

# Community Companion

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[www.communityfriendsmeeting.com](http://www.communityfriendsmeeting.com)

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Submissions for the March, 2012 newsletter due by: Monday, February 27, 2012

## Calendar

All events and meetings take place at the Meeting House unless otherwise noted.

**Singing 9:45 am, Meeting for Worship 10 am**

**Second Hour or Carry in Potluck @ 11:40 am**

- Feb. 5 Carry in Meal after Meeting for Worship: Simple Meal- see guidelines on page 2  
FUN Committee appreciates and encourages locally grown food when possible
- Feb. 12 Meeting for Worship with attention to Business
- Feb. 19 Quaker Quest Prep: Love
- Feb. 26 to be announced

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## Second Query from OVYM Book of Discipline, 1978: Prayer; Divine Relationship

Do you so order your life as to include reading, meditation and communion, that you may know more of the presence and guidance of the Divine Spirit? Do you remember the need to pray for others, holding them in the presence of God?

**First Month, 2011 Summary of Minutes of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be included in the March Community Companion**

**Simple Carry-In on First Sunday, February 5**

First Day School has been studying our testimony of simplicity. We have learned about the work of the Quaker organization Right Sharing of world Resources. This asks people from rich countries like ours to help the poorest people in the world who must live on \$1.00 a day or less.

At the Simple Meal, we will ask if you would like to make a donation to right Sharing of World Resources. We also ask you to eat a meal like what very poor people eat all the time. Here are some suggested foods to bring:

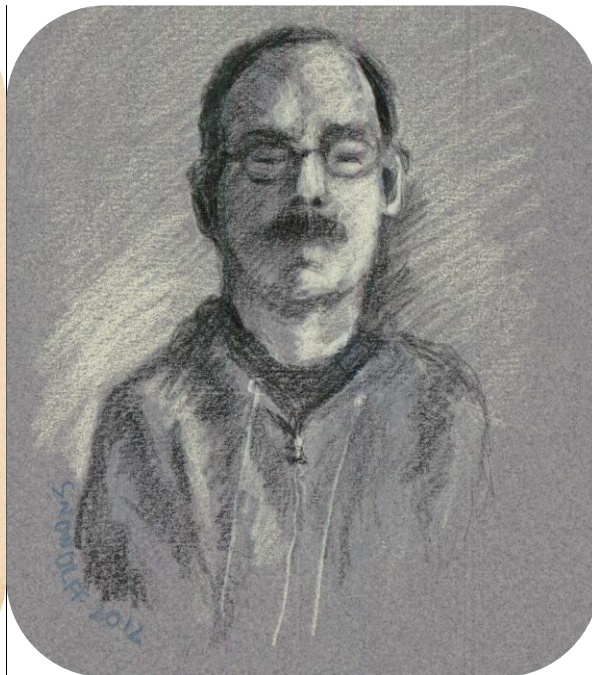
Rice	mixtures of rice and beans	tortillas with refried beans
Beans	simple bread	pizza dough with tomato sauce
Simple soups	vegetables you can grow	milk or eggs or local fruit- a treat
Tortillas	tea	

Think very inexpensive. Please NO MEAT

**SKETCHES BY JENNIFER SNOW WOLFF**, our own in-house artist



Leanne Montgomery



John Sniegocki

## Practicing Loving Kindness in Meeting for Worship

One of the responsibilities of Ministry and Counsel Committee is working to maintain the quality of worship in our Meeting. Because of this people come to us from time to time with concerns they feel are making it difficult to stay centered during worship.

An ideal model of worship may be for everyone to be in a state of deeply gathered waiting silence, collectively feeling the presence of the Spirit, with silence broken only by occasional inspired spoken ministry. Sometimes this happens, but not always.

I ask you to practice loving kindness when you enter into worship in our Meeting for several reasons. We are a diverse group of people on multiple levels. We are not a monastic community with everyone present deeply schooled in our practices. On any given First Day (Sunday, for newcomers) we usually have visitors and a variety of people at different places on their spiritual journeys and with different lengths of experience in our unique form of waiting worship. We welcome families and so have people of all ages, from nursing babies to occasional sleeping elders.

