



ESR Reports  
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ESR Reports is published in the fall and spring for alumni/ae and friends of Earlham School of Religion

Katherine Murray, Editor  
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## Crossing Borders & Building Bridges

*A Letter from Mike Zipser*

STRASBOURG—Four months ago I moved to this city of European importance—seat of the European Parliament, of the European Council, of the European Court of Human Rights, of the French-German TV program ARIE—situated on the border to Germany and on the riverbanks of the European river Rhine. The international flavor is intertwined with the more local and provincial tradition of an old Alsatian city with its timber-framed houses, narrow alleyways, and magnificent gothic cathedral that is beleaguered by thousands of tourists from all over the world throughout all seasons. This sense of international importance was not the reason I moved here, however. My reasons for settling abroad again were on a much smaller scale, though not less important for me. Now I again live much closer to my friends who either are part of the Mennonite church I faithfully attend or are in the Quaker meeting revived two years ago. In the immediate neighborhood, I have three

Mennonite friends, two of whom are German and one is an anglophile. (This helps me a lot with my language problem—I have been a beginner in French for almost three years now. I'm at a stage where I can understand more, but I am still dabbling more than I am babbling.)

Our small but still growing Quaker community reflects somehow the internationality of the city. With 16 attenders, we represent eight

nationalities and converse in four languages. (Most of the time, we use two languages and translate for those who are not fluent in one of them.)

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*Strasbourg Cathedral*

## Global Connections

*By Lonnie Valentine  
Professor of Peace and Justice Studies*

In far away New Zealand for the 21st Triennial of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), I ran into people with connections to ESR from places all over the world. I was surprised and pleased to see the connection that our current students, graduates, and supporters have made with the FWCC and its work.

One of the big surprises came during the evening when we put up our displays for all the great Quaker organizations and the many Quaker causes that Friends support. As I was standing at the ESR display, a Korean woman came up and started to ask about ESR. I thought this was great. Someone in Korea is interested in ESR! "Perhaps she will take a class on-line or perhaps come to Richmond," I thought. However,

*Continued on page 6.*



CELEBRATING ESR ALUMNI/AE  
*Nowadays*  
ALUMNI/AE NEWS



*Up*  
*Coming* @ ESR

**Tom Mullen Ministry of Writing Colloquium**  
**October 22-23, 2004**

Once again, proven and aspiring writers will gather for a bountiful colloquium experience devoted to inspiring writing as an act of ministry. This year's keynote speaker is Li-Young Lee, an award-winning Chicago poet, whose rich and reverent works include *Rose* and *City in Which I Love You*.

**ESR Spirituality Gathering**  
**March 5, 2005**

The 2005 Spirituality Gathering will focus on the role of music in the life of the Spirit, in both the gifts music brings us and the way music ministry guides spiritual formation. Our main presenter will be Fran McKendree, musician and composer, whose poetic gifts and spiritual depth are inspiring.

**Willson Lectures**  
**May 1-2, 2005**

The Bible has played a pivotal role in the formation of Christian belief through the centuries. Though many 21<sup>st</sup> century Westerners tend to read the book as though they were isolated individuals, when we read Scripture, we do not read it alone! In this year's Willson Lecture, Luke Timothy Johnson, R.W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Candler School of Theology, will focus on the importance of reading Scripture communally.

**Steve Ackley** (2003) writes, "I hope everything is going well for the beginning of another school year. Maureen and I are busily organizing our new ministries. My alumni news is that I'm loving my new job with Covenant Hospice as their Richmond area chaplain."

**Stan Banker** (1976) is now in his 14<sup>th</sup> year as Senior Pastor of Indianapolis First Friends Meeting. This past year Stan took two Quaker groups (44 persons) on study tours to Costa Rica, including visits to the Friends School and Meeting in Monteverde. He will take another group to Costa Rica in April, 2005 and lead a study tour of Quaker Philadelphia in June, 2005. His e-mail address is stan@indyfriends.org.

**Michael Birkel** (1979) continues to enjoy his teaching in the Religion Department at Earlham College and an occasional course at ESR. Michael's current interests include interfaith relations and research into Quaker spirituality.

Michael serves on the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches. His book *Silence and Witness* (a volume on Quaker spirituality for Orbis Press's Traditions of Christian Spirituality series) was published this year.

**Brenda Boggess** (1994) and family moved to State College, Pennsylvania in 2001 and Brenda is beginning her third year as the fifth grade teacher at State College Friends School.

Her husband Larry is Head of School at SCFS and son Ryland is in sixth grade. Daughter Annie has begun her first year at Westtown School as a ninth grader. Brenda writes, "Central Pennsylvania is a beautiful place to live, a fun place to go to a football game, and a great place to visit. We have been particularly happy to see members of the Crumley-Effinger family on their trips across the state and also to attend worship at the Brethern church here last spring when Dena Penz France was the guest speaker. What a joy to once again participate in her great teaching! Greetings to all of you wonderful ESR people."

**Victoria Burke** (2000) writes, "I've been working as a homecare chaplain for Hospice of Dayton for almost two years now (on 10/1/04 it will be two years). I love my work. The hospice movement is the very thing I always wanted to work for—even when I didn't know I liked churches, religion, or spirituality. Life and God groomed me for it by the experiences I had—especially the early death of my mother from a (then) incurable disease.

I live in Dayton in an affordable (working class) neighborhood called Belmont. My daughter, Elizabeth, has graduated (with honors) from Bryn Mawr College. She lives and works (apparently quite happily) in Philadelphia. This year *she* will host *me* at

Christmas holiday time. How about *that*?

Last summer I gave up my work at Englewood Friends Meeting (semi-programmed) as a part-time preacher. This year I have been attending Yellow Springs Monthly Meeting and so attended OVYM."

**Josh Brown** (1984) received one of the most unique awards ever given to a Quaker pastor— Best Memoir of the Year from the Society for Military History, given for his book *A Good Idea of Hell Letters from a Chasseur a Pied* (2003, Texas A&M University Press). It's a collection of letters written by his great-great-uncle, Robert Pellissier, from the trenches in France in WWI.

**Jessica Bucciarelli** (attended 2001-03) is now serving as editor of *Pastoral Care Newsletter*, published quarterly by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and distributed by subscription to meetings and Friends throughout North America. She also conducted interviews and solicited submissions for the June 04 issue of *Friends Bulletin*, which highlighted Quaker involvement in civil same-sex marriages in Portland and San Francisco.

**Anne Bittenheim** (1984) writes, "I am winding down my three-year period of practically full-time volunteer work with the leadership group starting Maryland's first charter school

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*ESR graduates are prepared to serve their yearly meetings.*

FOSTERING QUAKER LEADERSHIP:

# Understanding *the Needs* of *Yearly Meetings*

by April Vanlondon Degner

This spring, I had the unique opportunity to develop a field education site that focused on the relationship between ESR and the surrounding Yearly Meetings. Combining skills I employ as a research consultant with a local mental health center and knowledge gained in the M.Div program at ESR, my field education site involved visiting Friends of Indiana Yearly Meeting, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, and Western Yearly Meeting to see what skills they needed from graduates of ESR. The question I sought to answer was, “*What type of leadership does ESR need to foster and develop that will meet the needs of local Yearly Meetings?*”

Indiana Yearly Meeting, Western Yearly Meeting, and Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting were chosen for the project because of their longstanding relationships with ESR. These Yearly Meetings represent both programmed and unprogrammed traditions, and each has a distinct personality and a variety of concerns, goals, and expectations.

