

FRIENDS IN SAN ANTONIO

7052 North Vandiver at Eisenhower

July 2011

Developments in the History of the Peace Prize

The Nobel Committee's concept of peace, and its interpretation of the terms of Alfred Nobel's will, have changed in the course of time. The over one-hundred-year history of the Peace Prize shows that in the opinion of the Norwegian Nobel Committee there are many different paths to peace.

In the earliest years of the Peace Prize - up to World War I - the prize was often awarded to pioneers of the organized peace movement. Many of the laureates were parliamentarians who had committed themselves to working to resolve conflicts on the basis of international law and arbitration.

In the inter-war years, the focus shifted to active politicians who sought to promote peace and détente by means of diplomacy and international agreements, but prizes were also awarded for humanitarian work (Nansen, the League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees).

Since World War II, the Peace Prize has principally been awarded to honour efforts in four main areas: arms control and disarmament, peace negotiation, democracy and human rights, and work aimed at creating a better organized and more peaceful world.

In its awards to Wangari Maathai in 2004 and to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Al Gore in 2007, the Nobel Committee has indicated that its concept of peace now also embraces efforts to limit the harm done by man-made climate change and threats to the environment.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee
<http://nobelpeaceprize.org/>

Increasingly, the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded not to workers for international or internal peace but to ones whose work is for justice and equality within nations, such as last year's to Liu Xiabo, who is imprisoned in China for his activities.

AFSC's work parallels this. Clinton Pettus, AFSC's Dep. Gen. Sec. of Programs, says, "AFSC's programs all lead to nonviolence and justice. For example, to end violence and bring about a more peaceful and just world, we work to empower individuals with tools for addressing conflict constructively in their lives and communities; we support marginalized communities in their journey to challenge structural and direct violence; and we work to confront and transform conditions and structures of violence generated by or between communities, political states, and, increasingly, by non-state actors."



Budget

Unfortunately we have to report that contributions are lagging behind expenses more this year than is usual. It is a hard year with much uncertainty for everyone and if this year mirrors last year, when we failed to meet our budget by a considerable amount, we shall fail it again this year. This means that our resources will become dangerously low.

Contributions may be sent to the Treasurer, Friends Meeting of San Antonio, at P.O. Box 6127, San Antonio, TX78209".

Our Website

James tells us that we are up and running at a new and permanent web address, www.sanantoniofriendsmeeting.org

We are waiting for Colby to make the transfer to www.sanantonioquakers.org which is our original address and will again be one of two addresses . The temporary Coolsociology... etc site will no longer be used

Nothing will change, only the addition of the new address. Both addresses are from the same web hosting company. This was done to give an additional mnemonic address and also because we anticipated a delay with Colby transferring from one provider to the next.

Personal News

We believe that Emma and Audrey or Emma or Audrey are or is at the Friends Music Camp even as we write. We'll look forward to hearing from them how it was. We're happy to know that Denise and Bill celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary this month. Jocelyn is, we understand, in water at Sea World for the summer as assistant to a display there. She is hurled into the air by a sea lion and caught by an orca (not really.)

Sebastian is at home until the end of July. Right now he is doing a lot of reading, philosophy, science, and literature and working at Sonic. He will be taking the fall semester off and from August 1 until December will be working on an organic farm in Utah. He will return to UT Austin in the spring. Pam will be leaving in July to work at Friends Music Camp as a counselor again. She spent many summers there as a student.

During June Jen assembled a collection of 12 photographs of the meetinghouse and Meeting activities, by Dan Guajardo, Carol Redfield, and William Osborne. Along with captions describing Meeting, these are for a book on *The Churches of San Antonio*, to be published by the Arcadia Press. Milo Kearney asked us for these and will be a co-editor of the book.

(Normally we avoid second names so that nefarious hackers cannot pick up personal information about the people named. But in the case of the book, *The Churches of San Antonio*, Dan's, Carol's, and William's full names will be given when they are credited for the photographs.)

Erin and George have a brand-new daughter, Bridget! We're all delighted. They brought her to meeting where she was welcomed. Jen will be away for six weeks, continuing the research she did in Rwanda last year. We'll find out exactly what when she returns. Gary will act as Meeting Clerk while she is away. We were happy to see Natalie again, who came to see Lee and David. She is growing and happy with David's son and his wife in Colorado.

