain committees that find their work especially hampered by the pandemic and our inability to meet in person go into “hibernation.” That is, we suggest that those committees pause without worrying about meeting each month and drafting reports. If issues arise that necessitate convening, those committees can always “wake up,” and meet virtually to address needs as the committee sees fit. These committees include Peace and Social Concerns, Religious Education, Long Range Planning, and Community Engagement.

Third, we are in unity that our role as Nominating Committee members will shift for now to getting to know Friends and keeping in touch with them throughout the pandemic, but we will not approach others regarding roster vacancies until we return to in-person Meeting. This does not mean that Friends cannot approach us! If you feel a leading to become involved in a certain position, by all means, reach out to Gretchen, Julie, Oliver, or me and let us know.

We truly believe that our Meeting will return to its usual vibrancy once we can safely worship together in person again. And once that happens, Nominating Committee will shift back into a more familiar role. Until that time, we will continue our work of reaching out to Friends and strengthening those connections.

A New Kind of Pod

By Gretchen Haynes

There's a new movement afoot in education. Kids need schooling, but parents worry that bringing them together in traditional classrooms will spread COVID-19. They worry that kids will catch it from each other, then bring it home to infect the family. This has, unfortunately, already happened.

Some families are solving this by setting up "pandemic school pods". These are groups of two to four families who agree to limit their contacts to each other, forming a COVID-free "bubble" to school their kids safely. The kids learn and play together, go on field trips, and do all the other things that make learning fun. They just do it in small groups, taking precautions to be safe. Both kids and adults limit their contacts outside the group, so COVID does not spread.

Different groups of families have different standards, so they have to agree about what they're going to do. As one pod organizer put it,

There is a certain level of trust that we're establishing with the other families. We don't want to police, but we ask for transparency. ... We're trying to be as safe as possible with a huge emphasis on hand-washing and keeping things outdoors as much as possible. I would advise really taking time to interview the families that you plan to include and make sure everyone is on the same page in regards to safety.*

Wouldn't it be interesting to translate this concept into "worship pods"? Small groups of Friends could come together periodically to worship in person. Beforehand, participants would discuss their degree of outside contact and their standards of personal care, so as to avoid becoming infected and infecting others. They would commit to each other to continue following these standards and to follow the city's guidelines for small gatherings: meet outdoors, keep social distance, wear masks, use hand sanitizer.



The virus is trending in the right direction in San Antonio, and we hope we will be able to plan for "porch worship" at the Meetinghouse soon. In the meantime, self-organized "worship pods" would let us worship together in small groups. Since an asymptomatic person can still spread the virus, we would have to take our responsibility to each other very seriously.

I, for one, am interested.

* Anna Levy-Warren, quoted at <https://bit.ly/3llexPM>

South Central Yearly Meeting

FALL SCYM SESSIONS -- SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2020



Join us online as we continue to explore the theme:
***Loving in the Light:
Quaker Response in
Times of Crisis***

Registration will open Friday, September 4, 2020 at SCYM.ORG

All sessions will be held virtually via Zoom. Links will be available to those who register.

Schedule

<p>Thursday, September 24, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30-8:45 pm YM Opening and worship <p>Friday, September 25, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00-10:30 Business Meeting 1 11:00-12:15 Home Groups 1 12:15 – 1:30 Lunch/Community Time 1:30-3:30 Business Meeting 2 4:00-5:15 Workshops 1 5:15-7:00 Dinner/Community Time 7:00-8:30 Keynote speech by Minga Claggett-Borne: originally presented in April 2020, followed by discussion <p>Saturday, September 26, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00-10:15 Home Groups 2 10:30-12:00 Business Meeting 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:00-2:00 Lunch/Community Time 2:00-3:30 Panel Discussion 4:00-5:15 Workshops 2 5:15-7:00 Dinner/Community Time 7:00-8:30 Fireside Chat with Minga Claggett-Borne <p>Sunday, September 27, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00-10:30 Business Meeting 4 11:00-12:00 Concluding Worship 12:00-1:00 Lunch/Community Time 1:00-2:30 Variety Show – All ages encouraged to sign-up 2:45-3:45 Business Meeting 5 (if needed)
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The Wider World

Friends Committee on National Legislation Actions

From Julia Hitz, FMSA Representative to FCNL

FCNL seeks a society free of racism and violence as the will of God. Continued police militarization through the Pentagon's 1033 program, which funnels military equipment from the Pentagon to local police departments, only contributes to racist violence in our communities, undermining this vision of the world we seek. The House included Rep. Hank Johnson's (GA-4) 1033 reform amendment in their version of the annual defense spending bill. We need to make sure it stays in the final legislation.

- **Ask your member of Congress to include Rep. Johnson's 1033 reform amendment in the final defense spending bill as a first step towards police reform.**
- Click here for a link to an email letter. https://fcnl.quorum.us/campaign/27020/?utm_campaign=contacts&utm_medium=email&utm_source=ak&utm_term=13531.224372.-Z3yc5

Good News for a Good Program

By Jim Spickard

Some years ago, I interviewed Father Greg Boyle, the former pastor of Dolores Mission in Los Angeles. There were 17 youth gangs in that parish, and Father Greg worked hard to help their members turn to a better life. Soon afterwards, he founded Homeboy Industries – a program that trains former gang members for jobs and gives them the support they need to make a good living. He has written about that work in [Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion](#) and [Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship](#). Both are worth reading. So is a recent article by Steve Lopez in the Los Angeles Times. *Here's an excerpt.*

Father Greg Boyle, the local saint of unconditional compassion, has been unceremoniously booted out of his office at Homeboy Industries and relegated to the parking lot. "Come to my tent," the padre advised, saying "the homies" had pitched him temporary quarters, and one of them observed that it "feels like Afghanistan in here." Boyle is 66 and has long been under care for leukemia, so staff and homies thought he'd have a lower risk of getting the coronavirus if he moved outside.



I found Boyle at his desk in an open-air, white canopy lair, with a fan, a palm, and woven flooring that would have made Lawrence of Arabia proud. I wanted to ask about the miracle that visited Homeboy several days ago, when the \$2.5-million Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Humanitarian Award rained down on the nonprofit— which has had its share of financial struggles in the past — like manna from heaven. (keep reading at <https://lat.ms/2EYPQxD>)

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