



Clerk's Message: I Coulda Been a Contender

by Mike Holaday



Statisticians talk about something called a random walk. If you'll bear with me a minute, I'll try to connect that idea with you and me.

A random walk is the sequence that results from a series of random events. The particular sequence of heads and tails you get if you flip a coin over and over is an example of a random walk: H, T, T, H, H, H, T, etc.

Flip a coin just 20 times to see how a million different sequences of heads and tails can result. No one sequence is any more likely to occur than any other, yet one particular sequence *will* occur. That's where the idea of a random walk starts to get interesting. When you think about it, life looks a lot like a random walk, doesn't it?

You step out of a building and meet your future spouse, who happens to be walking by on the sidewalk at

that moment. You and your new spouse move to a new town and go to dinner with a new friend and his wife. She happens to mention a job opening she knows about. Your spouse needs a job.

She applies, gets the job, and it shapes her entire professional career. You move from City A to City B in support of her career, and adventures ensue.

All of these things happened to me. Have I been on a random walk all this time?

As it happens, I grew up a Roman Catholic. That was my mother's religion, and my father made no objection to my sisters and me being raised in that faith. As a serious-minded teenager I contemplated taking orders and becoming a Jesuit. I think I was attracted by the Jesuits' reputation as the intellectual elites of the

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Church. I realized soon enough that I didn't have a calling to the priesthood. It took longer, and a difficult career change, to realize I wasn't cut out to be part of the intelligentsia either.

All part of a long, random walk?

As it happens, Dad's father's people were Quakers. In the last weeks of his life, I sat with him for hours at a time and we talked about whatever was on his mind. He talked a lot about his father, a Quaker boy from southwestern Ohio, who walked off the family farm and out of the practice of his faith as a young man. Yet during his long and active life, my grandfather never lost a kind of aura he carried as a Quaker gentleman, and his children absorbed what we like to call Quaker values, which they passed on to my generation.

As it happens, there came a time in my life when I needed to satisfy my curiosity about this faith my father's people had embraced down through many generations until my grandfather's day. That time coincided with one of the spiritual low places for me. I walked into my first Quaker meeting feeling very needy, and found a silence and a community that fed the need and called to me.

All part of a long, random walk?

You and I could very easily be different than we are. In fact, according to the logic of the random walk, the probability that we would be just as we find ourselves today is vanishingly small. A different twist or turn anywhere in our lives throws the whole sequence off—it amounts to making us different people. We've all been on improbable journeys, our own particular random walks.

So I coulda been a Jesuit! I coulda been a rock star! I coulda been a contender! And so could you.

What we are, though, is much better. That's not a matter of what could have been, but what actually is. We've become what we are *experientially*, as George Fox might have said—that is, by the sheer experience of the thing.

On the plane of the soul, I suspect there are no random walks.

PDF copies of
The LEYM Bulletin
are available at

leym.org

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Service Project in 2015 at the Findlay Habitat ReStore

By Peggy Daub, Clerk of Ad Hoc Committee on Service

Nine friends spent a delightful two days just before annual sessions this year helping Habitat for Humanity in Findlay, Ohio. Despite its being a thriving community, there is poverty in Findlay, and the Habitat affiliate has built over 30 homes in its fifteen-year existence. The ReStore provides significant financial support for their building enterprises, and since there wasn't a building in progress at the time we came, the ReStore is where we worked.

The staff impressed us with their friendliness and devotion to their work, as they guided us through projects including moving and cleaning newly donated furniture, testing appliances, refinishing furniture to be resold, and stuffing the gift bags and preparing the marquee sign for an upcoming event.

Our nine participants were Ellerie & Jonah Brownfain, Peggy Daub, Kathleen & Paul Helbling, Mike Holaday, Clemence Mershon, Becky Morehouse, and Olwen Pritchard, representing Ann Arbor, Birmingham, Broadmead, and Grand Rapids meetings plus Erie Worship Group. Participating in a service project was a great way to build closer community within LEYM as we lived and worked together for those two extra days before our annual sessions. With assistance from Jon Sommer, we had room and board at Bluffton University as a simple extension of the yearly meeting's contract. We very much appreciated this convenience.

During the next year we will be deciding whether to pursue a longer service project in Detroit or another urban area in 2016, or to find another short project, probably near Bluffton. We would like to hear from you if you have an interest in participating or helping to plan next year's project. Please contact Peggy Daub or the Clerk about your interest or any suggestions you might have. Thank you to the yearly meeting for supporting us in this work.



Ellerie Brownfain, Becky Morehouse, Jonah Brownfain, Mike Holaday, Peggy Daub, Olwen Pritchard, Clemence Mershon, Paul Helbling

Restorative Justice in Action

From John Deikis, LEYM Representative to AFSC

The Michigan AFSC office has announced its autumn schedule of trainings for their correspondence-based co-mentorship program. The ***Good Neighbor Project*** applies restorative justice practices and principles, seasoned with Quaker SPICES (the testimonies of Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality and Stewardship) by way of a one-on-one co-mentorship dialogue between community members and long-term incarcerated citizens. The program is an excellent example of *accompaniment*. It seeks to empower the community by providing tools for repairing of harm in relationships caused by crimes committed by our incarcerated neighbors. The program also seeks to foster the heart change necessary for the political will to advance criminal justice reform.

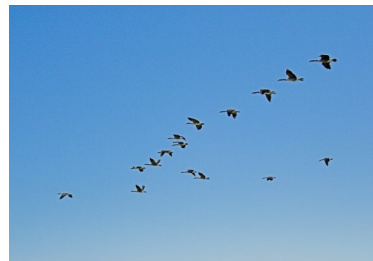
The training will teach interaction skills with incarcerated citizens, provide curriculum materials for letter writing, and explain what it means to be a good co-mentor. Then, those who sign up will be paired with an incarcerated neighbor for a correspondence-based co-mentoring and co-support relationship.

The next scheduled training session will be at our new office, 124 Pearl St., Suite 607, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197. We formally invite you, and any other interested parties who may wish to participate, to take part in the training session of your choice.

October 15, 2015 / 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm or
October 21, 2015 / 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Please respond and let AFSC know which session you would like to participate in. Also, please have anyone you may recommend to participate reply via e-mail, letting us know which session they wish to participate in.