Marian will relive a time from earlier in her life by revisiting Logan Canyon in Utah this summer, this time with son John and Joy. James is in S. Carolina visiting his elder daughter and will go on to New York to attend a reunion of Community Free Theater. Then he'll visit his brothers in upstate NY and come home. Colette and Sharon have been cleaning the gate before staining

it again. Colette and James have been working at draining the tray beneath the A/C for the meetingroom.

Sharon is planning a pool party for the children in her yard for the last Sunday in August. More later. Kate is recovering, from her accident but slowly, with an expectation of three months. She and her husband are considering moving, that this is the right time to go to somewhere smaller. Currently, they're thinking of moving to Knoxville, Tennessee.

Janet says that Kate has developed a woman-to-woman peace plan, "Letters to Our Sisters", which is an ecumenical project of understanding and peace. She invites women from various religious communities to join an e-mail friendship network to get to know one another and break down stereotypes. Each month through the year we write a personal commentary on a specific topic. Kate keeps us all dedicated with time lines and does the editing. Topics have included Peace, Food, Relaxation, Spirituality, Justice. Love and friendship flow along the e-mail tracks. It has been a challenge and a good experience to be a part of it. Janet

Business Meeting

Meeting for Business commenced with an advice from Mother Teresa "We can do no great things, only small things with great love."

The Nominating Committee recommended the appointment of William S. to the Casa Building Committee. William is an architect; his appointment was approved. Ken continues to plan the Forums and, while the Religious Education Committee still has no clerk, the children have been cared for. But meeting still needs a Friend to coordinate the work of this committee.

Bill reported that the engineering inspection of the Casa building was complete and the committee is now considering the next steps. Jen, our new Clerk, reported that we had received a request for permission to include photographs of the meetinghouse and Meeting activities for a book, *The Churches of San Antonio* (see above.) Meeting approved.

The new Treasurer reported that as expected the deficit in the Operating Fund had now started to decrease. Bill recommended, however, that a note be placed in the newsletter pointing out that the balance is unusually low for this time of year. The amount in the Sinking Fund is approaching its target. Colette and Marian are thanked for their work on the jumble sale, the proceeds of which have gone into the Building Fund.

Meeting closed in silence.

Miscellany

Many years ago, Kenneth Boulding, a prominent economist/Friend, spoke of spending a year at the university in Jamaica. He said the university had recently opened a school of medicine. But it did not have a school of agriculture. So more infants and people would be saved from dying, but there would be no more for them to eat. It would be cruel to allow people to die because there is no food for them. But we hope the same mistake is not being made on a wide scale, for instance in Africa.

We see that the latest hit musical on the New York stage is "The Book of Mormon." How long will it be before "George Fox's Journal" is featured? Should we not forestall efforts by outsiders by writing the score ourselves? Wilkinsons and Whitworths, think about it!

We think this is about religion: Bill Moyers writes in some promotional material: "I am told the first thing the late people's pundit Molly Ivins did upon reaching that Great Valhalla of Scribes in the Sky was to whip out the latest edition of the *Hightower Lowdown* and read it aloud to the multitude of saints, angels, and cherubs gathered to greet her.

I have it on reliable authority that the heavens shook, and that even the Lord of Hosts was astounded finally to learn what was really happening back on Earth. 'Why didn't I know this?' she

demanded of the apostles, all of whom reportedly now have their own subscriptions.” We pass this on.

Many of Hershey’s Quaker English chocolatier counterparts had created model towns and were major philanthropists. Hershey, Pennsylvania, became a model town that included five churches, a free library, men and women’s clubs, Hershey Park with lush gardens, a zoo, and fine hotel. He and his wife Catherine established a school for orphan boys in 1909. Today, the school controls 79% of The Hershey Company’s voting stock. It does not seem that Hershey was a Quaker.

Dave Zarembka writes from Kenya arguing that the purchase of large tracts of land by commercial farmers does not increase the production capacity of the land. He writes from the personal experience of his Kenyan wife, Gladys, who farms a small lot, producing maize but also beans, squash, greens, sweet potatoes, and groundnuts, interspersed or as a second crop. This is done with almost no use of artificial fertilizers and fossil fuels and is mostly for consumption at home.