I began this project by meeting with the faculty of ESR to gather information for a survey form. The final survey form included questions related to the various disciplines: Biblical Knowledge, Pastoral Ministry, Quaker Identity and Distinctives,

Pastoral Care and Counseling, Writing, Peace and Social Justice, Theology, and Spirituality/Spiritual Formation. Overall, 22 areas were identified and Friends were asked to rank these areas in order of their importance. This enabled me to create a description of what mattered most to each Yearly Meeting and see where ESR’s focus could help students prepare to meet the leadership challenges in their Yearly Meetings.

The results of the survey indicated that there were more similarities than differences among Meetings, yet these differences are important and necessary to the continued vitality of Quakers. As the project progressed, I was able to discuss the similarities with the various Monthly Meetings. Friends of all three Yearly Meetings ranked several of the same attributes among their most important. These include listening skills; knowledge of and ability to teach and apply biblical material; knowledge of and ability to teach Quaker history, beliefs, and process; understanding of waiting, expectant worship; pastoral care skills, and pastoral skills associated with the ability to provide service to the community.

We also had some tender discussions regarding the differences. Some differences

arise from the fact that some Monthly Meetings are programmed, some semi-programmed, and some unprogrammed; in one case, this diversity occurs within a single Yearly Meeting (Western Yearly Meeting). Indiana Yearly Meeting and Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting have Monthly Meetings that joined together for service projects and fellowship, and each spoke warmly of the other in my visits with them.

In all of these discussions, I heard that the Yearly Meetings were concerned with their relationships—with other Yearly Meetings, and with ESR. Friends made thoughtful suggestions and labored with possible solutions. When I returned to ESR, I reported these conversations to the faculty and staff. Their ongoing commitment to the Religious Society of Friends was apparent as well. ESR will use the results of this survey and the discussions in their strategic planning process as they continue to meet the needs of the Yearly Meetings.

In contacting Friends of all three Yearly Meetings, I was warmly welcomed. I was invited to participate in First Day Schools and worshipped

with several Monthly Meetings. I visited Administrative and Representative Councils. Several Monthly Meetings set up special times to meet and discuss the survey. I was invited to lunches at the rise of worship, evening gatherings for the purpose of supper and fellowship, and the meetings of Ministry and Oversight/Council.

In all my visits, I found groups of people deeply committed to exploring the issue of leadership within the Religious Society of Friends. It became clear that the question of leadership, leadership that is distinctively Quaker, is a concern that many carry. Most of us are facing dwindling numbers in our Monthly Meetings, yet there remains the firm conviction that we as Friends still have an important message and “way of being” in community that can heal our communities, both locally and globally.

*April Vanlondon Degner is a 2004 graduate of ESR. A member of Valley Mills Meeting, in August she was recorded as a minister by Western Yearly Meeting. She recently accepted a call to serve as pastoral minister of Fountain City Friends Meeting.*





Alsace

*BORDERS & BRIDGES* continued from page 1.

for the German-speaking Swiss and Alsatian people.) Both topics were well received and laboured during our common workshops on certain aspects of the topics. It was also inspiring to get

to know and worship with new people, and to meet “old Friends” again. With 300 Quakers in Germany out of a population of 82 million, and 80 Quakers in France out of a population of 60 million, one is always grateful to have an opportunity to worship and meet with other Friends who are from beyond one’s own little constituency.

Perhaps you would also like to know where in Strasbourg I have settled, since this little detail is not less important than the fact that I live abroad again. I live very close to the city center in a Jewish neighborhood. The buildings are mainly *Jugendstil* (art nouveau), dating back to the beginning of 1900. If there were there no cars in the streets, you could feel yourself set back 100 years, especially on a Friday night and throughout the weekend. First the Shabbat begins with the Orthodox Jews walking to the nearby synagogue and then celebrating their Seder meal with the family, and then the weekend quietly glides into

the Christian Sabbath, the Sunday. Thus for two and a half days, life in this neighborhood changes its pace, slows down, becomes quieter and takes on the colors of Sunday, black and white. It’s then that I enjoy most my little balcony that leads to the street; I can read or have my meal in peace and quietness—it’s not perfect, but the car noise from the nearby busy street is tolerable. At the same time, I can watch the interesting strangeness of this little world: the Orthodox men clad in black suits and wearing broad-brimmed black hats; the Orthodox women a little bit more colorful, but still very plain (the Amish would call it *schlicht*) and modest in their appearance. The men and women are surrounded by such a number of children they would make a whole class in my special school. Orthodoxy—be it Jewish, Amish, or that of another denomination—seems to be indistinguishable, or at least very similar, in many of its outward and inward manifestations.

Living on the fifth floor (which was hell for moving all my stuff, thanks to a lacking of elevator!) has the heavenly advantage of being able to enjoy a superb view of the street in front, of the backyard in the back rooms,

We are in the process of discussing whether our worship group should become a member of the French or German Yearly Meeting or of something else that would reflect our national diversity in a much higher degree. We have a number of regular attenders as well as those who hardly ever appear (luckily the minority), but we have visitors at almost every meeting, which means that introductions are already part of our after-silent-worship rituals. Because we meet only once a month, we always have a shared meal over which we get to know each other a bit more. From time to time someone gives a presentation on a Quaker topic, such as “Clearness Committee,” or “Why do Quakers worship in silence?”

Recently I was involved in the preparation of two regional Quaker weekend retreats, one on “Spiritual Growth,” and the other on “Prayer.” (The latter was a *Grenztreffen*, or “Border Meeting,” between Switzerland, Germany, and France

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“With 300 Quakers in Germany out of a population of 82 million, and 80 Quakers in France out of a population of 60 million, one is always grateful to have an opportunity to worship and meet with other Friends who are from beyond one’s own little constituency.”

and into the homes of my surrounding neighbors on both sides. No need of a television with its soap operas: I have it all in real life! I also appreciate the fact that I get a lot of light in every room; that is, the combined dining/living room, the study, the bedroom, bathroom and kitchen. This is enough space for a single man who cleans his apartment by himself and who likes to welcome visitors overnight and over days and weeks. I was lucky to have quite a good number of people to help me move: an international crew of 13 men and women from six different countries managed to communicate in such a way that my furniture and boxes of books survived the strain of five flights of stairs and the five languages people were moaning and groaning in. There were moments of the Spirit when we, at the end of the day and our physical tether, tried to get my electric piano up the 86 steps—laughing about our own individual incapacity and tiredness and encouraging each other as a determined little community that was going to close the day by giving a piano a new home. In May, I celebrated with a helpers' house-warming party. It was great to welcome almost all of them again in my furnished home, this time without any physical hardships, but for pure leisure and fun. We played games, had meals, sang songs, and talked with one another in three different languages. Unfortunately, one person

couldn't come to the party because he was held in detention. He was from Algeria seeking asylum in France. Only five days later they sent him back to Africa. Fortunately, I had the chance of visiting him before he had to leave the country. Sadly, we are becoming more and more a fortress here in Europe, refusing immigration to those who would like to contribute to our societies as millions of other immigrants have done in the past.

