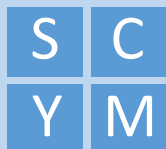




Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) SOUTH CENTRAL Yearly Meeting News

Friends in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma & Texas



February 2018

for

**Yearly Meeting
2018**

March 29-April 1

SCYM Plans to “Lift Hearts & Spirits to the Light”

by Rich Corl, Live Oak Friends Meeting

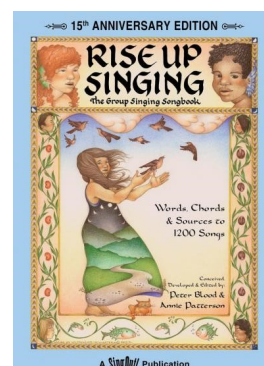
In early 2017, as our quarterly meeting began to consider a theme for the adult program at SCYM-2018, we realized how discouraged many of us felt with the results of the 2016 presidential election. When the year progressed into floods of negativity and inaction by Congress, the spirits of Americans seemed at an all-time low. Thus, we felt led to present a different kind of program to our fellow Quakers – one that encourages **PLAY!** “**Lift Hearts and Spirits to the Light**”

Keynote: Annie Patterson and Peter Blood – in concert!! Annie and Peter (active Quakers, together since 1981) are the creators of *Rise Up Singing* and *Rise Again* songbooks. She is “a teacher, musician, artist, peace activist, mother, and community organizer.” He is “a nurse, family therapist, crisis worker, music editor, song leader, spiritual forma-

tion leader and teacher of Quakerism.” We feel honored that they are joining us.

Please plan to attend this year’s SCYM to build your spirit in community with us. The workshops will give you specific tools through the arts that will encourage you to creatively move forward “to the Light.” Come join us as we make art through clay, collage, writing, movement and music. We invite you to offer a workshop and share the art that inspires your life. Contact (workshops@scym.org, 832-257-8425).

Workshop Deadline: If you would like to offer a workshop, please submit a written description of your topic and include your space and equipment needs. Please send your information to workshops@scym.org. **We must have your submission NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 19th.**

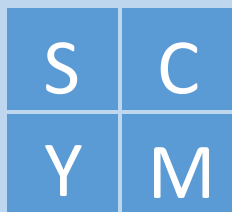


South Central Yearly Meeting Theme for March 30th - April 1st, 2018—R Corl

If you are like me, you have been working hard to try to counteract the negativity coming out of the current US administration and congress. Regardless of your political affiliation, just being an American citizen over the last year has pushed spirits to all-time lows. We might feel angry, dismayed, confused, helpless, uncertain, deceived and embarrassed. That drains us of our energy and willingness to keep doing the things that we care and feel strongly about.

It is in these chaotic, spirit-draining times that we present the 2018 SCYM theme: “**Lift Hearts & Spirits to the Light**”. We intend to give participants specific tools through the arts to take home and use in active ways. We welcome your involvement in Workshops, Home Groups and of course the Business Meetings that guide the work of SCYM for the coming year. To present a workshop, please contact Richard Corl, clerk of the Bayou Quarterly SCYM Theme Committee.

**Pre-YM Issue
Volume 56
Number 1**



Yearly Meeting News is currently published twice per year--a Pre-YM issue and an electronically-distributed Post-YM issue for those attending the monthly meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, South Central Yearly Meeting, which has meetings and worship groups in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas.

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Our SCYMFacebook Page:



www.facebook.com/scymquakers

Sustainability Minute

From Presiding Clerk Liz Yeats (Friends Meeting of Austin)

SCYM recently received a letter from Susanna Mattingly, Sustainability Communications Officer for Friends World Committee on Consultation in London, asking what SCYM is doing to take further action on the Sustainability Minute, which asks yearly meetings to initiate at least two concrete actions on sustainability, involving Young Friends in key roles. The Sustainability Minute was approved at the World Plenary Meeting, Pisac, Peru 2016 and is available online at <http://scym.org/sites/default/files/documents/IRM%2016%20Sustainability%20Minute.docx>.

To date, I don't think SCYM has initiated any actions toward sustainability on the yearly meeting level. We certainly learned about sustainability during the adult program at 2017 SCYM sessions but nothing around those issues was discussed during the business sessions.

FWCC is offering us resources and

help in addressing this matter but asked if we could address the following questions to better understand what is needed:

1. What sustainability challenges and opportunities you are facing as a yearly meeting?
2. What has been going well within your yearly meeting?
3. What has not been going so well?
4. What would you like to see happen?
5. What do you need to make this happen?

I wonder whether you have considered such questions within your monthly meeting or worship group? Such a discussion might be good preparation for a discernment of this matter during business sessions at 2018 SCYM.

I'm hoping that Friends will come to 2018 YM sessions ready to address these and other questions about how we should be moving together toward 'living sustainably and sustaining life on earth'.