Forums

Our first forum in June focused on the advice, “Do not assume that vocal ministry is never to be your part. If the call to speak comes, do not let the sense of your own unworthiness, or the fear of being unable to find the right words, prevent you from being obedient to the leading of the Spirit.” The assembled Friends divided into two smaller groups to and reassembled later to share thoughts.

There were thoughts on how to minister to the children, who are present at the beginning of meeting, when Friends are not yet centered down.

Rick Pierik was unable to lead a forum on the work of AFSC but he will now be able to come on the last Sunday in July. Friends mingled and shared instead.

Not MASH

In the popular and antiwar TV series MASH, Alan Alda, playing Hawkeye, with his sidekick, BJ, played by Mike Farrell, provided the bitterness about the war which killed or maimed the young men they saw carried into their makeshift surgical hospital near the Korean frontline.

Periodically they would be faced with a need for a surgical technique they were not familiar with but had heard, or read, about. Amid the ruckus, they would innovate, remembering or simultaneously reading up details of the technique. Or a visiting surgeon might know the right procedure.

Perhaps the doctors at Brooke Army Medical Center often feel the same about war. But something similar has happened there, or at least started there, this time close to miraculous. A young corporal, Isaias Hernandez, had had most of his thigh muscle destroyed by a bomb, and doctors, faced with no solution, recommended amputation. He refused and for almost three years he sweated through exercises to strengthen transplanted muscle from his back, to little use. Then he read of another war veteran whose fingertip had been severed and miraculously regrown up to the fingernail after an application of “pixie dust.”

He sought out an army doctor who knew of this, who inserted a paper-thin piece of the “extra-cellular matrix” of a pig’s bladder, the stuff used to make the pixie dust. Muscle that had seemed completely destroyed grew back. Not only that, but the reassembled muscle was 103% whole, stronger than before. His leg was completely restored.

The technique grew, as is often the case, from the serendipitous discovery of the unexpected regrowth of dog aortas replaced by sections of intestine. The finder was Stephen Badylak, who later discovered not only the how but the why. He was not a military doctor, but Hernandez’s

case is described in the current issue of Discover magazine.

P.S. The man whose fingertip regrew seems to have been a distant relative of Marian by marriage.

Who Received Most?

Over fifty years ago I was in hospital in England. The long ward, in a WWII hut, had about thirty or forty beds and was a companionable place where everyone kept a caring eye on everyone else. One man, opposite me, impressed himself on me with a story. He was an undertaker with his own business. My Granda worked for an undertaker. One day, he said, there was a loud noise of wailing and sobbing and he found a Jamaican family coming in through the front door. They'd been in England only a few months and their man, husband and father, had died. Their priest had sent them to an undertaker who wouldn't take them because they had no money. They were distraught. What could they do?

My wardmate was moved by pity and said, alright, he'd take care of it. They had no friends, he said, and nobody came to the funeral service so he and his Protestant men sat in the Catholic chapel and sang hymns with them. Afterwards they parted without paying anything and he put it out of his mind. A year afterwards there was a great noise in his shop, singing and shouting. He sent one of his men to find out what it was. It was the Jamaican family again, dancing into the shop and singing, "We've got the money, we've got the money!"

Granda would have liked that.

Ken

Quakertown, Denton

Denton, TX, has a park, Quaker Town Park. In 1875 African-Americans settled in Denton, calling there area Freedman Town. Later the settlement grew and they named the new area Quakertown after the Quakers who had helped runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad. But in 1921 a petition to take the area for a public park was approved by the white majority. It lay between the civic center and a women's college. This seizure was supposed to beautify the city. The community, a strong one with school, businesses, doctors, churches, and a funeral home, was forced to move.

Lee Martin wrote an historical novel, *Quakertown*, about an African-American gardener made to help in this process. The area park was named Civic Center Park, but has been renamed Quakertown Park to atone for the forced removal of the families. A Quakertown house is being renovated by the Denton County Historical Park Foundation where an African American Museum will be located.

History and Mathematics

In First Day School, teacher asked, "What happened in 1624?"

Young Luke's hand shot up. "George Fox was born."

