

# Our 40th Anniversary Year

# Penn Notes

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William Penn House

September 2006

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## Building Community

In early August, way opened (in the form of other William Penn House staff generously volunteering to cover for us) for the three interns at William Penn House to participate in the HIPP facilitator training held here. Erik Hanson, Natasha Almonor, and Janaki Spickard-Keeler joined fifteen volunteers from all over the country and the world to learn how to lead workshops for the Help Increase the Peace Program, an outgrowth of AFSC's Alternatives to Violence Program. Kathryn Liss, the director of HIPP, led the training along with Kimberly Bodiford.

Quaker and non-Quaker, old and young, black, white, Asian, Northerner, Southerner, West Coast, East Coast, foreigner, straight, gay, and in-between: for five days we built a community not in spite of our differences, but because of our common goals.

HIPP aims to "empower youth through conflict resolution and community building." It's not exclusively for youth; the program is very adaptable, and throughout the training we each talked about the groups we hope to bring it to.

The first two days we experienced a workshop from the point of view of participants. Through role-plays, practice listening, and activities oriented to bring about an awareness of our own propensity toward conflict, we each learned a lot about ourselves in addition to learning about others—and in addition to learning about how to facilitate these workshops, which of course is the whole point.

By the third day, we'd built enough trust in each other to be able to really talk about the hard issues, and to begin to think about how to lead workshops to address those very issues. Groups of three selected a topic: cooperation and trust, bullying, power, multiculturalism and economic disparity, stereotypes and labels, and sexuality and homophobia. We each prepared and led a workshop session, then got feedback from the rest of the group.

We never stopped building community throughout our five days; I got more hugs in that one week from new friends than I'd gotten in the previous two months. Card games late at night, rambles across the city, meals and worship and craft projects shared: it was an amazing experience.

We had among our group four fabulous young people who brought levity and perspective to our activities. Older activists brought lifetimes of experience to inject reality into our idealism. I learned more about my fellow interns than I'd learned in months of living with them. And I can't wait for our "I Have a Dream..." Youth Seminar, where Kathryn will be facilitating more HIPP activities and building community with Quaker youth and local DC youth, learning about race and civil rights. ■

*The author, Janaki Spickard-Keeler, is finishing up a one year internship at William Penn House. Raised as a Quaker, Janaki grew up in Texas and California. She is a 2004 graduate of Smith College.*

## Washington Quaker Workcamp NEWS

This June, Washington Quaker Workcamps completed our busiest school year ever. Over the course of the year, more than 800 campers participated in our programs, for more than 1500 total days of service. Weekend and weekday workcampers repaired walls, remodeled a kitchen, and painted homes in the home repair projects.

We supported the **Capitol Hill Group Ministry** by deep-cleaning their daytime hospitality center for homeless families, helped serve meals to homeless people, and assisted teachers in their after-school and summer camp program, **Mission Possible**. We also helped with shelter maintenance for the **Community for Creative Non-Violence** in their **Federal City Shelter** and continued our work with Washington Parks & People in their efforts to revitalize **Marvin Gaye Park**.

We led three workcamps outside the Washington area. In March, we returned to Logan, WV with another group from Sandy Spring Friends School, helping the local AFSC project by replacing the roof for an elderly woman and painting another home.

In June, we returned to Caretta, WV, for the sixth year to help **Big Creek People in Action** with home repair projects. Working with experienced carpenters and youth from Buckhannon, WV, our campers painted a home, built a wheelchair ramp for a church, and framed an addition for a home. And this summer Sidwell Friends students worked in New Orleans (see story) The warm sharing of different perspectives enriched each of these events.

### New Orleans Workcamp

In June, Washington Quaker Workcamps joined the Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) in their efforts to support the recovery of the New Orleans Public Library. Before our workcamp, the Meeting had committed itself to raise funds to reopen a neighborhood branch of the Library. Thanks to the volunteer leadership of FMW member Mark Haskell, the willingness to help of nine Sidwell Friends students, and a grant of \$5,000 from the American Friends Service Committee, we were able to add a human face and some muscle to efforts to help the Library system.

Our work was simple: helping sort donated books, organizing books to sell as a fundraiser, landscaping and gardening. We also toured much of the city, including the glitz of the French Quarter (largely undamaged by the storm and flooding) and the devastation of the lower Ninth Ward.