Contact: Ronald Simpson-Bey
American Friends Service Committee
124 Pearl St., Suite 607
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197
734-761-8283



Resources on LEYM's Web Site from Mathilda Navias, Web Master

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting maintains a web site at leym.org. Information that you may find useful includes:

- Copies of the *Bulletin* that can be read on-line or downloaded
- Contact information for LEYM officers and others
- Find a Meeting – a directory of all meetings and worship groups within LEYM, including a map, contacts, and how to attend worship
- Information and registration forms for Annual Meeting and Representative Meeting
- Information on LEYM's Spiritual Formation Program, including a registration form
- A calendar of LEYM events and deadlines
- Links to other Quaker organizations

Greetings from the Editors

This issue of the *LEYM Bulletin* comes out of July's Lake Erie Yearly Meeting itself – a disturbing, enriching four days that riled up complacency, raised consciousness, and re-connected people who don't see each other often enough.

"Sowing the seeds of Friendship" was the subtitle and central metaphor. We sent out the call for statements, continuing the metaphor with "fertile ground," and the responses bloom within these pages. Judy Greenberg, writing for the Earthcare committee, offers thoughts on soil; Jeff Cooper and Mike Hinshaw provide detailed financial accounts for those of us who read organizational status in the numbers; a short excerpt from Merry Stanford's plenary, "Unconventional Joy: The Scandalous Ministry of Befriending," invites us to nurture and share seeds from painfully deep places within ourselves.

Peggy Daub's report on the pre-LEYM service work at the Habitat ReStore in Findlay suggests that doing service provides fun and friendship for the doers. More such opportunities suggest themselves in the reports and announcements throughout this issue. We have also included two reflective pieces, an essay by Brad Cotton and a poem by Debie Smith.

So far, the gorgeous meadows and the trees of early Autumn have been sanity-restoring. This issue has more pages than June's did, but preparing this *Bulletin* still feels like stuffing a wealth of hearts, ideas, and activities into a small container. We hope it serves as an incentive to re-connect with Friends you know and connect with new ones, to join some of the actions being announced, or to develop ideas for new steps into the gorgeous, troubling world.

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Announcement:

Deadline for submissions to the winter issue: January 15, 2016. We welcome your thoughts, reports, experiences, and plans. You can email both of us directly or send material to BulletinLEYM@gmail.com. The theme will be Tending the Fire.

News from Finance Committee

by Jeff Cooper

Below are the financial report for the 2015 Annual Meeting and the approved budget for 2015–16. For Annual Meeting, income slightly exceeded expenses, thanks to donations from Friends. In the budget, expenses (\$24,500) are considerably lower than last year, largely because only one retreat is scheduled for the High School Teen Retreat program and there is no budgeted contribution to Friends School in Detroit (though there is a larger contribution to Olney Friends School). As in past years, this budget has a slight deficit; if income falls short of expenses, the difference can be covered through the General Fund, which has a healthy balance. Please note that budgeted income is based on a suggested per-member contribution of \$32, down \$9 from last year.



Jeff Cooper, Clerk of the LEYM Finance Committee

Financial Report for 2015 Annual Meeting

Income

Fees

Housing and commuter fees	\$7,137.50
Meals	\$7,810.20
Registration fees	\$5,790.00
Payment for lost key	20.00
Bookstore profit	\$27.00

Additions and subtractions

Donations	\$861.69
Less first-time attendee discounts	(\$465.23)
Less scholarships	(\$4,605.92)

Total Income **\$16,575.24**

Expenses

Housing and commuter fees	\$7,137.50
Meals	\$7,810.20
Honoraria	\$300.00
Ice cream social	\$390.00
Youth activities	\$250.10
Copies	\$95.60

Total Expenses **\$15,983.40**

Net Income **\$591.84**

Adjustment (\$12)

Adjusted Net Income **\$591.72**

(= sum deposited in bank less total paid out)

LEYM Budget for 2015–16

Travel	4000
Office	50
Contract worker	2000
Finance	50
Publications	3200
Advancement & Outreach	100
Ministry & Nurture	100
Clerk's Fund	300
FGC contribution	4500
Michigan Friends Center	
one-time donation	1000
Records project	100
FWCC Travel	1500
Youth Activity Fund	1000
High School Retreat Program	1600
Spiritual Formation	800
Olney Friends School	2000
Consultation Fund	0
Ministry Scholarships	500
Insurance	500
Total Expenses	\$24,500

Contributions	23,040
FFC Payouts	1050
Other Income	0
Total Income	\$24,090

Deficit **\$410**

Suggested contribution **\$32**
Per member

TREASURER'S REPORT:

1. General Fund Income
2. Individual Budget Items
3. Summary of Funds

By Mike Hinshaw,
LEYM Treasurer



Mike Hinshaw

General Fund Income— Report 1

Akron Friends	180.00	11-Aug
Ann Arbor Friends	5,207.00	15-Jan
Athens Friends	2,460.00	22-Sep
Birmingham Friends	738.00	16-Dec
Broadmead Friends	1,890.00	3-Feb
Cleveland Friends	1,927.00	19-Mar
Delware Friends	492.00	18-Mar
Detroit Friends	989.00	10-Nov
Grand Rapids Friends	943.00	18-Feb
Granville Friends	900.00	25-Aug
Holland Friends	200.00	20-Mar
Kalamazoo Friends	1,353.00	2-Mar
Kent Friends	680.00	17-Nov
Mid-Ohio Valley Friends	180.00	15-Jan
North Columbus Friends	800.00	16-Dec
Oberlin Friends	574.00	3-Nov
Pine River Friends	615.00	16-Dec
Pittsburgh Friends	5,658.00	12-Apr
Red Cedar Friends	3,116.00	16-Dec
Wooster Friends	600.00	5-Jan
Individuals		
Total	29,502.00	
FFC Dividends	955.94	30-Jun
FFC Change Portfolio Value	356.92	30-Jun

Individual Budget Items for 2014-2015— Report 2



Mike Hinshaw and Jeff Cooper
presenting financial information at Business Meeting