Peace, Liz Yeats

A New Location for Representative Meeting 2018

As an experiment, Representatives and the Yearly Meeting Planning Committee will meet at Camp Gilmont near Gilmer, Texas November 15-18, 2018. At Representatives' meeting in 2016, it was decided that an ad hoc committee would search for a location closer to Friends from Arkansas and western Oklahoma. After a diligent search, the committee located this camp that would be open in November, open to housing 30 to 40 people, no need to sign a statement of beliefs, affordable, and could provide vegetarian food and adequate meeting spaces.

Gilmer, Texas is in northeast Texas, midway between I-20 and I-30 east of Dallas.

As always, everyone is welcome to attend Representative Meeting.



A Message from Yearly Meeting Planning Committee

Yearly Meeting Sessions are more than the Adult program, including business meetings and scheduled activities for children and youth. Everyone is encouraged to attend the business sessions. There are a few changes in the schedule from 2017 and other recent years. For instance, the keynote address will be a concert presented by Peter Blood and Annie Patterson on Saturday afternoon with a question and answer period that evening. For specifics you can check the abbreviated schedule on line or see the complete schedule available at Greene Family Camp at registration.

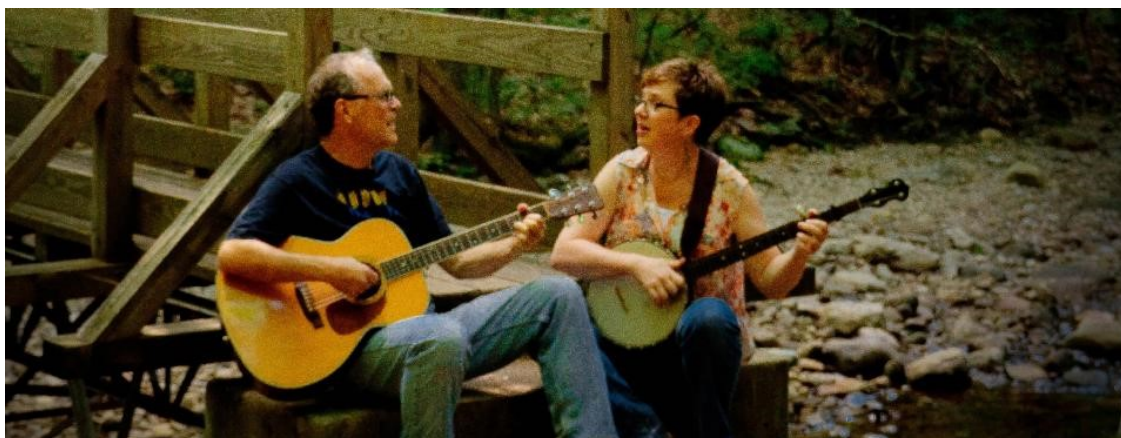
If you have questions about the site, programs or anything else you can stop at the “Information” table in the dining hall near the registration tables. For people new this year, people who ought to know stuff will be wearing buttons saying, “Ask Me.” Please ask instead of wondering about something.

Chris Drexler from Live Oak Friends Meeting is the site coordinator. Let him know if you want to reserve meeting time and space for a committee meeting or will have an exhibit. You can reach him at onsite@scym.org. For general concerns or questions, contact Jane Houser, clerk of the YM Planning Committee at ymplanning@scym.org.

One other change was recommended by the Youth Program Support Committee. Activities that were labeled “family-friendly” will now be called “community” to help clarify that those activities are for everyone, not just families with children. These include boating on Friday afternoon and swimming in the pool on Saturday (weather permitting.) And as a reminder, no one should enter the pond or pool areas except when opened and supervised by camp staff. Friday night there will be a campfire with singing and star-gazing with Edwin Campbell and one new event—a drum circle. Saturday evening will bring The Quaker Variety Hour. (Not just for families.)

The past two years, construction on I-35 disrupted our usual path to GFC. As of November 2017, the main lanes appear to be complete, but eliminate a northbound exit for Bruceville. Go one more exit to Woodlawn Rd., cross over the freeway and use the southbound frontage road. Do not enter the main lanes. If the frontage road still ends, just turn right and go up the hill to the camp. GFC maintains video instructions on their web site, so check that link before you leave home. Google Greene Family Camp and then click on “directions” to find their map and videos.

Welcome to Yearly Meeting, 2018—All are welcome!



Live Oak Friends Meeting Thanks Harvey Donors

From Jane Houser, Clerk, LOFM Finance Committee

As our city and the surrounding areas begin the recovery process, we are grateful for the many donations and expressions of care and concern. We received donations from more than 90 individuals, Quaker Meetings and Friends Churches in many areas of the country. We are grateful that so many thought of us when there are so many needs in the world.

