



BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

A publication of the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

brooklynmeeting.org

MARCH, 2017

Alternatives to Violence Program Basic Workshop at Brooklyn Meeting

Brooklyn Meeting is offering an AVP Basic Workshop, starting on the evening of Friday, March 10 and ending on the evening of Sunday, March 12. The workshop is a wonderful opportunity that Friends have been requesting for a long time.

Here is some information about AVP and the workshop for those who may not be familiar with it:

From the AVP website avpny.org:

“The AVP program began in 1975 when a group of people inside the walls at Green Haven Prison (NY), calling themselves the Think Tank, felt the need for nonviolence training in preparation for their roles as counselors in an experimental program with young people. They collaborated with the

Quaker Project on Community Conflict, and devised a prison workshop.”

“Most people are exposed to some form of violence daily. Interpersonal violence represents a failed human interaction. The AVP conflict resolution workshops are designed to help people create successful interactions.”

The AVP Basic workshop “helps individuals develop basic conflict resolution skills to help them de-escalate conflicts. The workshop involves a series of experiential exercises in small groups that build community and trust. Role plays of conflict situations build skills and help participants to think on their feet.”

AVP workshops are fun, and at the same time they are community-building and teach ways to interact without violence. They can be transformative, even life-changing. This is your opportunity for you to share in this experience.

Here is information on the workshop schedule and a registration link. A modest donation is also requested on a sliding scale (\$40-75), but no one will be turned away for inability to pay.

Workshop Dates and Times:

Friday March 10: 6-9 p.m. (light supper served)

Saturday March 11: 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. (meals and snacks provided)

Sunday March 12: 1-8 p.m. (meals and snacks provided)

Registration: complete the Google Form at Brooklyn AVP Registration or email events@tnrmediate.com Workshop limited to 25 participants.



Do You Want to Quaker “Outside the Lines”?

What does it mean to Quaker Outside the Lines?

It means to take your Quaker faith out into your community in meaningful ways. If you have a project in mind that would engage your neighborhood community, we have an opportunity for you! From now until October, Friends in New York Yearly Meeting can receive up to \$200 reimbursement for a project that:



- Involves Quakers and non-Quakers doing something together;
- Is a manifestation of Quaker faith;
- Is meaningful to people living in your town or city;

- Happens somewhere other than your meetinghouse (libraries/schools/parks/etc.);
- Is documented at least once on social media, using #Quakeroutsidethelines.

Quaker Outside the Lines is open to all of us in NYYM - individuals, whole meetings, small groups, First Day Schools, everybody!

Watch the introductory video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ0Dewh-vUzs&feature=youtu.be>

To apply (or get more information) here: www.tinyurl.com/quakeroutsidethelines

February Meeting for Business: Finances, Membership and Committee Reports

New Member Welcomed

Seth Phillips, son of long-time Friend Michael Phillips, reads his application letter for the second time and is received into membership. Seth is a principal in the New York City schools.

Recorders Report on Meeting Membership

In 2016, eight adults became members by request: Jonathan Fluck, Paul Sireci, Willie Mae Watkins, Adrienne Almeida, Ed Oliver, Amy Hundley, Columbine Loza and Emily Sandusky.

One child, Neva Almeida, was accepted by application of her parents.

Five became members by transfer: Morgan Wajda-Levie, Maureen McGovern, Magnolia Sampson, Mary Owen and Jim Darragh.

Three Meeting members passed away: Boyce Benge, Sarah Nazimova-Baum and Stanley Zarowin.

H. Wayne Williams, David Whitlock and Jon Miller transferred to other meetings.

The total membership of the Meeting is 277. Twenty six of these members live at a distance.