Account	Budget	Actual Exp.	Budget %	I	Total Expense	Total Budget %
Travel ¹	3000	3000	100		4286.80	143%
Office	50	48	96		48.00	96%
Contract worker	2040	1638.19	80		1638.19	80%
Finance ²	50	11.00	22		11.00	22%
Publications	3000	3083.21	103		3083.21	103%
Advancement	600		0		0.00	0%
Ministry & Nurture	300	-324.93	-108		-324.93	-108%
Clerk	300		0		0.00	0%
FGC	4500	4500.00	100		4500.00	100%
Records project	100	100.00	100		100.00	100%
FWCC Travel	2400	2400.00	100		2400.00	100%
Youth Activities	1000	1000.00	100		1000.00	100%
H.S. Teen Retreat	6300	6300.00	100		6300.00	100%
Spiritual Formation	800	800.00	100		800.00	100%
Friends School Detroit	4500	4500.00	100		4500.00	100%
Olney Friends School	600	600.00	100		100.00	100%
Consultation Fund	0				0.00	0%
Scholarship Fund						
For Ministry	500	500.00	100		500.00	100%
Summer Work Project	1200	1200.00	100		1200.00	100%
Insurance	500	500.00	100		500.00	100%
Sub-Total	31,740	29,855.47			31,142.27	
Misc					0.00	
Totals	31,740	29,855.47	94%		31,142.27	98%

¹ Travel includes \$1286.80 of In Kind Restricted Donations in the Total Expense

² Finance includes Banking costs

Summary of Funds: 2014-2015 — Report 3



Our Clerks (Mike Holaday, Sally Weaver Sommer, and Nancy Reeves) presiding over one of the Meetings for Business Sessions.

Fund Name	Starting Balance	Income Change	Subsidy from Gen. Fund	Cash Expenses	End Balance
General ¹	23746.74	30814.86		29855.47	24706.13
Granville Youth ²	7192.02	310.92		245.87	7257.07
Annual Meeting ³	1473.31	15530.41		14271.55	2732.17
Youth Activities ⁴	7092.37	1175.87	1000.00	2861.08	6407.16
H.S. Teen Retreat ⁴	5773.30	215.00	6300.00	4213.91	8074.39
Spiritual Formation ⁴	1107.51	5335.00	800.00	4915.31	2327.20
FWCC Travel Fund ⁴	2339.83		2400.00		4739.83
Consultation Fund ⁴	3143.68				3143.68
Ministry Scholarship ⁴	1000.00		500.00		1500.00
Summer Work Project ⁴	100.00	975.00	1200.00	920.00	1355.00
Traveling Ministries	3500.00				3500.00
Travel Contingency ⁴	3000.00			727.87	2272.13
TOTAL	54468.76	54357.06	12200.00	58011.06	68014.76

¹Includes line item accounting from Budget plus contributions, and also reflects dividends and changes in net portfolio value. FFC base account.

²Granville Youth Fund is a separate FFC account; 'Income or change' reflects both dividends that have been paid and are then transferred to Youth Activities fund.

³Income includes individual donations

⁴Other funds are managed through accounting and may be subsidized by the corresponding budget line.

Balance Sheet for 2014-2015 — Report 4



Balance Scale

Cash Assets

Value	07/01/14	06/30/15	Change in
Citizen National Bank, Bluffton	32,499.02	29,667.11	(2831.91)
Friends Fiduciary Base Account	19777.72	31090.58	11312.86
Dividends, re-invested		955.94	
Change in portfolio value		356.92	
Friends Fiduciary, Granville YF	7192.02	7257.07	65.05
Memo: Curr FFC total 38347.65			
Total Cash Assets	59468.76	68014.76	8546.00
 Allocation of Assets			
General Fund	23746.74	24706.13	959.39
Granville Youth Fund	7192.02	7257.07	65.05
Annual Meeting Fund	1473.31	2732.17	1258.86
Youth Activities Fund	7092.37	6407.16	(685.21)
High School Teen Retreat Fund	5773.30	8074.39	2301.09
Spiritual Formation Fund	1107.51	2327.20	1219.69
FWCC Travel Fund	2339.83	4739.83	2400.00
Consultation Fund	3143.68	3143.68	0.00
Ministry Scholarship Fund	1000.00	1500.00	500.00
Summer Work Project Fund	100.00	1355.00	1255.00
Travelling Ministries Fund	3500.00	3500.00	0.00
Travel Contingency Fund	3000.00	2272.13	(727.87)
TOTAL ALL FUNDS	59468.76	68014.76	8546.00

SUBMISSION DEADLINE
for the Winter *Bulletin*:
January 15, 2016

A Continuing Story of conflict and hope with Friends in Eastern Congo

Readers of the *Bulletin* will remember two letters by Rosemary Coffey. “The Friendly Folk Dancers Tour of Eastern Congo” was in the Fall 2014 issue; “Hold Congolese Friends in the Light” appeared in the spring. Briefly, several of the Quakers Rosemary knew there were attacked and robbed. The ongoing wider conflict also disrupted the flow of funds to Friends in that area. Rosemary’s letter below is accompanied by a description of ten projects that urgently need funds and new safe procedures for sending donations.



Members of the Friendly Folk Dancers Group (from L to R): Hudson (Kenya), Rosemary (US), Antoine (Rwanda), Aline (Rwanda), Peter (US), Guillaume (Congo), Mkoko (our host), Mark (US), Rose (Congo), Lynne (US), and Sarah (Kenya).

Dear Friends,

I know it has been quite a long time since I first brought to your attention the needs of struggling Friends in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We have, however, finally found a way to transfer funds through Vanguard that does not involve paying a significant sum for various charges along the way. We have successfully sent \$500 so far to the Congo Yearly Meeting's account in a bank in Bujumbura, Burundi, and "lost" only \$30 at that end for actually delivering the cash. We feel that's a fair fee and are comfortable doing it again.

So, if you are so led, please consider sending me a check (made out to Rosemary K. Coffey) with a notation in the memo line regarding which of the ten projects (see attached list!) seems most meaningful to you. The amounts at the end of each are mostly symbolic; they are certainly not meant to specify what you are to contribute. The first two projects appear to be of the highest priority, given the difficult and tense situation in the eastern Congo. If you are not wedded to any particular project, that's okay too; we're comfortable leaving that up to local Friends.

If you think that your Meeting might consider supporting any of these projects, please share the list with them, or with other Friends of your acquaintance with similar interests. Every little bit helps, and I do mean that.

Thank you in advance for your moral -- and, perhaps, financial as well -- support!