Some individuals in our fellowship have raised concerns by reading during worship. Ministry and Counsel reminds worshippers that either reciting/reading traditional prayers or spiritual literature, especially as a way of guiding our minds toward waiting worship, is a well-accepted Friends' practice recommended by Howard Brinton in his classic book *Friends for 350 Years*. Some of us who cannot yet meditate quietly may choose to read spiritual literature throughout the worship time, but please don't bring *Time* magazine or textbook assignments.

Journaling during worship is another practice that occasionally is brought to Ministry and Counsel Committee as a concern. We have asked Friends to accept this practice by their fellow worshippers in a spirit of loving kindness because it sometimes enables a Friend to capture guidance or inspiration that comes to them during worship and its active quality helps some individuals stay focused in the silence.

The most recent "distraction" brought to us as a concern is that a member of our community sometimes sketches individuals during worship. Some of the sketches have been printed in our newsletter. For anyone who does not yet know this Friend's story, she has been a life-long Friend and an artist. A near-fatal car accident left her with severe brain injuries and a total inability to sit through the quiet worship she used to love. She began sketching during worship in an effort to again be part of the community. If you happen to notice her sketching someone, or perhaps sketching you, we ask you to offer her the same loving kindness you would to a hungry infant nursing or a sleeping elder, and blend the "distraction" into the fabric of your communal worship. A new policy has also been instituted that no sketches will be published without the consent of the subject.

Finally, practicing loving kindness toward everyone with whom you worship will not only make ours a more welcoming community. It will help you as well by deepening your own worship as you remove the barriers of irritation and anger toward others you might initially have been inclined to feel. Blessings, Eileen Bagus for Ministry and Counsel Committee

**The following statement was approved by Community Friends Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).**

Approved on 12/11/2011

Occupy Cincinnati is a movement of people in Southwest Ohio from all walks of life, most of whom work for a living, and who are protesting the redistribution of wealth in American Society to the wealthiest persons (those in the top 1%) from the rest of us (the 99%). The average hourly wage of the bottom 10% of the American workforce has remained at about \$8.50, adjusted for inflation, since 1979. The average hourly wage of the average American worker has been raised by about \$1.00 an hour in that same period of time: from \$17.10, adjusted for inflation, to \$18.50. Meanwhile the average net worth of the top 1% of Americans is over \$19,000,000. The details of this distribution are available for all to read, yet the consequences of it are not readily realized. Loss of jobs, non-sustainable use of Earth's resources, increases in home foreclosures, increases in food insecurity, and decreases in education attainment can all be correlated to such inequality. Added to this is the massively increasing and disproportionate influence of money over the election process exemplified by the "Citizens United" case which Community Friends has already objected to in a minute of the monthly meeting.

The inequality of this situation contradicts the Friends testimony of equality. Originally Friends focused the testimony of equality on the equality of all persons in the light of God. It is for this reason that early friends in the 17<sup>th</sup> century eschewed hiring ministers and practiced the full equality of women. The testimony was extended to all persons in the 18<sup>th</sup> century through Friends testimonies against slavery. John Woolman protested against slavery because of its destructiveness to the moral fiber of Quakers themselves, as well as of the enslaved persons. Anthony Benezet carried the testimony further into the political realm. Working through the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Benezet published pamphlets on the slave trade. His work on the history of West Africa, the export/import data referring to human trafficking, and the personal stories he gathered from slave traders, and enslaved persons at the Philadelphia market were distributed widely on both sides of the Atlantic. Benezet's work has been credited by his colleagues and the historians as the single most important contribution to the ending of the slave trade by Britain in 1807. Benezet thought it criminal not to speak out.

It is in this spirit that Community Friends Meeting affirms its support of Occupy Cincinnati. This non-violent protest exemplifies Friends testimony of equality of all persons. We are grateful for the exemplary behavior of this group that also finds it a crime not to speak out against the inequality in our society, an inequality that is clearly, if not wholly intentionally, supported both by huge banks, corporations and the governments of our states and our nation.

**\*\* following note received concerning our minute**

Hello Community Friends Meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of the Gainesville [Florida] Friends Meeting. I was delighted to discover the January issue of your newsletter, *Community Companion*, which I shared with some of our committee members yesterday. We are contemplating asking our own Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business to approve a minute to do exactly what you have already done, expressing support for the concerns of the Occupy movement, and we are excited to learn that there is a precedent.