With the move to Strasbourg, the distance of my daily bike trip to school has exactly doubled, which keeps me in good shape. I cross the border twice a day, live in France, work and go shopping in Germany (most things are less expensive there), meet my friends and culture-vulture in Strasbourg. Living in two worlds at the same time seems to be the theme of my life. If I ever write a book about my life, I will title it *Border Crosser*.

My summer vacations start at the end of July and I am looking forward to my

trip to the States. This will be my first trip to the States after leaving them three years ago and since the heavy events of 9-11, the war in Afghanistan, and in Iraq.

OK, enough for today. If you ever want to get to know the real European capital (Brussels is too big; Luxembourg too small), give me a call and pay me a visit. The un-ironed-but-clean bed sheets are waiting for you.

God bless you,  
Yours,  
Mike

*Mike Zipser (2001) came to ESR with a passion for peace and justice and a commitment to building bridges between groups who do not yet know one another. As an alum, his letter illustrates that the creative initiatives the faculty and staff came to admire during Mike's time at ESR continue to characterize his ministry.*

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**“It was great to welcome almost all of them again in my home...for pure leisure and fun. We played games, had meals, sang songs, and talked with one another in three different languages.”**



*Mike with friends.*



Our Worship Sharing group. Liz Yates (ESR attendee) is to my left.



Margaret Fraser, FWCC clerk of Section of Americas, and Loida Fernández and others from Latin American Friends



View from Friends House on island off of Auckland, New Zealand.

GLOBAL continued from page 1.

she began talking about a number of ESR faculty and former students. Upon asking her how she knew these people she said, "Oh, I am an ESR graduate!" This graduate, Boon Yi Kwak, or "Boonie," graduated from ESR in 1977 and was a classmate of ESR faculty Stephanie Crumley-Effinger and Earlham College faculty Mary Garman. She was very glad to hear the news about ESR and presented the school with a new biography of the Korean Quaker, Ham Sok Hon, subtitled *Voice of the People and Pioneer of Religious Pluralism in Twentieth Century Korea*.

Another ESR graduate, Manuel Guzman (ESR, 1996) from Mexico, is doing workshops on Quakerism in Latin America under the auspices of FWCC Section of the Americas. Not to be outdone by Boonie's gift, Manuel presented ESR with a

copy of his own translation into Spanish of Jack Wilcutts' book, *Why Friends Are Friends*.

Speaking of the Section of the Americas, ESR's own Margaret Fraser (ESR, 1997) is now serving as Executive Secretary of the Section after completing her service to Pendle Hill. Margaret said that ESR prepared her well for the variety and energy of Friends worldwide, although she did indicate she could use some rest!

Other ESR alums or current students representing their Yearly Meetings at the Triennial were Liz and Tom Gates (attended ESR, 1994-95) from Philadelphia; Margaret Woolgrove, (attended ESR, 1992-93), living in New Zealand and helping keep things running; Eugenia Perkins, who has recently audited some ESR extension courses in North Carolina, representing North Carolina YM (FUM); and Cindi Goslee, current ESR student, from Ohio Valley. Cindi was with her husband, Roland Kreager, who serves as the director of the Right Sharing of World Resources project that is now housed in Virginia Cottage on the Earlham campus, just behind ESR.

John Owen, retired development staff for ESR

and Earlham College, was there raising money for FWCC. (I guess you

cannot keep a good fundraiser down.) John was there with his wife, Julie, who represented Indiana Yearly Meeting. ESR Board of Advisors member, Jim Perkins was representing Great Plains Yearly Meeting while Bill Wright, ESR supporter, was representing the Western Association of Friends.

I am very grateful to ESR for sending me to represent the school. Also, it was an honor to be able to address an FWCC plenary session on our Peace Witness. (You can get copies of all the plenary talks from FWCC from the Philadelphia Office, 1506 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102; 215-241-7250; [americas@fwcc.quaker.org](mailto:americas@fwcc.quaker.org).)

The abiding feeling from the conference was one of how unity can exist in the midst of all the diversity among Friends. Just as I met people with ESR connections who are now all over the world in diverse Friends settings, so too is the greater Society of Friends able to learn together with all our differences. For me, FWCC does what ESR does in providing a place of hospitality where all Friends can learn from one another in the Spirit that unites us all.

# Physical Vocabulary of the Spirit

By Janet Peterson

My first recollection of an encounter with the physical aspect of prayer was at the age of 10. As a Catholic school-girl, I didn't put much thought into kneeling at mass. There in the glossy wooden church pews, I simply went along with everyone else. I remember thinking about my knees and back hurting as I would "cheat" and lean back into a half-sit on the pew for relief.

At that time, my spirituality wasn't very developed. Alternating between repetitive bouts of standing, sitting, and kneeling, it was easy to focus less on the physical ritual and more on the sermons. I recall listening intently, trying to grasp how this God was relevant to my life. What are these Jesus stories all about? Why don't I hear his voice talking to me?

At a pivotal point in my life, a full 20 years after being away from the church, I was born again into the Christian faith. It was at this point that the person of Jesus became real to me—not as a story from the pages of history, but as a palpable, powerful presence. I went from picturing Him in my mind to, for the first time, experiencing Him in my physical reality—a wonderful yet fleeting experience.

Just as kneeling was a part of my prayer vocabulary

growing up in the Catholic Church, I began to gradually become aware of this prayerful physical language that exists beyond our minds and hearts.

I find it only natural to consider the body a realm of spiritual expression. We are created by God, in God's image. Our bodies are physical interpretations of the goodness God spoke into existence. Scriptures refer to our bodies as "temples" of the living God. It is in that realm that I began to see another channel for expressing prayer and receiving God in a physical dialogue.

The connection between spirituality and our bodies is growing in peoples' awareness and has recently gained renewed interest, although the idea has been around for some time. Mystics in all cultures have talked about the physical universe being made of an underlying form of energy that can be affected by thought. Mystics go so far as to claim we create our own reality from our thinking and the thoughts we share with others.

What started me thinking about this mind-body-spirit connection was a spirituality conference I attended in March 2004, hosted by ESR. Julie Murray, Spiritual Director and Co-founder of Cincinnati's The Center

Within, addressed this connection between mind, body and spirit at the conference. "The human body is a microcosm of the larger reality we can grasp. We are not here permanently on this earth but for now, we are in a season of being in the world of physical reality. We are a part of Creation. It is a realm where the divine presence is active and revealing Himself, so we need to pay attention to this. What we are doing is noticing God in the body."

Murray says her role as spiritual director includes "any manner of activity that assists the soul in paying attention to God." Some of

these activities include guided meditation, healing prayer, art, and movement.