Rosemary Coffey

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO FRIENDS PROJECTS FOR FUNDING 2015

Contact: rosemarycoffey@aol.com



1. MUCH-NEEDED SUPPLIES FOR HOSPITAL IN ABEKA

The hospital needs *everything* – from a motorcycle (\$4,500) and funds for its insurance and maintenance to a wheelchair (\$150), a scanner (\$180) and photocopier (\$250), and staff (\$4,800-\$7,800/year for three persons). **A recent attack by bandits resulted in the destruction or removal of all sorts of supplies, which must now be replaced.**

Approximate cost for one laptop \$350.00

2. CENTER FOR TRAINING YOUTH IN THE TRADES

A training center for youth will help young people learn trades that will then allow them to survive and improve their living conditions. This center will teach plumbing, computer skills, masonry, shoe-making, etc., and will also be the place where young people from different ethnic groups spend six months training together, sleeping side by side, exchanging ideas and experiences, and, finally, learning about peace. **It is a practical way of countering the seeds of hatred in the minds of the new generation and making them employable.**

Cost to train one youth for six months \$300.00

3. BUILDING SPACE FOR DANCES OF PEACE

Makobola has a high rate of widows and widowers as well as orphans traumatized after the war. Following the presentation by the Friendly FolkDancers, local authorities and the population of Makobola learned that, by dancing the dances of people in conflict or with whom you have grudges and differences, you can reconcile these differences and build a bridge of understanding. The local authorities have agreed to provide free land for building a space where dances and music from different ethnic groups can be practiced. The evaluators during the recent FFD demonstration dances recommended the construction of rooms to accommodate people during both the rainy and dry seasons.

Amount needed to begin construction: \$500.00

4. SHARING WITH ORPHANED CHILDREN (Makobola)

Most of the children who were orphaned after the Makobola massacre of 600 people are not in school. Since it is the responsibility of parents in DR Congo to pay the teachers' salaries, naturally that means that orphans cannot provide the required fees. Allowing these children to study is part of helping them to heal from the trauma they have endured.

Amount needed to sponsor one orphan for a year: \$150.00

5. BEDS FOR PATIENTS IN THE ABEKA HOSPITAL AND HEALTH CENTER

In these medical centers new mothers give birth and then sleep on mats on the floor. Many of the older babies who are malnourished, have anemia, suffer from malaria, etc., also sleep on mats and cloths. Having enough beds would help the situation considerably. In addition, the Hospital at Abeka and the Nutrition Center were victims of looting during past wars, so they are short of many kinds of materiel.

Amount needed to purchase one bed: \$250.00

6. TUILERIE BRICKMAKING PROJECT

The lack of jobs is one of the main reasons why young people are manipulated by politicians until they agree to take up arms. We want to teach about 20 youth how to produce baked bricks and tiles, allowing them to earn capital to carry out other income-generating activities. This is a community project of peace among young people from different ethnic groups, but also a development activity designed to enable people to build a sustainable house out of local materials.

Amount needed to fund the training of one young person: \$60.00

7. ORCHESTRA TO SUPPORT DANCING AND SINGING FOR PEACE

The plan is to form an orchestra of young Congolese, both Quaker and non-Quaker, from various ethnic groups, in the conviction that music may contribute significantly to the consolidation of peace in the area. The ultimate goal is to help form a peaceful society in which people can live together regardless of their differences.

Approximate cost of a synthesizer \$750.00

8. ARK FOR HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

How did the rat and the cat, the goat and the leopard, live together peacefully in Noah's ark? It is because they were transformed before they entered the ark. Similarly, we want to help the people who were traumatized by the recent massacres and other atrocious events. It is difficult to reconcile them with their enemies, making it likely that they will maintain hatred with negative consequences for the next generation. We must first heal the traumatized, so that they will forgive their former enemies and agree to live side by side with them. Thus we wish to develop a counseling program in Makobola to eradicate the roots of trauma and make it possible for the new generation to reach out and forgive. Ultimately, the plan is that they will form a bridge of unity with their enemies.

Salary for one counselor for one year \$1,600.00

9. RADIO LWENGE

The purpose of the only Quaker radio in Africa is to proclaim the good news of salvation and awareness in the Fizi area, long torn by ethnic wars, in order to promote living in peace and unity. Although it has had a positive impact to-date, Radio Lwenge really needs solar panels to produce a continuous current, allowing it to function consistently. This radio station is the expression of the Quaker commitment to the search for lasting peace in the DRC.

Cost to install one solar panel \$2,015.00

10. CONSTRUCTION OF AN OFFICE

FOR A NEW GENERATION FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

The establishment of a head office for N.G.P.D.A. is essential to making the project work. It will bring together without discrimination young people from different ethnic groups, who will physically participate in the construction of the office.

Amount needed to pay one construction worker for six months: \$500.00

Mkoko BOSEKA

Legal Representative/Clerk

REFLECTIONS

by Brad Cotton

“The voices are getting too loud.”

“I’m sorry to hear that. Have you been taking your medicine?”

“I take these and I get a shot once a month.”

Mark handed me his prescription bottles for haloperidol and benztropine. He also gets fluphenazine decanoate shots once a month. Mark is 44 years old. He is dressed in thrift store clothing, a red flannel plaid shirt tucked into what was once fine worsted wool trousers. A safety pin holds the fly shut. Mark’s hair is combed neatly though—unusual for a person suffering from long term schizophrenia.

Mark has a quiet dignity about him. His face has the classic lack of expression, caused by the schizophrenia itself as well as effect of the meds that help to keep his brain chemistry as close to normal as modern pharmacy can get. Mark’s hands tremor also.



“The voices are getting bad. I know when I need help.” Mark does warehouse work. He lives in a group home with other psychiatric patients. I’ve been in many of these homes on EMS runs. The cigarette smoke is so thick you are tempted to get down on your hands and knees and do like they teach you in fire school—crawl under the smoke. It is always dark in these places. It is either too expensive to buy light bulbs or no one is organized enough to get it together to replace the bulbs. There are shadowy figures doing the “Thorazine Shuffle” in the smoke. There is always a TV on. Sometimes someone is watching the Kardashians or some other such nonsense.