Printed Directories are available at the Book Table in the Social Room for \$2.00. Friends are invited to make corrections in their listings by emailing database@brooklynmeeting.org

Meeting Treasurer Makes Her Last Report

Danielle Dybiec, having served her full term as Treasurer of the Meeting, reported a checking account balance of \$55,346.83. Excerpts of her last report: "Serving as Treasurer puts you in direct contact with the generosity of time, volunteerism, service, kindness, creativity, productivity, dedication and spirit that pervades our Meeting. Every time you requested a check, it was because you did something for someone else... Your intentions were always good. You just want to help each other-- and the world. And we are all so busy all the time. Maybe each of us could do more, should do more to make the world's burdens easier to bear. But to me, all your acts and monies spent, large and small, amounted to something greater. Each check request was a message and it said, 'I spent this much money. I spent my time. I did something. I care.'"

Finance and Collections Committee Report

The Committee raised and deposited \$89,864.97 over the past year. \$44,411.35 went to New York Yearly Meeting. \$2,000 went to Powell House.

Library and History Committee Reports

The Committee has discontinued interviews of older members for the present until volunteers are found to conduct the interviews. The Archives remain on the third floor and include former Meeting Minutes. The Library has been little used [one book was taken out during the past year] and the Committee is considering how to proceed.

Ministry and Counsel Committee Considers Sanctuary for Refugees

The Committee suggests a "Welcome" sign and will connect with the Property Committee to work on it. As this Meeting does not presently have space to provide shelter, it is suggested that we join with another group that does.

-- Molly Rusnak

Minutes of Meeting for Business

The assistant clerk of Brooklyn Monthly-Meeting, Nancy Black, keeps an e-mail distribution list of people who have asked to receive the minutes from our Business Meeting each month. If you do not currently receive the minutes, but would like to receive them in the future, please send an e-mail message with that request to nbb@westnet.com.

Brooklyn Meeting Welcomes George School Alumni

On February 19, Brooklyn Meeting hosted its second annual gathering of alumni, parents, and friends from George School, a Quaker boarding and day school in Newtown, Pennsylvania. Approximately 30 people joined for worship and social hour, catching up with old friends and meeting new ones.

Karen Suplee Hollowell, George School's director of alumni relations, noted that

the school hosts all sorts of alumni events but said that events like these, which tie back to a shared purpose, are especially meaningful. The school has organized similar gatherings in Asheville, North Carolina; Chatham, New Jersey; and Philadelphia, but noted that the events with the highest turnout have been those in Brooklyn and at 15th Street Meeting-house.

"Meeting is something that most George School alums miss terribly. Even if they don't always appreciate it when they start, they come to love it," she said. "Our hope is that people will find a permanent home

at a Meeting, especially for young alums and those with young children."

In fact, she noted, she had spoken to at least three people who attended last year's event and now regularly attend Brooklyn Meeting.

Did you attend a Quaker school? Do you know alumni in Brooklyn? Consider contacting your school's alumni office and asking whether they would be interested in doing something similar.

--Melissa Cavanaugh

Socially Responsible Activities Fund Seeks to Fund Socially Responsible Activities

- by Jonathan Fluck

If you have a project that you would like to work on which forwards an environmental, peace or social justice issue, there is a fund that you may apply for. It has been in existence since 2014 when New York Quarterly Meeting ended the amount that each of our meetings historically had been responsible to send to NYQM. They encouraged each of the meetings to use that money for donations to socially responsible causes of their own choice. The link for this fund in Brooklyn Meeting is Peace & Social Action Committee.

Peace and Social Action Committee has been tasked by the Meeting with distributing \$13,000 again this year to projects that advance Quaker social concerns. We have decided that this year there will be two deadlines for proposals: April 30 with decisions made in May, and Sept. 30 with decisions

made in October. The committee is always open to hearing proposals that require a more timely response than these two deadlines allow and will hold some money aside to meet such requests. This year the committee itself will be organizing two events and \$2,000 will be set aside for each of those programs, leaving a total of \$9,000 to be disbursed.