In another conference workshop, Stephanie Ford, Assistant Professor of Christian Spirituality at ESR, led a guided meditation in which we used visualization to picture Christ as the source of energy, illuminating, and filling us. We focused on areas that have been neglected or have been the recipient of negative thinking in order to facilitate the flow of peace and care to those areas. She also taught a physical approach to prayer in which we combined words

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**ESR's Spirituality Gathering** is an annual, day-long event that includes worship, keynote presentations, small-group workshops, lunch, and community time. Each year, persons interested in the field of spirituality gather at ESR to explore new topics, share their wisdom, network, and experience spiritual renewal. This year's Spirituality Gathering was held March 6, 2004, on the topic, "Prayer & Our Bodies."



# ESR People & Places

F A C U L T Y N E W S

## Staff Transitions

### Introducing:

**Jennifer Dove-Isbell**, from Roanoke, Virginia joins the ESR Development team in a

part-time capacity as the Coordinator of Annual Fund and Constituent



Relations. Jenni worked most recently as Director of Development and Alumnae Information Services at Hollins University. She is a member of Roanoke Monthly Meeting in the Baltimore Yearly Meeting and is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at ESR.

In March, **Jay Marshall** (ESR

Dean) moderated a panel discussion of *If Grace is True: Why God Will Save Every Person*. Held at Richmond First Friends Meeting, the panel included co-author James Mulholland as well as ESR faculty **Stephanie Crumley-Effinger**, **David Johns**, and **Paul Buckley**.

In April, Jay was the guest preacher at Anderson School of Theology's Senior Recognition Service of Worship. His message, "Now, Run With the Chariots," is available on-line at [http://esr.earlham.edu/vocal\\_ministry/index.html](http://esr.earlham.edu/vocal_ministry/index.html). He also participated in New Castle Friends "Food for the Soul" speaker series.

In July, he hosted a dinner at the USFWI Triennial, recognizing that group's significant contribution to 101 ESR students through the Sarrin Scholarship. Later that month, he clerked the 2004 Sessions of Indiana Yearly Meeting and preached at Friends Fellowship Community.

In September, Jay hosted Friends at ESR's International Day of Peace in Philadelphia. The event supported worldwide peace in unison with the United Nations, and featured a panel discussion, media event, and a luncheon. Betty Williams, 1976 Nobel Peace Prize winner, was the keynote speaker.

In July, **Tim Seid** was interviewed by a reporter for the Indianapolis Star newspaper about an exhibit held in Indianapolis called, "The Dead

Sea Scrolls to the Bible in America." The article appeared July 10th and can be read online at: <http://www.indystar.com/articles/8/161284-1528-P.html>.

**Stephen Angell** spoke at the Quaker Historians and Archivists Conference, which met in June at George Fox College in Newberg, Oregon. His topic was "Puritan or Spiritualist Bible Interpretation? Comparing Seventeenth-Century Quaker Exegesis of Col. 123-28 and Col. 214-17 with that of their Protestant Contemporaries and Forebears."

September 10-11 and October 1-2 **Nancy Bowen** will be teaching at the Course of Study School at the Methodist Theological School of Ohio (Delaware, OH). The Course of Study is an alternative to a seminary degree for those who desire to pastor a United Methodist congregation. She will be teaching the entry-level Bible course, "The Pastor as Interpreter of the Bible."

September 18-19 Nancy Bowen will be giving two lectures at St. John's United Methodist Church in Albuquerque, NM. The theme is "Surviving Terror: Faith and Trauma in Ezekiel."

**David Johns** spoke at a number of churches and meetings throughout Indiana, Ohio, and California. In March, David was a panelist in a discussion on the theology of grace; in May he gave a talk entitled, "(Dis)integration: Why

We Need Ritual;" in June, he delivered a paper for the Quaker Theological Discussion Group meeting at George Fox University in Oregon ("A Christo-textured Life the Center of Practical Faith"), he attended an Association of Theological Schools conference in the Los Angeles area, and presented a talk at First Friends Church of Whittier, California ("Theology, Ethics, and our DNA"). He will deliver a paper in October to the National Council of Churches Faith & Order Commission meeting in Pasadena, California on "Quakers and the Internal Structures of Ecclesial Authority." Additionally, in June, the Earlham Board of Trustees approved David's promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor of Theology.

On March 27, **Stephanie Crumley-Effinger** was one of several ESR faculty who served on a panel that made presentations and responded to questions in a lively discussion of a book that has stirred up controversy, especially among Friends in the Midwest. *If Grace Is True: Why God Will Save Every Person*, written by Quaker pastors Phil Gulley and Jim Mulholland, challenges many tenets of Christian theology, and particularly those of the evangelical churches in which its authors were raised. As part of the panel, Stephanie compared and contrasted Quaker Christian universalist beliefs rooted in the testimony of early Friends with the pluralist universalist approach

*The Pilgrimage to Sweden group poses on the steps of the retreat center building at Svartbacken. Missing is one participant, who took the picture.*



# Looking Back

On May 8, 2004, 12 **students received the Master of Divinity degree** from ESR. These 12 represent the diversity of background and interest typical of ESR. As new graduates from Friends, United Methodists, and Unitarian Universalists traditions, this group goes forth into a variety of ministries.



*2004 ESR soon-to-be graduates await their pronouncement as ESR alums!*

On March 5-7, ESR held its **triennial alum gathering**. Held in conjunction with the annual Spirituality Gathering and a prospective student open house, alums had the opportunity to renew old acquaintances, share their wisdom with potential future alums, and enjoy the activities associated with the “Prayer and Our Bodies” theme of the Spirituality Gathering.

This year’s **Willson Lectures** provoked thoughtful dialogue around the topic of Science and Faith. Ted Peters raised a multitude of ethical questions that arise around the issue of genetic engineering.

In March, the **National Council of Churches USA** held their conference on the ESR campus. Founded in 1960, the council is the leading force for ecumenical cooperation among Christians in

the United States. With 36 participating denominations, the group represents more than 50 million

Protestant, Anglican, and Orthodox Christians in 140,000 local congregations.

In July, a small group traveled to Sweden for an educational tour jointly sponsored by ESR and the Newlin Center for Quaker Thought and Practice. Carol Sexton, ESR '01 and Julia Ryberg, current *ESR Access* student, coordinated this trip which introduced participants to the beauty of Swedish culture and to Friends in Sweden. Among the 13 participants were the following ESR and Earlham alums: Dortha Meredith, EC '80 & ESR '85, Redwing Wilderbrook, ESR'80, Priscilla Berggren-Thomas, current *ESR Access* student, Esther Pearson Simon, EC '51 and Carol Baker Thornton, EC '76.

## *PEOPLE & PLACES continued from page 8.*

recommended by the authors. Also, in discussing the book’s critique of the substitutionary view of atonement, she urged the gathered Friends to consider the Narrative Christus Victor theory of atonement, which addresses many of the authors’ concerns yet keeps faith with a Quaker Christian commitment. A written record of the proceedings and a partial set of audiotapes of the day are available from First Friends Meeting, Richmond, Indiana.