“I am glad you are here.” I get Mark a glass of water and a snack. Same as when someone visits your home in the Summer and you get them some ice tea. Getting a psych patient some food or drink creates that bond. Like home. It is that Saturday after Good Friday in the ER. Jesus is dead. We do not yet have the promise of resurrection.

“It must be hard hearing those voices all the time. I don’t know that I could do it. Does it help if we give you a shot of Haldol now?” I remember some schizophrenics with enough wherewithal and knowledge of their disease that they

would ask to be put in restraints when the command hallucinations got too strong. I order Mark a shot of haloperidol, lorazepam and diphenhydramine.

Mark thanks me. We shake hands man to man.

I am so much luckier than Mark. It is now Easter. I am surrounded by family, children and grandchildren. I pick up lilies from the altar rail for my mother and father, gone since last October 28th. Married 64 years, Marie and Wendell died on the same day. It is good that we have the promise of life and renewal. The forsythia bush outside our kitchen window is just turning yellow. Soon it will be as bright as Moses' burning bush.

Mark may wait days in the ER for placement in a crowded state hospital before returning to his "life". If he had good insurance he would be placed immediately in a bright and shiny private psychiatric pavilion. I think of the Door's song "End of the Night": "some are born to sweet delight, some are born to the endless night." Moving away from Jim Morrison and the Doors, Matthew 25:40 tells us that as we have done for my patient Mark, one of "the least of these", we have done for Him.

I am committed to a politics of the compassionate and correct application of Matthew 25:40. Any serious scriptural scholar will tell us that Jesus meant "we" were to care for these least ones. There is no message that it was the responsibility of "the market" to care for these who would seem to have little to no "market value". Jesus rebukes the rich young man who wants to quibble about exactly who is his neighbor. We are all neighbors and when we structure society and politics such that we all have truly equal opportunity, and we all take part in caring for those less lucky than ourselves, since, after all, these "least ones" are closest to God's heart.

Quaker Teens please join

The Quake that Rocks The Mid-West!

When: January 15-18, 2016

Where: Evanston, IL Meeting House

Activities: Outings, Workshops, and Fellowship

Cost: About Forty Dollars with Scholarships Available

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UNCONVENTIONAL JOY: THE SCANDALOUS MINISTRY OF BEFRIENDING

This is a short excerpt from Merry Stanford's deep, insightful, and thorough plenary address to LEYM, July 2015. The entire speech is printed in our 2015 Annual Records, and well worth your reading.

... I have worshipped in many meetings, within our yearly meeting and beyond it. In some meetings there is a vitality that is contagious and wholesome: newcomers are welcomed, spiritual friendships are nurtured, members and attenders feel a part of a caring, loving network of Friends, First Day School doesn't lack for teachers and families bring their children to meeting every week, the meeting is taking marriages under its care and celebrating the births of babies and the graduation of seniors. Life is happening there!



But other meetings languish. First Day School doesn't exist because there are no children; or the only teachers are the parents themselves. When someone gets sick, no one knows about it, and no help is offered. Unseasoned attenders are placed in positions of responsibility. There is no growth, no depth, no celebration. Members leave, few newcomers appear. If they do come, they don't stick around for very long. (Please note that I'm talking about extremes here. Most of our meetings fall somewhere in the middle of these two extremes.)

What is the difference? Why do some meetings languish while others thrive? Is it the First Day School curriculum? The kinds or number of committees? The skill of the clerk? The adequacy of the budget? The commitment of enough Friends to "do the work" of the meeting? The presence of a critical number of Friends with "spiritual depth?"

While all of these are tools or factors that can help a meeting stay healthy, they are more indicators of health than underlying reasons for health. I have come to believe that the single most important factor in whether our meetings thrive or languish is the love we live out toward each other, and toward the stranger in our midst. *(continued on the next page)*

Love

This sounds like a simple thing. It's not. Love is the hardest thing there is to do in the world, and the most satisfying. Peter and I lead Couple Enrichment events, and train new leaders, to help couples learn skills to express their love for each other in ways that the other can receive. Peter and I know, from the four marriages we share between us, including this last one, that being in a committed relationship of two, or a family of four or five or a dozen, is a complicated proposition. Remaining at the love fest after 30 years when your beloved still doesn't get how much you need spoken appreciation can become a difficult decision. Opening one's home to the adult child who is actively alcoholic and has lost a job, or a family, or self-respect is excruciatingly painful. Putting one's travel plans for retirement on hold to care for an aging parent can feel like a sacrifice. It's the close familial bond that helps us make these necessary decisions.

So in our communities of faith, in our meetings, how much more difficult is it to make the decision to love when we ***don't*** have that family bond? There are likely to be more of us, making the sheer mathematics of possible relationships overwhelmingly complex. And without that strong family bond, how likely is it that you will keep coming to a meeting where you feel invisible or underappreciated? How likely is it that we will extend a hand to the member who falls off the wagon and misses meeting after meeting due to hangovers and shame? How likely is it that the meeting will travel to the long-term care facility to worship with the bed-ridden older Friend who can no longer get to meeting? How likely is it that we will respond with both compassion and clarity when our meeting for worship is disturbed by an attender with mental illness? Without the bond of family loyalty, how likely is it that we will find a way to love when it is difficult or inconvenient to do so? It is so much easier to say to oneself, "That's a job for the pastoral care committee. I don't need to address this myself. I don't need to change myself or adjust my plans, or stretch beyond my limits of comfort. It's someone else's job."...

In each of five personal, hurt-filled experiences:

I thought of myself as having been done wrong toward. I wanted to withdraw, to protect myself ... But God had other ideas, and in each of these situations I received a strong leading to let go of my fear, let go of the need to be in the right, or to be vindicated, or to be perceived correctly. Instead, I was led to make some peace offerings. One of them has so far resulted in an improved relationship. The other four have not changed yet, either because I haven't been skillful enough, or because the other does not yet want a more peaceful connection with me.

I'm sharing these personal experiences with you now to show you that I'm just like you. Maybe I'm worse than you. I do not easily lay down my shields, and sometimes I don't even want to! So often it's a thankless task, because the slinging doesn't stop just because *I'm*
(continued on the next page)

ready to be peaceful! But God says that it doesn't matter whether we are **successful** or not in love. What matters is whether we, as individuals and as communities, are **faithful** in love.