Our guidelines for those interested in applying for support are as follows:

1. The Peace and Social Action committee wishes to consider primarily Quaker initiated projects that respond to environmental, peace, and social justice issues of our day. Proposals should be in writing, and the person submitting the proposal should be prepared to meet with a committee member prior to our meetings to decide on projects (May & October).

2. The committee prefers projects that directly involve Brooklyn Monthly Meeting as a whole or individuals active in Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, but we are open to contributing support to on-going Quaker programs.

As a reference, in 2016 we gave money to:

- NYQM's African Education Committee to be used in assisting children to attend the Kisangura Friends School in Tanzania (BMM member Jim Morgan is very involved with this effort);
- the Cove, a Bronx learning center for teens which BMM member Lyn Pyle helps lead; the Committee's all day forum "Beyond the Bars" examining mass incarceration and the problems of re-entry;
- BMM member DK Holland's Inquiring Minds school program introducing civics to elementary school children;
- Earth Quaker Action in support of a Philadelphia initiative to hire inner-city people to help install solar panels on neighborhood buildings;
- the Indonesia Peace Team to help build a welcome house;
- City Voices, a publication in support of people with mental illnesses with which BMM member Carl Blumenthal is involved;
 - the ARCH program for which BMM member Callie Janoff works;
 - and in support of two individuals traveling to conferences or forums.

If you have questions about any of this please speak with any Peace and Social Action committee member.



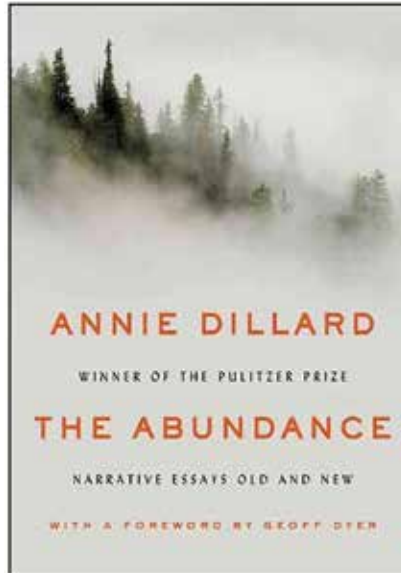
An “Abundance” of Annie Dillard

by Carl Blumenthal

Before everything became “awesome,” Annie Dillard expressed awe of things human, natural and divine. With *The Abundance: Narrative Essays Old and New* (2016), she steps off the beaten path of religion for the wilds where matter and spirit intertwine.

Like one of her heroes, Teilhard de Chardin, a renegade priest and paleontologist, Dillard “possesses a sort of anaerobic capacity to thrive on paradox.”

Thus: Observers of a full solar eclipse flee as soon as it’s over. A trapped deer’s struggle hastens its demise. “Chinese men lose no face by crying.” A chance encounter with a weasel challenges free choice. Raising hell as a child leads to an adult’s search for what is holy. Fossils can’t survive without the soil in which they hide. “A writer asks not after what



he loves best, but what he alone loves at all.” Blackbirds so completely fill a tree they go unnoticed. Polar explorers reach their goals by losing their way.

Finally, a moth burns in a candle flame “glowing within, like a building fire glimpsed

through silhouetted walls, like a hollow saint, like a flame-faced virgin gone to God, while I read by her light, kindled, while Rimbaud in Paris burnt out his brains in a thousand poems, while night pooled wet at my feet.”