July 5-8, Stephanie represented ESR at the Indiana

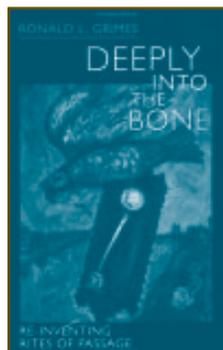
Yearly Meeting Pastors’ Short Course, held at Quaker Haven Camp in Syracuse, Indiana. She and her youngest daughter Mary enjoyed deepening friendships with pastors and families from across the yearly meeting in worship, meals, fellowship, and learning sessions, and getting acquainted with those who have recently come to be part of IYM.

July 9, Stephanie led two sessions of a workshop, “A Brief Introduction to Quakerism,” at the Summer CPE Day, which met at ESR and Bethany. CPE Day gathers students and

supervisors participating in summer programs of CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) and is held annually at different Midwestern locations. Stephanie’s workshop provided an overview of Quaker faith, worship, and testimonies, combining didactic, experiential, and reflective components.

**Stephanie Ford** (Assistant Professor of Spirituality) reports that she had a busy summer, speaking at three week-long academies (Academy for Spiritual Formation/The Upper Room). She spoke

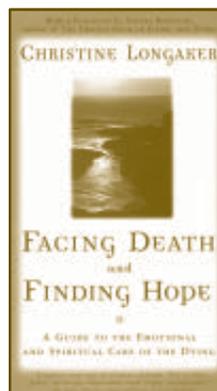
on prayer, women mystics, and protestant spirituality. In particular, she enjoyed bringing insights from her own research of women mystics like Julian of Norwich and Mechthild of Magdeburg to the lay and clergy participants at the academy at Waycross, Indiana. This summer, her article “A Dance With Gentleness” came out in the July/August issue of *Weavings*. Also, a book review of *Seekers Found: Atonement in Early Quaker Experience* by Douglas Gwyn was published in *Quaker Religious Thought* (July 2004; # 102).



Ronald L. Grimes is one of the more important writers working in the area of religious ritual, culture, and anthropology. In his book, *Deeply Into the Bone: Reinventing Rites of Passage* (Berkeley and Los Angeles University of California Press, 2000), he explores a variety of important transitions in human life and shows how these transitions have been ritualized through the years and in various cultures. The list of transitions is familiar: birth, death, marriage, and so on. Their familiarity merely underscores their universality. However, Grimes addresses a number of other transitions that have not customarily been ritualized, and perhaps should be: divorce and abortion, to mention but two. Ritual traditionally has functioned to hold us together through the disorienting and disintegrating events of human existence. Grimes helps us think about whether the ritual life of our communities (yes, even Quaker communities!) is adequate to the real challenges that passages present to us in our time.

**David Johns**  
Associate Professor of  
Theology

As my mother nears death, I find myself trying to figure out how to be there for her and deal with all the various emotions that arise in me. I brought along *Facing Death and Finding Hope: A Guide to the Emotional and Spiritual*

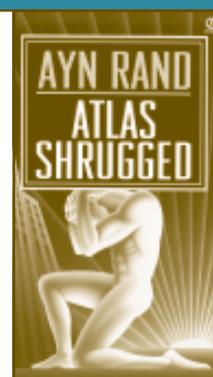


*Care of the Dying*, by Christine Longaker (New York, Doubleday, 1997) seeking some ideas and practices in facing death. It has helped.

Christine Longaker's husband developed acute leukemia at the age of 25 and struggled with the debilitation and pain of this disease and treatments for a year before dying. This led Christine to begin her own 20-year career in spiritual care for the dying and their families. She found, as I have, that various Buddhist perspectives and practices can be of help. She studies with Sogyal Rinpoche who worked to bring the insights from Tibetan Buddhism to the West with his work, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. Although, as both Sogyal and Longaker say, one need not be Buddhist to use the teachings, I found that Buddhist perspectives do complement Christian approaches.

Two aspects of the Buddhist view stand out as I read the book. First, the focus upon the moment at hand, without getting caught up in thoughts of what is coming or, equally vital, not getting stuck in all the old business of the past. I am aware, however, that thinking this is of value does not thereby make it happen! Nonetheless, just attempting to be fully present and to nurture that state of mind is helpful, even though I often fail.

Second, the claim that beneath everything we see and



feel is an ocean of compassion that, at least sometimes, we can touch helps when I do not feel so compassionate—towards others or myself. Again, believing this intellectually does not make it happen, but attempting to be aware of it—and reading about others who are working to realize it—is helpful.

Finally, there is a larger challenge that I take away from the book: Dying is not just about dying. It is about how we shall live. The medieval *Book of the Craft of Dying* says, “Learn to die and thou shalt learn how to live. There shall none learn how to live that hath not learned to die.” Though I find myself resisting that, at times I now get a sense of what it means.

**Lonnie Valentine**  
Professor of Peace and  
Justice Studies

Two books that have brought me great pleasure in recent months are *The Name of the Rose*, by Umberto Eco (Harvest Books, 1994) and *Atlas Shrugged* (NY: Signet Books, 1996). Both are novels with intriguing plots, but each raises stimulating theological questions. *Rose* raises issues related to power, hierarchy, and the church's role as guardians of truth. *Atlas* asks what would happen if the creative minds of the world went on strike! In the process, the book challenges the reader to imagine what relationships might be like if we set aside the assumptions of “original sin” and “human depravity.”

**Jay Marshall**  
Dean of ESR

## SUMMER MOVIE THEMES:

# Reflecting on Real-World Oppression in Teen Pop Culture

By Stephanie Crumley-Effinger, Director of Field Education

Theological reflection upon experience, the core of the Field Education seminar that I teach each year, is much too interesting and useful to be confined to the classroom. I enjoy reflecting on all sorts of experiences, particularly in reading poetry and stories and viewing films and television shows. This summer I watched, with my two teenage daughters, a series of “chick flick” movies that invited my reflection on a common set of issues: community and brokenness. Those of you involved in ministry to teens, or who are parents or relatives or friends of kids, may be particularly interested in the potential for such reflection.

The films briefly described here explore ways in which marginalized persons respond to the oppressive words and actions of those who hold power. In each of these films (and in many more of the genre), this takes the form of one or more teenage girls dealing with a popular girl who is usually attended by a posse of two to five sycophants, who acts toward other girls (and often, boys) in a hierarchical and rigidly structured manner.

In *Reflections of a Teenage Drama Queen*, the protagonist is Mary, who prefers to be addressed by the more exotic-sounding name of Lola. Having recently (and unhap-

pily) been moved by her mother from Manhattan to the suburbs, Lola upsets her new school’s hierarchy by challenging the reigning popular girl in ways ranging from a dance contest to the lead in the school musical. Lola’s preference for a good story over reality eventually gets her in hot water, and her character is also tested by being disillusioned by someone she admires and by being faced with the opportunity to benefit by another person’s comeuppance.