I believe Friends are being called to a special kind of faithfulness, a peculiar mission. And what is this peculiar mission? To choose an unconventional, "living at the edges" kind of capital-L Love by scandalously, counter-culturally befriending the capital-O Other, and thereby experiencing capital-J Joy.

To befriend the Other means to choose to operate beyond the limits of our preferences and comforts. It means laying down the 20-ton shield of comfort that protects us from the unexpected.

We certainly have a history of this.

It was scandalous that early Friends did not take off their hats to greet others. It was scandalous that they did not make use of the many terms that denoted their rank in polite society. It was scandalous that kitchen maids and fine ladies were all welcome at the same Meeting for Worship, on the same benches. It was scandalous that women were ministers. Friends were locked up when they preached a gospel of direct access to the Christ within, without an intermediary, when they would not take oaths, when they acted in defiance of government authority, when they refused to fight in whatever wars were popular at the time. If we were living in accord with *their* testimony of equality, who would we be scandalizing now? Who would want to lock us up, if we were living in the Life that early Friends lived?

We also have spiritual teachings that guide us toward this.

Early Friends drew on a power available to them directly through their experience of the inward Christ. George Fox and others studied the bible, and they knew that Jesus had a special affinity for the outcasts, and that he was very good at being scandalous! Here are three examples:

1. In Jesus' day, devout Jews avoided certain people who were considered unclean. These were the non-Jews, such as the occupying Romans and the neighboring Samaritans; those who collected taxes for the occupiers, women who were bleeding, or who loved someone other than a husband; anyone who had a visible chronic illness. But Jesus welcomed the "unclean." He ate with sinners – the men who collected taxes; the women who were looked upon as prostitutes and whores; the people who were considered unfit for polite society. He asked the Samaritan woman for a cup of water, healed the child of the Roman official, touched and allowed himself to be touched by lepers and by the woman who had bled for a dozen years. I imagine him looking on each of these with a loving gaze. He didn't let protocol or good manners get in the way of loving people. *(continued on the next page)*

2. Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, in which the rabbi and the scribe pass by the injured Jew on the road. In fact they move to the other side of the road because they are offended by the sight of him! (Maybe they are on their way to work? Maybe they can't be late for an important meeting?) It is the alien, the traveler, the Samaritan, one of those who is despised, who attends to his wounds, carries him to safety and pays for his medical treatment. And Jesus asks, "Who was this man's neighbor?" Those like him, who lived near him, in his neighborhood, but passed him by in his time of need? Or the Other, from the wrong side of town, who stopped and cared for him, who showed compassion? We know the answer to the question posed by Jesus. We can ask ourselves: Who has been neighbor to us? Who are we neighbor to?

3. There is another story about Jesus in Luke. It occurs during the period of time when Jesus is being closely watched by the powers-that-be at the temple. He goes to the home of one of these leaders on the Sabbath for a meal. He teaches there, at this banquet, that when one is invited to dinner, one should not seek to sit in the best place at the table. Rather, he says, choose the lowest seat. **"For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."** Then he says to his Pharisee host: **"When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind."**¹⁴ **And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you."** (Luke 14:12-14) Are our Meetings for Worship not banquets? Jesus teaches pretty consistently throughout the New Testament a preferential treatment of the poor and homeless. ...

Editor's Note from Susan Carpenter:

For the best, most "scandalous" parts of this address I strongly suggest reading it whole in the annual record. But I could not help but add Merry's lines about Ursula LeGuin, an author she considers "a spiritual prophet." And the Beatles.

From LeGuin's *The Lathe of Heaven*: "Love doesn't just sit there like a stone. It has to be made, like bread, remade all the time, made new.' We have to make love all the time. I mean it. It's like that old Beatles' tune: 'and in the end, the love you take, is equal to the love you make.'"



ANNOUNCEMENT:

BROADMEAD MONTHLY MEETING JOINS COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES

By Kathleen Helbling

This summer, Broadmead Monthly Meeting joined Compassionate Communities of Toledo, the local branch of an International Organization that encourages each person to become involved in the welfare of his/her neighbor. In the spring of 2014, Toledo Council and Mayor Michael Collins signed on to make Toledo a Compassionate City. Since then there have been dinners to promote understanding of charitable organizations and opportunities to make connections. During the year, there are many opportunities to be involved. In September there was a drive to clean up areas of Toledo and many people joined to pick up trash in the Warehouse District.

On October 7, there will be a Housing Convention at the United Way building in Toledo. It will be from 1-5 and will present several groups that are working to provide fair housing in the city. Attenders are asked to bring hygiene products for registration to be donated to the Tent City.

Compassionate Communities is also one of the sponsors for the Interfaith Community of Greater Toledo which holds a festival beginning September 12. In the spring, Broadmead plans to be a part of a tree planting which will take place along the Maumee River with Tree Toledo, an offshoot of Compassionate Toledo.

The website is: compassionatetoledo.org

Report: Middle School Overnight at LEYM

LEYM Middle School Overnight! After 3 years of waiting the middle school group was finally allowed their very first overnight together. A great time was had by everyone. We played games, talked and snacked. Lights out at ten.

Point of Interest. Four moms were present at the beginning of the overnight and only one made it to the morning. Congratulations to Diane Mott.!



In the picture: Jonah Brownfain, Alexander Charlot, Jabiri Crowley, Sophie Hull, Micah Miller, Gabe Mott, Skylar Price, Jayson Smith, and Samantha Smith



L to R: Diane Mott, Ellerie Brownfain, Jo Steigerwald, and Jenn Seif

TENDING OUR FERTILE GROUND FOR LOVE —by Debie Smith Grand Rapids Meeting

*Pema Chodron, an American Buddhist nun, wrote, "War begins when we harden our hearts, and we harden them easily — in minor ways and then quite serious, major ways, such as hatred and prejudice— whenever we feel uncomfortable. . . . We can talk about ending war and we can march for ending war, we can do everything in our power, but war is never going to end as long as our hearts are hardened against each other." (from *Practicing Peace in Times of War*)*

So, how do we move away from acting from the infertile ground of war -- a hardened heart --towards acting from the fertile ground of peace -- a softened heart where love (rather than not love) is truly a choice?

As a personal answer, I offer a poem I "received" as a call one day while I was walking in silence through a wooded area and came across a small natural dam. I felt the call pulsating through my body and responded "yes." Little did I know then what would be asked of me to be faithful to this call.