"Excellent," said the teacher, "And what happened in 1628?"

Luke frowned. "Um, he said at last, "George Fox was four years old?"

Quaker House Newsletter

The Life Of Muhammad

The BBC is to trace the journey of the Islamic prophet Muhammad for a new series which is claimed to be a first for British television. Al Jazeera reporter Rageh Omaar will present the three-part programme for BBC2, following in the prophet's footsteps from Mecca and along the journeys he took during his life. To ensure the programmes are in line with Islamic tradition, they

will not depict the face of Muhammad or feature dramatic reconstructions of his life.

The Life Of Muhammad will follow events such as his migration to Medina and the founding of the first Islamic constitution, through to his death. It will also examine his legacy and the impact of the faith he established.

The BBC's commissioning editor for religion and ethics, Aaqil Ahmed, said: "For some people in the UK, Muhammad is just a name, and I hope this series will go some way to explaining who he was, how he lived, what his prophetic message was, and how all of this compares to his legacy today. "This is a very timely landmark series filmed in Saudi Arabia, Jerusalem, Syria, Turkey, the USA, the UK and Jordan. It features comment from some of the world's leading academics and commentators on Islam - a subject that many people may know little about."

The BBC said the programmes would raise questions about Islam's role in the world today and explore "where Islam's attitudes towards money, charity, women, social equality, religious tolerance, war and conflict originate".

Omaar is a former world affairs correspondent for BBC news who joined Al Jazeera's English service in 2006. He said: "The details of Muhammad's life really are little known, and I hope that my series will - for many - shine a light on the very beginning of Islam, taking viewers to the heart of this faith, illustrating just how Muhammad's life and legacy is as important today as it was over 1,000 years ago."

This news from the BBC Television Centre. We hope we may see this series here.

Quakers and Muslims

In the Spring issue of *Quaker History* David Vlasblom writes of the early contacts of Quakers with Muslims (known in those days of the mighty Ottoman Empire as "Turks".) He draws on several accounts, saying that the ignominy visited on Quakers in England led them to identify more easily with others held in the same way. In those early days Samuel Fisher taught that the accuracy of the Bible was suspect, given its oral handing down, and that the inward "Light of Christ" was more reliable. This was a major difference with Anglicans, Puritans, and other Protestants. He and Barclay held that the "Light of Christ" was equally available to those of other religions, including Islam.

Many evangelical Friends visited "Turks," but, despite their belief that they were misled, were enabled to speak with them in an equal exchange of ideas. In this, these Friends found that the "Turks" were men of learning and capable of making thoughtful decisions, finding a commonality with Islam. But they found that local friars in Palestine were hostile and that they occasionally needed help and protection from sympathetic Muslims. They were therefore able to form impressions of Muslims from a direct dialog with them.

The journal also has an amusing photograph of a Victorian Quaker lady standing on the rubble in front of the face of a glacier in the Canadian Rockies. She looks, in her long and full black skirt with her cane, as if she is on the way home from Meeting.

Family Vacations, Philip Gulley

When our son Spencer was six weeks old, I said to my wife, "It's time for a vacation."

"Not a good idea," she cautioned. But she went along because she believes in letting me learn from my own mistakes.

We went to a lodge four hours away. Spencer slept the whole way there. I was gloating. Checked in. Went to our room. I was gloating some more. Having kids is a breeze. Mothers are such alarmists.

Then Spencer woke up.

In the book of Revelations, John writes about the seven plagues of divine wrath, ranging

from bodily sores to earthquakes. John missed a plague: crying kids. Spencer stopped crying long enough for us to eat dinner. Grandmother-types looked at us and smiled. Before I had a child I thought they smiled because they liked children. I now understand they smile because their children are grown. . . .

That family vacations don't turn out as we'd hoped can only be blamed on television and its inaccurate portrayal of family life. . . We do ourselves a disfavor when we expect family life to be *The Brady Bunch* revisited. Truth is, most of our families lurch from one mess to another. And that's not altogether a bad thing. Otherwise, how would we cultivate the fine art of forgiveness?

My wife even forgave me after our first vacation. She said at the time, "You can't help it. You come from a long line of men who didn't listen to their wives."

I said, "Excuse me, what did you say?"