It is interesting that the Occupy movement has spread so rapidly throughout our country and other parts of the world. So many people have recognized that any society characterized by gross and increasing disparities of wealth is one that is in decline and have shown the courage to demand that their leaders develop policies and take actions to reverse this corrosive development. We would like to support this recognition and this demand, while insisting on nonviolent action, based on the recognition of "that of God in every person," even those most responsible for bringing this disparity upon our civilization.

Would you be so kind as to share your minute with us? I will share immediately share it with our committee, and we will be able to build our own proposed minute with the benefit of your efforts. If we succeed with our minute, a copy of your press release could also be a great help to us in planning our own publicity. Thank you very, very much for your assistance.

Best wishes,  
Timothy B. Ray

The Community Committee is publishing each month in the *Community Companion* newsletter the most requested recipe for the item provided for the First Day Carry-in for that month. This month's most requested recipe was for vegetarian chili. In respect to Quaker concerns de-emphasizing the individual we have agreed that the recipe should not mention the cook by name.

**Vegetarian Chili\***

(Makes about 5 Quarts/Liters)

2 15 oz. cans each black beans, pinto beans and chick peas.  
Rinse and drain.

1 or 2 green peppers  
1 onion  
3 cloves garlic  
28 oz. can diced tomatoes

Puree vegetables in Vitamix or blender. (Optional: Helpful for people with texture-challenges!)

2 15 oz. cans tomato sauce  
1 Tbsp. salt  
1 Tbsp. molasses  
1 Tbsp. chili powder  
1 tsp. ground cumin

1 lb. tofu  
Cut into 1/2" cubes. (Could also substitute potatoes or squash).

Mix all ingredients in a large soup pot. Heat until boiling then simmer about 45 minutes or until ready to eat.

Serve with rice, cornbread or crackers. (I like Mary's Gone Crackers vegan, gluten-free crackers.) Top with cheese (Cheddar Diya is a good vegan option) and any of your other favorite chili condiments. Enjoy!

\*This recipe was adapted from Audrey Hess, Karin Shank, and Linda Nafziger-Meiser's Vegetarian Chili recipe found in *Simply in Season: A World Community Cookbook* (2005) commissioned by Mennonite Central Committee (Eds. Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert). Herald Press, Scottdale, PA.

"I love this cookbook because it helps me eat in sync with the seasons. You can find it at the 10,000 Villages store in O'Bryonville."

Below is an article written by Tom Wahlrab, Executive Director of The Dayton Human Relations Council. We met him at the January MARCC meeting where he was the speaker on Dayton as an immigration friendly city. Polly and Amos were both active in Community Friends Meeting and served as resident caretakers for a number of years. He writes: "It was wonderful running into people who knew the Brokaws. My wife and I only knew Amos only through telephone conversations. The article I've attached provides some more information, but you should know that we wrote it because we wanted his friends to know of his intentions for his land down in Highland County and that the letter provides a way to honor his and Polly's legacy."

**Amos and Polly Brokaw** purchased 95 acres of prime temperate hardwood Appalachian forest adjacent to Pike State Forest and Fort Hill Memorial in 1974. According to Amos, they "responsibly" harvested the trees and then planted hundreds of white pine seedlings on the Fort Hill Road boundaries of their land. Today those white pines are 75 feet tall, and, thanks to the Brokaw's children, nearly 88 acres of this land is now under contract to the Arc of Appalachia ([www.arcofappalachia.org](http://www.arcofappalachia.org)).

In a previous edition of the Arc's newsletter, the Brokaw Woods is described as "sitting in one of the most auspicious and pivotal locations imaginable. Purchasing it would link major pre-existing conservation lands and natural features, thereby creating one large contiguous block of protected forest. The purchase of the Brokaw Woods would be a significant step towards fulfilling the vision to 'make a fragmented, invisible and forgotten biome...united.'" Making a pitch for supporting the Arc's purchase of the Brokaw Woods is only one of the purposes of this article.

The other purpose is to introduce you to Amos and Polly Brokaw. The Arc of Appalachia has reflected on the belief that the environment's "problem" is people and has designed a mission that includes the belief that the environment's "solution" is also people. It is our hope that knowing a little about the lives of these two people will compel you to support this purchase and thereby create a memorial to Amos and Polly Brokaw.