Looking in over my landscape
I see a dam
 wide
 deep
 thick
Solid block upon solid block,
Constructed over a lifetime,
Many lifetimes.



Examining it carefully
I search,
unsuccessfully,
for its beginning.

Above and beyond this dam
Love flows freely,
Gaining intensity
as if
 flowing
 downhill
 it rushes towards me
until it
CRASHES!
into the dam.

Years of living
have eroded the dam
here and there,
Love trickles
 s l o w l y
through these cracks.

This year
a large chunk
just fell away,
Love flows freely
through this passage,
But FREEZES
as it meets the ground below,
forming ice sculptures
to guard the dam.

Gazing at the dam once more,
I know it is time,
Time
to name each block,
Pick it up
no matter how
 heavy
 dirty
 slimy
 or sharp its edges.
No matter how difficult the task.

It is time
to return my inner landscape
to its natural state,
Time
to step back,
watch with awe,
as Love, once more,
flows freely.

Freely
to me
through me
into the world
through the world,
to a place
of peace never ending.

When you listen deeply in the silence, what do you hear about how you are asked to tend your fertile ground for Love? Have you answered, "yes?"

Debie Smith, Grand Rapids Meeting



Fertile Ground

by Judy Greenberg

What a great topic! Pondering how Earthcare might approach the subject of Fertile Ground, and the way some of us use the “ground of all being” as a way to think of God, I suddenly realized what I really want to say is: **We need to get ourselves and our children excited about soil!** As the song goes, “We’re standing on holy ground!” The new things people are learning—about what makes for good soil, how nature has evolved to make and keep it healthy, the mistakes our humankind have made for so long with the soil, and the incredible role the soil plays in keeping our world working—are so relevant in so many ways these days.

Our culture has taught many children to be afraid of dirt! I’m betting Quaker kids aren’t often afraid to get their hands dirty. But can we do better as Friends at keeping up with new understandings about healthy soil ourselves, and talking with our children about the new breed of farmers who farm the soil instead of mining it-- and how might this change things? Are we remembering to re-visit our personal carbon footprints and talking with our kids about reducing our carbon usage, and about possibilities of paying carbon taxes (to offset our personal carbon footprint) to help farmers sequester carbon in the soil, instead of releasing it into the atmosphere? Think with children about the struggle between the agribusiness models of commodity farming and the old/new ways of respecting the soil and plants and animals and ourselves as part of a miraculously complex, live system that requires thoughtfulness and care when we intervene. I’m skimming very lightly over a vast topic in the hope that Friends will be stimulated to look further into farming and soil research science as fascinating new-frontier type occupations.



Earthcare Committee: Clockwise starting from the left: Jim Crowfoot, Russ Adams, Dick Hogen, Judy Greenberg, Al Connor, Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Steve Connor, Phil Balderston, and Max Heirich.

In her very “non-scientific-reader-friendly” book *The Soil Will Save Us*, Kristin Ohlson reminds us that carbon is the common element in all life. Earth’s soil has held vast stores of carbon for millenia, whereas now soil over much of the globe is being depleted of carbon and indeed desertified. At the same time too much carbon in the atmosphere threatens our future. She and some thoughtful farmers and researchers have come to believe finding ways to sequester carbon in the soil could significantly lower our atmospheric load. She writes: “Gathered nearest the plant roots are the fungi and bacteria, both of which line up like pigs at a trough to get their carbon sugars. They’re so tightly clustered near the roots that they form an almost impenetrable boundary between the root and soil pathogens that lurk nearby, trying to attack it. The barricade is not only a passive one; fungi can actually throw their ropelike strands around an interloper—say a root-eating nematode—and strangle it. The plant is their sugar daddy, after all. It behooves the fungi and bacteria to protect it. Likewise, it behooves the plant to keep the fungi and bacteria around, as they bring the plant nutrients that it can’t get any other way.”

More about this underground world: Healthy soil has five main categories of microorganisms: fungi, bacteria, one-celled organisms called protozoa, tiny worms called nematodes and microarthropods which are related to crustaceans and insects. Countless herds of these countless creatures live in great soil “cities” going about their business, feeding, trading nutrients, protecting themselves, making alliances and carrying on battles with each other and

Continued on the next page

with plant roots in the soil. A wonderful book to share with your children is *The Secret Garden—Talking Beetles and Signaling Trees: the Hidden Ways Gardens Communicate* by David Bodanis. He brings to life the unbelievable drama of what's going on beneath our feet and has fascinating photos of microscopic critters you and your kids will both love. To begin to visualize these cities, the word *aggregate* is helpful. Bacteria exude carbon glue to attach to particles of sand, silt and clay, and gradually they have protective little clumps of dirt called aggregates. Fungus in the soil throws threads of fungus around many of these little clumps and holds them together. These *aggregates* leave tiny spaces for air, water, microbes and worms to move slowly through the soil. In healthy soils, there are trillions of these aggregates piled on each other, giving good soil its crumbly, cakelike texture. Part of plants' survival depends on their being able to maintain a balance between their underground rootmass and the aboveground mass of stems and leaves. When an animal eats part of the aboveground plant, the plant “sheds a corresponding amount of its roots. When the discarded roots die, the soil's resident population of bacteria, fungi, and earthworms will get to work breaking them down into rich brown humus. What had been the grass plant's root runs will become channels through which worms, air and rainwater will move through the earth, stimulating the process by which new topsoil is formed.”

The above quote is from another thought-provoking book: *Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan, describing various natural systems for keeping soil healthy, as noted by some innovative farmers. One example: before human agriculture, herbivores like wildebeests or buffalo grazed grasslands in tight herds to protect their young and weaker animals from predators. As they grazed, they left hoofprints that served as tiny catchment basins for rain; they also left urine and piles of manure which included seeds, fed soil organisms and drew insects, and they trampled grasses and stalks into the soil where soil organisms could feed on them and seeds could grow. After a short time, the herds would move on again, to get away from their own dung and away from predators, and start over in a new field. After the herbivores moved, as the plants had time to recover and grow, flocks of birds came to eat insects and larva from the manure, and added their own manure.