During a three-day period, the Greater Houston area and parts of southeast Texas received between 30 and 56 inches of rain as Hurricane Harvey decayed into a tropical storm. In some places the water was relatively “clean” but in others storm water mixed with overflowing sewer treatment plants and releases from reservoirs. In mid-November, reports say there were still 150,000 families displaced from their homes, with total damage estimates in the billions of dollars. The Friends Church in Friendswood, Texas, sustained some damage as did more than 30 of their members. We sent two work crews to Friendswood to help them “muck out” homes and made a major donation to their recovery fund.

Live Oak’s buildings and property were undamaged, but three families in the meeting community lost cars or sustained damage to their homes. Your contributions helped them replace cars and get started with the repair process even before insurance paid its share.

Our process charged our Finance Committee with accounting for and acknowledging contributions, while our Care and Concern Committee dealt with the distribution of funds. In the distribution process, we wanted to move as quickly as possible and provide funds where small amounts could have the greatest impact as well as address unmet needs or underserved populations. Those organizations include Altruist Relief, Mama Rosie’s Feed the Hungry Fund, Texas Organizing Project, Southeast Texas Food Bank, West Street Recovery, The Transgender Project Relief Fund and Best Friends Animal Rescue.

Again we are extremely grateful to all who contributed and who expressed concern for our well-being.

Notes from the YM Planning Committee

From Jane Houser, Clerk, SCYM Planning Committee

Recently I was reminded of the legend of Brigadoon, the magical Scottish village that appears once every hundred years and is unchanging—at least until two hunters from New York show up. Anything anyone needs seems to be right there and available. I surmise that SCYM’s sessions at Greene Family Camp must feel a little like that to most people—when they arrive, everything is all set up, tables and chairs in place where they will be needed, signs posted, housing assignments done and everything else, as if by magic. But unlike Brigadoon, preparations and set-up at GFC are done by real people—the employees of Greene Family Camp and volunteers from the planning committee and the site coordinators.

Here is a brief description of how the process works. Four to six weeks before yearly meeting, e-mails circulate to anyone who has a role in any aspect of program, including youth coordinators, workshop presenters and the clerks. They are asked to list or describe what they need in the place they will be using, including chairs, carpeted space, tables, Wi-Fi access, etc. The site coordinator tallies all of that data and sends a set up plan to our contact at GFC, usually the operations manager. When the site coordinator arrives

at GFC on Thursday morning, some of that will be complete, but chairs will be in stacks, rather than nice neat circles, tables may be dusty and may not be set up where needed. Members of the Worship Oversight committee set up chairs in the theater and location for early bird and night owl worship. The site coordinator and whatever volunteers can be rounded up do everything else including putting up signs on doors to remind Friends of the name of the space within. No magic is involved. Throughout the sessions volunteers do a wide range of tasks, including supervising the campfire, turning off the blowers in the theater before sessions, running microphones during sessions and managing the sound system. If you hear anything in the theater, thank Edwin Campbell, who spends his entire yearly meeting in the sound booth. And if there is a chair where you expect it to be, thank Chris Drexler, our site coordinator. And if you need something moved, consider doing it yourself—just put it back when you are done. Ask how you can help. And remember that SCYM runs on people power rather than magic. If you would like to help with set up, clean up or work to solve problems, contact Jane Houser, clerk of YM Planning to volunteer:

ymplanning@scym.org

South Central Yearly Meeting

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www.sycm.org

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Further Thinking about Food—*Register Early*

From Jane Houser, Clerk, SCYM Planning Committee

The Yearly Meeting Planning Committee understands that Friends care about food both to satisfy individual needs and as a reflection of values and testimonies. For many years, Greene Family Camp had two sisters who both managed the food service and were the lead cooks. They had a binder on SCYM that included menus used over the years, along with vegetarian recipes that seemed to be well received. They both retired during 2015 and we were introduced to the new director at the time of representatives meeting.

The camp has always asked for a list of special needs and a vegetarian/vegan count three weeks before we arrive. Last year, registrations were really slow in coming and three weeks out, we had only three registrations for vegans.

Now fast forward to 2018. Kristy has been there for a while now and seems to have settled in, including building a stable staff and a collection of vegetarian cookbooks. Before representatives' meeting, Kristy and the clerk of YM Planning exchanged e-mails and phone

calls and I described some of the issues. She seemed very open to dialogue and altered the menu with vegan and vegetarian alternatives. During the representatives' week-end, the camp provided main dishes for vegetarians and vegans that were well received. At this point, I am confident that Greene Family Camp can meet our needs, **if we can get registrations in with enough time to provide an accurate meal count** and explanations of special needs. In addition, Friends are always free to supplement the meals provided. There are full kitchens in the old staff lounge (young friends space) and the fireplace room, as well as a refrigerator and microwave in the health house. Special needs/requests should be sent to the Registrar or attached to your registration form, including as much detail as possible.

FYI, the dining hall now has water fountains with filtered water and taps for water bottles, so bring your own water bottles and reusable coffee cups.