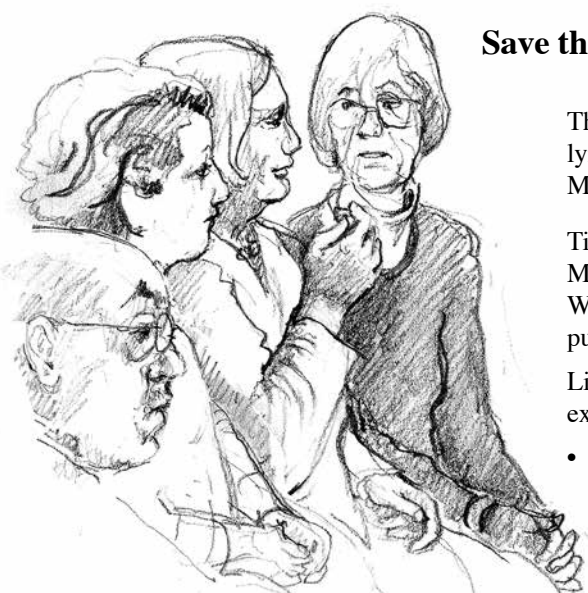
As the title of this collection suggests, Dillard’s revelations appear fast and furious. This is a blessing because you can never tell how she will interpret her observations. And a curse because she can lose herself in the weeds or spiral into the ether.

With 1974’s Pulitzer-prize-winning *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, Dillard burst on the nature-writing scene like Athena from Zeus’ head. She proved that a scientific dilettante could legitimately commune with the wildlife in her backyard, Virginia’s Roanoke Valley, as if Walden Pond was the suburb of Thoreau’s day.

An American Childhood (1986) is Dillard’s one attempt to be amusing. And she succeeds by refusing to live up to adults’ expectations. However, she is ultimately drawn to the suffering of others, whether that be deer, the gruesome deaths of those explorers, a frog devoured by a giant water bug, tsunami victims, or Teilhard’s monkish travails. “Cruelty is a mystery, and the waste of pain.” But how can we avoid it?

Note: A longer version of Carl’s recent newsletter review of Margaret Fisher’s veganism pamphlet *Enlarging the Circle of Love* was published in the February, 2017 issue of *Friends Journal*: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/enlarging-circle-love/https://www.friendsjournal.org/subscribe>

To subscribe or donate to FJ, an independent organization: <https://www.friends->



Save the Date: Quaker Witness Day, Wednesday, March 8, 6-9 PM

This event is co-sponsored by Brooklyn Friends School and Brooklyn Meeting.

Time: 6-9 PM at Schermerhorn Street Meeting House; light supper served
We will hear from Friends about their public witness and ministry.

List still in formation; we currently expect these Friends:

- Buffy Curtis, Liseli Haines and other Friends who have visited Standing Rock

- Annie Patterson and Peter Blood,
- Ministry of Songs of Courage and Hope
- Linnea Capps, doctor engaged in global health work (currently in Chiapas, Mexico)
- Margaret Lechner, Alternatives to Violence Project - AVP

Note: RSVP not required, but helpful so we can order enough food!

RSVP: Tom Rothschild trothschild@brooklynfriends.org

**Save the Date:
Spring Sessions,
March 31-April 2**

Dear Friends,

We gather for Spring Sessions at Friends Academy on Long Island. Those of you coming from upstate (which in this case includes even those of us in many parts of New York City) will pass not far from the stone marking the spot where George Fox preached in 1672, under two large oaks in John Bowne's garden.

Much has changed since then: though my meeting, Scarsdale, has a small table made from their wood, the trees are

long gone, the stone stands in front of an apartment building, and many of the signs in the busy neighborhood are in Chinese.

But some things have not changed. We still, as then, speak truth to power. This Spring Sessions give us a chance to ground our speech in worship together. Witness Coordinating Committee will have space on the agenda; politically things are moving quickly, and there may be important actions to consider, individually or collectively. Christopher Sammond, our General Secretary, will have a report, and we will hear a report on the progress toward replacing him when he resigns this summer.

We had the biggest crowd in recent memory (about 70 people) at Coordinating Committee Weekend in January. It is an important time to be together, Friends. We have a long history of speaking into the political space in which we find ourselves. We know how to do it. Let us support each other in this deep discipline and celebrate our collective wisdom.

Looking forward to being together,
Lucinda Antrim
Clerk, New York Yearly Meeting

**For more info,
visit NYYM.org**

**Save the Date:
Quaker Cemetery
Workday, April 22**

Friends & Brooklyn Friends School: Please Join Together for our Spring Visiting and Workday At Our Quaker Cemetery in Prospect Park.