In contrast, conventional agriculture runs heavy machinery—Ohlson uses the phrase “ripping the soil open”—with plows, releasing carbon into the atmosphere. The machinery compacts the soil and smashes the underground “cities” or structure of the soil that supports the organisms necessary to the plants. Livestock that is lucky enough to pasture outside is kept in fields for a long time, protected by fences so they spread out, eat their favorite grasses down to the roots where the vegetation has no chance to recover, and leave patches of bare ground. Many farmers and researchers have discovered that bare ground is a mistake, that planting cover crops between the regular crops and leaving the residue after harvest enriches the soil and reduces erosion, keeps the soil cooler in summer, and provides food for worms and other creatures that help keep the soil more porous and absorbent. Allowing animals to reduce fields to bare ground halts photosynthesis, where the plants remove carbon dioxide from the air and, combined with sunlight, convert it to carbon sugars that the plant uses for energy. Some of the carbon is stored in the soil as humus—a stable network of carbon compounds that can remain in the soil for centuries. As the soil loses its structure, it loses its ability to absorb heavy rains, which increases flooding; it loses its ability to hold moisture in dry periods which increases the impact of droughts, and it loses its ability to withstand extreme winds and storms which blow or wash topsoil away.

Pollan tells about Joel Salatin, one of this new breed of farmers: he pens his cattle into a field for a day with electric fencing to simulate predators and holding them close together (called mob grazing). The herd grazes intensively, leaving behind mashed stalks and hoofprints and manure; then he moves them to a fresh pasture. As the grasses have a chance to recover, Salatin moves his chickens—in “chicken tractors”—into the field to scratch, eat larva from the cowpies, and add their own manure to the soil, until they have further enriched the entire field before they are moved after the herbivores again. Keeping track of where each field and each group of animals are in the growing and grazing process requires extensive spreadsheets, but the farmers claim this is a far easier kind of farming than using heavy machines and “disturbing” the earth with mineral fertilizers, herbicides etc.

The more you look into soil, the more questions are raised and the more interesting it becomes! With the possibilities of mitigating climate change, securing more humane and dependable food sources for the world and thus more stable economies, and thus a more peaceful world, I hope Friends will take up the challenge of finding out more about this ground on (in?) which we live and move and have our being.

LEYM Committee Clerks 2015-16

Advancement & Outreach

Erika Smith (Ann Arbor)

Arrangements & Site

Jon Sommer (Broadmead)

Earthcare

Russ Adams (North Columbus)

Richard Lee (Red Cedar)

Finance

Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor)

Ministry & Nurture

Paula Deming (Waysmeet)

Nominating

Abbey Pratt-Harrington (Athens)

Peace

Lucia Kalinosky (Oberlin)

Program Committee

Dale Pratt-Harrington (Athens)

Publications & Archives

Peggy Daub (Ann Arbor)

Youth & Children's Program

Kate Spry (Cleveland)

High School Teen Retreat Program

Dave Avner (Pittsburgh)

Ohio Yearly Meeting Sponsors Two Retreats

The Friends Center of Ohio Yearly Meeting in Barnesville, OH, is sponsoring a weekend retreat on “Spiritual Autobiography: The Soul’s Story” October 9-11, 2015. Susan Yanos will be facilitator.

For more information go to <http://wp.me/plzxUQ-JQ>

The Friends Center of Ohio Yearly Meeting in Barnesville, OH, is sponsoring a weekend retreat on faithfulness November 13-15, 2015. Marcelle Martin will be the facilitator.

For more information go to <http://wp.me/plzxUQ-JL>



LEYM Summer 2015

LEYM ANNUAL FALL YOUTH (K-8) RETREAT
OCTOBER 2-4, 2015 at PILGRIM HILLS UCC camp in Brinkhaven, OH 43006

Come join us for a wonderful weekend of fun and fellowship for the second year at the Pilgrim Hills UCC camp. All LEYM youth in K—8th grade, their families, and any friends who are interested in joining them, are welcome. We will share in fellowship and fun—go wandering, play games, visit Joyce and Philip Balderston's farm, design and silk screen a T-shirt, have a campfire (weather permitting), have worship sharing, and

We will be staying in refurbished cabins and having meals prepared and served to us in the dining hall. Please let me know of special dietary needs, so the kitchen staff can accommodate us. (The camp staff would like to know a week ahead of time.) Bring a sleeping bag and your favorite camp bedding, layers of clothes for various types of weather, sturdy shoes for wandering and a separate pair you don't mind getting muddy on the farm, flash light, towels and bathroom toiletries. Bring a journal if you use one, word or board games to share if you have favorites, a T-shirt to silkscreen, and your imagination.

Please do not bring electronic devices, unless they are absolutely necessary for work or school. Cell phone reception is erratic, so don't plan lots of time talking with folks elsewhere – there will be lots of good folks with whom to visit at the retreat. Please call or email Conleth Crotser at 440-396-6236 or conlethcrotser@hotmail.com as to how many folks are coming from your household. Bring the following registration form with you, one for each person attending. The cost will be \$70 per person. If you would like a \$25 scholarship, please mark that on the registration form. Other arrangements can be made through Conleth.

NAME_____

AGE_____

ADDRESS_____

FEE PAID_____

SCHOLARSHIP \$25 _____

MEETING_____

PARENT OR ADULT ATTENDING WITH-
CHILD_____

PARENT/GUARDIAN (if not attending)

CONTACT phone number(s)

ADDRESS (if different than child)

INSURANCE INFO (if parent/guardian not attending)

_____ (a copy of the card would be even more helpful)

ANY HEALTH INFO THE SUPERVISING ADULTS NEED TO KNOW (such as allergies, food intolerances, medications, health problems...)

PLEASE SIGN IF A PARENT OR GUARDIAN IS NOT COMING WITH THE YOUTH ATTENDEE.

I (name)_____ (relationship) _____

give (youth name)_____

permission to attend the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Fall Youth retreat at Pilgrim Hills, UCC camp at 33833 Twp Rd 20, Brinkhaven, OH 43006, 740-599-6314. I understand that reasonable caution will be taken during all events. If an emergency arises, the supervising parents will make every effort to contact me as soon as possible. If the emergency is life or limb threatening, my child will be taken for emergency care at the same time attempts are made to contact me. Signature _____

date_____ Thank you for sharing your daughter or son with the group. We all appreciate each person who comes and hope each one has a wonderful adventure while with us.