This is a story about a juxtaposition of stories, of lives, of history. The Brokaws were environmentalists. The Arc of Appalachia's purpose is to connect and protect the native forest. The Brokaws were civil rights activists. The area of the Arc's preserved land, and specifically the Fort Hill area, is rife with Underground Railroad history. The Brokaws were actively involved in Quaker communities dedicated to human rights. Highland County has a history of Quaker, as well as Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian, civil disobedience in the service of securing and protecting human rights.

While yet in college in the 1940s, the Brokaws were instrumental in racially integrating the dormitories at Ball State Teacher's College in Muncie, Indiana. Amos was sentenced three times to Federal prisons for resisting wars. Polly scooped up a teapot of water from a stream flowing not far from the Fernald Uranium Processing Plant outside of Cincinnati and had it analyzed. She and Amos spent the next eight years opposing the plant and led a movement that closed it down. Polly's son, David B. Fankhauser, PhD, states that, "Polly and Amos were devoted to the preservation of the environment. I believe Polly was the first to raise questions about activities at the nuclear weapons facility at Fernald. She was arrested for protesting at the gate and as a result, spent time in the Cincinnati workhouse." These conscience-driven intentional actions are only some highlights of the actions of two people that reveal a purposeful life. The Brokaws raised six children and 27 foster children. The Quaker communities in which they were involved tell stories of them restoring buildings, planting gardens, saving animals, leading the efforts to eradicate homelessness, and opening Quaker buildings to other community groups with similar missions.

Even if we don't know if the Brokaws knew the connection their land had with their life's work, we can know and honor it. Paul Young, a resident of Highland County, has written several historical accounts of those times and references Sinking Spring and Hillsboro among many other local towns that were committed to maintaining the Underground Railroad. He also references caves at Fort Hill Memorial that were possibly used as hideouts along the Underground Railroad. On private property within a mere 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a mile from the Brokaw Woods and the Fort Hill Memorial, there is the well-researched Kessler Cave that surely would have been adequate as a temporary hideout and would have been known by the local Presbyterians, Quakers, or Baptists who were intent on helping the oppressed, much like Amos and Polly in their own time.



The Brokaw Woods is a valuable addition to the Arc of Appalachia's protected lands, supporting the integrity of the Eastern temperate hardwood forest. The Brokaw Woods can also be a fitting memorial to the people of Highland County who acted on their convictions and defied the unjust law of the land, and to the Brokaw's, who carried on the work a hundred and fifty years later.

The first railroad in Highland County was the Underground Railroad. This historical act of civil disobedience was supported by enough people and enough churches to be carried on for over a half-century and to be passed on to the sons and daughters of the first abolitionists. Today the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati bears witness to their work. Polly and Amos Brokaw embraced a Quaker belief in peace and justice and are known in the Cincinnati area for always having spoken out and for marching and getting jailed as well, bearing witness to the cause of social justice. Their home was referred to by David Fankhauser (Polly Brokaw's son and former Freedom Rider) as the "underground railroad in reverse," as they had housed so many civil rights workers heading south.

In our conversations with Amos, he never spoke of his activism to us. We learned of this part of his life through a video produced in the 1990s about peace activist scholars (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BXPrI3wGRw>) in which Polly and Amos speak for themselves about what inspired them. Polly died in 1997; we made our acquaintance with Amos in 2009 after having purchased a house on 1.34 acres on Fort Hill Road adjacent to the Brokaw Woods. Over numerous telephone conversations, we talked about the land and the birds and other wildlife. He loved hearing about the specific birds we had seen or heard. He said several times that our conversations were making him miss this land, the woods that he graciously urged us to enjoy.

During our last conversation with Amos last November, just months before he died, we mentioned the ARC and its mission and how they might be interested in his property. He expressed genuine interest and even excitement about the possibility. His daughter Colleen shared with us that "Amos was excited about the idea of the land going to the ARC and specifically said he wanted us [his kids] to look into it as a possibility."

Saving the Brokaw Woods would be a fitting memorial to the history of the people of Highland County who acted on their convictions. The Brokaw Woods, as well, would be a statement of our gratitude to Polly and Amos Brokaw for acting on their beliefs in justice and in the integrity of our relationships with our fellow humans and with our environment.

## News from other Quakers

### Quakers and Capitalism: February 19 at 4:00

The Quaker Conversation Group at Cincinnati Friends Meeting, 8075 Keller Road, Cincinnati, 45243 will be focusing on the history of Quakers and their relationship to and participation in capitalism and business. All are welcome. Refreshments served.