Philip Gulley, *Front Porch Tales*. The book is in our library.

Integrity is More Than Truth -Telling

The Rwandan superintendent of our Friends workcamp told this story:

Two friends were approaching each other; one called out to the other, "Look at that nice brown goat."

The other yelled back, "Brown goat? I don't see a brown goat. There is a white goat. Don't you see the white goat?"

The first person angrily responded, "No, there isn't a white goat. You must be mistaken or crazy. There's only one brown goat."

"What? No, you must be lying," the second friend shouted back.

As they walked closer and eventually came together they realized they were indeed referring to the same goat - only that it was white on one side and brown on the other.

It wasn't about truth or one friend being right and the other being wrong. They needed each other to get closer to the complicated and yet more whole picture.

Integrity is about more than truth telling. It requires us to more deeply understand the perspectives and lives of Friends different from us. It might also mean struggling with the bigger questions of the seeds of violence in our possession that affect Friends on the other side of the globe.

From *Quaker Life* by Anna Crumley-Effinger, assistant clerk of AGLI.

Plain Dress

Early Friends took to plain dress and speech to stress equality by rejecting symbols of status. But both came to signify status and so to be meaningless. What now? We know that every new piece of equipment, or treatment, or mode of transport, or source of knowledge, is unavailable to the poor. We have computers, Ipads, and smartphones. "Trickle down" is a cruel process. Every year the poor get left behind in new unthought-of ways. Yet it has made it possible for American poor to have TV, air conditioning, telephones, and cars when the poor of other countries still hope for bicycles and radios. The rich try out the new faddish things when they're very expensive, scarce, and inefficient and keep buying them until they're cheaper and work better. While other people try to catch up. Is this the only way?

Appreciation

In a 1937 Collection address at Swarthmore College, Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein, Carnegie Visiting Professor, who had been eight years old at the time Friends administered post-war relief in Germany, told of conditions there in 1918. He said, in part:

“Thus, the end (of the war) came, when the country and all of us were near starvation, tuberculosis was raging among the young, and when one would have been willing to commit any crime to get a loaf of bread.

Not long after these darkest days of the World War news reached us which at first we could not believe. Our teacher came into the classroom and informed us that, from the next week on, we would get a regular breakfast consisting of things of which we had long since forgotten.

‘It cannot be true,’ we said, ‘there is no milk, no rice, no butter, no meat, no chocolate anywhere – how then could we get it? And who on earth would be willing to give it to us even if there were some supplies?’

‘You will see for yourselves,’ the teacher answered, ‘ the people who are sending you these breakfasts are Americans, called ‘Quakers.’“

It was true – and I am convinced that without these Quaker breakfasts I would not be here today.

It is said, Man doth not live by bread alone – and so these breakfasts were more than physical food. They were the first symbol that War might be forgotten, with all its hatred and killing, that a new community of Man, a new order of things based upon the principles of Peace and Reconciliation might come into existence.

If the spirit of the Quakers, the spirit of true Christianity, could have prevailed, Europe and the World would look different today.”

“Today”, of course, being 1937. *Friends Intelligencer*, Tenth Month 30, 1937

lonely

God feels far away.
I cannot feel, and walk
twilight streets, beauty sings
not so strong as lonely.

mark hickman

Calendar, July, 2011

Meeting for Worship is held on Sunday at 10 a.m., followed by refreshments and a Forum discussion at 11.30, usually lasting until about 12.45. Children are invited to join worship for the first fifteen minutes, after which they may go to join with the Young Friends program. Child care is available during Forum.

- 3. Sunday Potluck lunch at 11.30.**
- 7. Thursday Midweek Meeting, 6.30, meetingroom.**
- 10 Sunday Forum –Spiritual Quaker Process: M&O Queries in Small-Groups.**
- 17, Sunday..... Meeting for Business.**
- 20, Wednesday Midweek Meeting, 6.30, Julia’s house.**
- 24, Sunday Forum – Lee Teran on Legal Problems in Immigration.**
- 31, Sunday Forum – Rick Pierik – the Work of AFSC.**

Each Thursday, at 4-5 pm, a silent peace vigil is held at the corners of S. Flores and Commerce, one block west of Main Plaza near City Hall.

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