Reflecting on the workcamp, Mark writes: "We were there to work with the New Orleans Public Library system and the Friends of the New Orleans Public Library. But aside from the small efforts we could offer with our hands and hearts as volunteers, we were there as much to be witnesses. Even though most of our teens had not known pre-Katrina New Orleans, it was soon obvious to all of them that something monumental and shocking had happened there, and it wasn't going to get fixed quickly nor easily – or maybe at all. One of our girls said she felt like an ant and wondered how we could possibly (make a difference..... But the spirit of the city and its peo-



(Continued from page 2)

ple is still there, and the kindness of the citizens to the scores of volunteers trying to rebuild the city is truly touching..... Time and again, New Orleanians asked us not to forget about the city's situation, and to tell everyone at home about it and them....." ■

## Two Upcoming Fall Seminars

### For Youth:

From October 13-16, 2006, a dozen high-school age Friends and a dozen DC area students involved in AFSC's *"Help Increase the Peace Program"* (HIPP) will participate in the ***"I Have a Dream..." Youth Seminar***. We will build community; learn about lobbying and nonviolence; explore issues of racism, civil rights and democracy; and take guided walks on the National Mall and through one of D.C.'s most historically- and culturally-rich African-American neighborhoods.

We invite Friends Meetings from across the country to support one or two young Friends in attending, asking them to report back both on their experience and follow-up ideas.

### For Teachers:

From November 2-5, 2006, teachers of middle through high school-aged students will gather for the ***Teachers of Peace: Educating for Peace and Social Change*** seminar.

In a supportive Quaker community, participants will learn about Multi-Track Diplomacy, a holistic framework for teaching peacemaking; feed their imaginations in sessions featuring peacemakers from a variety of tracks; and begin creating their own peace lessons, units or courses.

Participation (20 contact hours) will count toward continuing education requirements for licensure renewal in most school systems. ■

To register or for more information, please call Bernadette Odyniec at (202) 543-5560 or email [bernadette@williampennhouse.org](mailto:bernadette@williampennhouse.org).

## Two Celebratory Events

As we step into Fall and the last quarter of our Anniversary Year, staff and board members are busy making plans for two more celebratory events.

### A Special Birthday/Anniversary Dinner

As is our custom, each first First day evening the House is open to local Quakers for potluck dinner followed by a panel or speaker. Since October is the month of William Penn's birthday (Oct. 24) we have chosen October 1st to have a special Birthday/Anniversary potluck dinner. The speaker will be Lincoln Cory, son of WPH founders Bob and Sally Cory. Lincoln will reminisce about the history of the House, especially the "Cory Days".

We would like to extend a special invitation to former guests, staff and board members. Bring your photos and memories and help us celebrate the wonderful web of people who have been a part of the ministry of this house. Dinner starts at 6:30—program at 7:30. And, there will be cake and ice cream! Call the William Penn House office (202-543-5560) for more information and directions.

### A Fund-Raising Bike Ride

The final event of our anniversary year celebration is a bike ride scheduled for Saturday, October 28. There will be three different courses to choose from. One will be a short, 4 mile ride suitable for families with children. For more ambitious bikers we will have a 20 mile ride to Bethesda and back via the Capitol Crescent Trail. The most ambitious course will be a 40 mile moderately paced road ride to Great Falls and back. The suggested contribution for the rides is \$20 per person or \$5 per family member for the family ride. Each participant will receive a T-shirt and each ride will have at least one refreshment stop on the way and again when you return to the House. ■

Please check our website [www.williampennhouse.org](http://www.williampennhouse.org) for entry forms and additional information, or call the office at (202) 543-5560.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I want to support the mission of William Penn House to make visible the Quaker Testimonies of Peace, Simplicity, Equality, Truth and Community.**

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## Coming Events

### Anniversary Dinner and Speaker

Come to WPH on **Sunday, October 1** for a special potluck dinner with cake and ice cream! Our speaker will be Lincoln Cory, son of WPH founders Bob and Sally Cory.

### Anniversary Bike Ride Fundraiser

Join us for a day of fun — ride 4, 20 or 40 miles with other bike enthusiasts. Scheduled for **Saturday, October 28th, 2006**. For more information and to register, visit our web site at [www.wmpennhouse.org/bikeride.html](http://www.wmpennhouse.org/bikeride.html).

### Quaker Youth Seminar—"I Have a Dream"

October 13-16, 2006  
Registration is Limited

### Teachers of Peace Seminar

November 2-5, 2006  
Registration is Limited

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