*Saved* has generated a fair amount of controversy among evangelical Christian communities for its unflattering portrayal of teens (and adults) at a Christian high school, and its challenges to traditional values. Here the powerful teen has theological reasons (or justifications) for many of her actions, and has available to her things like using a prayer gathering to function as a weapon. The protagonist (again named Mary) takes an action that she believes God wants her to do so as to help a friend, and has a spiritual crisis when difficult consequences result. Unfortunately, others at her school react in unkind ways—except for the school rebel, who, in a “Good Samaritan” type of reversal, demonstrates care. This would be all the more convincing if the film did not have such a

clear agenda of portraying virtually all of the Christians in it as hypocritical or stupid. But it led this viewer to wonder if that may have been the experience of those who made the film and to mourn the ways in which the church, as it has been said, “shoots its wounded,” and has been observed doing so.

A fictionalized response to the non-fictional study of teen-age girls, *Queen Bees and Wanna-Bes*, *Mean Girls* was written by Tina Fey of *Saturday Night Live* fame (who also has a role in the film.) *Mean Girls* returns to the theme of a girl new to town finding her way within the teenage jungle. Cady was home-schooled by academic parents doing research in Africa, and thus everyone and everything is unfamiliar to her. At first befriended by two kids on the margin, when she is invited into the popular crowd, her geek friends see the chance for revenge if Cady joins “The Plastics” as a “mole.” The film invites viewers to consider the extent to which is one shaped by the persons with whom one affiliates and the actions in which one participates. And while revenge may seem sweet, it, too, has a formative effect on those who indulge in it.

Such issues invite the viewer to consider these films



in light of Walter Wink’s discussion of “the myth of redemptive violence,” (*Engaging the Powers Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, Augsburg Fortress Press, 1992.) How should one respond to oppressive forces? What might prevent marginalized people from taking on the roles of their oppressors once they succeed in escaping their marginalized status? What is the myth or story or answer to which a given person turns for hope, inspiration, and challenge in the face of cruel domination by others?

And, finally, how do we address the very real dilemmas into which our young people are placed by the fierce and rigid patterns of social order they encounter in school? In what ways do we nurture and challenge them as they participate in these hierarchies—in whichever part of the system they find themselves? How do we help the church/meeting/youth group free itself from the constraints under which the kids function in their daily lives in school and begin to live instead in the alternate reality that is the beloved community?

## Stephen Angell

“The Catechisms of George Fox: Why they were written in the first place, what was contained in them, what use was made of them, and what we can learn from them today,” *Quaker Theology* 5, No. 2 (Fall-Winter, 2003). Available on-line at <http://www.quaker.org/quest/issue-9-angell-01.htm>. “The Church Called, Gathered, and Faithful,” (Co-authored with Patrick Nugent and David Johns) a response to *The Nature and Purpose of the Church A Stage on the Way to a Common Statement*, *Quaker Theology* 5, No. 2 (Fall-Winter, 2003). Available on-line at <http://www.quaker.org/quest/issue-9-FUM-01.htm>

## David Johns

“Authority of the Church in What World,” published in *Ecumenical Trends*; “The Church Called, Gathered, and Faithful,” (Co-authored with Patrick Nugent and David Johns) a response to the World Council of Churches *The Nature and Purpose of the Church* in *Quaker Theology*. David has also published reviews in *Quaker Life*, *Religious Studies Review*, and *Barclay Press’ On-line Cafe*.

## VOCABULARY of the SPIRIT continued from page 7.

with specific gestures to invite God’s Spirit into our bodies and to direct our prayer out to others. It reminded me of times in church when I would see hands outstretched to the sky during worship time.

My first reaction to that kind of demonstrative spirituality was fear—fear because it was different from what I was used to. But this fear later turned to acceptance and then to appreciation of the beauty in expressing one’s irrepressible love for God. To see that emotion manifest itself physically made an impact on my own desire for greater faith and less inhibition in expressing it.

Murray reports that through this kind of physical prayer with her patients, God often reveals something new. Shifts happen. Powerful experiences occur. New directions emerge leading to wholeness. Emotional and physical healing takes place. “The body is a vast universe

of unconsciousness. We need to open ourselves to be led deeper to these unexplored areas, similar to when we gain understanding from analyzing our dreams,” says Murray.

Physical healing—mild or miraculous—can occur in the context of the mind-body-spirit realm, says Murray. In another conference workshop, energy worker and ESR student Jackie Speicher addressed the natural healing energy of prayerful touch. The reason touch works, says Speicher, is that we live in a touch-deprived society. Touch has a powerful impact to soothe and to alter a person’s emotional state. In giving this single-pointed attention to someone and involving the divine element, we call two powerful forces into action.

Ford echoes this notion. “Jesus was aware of his father’s embrace in every moment of his life. If we can imagine that God is the light embracing us and others—that Christ is our source—we

can love our bodies and let God work powerfully in and through us.”

As an attendee of the spirituality conference, hearing about these methods of prayer combined with the body was a first for me. The ideas seemed a bit new and “out there” for a person of my traditional Catholic upbringing. But the more I listened, the more I became comfortable with the notion that our bodies are truly a canvas for the spirit of God to move in and speak through.

My experience at the conference brought back memories of how I had felt Jesus’ physical presence in that moment when I first believed. It was real, just as I am real and present on this earth. And until I am there with God physically, I want to experience God as powerfully and genuinely as possible.

*Janet Peterson was an attendee of this year’s Spirituality Gathering.*

NOWADAYS  
continued from page 2.

and am spending as much time as possible supporting the Kerry campaign while looking for opportunities to return to the paid work force.”

**John Carter (1981)** writes, “Karen and I are thoroughly enjoying living in Tipton, Indiana. As an independent, solo physician I find I have both the opportunity and the freedom to provide the various forms of ministry needed in the practice of Family Medicine. I still do a fair amount of singing every year at both church and community events, though I haven’t had as much time for writing new songs as I’d like. I also provide pulpit supply when local pastors go on vacation. Karen is doing home health nursing, and in her spare time she takes care of me, our four kids, four horses, two dogs, and who knows how many cats. Chris (14) will be playing baritone in the eighth grade band this fall. Alla (10) is our artist in residence and received a grand champion ribbon at the 4-H fair this summer. Bryce and Bryan (7) will be playing community league flag football this fall. If you’re out this way, stop by and say “Hi!” We’re in the Tipton phone book (It’s not that big!).”

**JoAnn Coates-Hunter (1992)** and **David Coates-Hunter (1990)** writes, “We live in Frederick, Maryland and enjoy playing with Cynthia Mason (1993) and her family regularly. Sadie is 9 and entering 4th grade. She is full of energy and experienced her first two weeks at Opequon Quaker Camp this summer. Sam is 6 and entering 1st grade and ran around the woods with his Dad and grandparents a lot this summer, wishing he was old enough for camp!”