Saturday, April 22, 2017 10 AM - 4 p.m.

Enjoy fellowship, work and fun. Help rake, plant and remove invasive plants. Bring rakes or gloves if thou have them. Visit the gravesites of family and friends.

Bring your lunch; beverages and cookies will be provided. For further information please call cemetery sexton Robert Wilbur at 718-938-1800.



**N.Y. Yearly Meeting 2012
New Advice & Query
About the Environment**

Advice #17

Friends are advised to acknowledge and celebrate our interconnectedness with the natural world and to share with our children and others our love for God's

creation. We are encouraged to live lives that nurture ourselves and the Earth. We are urged to pay attention to such concerns as population growth, climate change, sustainable energy policies and right sharing of natural resources.

Query #16

Are we engaged in nurturing and deepening our relationship with all

creation? Do we take time to be open to the Spirit through contact with nature? Do we strive to live in harmony with the Earth? How can we transform our lives in witness to our right relationship with the Earth and join with others in active stewardship, realizing that we share our planet now and in the future

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The Communications Committee welcomes Brooklyn Meeting News contributions from all Meeting members and attenders. Our newsletter includes a variety of content which may be of interest to our community, including but not limited to:

- Recaps of recent Meeting events
- Previews of upcoming events
- Issues pertaining to our Quaker faith and history

The newsletter is published on the first Sunday of each month, and we request that submissions for the next issue be submitted by December 19th, so that we may briefly discuss your contribution, as regards its timeliness, appropriateness, and length.

General Guidelines:

- Please send an email to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org

Contributions should generally be brief, between 150-450 words in length.

Please send your newsletter submission as an attached Word document.

Keep in mind that contributions will be copy edited, and may not appear in the newsletter in exactly the same form as how they were submitted.

Thank you for your interest - we look forward to your input!

REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

Meetings for Worship

9:00–9:50 AM and
11:00 AM–Noon on Sundays,
in the meeting room

6:30 PM Tuesdays,
in the meeting room

6:00 PM, every Thursday, weather permitting spring through September, outdoor worship under the Quarterly Meeting's care in Battery Park (Manhattan) at the Labyrinth just north of Castle Clinton

Childcare

Sundays during 11:00 AM worship, for children of 3 months to 3 years, in the care of an early childhood teacher and dedicated volunteers

First Day School

10:45 am – 11:45 am, Sundays, September to June. Three classes, roughly related to age: Bodies (age 4-6), Minds (agr 7-9) and Spirits (age 10-12).

Social Hour

12:00 PM Sundays, Ground-level dining room

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

1:00 PM, first Sundays, in the meeting room

Hymn Singing around the Piano

10:00 AM, first Sundays,
in the meeting room

Readings of Spiritual Texts

10:00 AM, second Sundays,
in the meeting room

Worship Sharing

10:00 AM, third Sundays,
on the third floor

Community Dinner

1:00 PM-3:00 PM Set-up
3:00 PM-4:00 PM Meal/Serving
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM Clean-up,
come for some or all!

Last Sunday of every month, ground-level dining room; volunteers appreciated for this monthly dinner for anyone who wishes a free hot meal. Children encouraged to volunteer. Contact: Andres Colapinto, acolabus@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ongoing additions to upcoming Meeting events are regularly added to the Meeting website at <http://www.brooklynmeeting.org/calendar>.

To submit an event, email: events@brooklynmeeting.org.

Send additions to Regularly Scheduled Activities or Upcoming Events to events@brooklynmeeting.org.

Send inquiries or suggestions about the newsletter to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

The Monthly Meeting Newsletter is published by the Communications Committee of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.

Current members: Melissa Cavanaugh, Ben Hill, Molly Rusnak, Lucy Sikes, and Heather Loza

Drawings by Lucy Sikes