JoAnn is the lead sixth grade teacher in a school tucked away in northern Montgomery County. She also facilitates and trains a Student Justice Peer Leadership group that leads workshops on peace and justice issues, those near to the hearts of elementary and middle school children, as well as topics that stretch their minds beyond their local schools. David is the property manager for the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Camping programs. This means that he is responsible for over 1,000 acres of beautiful mountainous terrain, about 60 buildings and their contents, and many vehicles. He is great at it and makes it possible for hundreds of children to enjoy Quaker outdoor adventure camping at its best and hundreds of grown ups to experience spiritual retreat and refreshment throughout the year. JoAnn adds, "Overall, we find ourselves happy, challenged, and open to visitors from all over! So come on down!"

**Tyler Connoley (2002)** and his spouse Rob moved to Silver City, New Mexico in January of this year. Tyler is finally getting to pursue writing as a full-time occupation. He had an essay published in *The Advocate* on June 8th, and you can read his weekly essays at [www.tylersturn.com](http://www.tylersturn.com). He's also working on a collection of midrashim, building on the stories he wrote while at school, and writing the occasional non-biblical short story. He hasn't had any of his stories published yet. New Address: Tyler & Rob Connoley, 100 West 19th Street, Silver City, NM 88061, 505-534-0319

**Gary Cummings (1983)** and **Faith (Eddie) Funk Cummings (attended 1979-82)** write, "Faith and I hang around the Anabaptist Peace Church fold and are reluctantly official

members of the Mennonite Church. Both of us left the Friends fold in 1996. Gary served as a Team-Minister of Rehoboth Mennonite Church in Schuyler, and Faith was the Youth Minister there (1996-1997). Since then we have been involved in home church ministry. Gary is a Registered Nurse and Home Care Supervisor of Interim Healthcare in Staunton, Virginia.

We never had children, but we have a lot of church kids and church friends from Indiana to Texas to California back to Virginia. Gary recently recovered from a very serious illness which took a year of therapy. Virginia is our adopted state. We live in the Shenandoah Valley and love it here."

**Keith Esch (1966)** writes, "These few days, Ginny and I are working with Charles Thomas's family following his death on Tuesday morning, August 3, 2004. We became acquainted with him in 1964 when we came to ESR. These 40 years knowing him and his late wife, Lucile, have been rich. Their daughter, Karen Thomas Karns, Fairfield, IA, also an ESR graduate, is a wonderful friend as well. Charles was Associate Professor of Applied Studies at ESR 1963-74. He really was an anchor, working alongside Wilmer Cooper in those earliest years of the school.

Otherwise, Ginny and I are happily settled in our new home at Friends Fellowship Community. Our phone number is the same. We welcome calls and/or visits from alums as they travel through Richmond.

Ginny continues her ministry in Stewardship as a volunteer at our local meeting, West Richmond, and for Indiana Yearly Meeting. Keith, as a member of Earlham's Board of Trustees and liaison to ESR's

Board of Advisors manages to be somewhat aware of happenings at ESR. At least the parts Jay wants us to know about! In fact, Jay Marshall is doing a terrific job! There have been significant changes and yet the school is essentially the same."

**Ingrid Fabianson (2001)** writes, "I continue to live on San Juan Island where I have a part-time job as a social worker/alcohol counselor. I have recently helped edit and write the new Quaker Earthcare Witness study guide entitled, *Earthcare for Friends*.

While I love being in my actual home, I miss having a deeply spiritual focus in my daily work. I am, therefore, continuing to pursue work anywhere in the world where I might combine my love of earth care, psychology, and spirituality. I am especially interested in Celtic spirituality and would love to live in Ireland and the UK. All suggestions for such an endeavor are welcome!"

**Sabrina Falls (1995)** writes, "My ministry vocations include both harp and preaching. I am a professional harpist and Certified Music Practitioner. As a CMP, I play live therapeutic harp music at the bedside of sick or dying persons. Currently I have work at Methodist Hospital (in-patient hospice unit) and IU Cancer Pavilion (out-patient chemotherapy), and play for weddings, receptions, funerals, retreats, worship services, and special programs (festivals, etc.).

I also continue to serve as guest preacher to fill in for absent pastors at local Friends and other churches. My music has been featured on a recently released MP3 called *Indy MP3 Project*, and I continue to sell my CD, *Healing River*.

## Spotlight Letter

**Frank Massey (1984)** writes, "I have often asked the question, 'What is ministry?' This question is asked by many Friends, especially those of us in the unprogrammed tradition. What I have learned is that ministry happens in many forms and many venues. Who would have thought, 20 years ago as I sat in that New Testament class at ESR, that I would now be the lead staff in a \$2.1 million Friends operation with an annual budget of \$1.1 million? I certainly wouldn't have. But today I serve Baltimore Yearly Meeting as General Secretary. What I have discovered, and maybe I knew this all along, is that we witness to our faith and beliefs each and every moment of each and every day. Whether we are balancing a budget, maintaining accurate and complete records, bringing a message of the 'good news,' or raising funds to purchase and develop a camp for our young people, we are 'doing' ministry. How we undertake these tasks is a witness to the world when undertaken with integrity, honesty, passion, and compassion."

**Frances Forster (2000)** writes, "Since graduation I did one unit of CPE in New Orleans, offering a ministry of massage therapy at an AIDS Hospice, and one year CPE at the University of California at San Francisco Medical Center. From there I moved north to Santa Rosa, where I worked two years as a chaplain at a local hospital. I have also served as Resident Friend for Redwood Forest Monthly Meeting for the last two years.

I am now moving to England (Aug.12), and will marry a Brit named David Stacey, whom I knew in high school in La Paz, Bolivia. We became reacquainted in June on our second (ever) high school reunion cruise. My new home is in a tiny village about 30 miles northwest of Cambridge, near Peterborough. The local Meeting is in Oundle. I understand the terrain is green rolling hills and beautiful, and about two hours north of London. I would love to have ESR folks come visit. My new address is: Frances Forster, Highgate House, Back Lane, Elton, Cambridgeshire PE8 6RH England, UK."

**Jim and Eden Grace (attended 1995-97)** write, "Both Jim and I attended ESR, although neither of us graduated from there. We'd love to share with Friends that we are moving this fall to Kisumu, Kenya to work as field staff with Friends United Meeting. We'll be helping FUM open an African Ministries Office that will better enable the African member YMs of FUM to come together around shared priorities, and will facilitate renewed global partnerships between the various regions of FUM. Friends can see more about our work, make a contribution to our ministry, and sign up for our email newsletter, at [www.fum.org](http://www.fum.org)."

**Kenneth E. Hall (1978)** writes, "I am currently serving the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as the Trinity-Brazos Area Minister. The Trinity-Brazos Area is made up of 54 established congregations and four new congregations at various stages of development. The congregations cover a total of 19 counties. I reside in Fort Worth and work from the Area office located there. My work is going very well and I am enjoying the people with whom I work. My wife, Hyacinth, serves as the Vice Principal of Souder Elementary School in the Everman Independent School District."

**Tara Hornbacker (1994)** received a D.Min from Fuller Theological Seminary. She writes, "My dissertation was entitled, *Reenvisioning Theological Education for Ministry as Spiritual Formation*."

**Phyllis Hutson (1982)** writes, "Gene and I continue to be happy in our northern Michigan home on the shores of the 'Big Lake.' Our six offspring and their spouses have gifted us with 14 grandchildren. I am doing some local teacher training in dyslexia diagnostic testing and continue to supervise about 10 interns in Indiana who are working to qualify at various levels of certification as Orton-Gillingham Practitioners. I remain busy as a trustee in my professional organization, consulting and presenting papers on dyslexia at various conferences. My namesake, The Hutson School for dyslexic students in Indianapolis, continues to thrive and is receiving national recognition for its excellence. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the incomparable, 'full-spectrum' education I received at ESR, along with the recognition that this work



is, indeed, ministry. The professors and deans who made this possible know who they are, and, once again, I thank them. I would enjoy receiving e-mail from alums and professors at [pchlsa@chartermi.net](mailto:pchlsa@chartermi.net)."

**Rev. Justin Lapoint (1972)** has retired from the parish ministry. For the last eight years, he has served Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church in Duplin County, North Carolina. Justin will continue teaching at James Sprunt Community College in Kenansville. He is instructor in Old and New Testaments, World Religions, Academic Skills, and remedial English. Justin's wife Rachel has a full-time position at JSCC as an instructor in Biology.

**Maureen McCarthy (2003)** writes, "It is with great joy that I share with ESR alums that Steve and I finished our CPE residency this past May. We are now living in Richmond again, on south 45th street—a quiet neighborhood that is great for walking. I'm feeling very blessed to be serving as chaplain at Friends Fellowship Community! I'm loving every minute of it. I'm having lots of one-on-one visits with the residents, and we've got three Bible study classes for three different levels of care, a grief support group, and a caregivers support group starting soon.

There is a lot going on here at FFC and I am enjoying being a part of it."

**Jesse Paledofsky (1987)** In addition to his work as a hospice chaplain in the Washington, DC area, Jesse Paledofsky has continued to hone his songwriting and performing skills. He has played piano with the Archie Edwards Blues Heritage Foundation at the Kennedy Center Open House and at the Smithsonian National Folklife Festival. He has also shared his original compositions at the Washington Folk Festival, Pendle Hill, and at the National Theatre's Monday Night Concert series. Jesse's new CD, *Food for the Long Haul*, has just been released on Azalea City Records. You can contact him at [www.jessepal.com](http://www.jessepal.com).

**Earl Prignitz (attended 1961-65)** writes, "I will be 89 years old the 27th of this month and we celebrated the five in my family who have birthdays in August yesterday at Irene Goodwin's home on the outskirts of Knightstown, IN. There were 24 of the Prignitz clan there for a wonderful meal and party. I continue to stay active on my computer and still write 'My Friendly Thoughts' pages. I'm up to 89 pages now, and I keep getting inspired to write more. Anyone interested can see

<http://homepage.earl.homesstead.com/Basic1.html> and <http://moreyet.homesstead.com/MyHomePage.html>.

**Trish Roberts (2000)** writes, “This past year has been a ‘sea change’ for me. I have moved close to the centre of Canberra —just 10 minutes’ walk from all the opportunities that a national capital city affords. I continue to offer individual spiritual direction and this is my main focus. I am active within my local Quaker meeting and the Yearly Meeting. My most recent Quakerly activity was to report on a national ecumenical gathering on issues of sexual abuse and misconduct in Australian Christian churches. Following this, Australia YM has set up a working group to look at these issues among Australian Friends and begin creating procedures for us to follow. While choosing not to be in this working group myself, I will offer pastoral care to those involved in this venture. Voluntary work figures more highly for me, and I am about to begin training as a telephone counselor. I have no grandchildren, but have bonded with my son’s pet ferrets.”

**Joanna Schofield (1995)** writes, “I’m in my ninth year as Pastor of West Elkton Friends Meeting, West Elkton, OH. The Meeting will be 200 years old in 2005. We have an ESR student, Donne Hayden, who will do a Field Ed placement with us to write our history! Donne is in the writing track of the M.Div/M.Min program. So, if you are in the area September 11, 2005, come to our celebration. Another part of my life is spent at good old ESR. I serve as the registrar for both ESR and Bethany. I am beginning my sixth year in that position. It is nice to work with folks who are spiritual seekers like me.

My daughter, Chaundra, graduated from Earlham with a Biology major in 2002. Since then she has been working for the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), Marine Invasions Research Laboratory. Her work is in the ‘Near Shore Project,’ which has to do with invasive species of invertebrates that come into our bays on ships and in ballast water. Her next step is to vet school in fall of 2005.”

**Peter Sebert (1973)** writes, “I write historical articles and a cartoon script for the Brown County Almanac. I also teach storytelling to K-6 students of Brown County, and during the past two years, I have spoken nine times at a Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

A third granddaughter, Grace Kathryn, now joins Sara (7) and Faith (5). I hope to travel with them by train and see America and other places before boys and careers take over their minds.”

**Jean Semrau (1987)** writes, “From 1993 to 2003, I served as interfaith chaplain in hospices and hospitals in Oregon and Washington (with brief CPE stints in Minnesota and New Mexico). I finally became Board-certified in 2000...and then retired from chaplaincy in 2003! I’m delighted still to be working in hospice but now am choosing to be more ‘behind the scenes,’ as coordinator of volunteers. I bought a little house in Medford, Oregon, and am open for visitors!”

**Julie-Ann Silberman-Bunn (1991)** writes, “After 12 years of ministry in Kent, OH I have accepted a position at the UU Church of Greater Bridgeport, in Stratford, Connecticut. We are moving in August and I begin my new position September first. My husband is currently

seeking a teaching position. My stepsons will be entering the 10th and 5th grades in the Seymour Connecticut schools where we have just bought a home. I would love to hear from ESR friends!”

**John C. (Jack) Smith (1970)** attended ESR in 1963-64 and received his M.A. from the School in 1970. He recently wrote to express his disappointment that there was no news in the Fall 2003 *ESR Report* of anyone from the “earlier era” of ESR. (He then realized, he writes, that he had not sent in anything, and so had no one to blame but himself.) With that in mind, he sends the following update: Jack came to ESR with degrees in pharmacy and pharmacology, and now has a doctorate in pharmacy, known as a “Pharm. D.” He is presently the pharmacist member of a clinical team at a medical clinic in Harrisonburg, VA. He also teaches two terms of clinical pharmacology in the graduate program of the Physician Assistant Program at James Madison University, located in Harrisonburg, VA.

Jack and his wife, Susan, are nearing their 40th wedding anniversary. They are also both active Conservative Friends. Susan has served as clerk of Ohio Yearly Meeting for 13 years, and Jack is a recorded minister in that tradition.

**Deborah Suess (1991)** writes, “After 20 months of interim ministry with the good people of Spokane Friends Church (NWYM), Tim and I moved cross country and now call home Greensboro, North Carolina. Tim is doing CPE work at Moses Cone Hospital and I am thankful to be serving as pastoral minister at First Friends Meeting. We love visitors —come see us!” (Phone: 336-315-5384)

**Patricia C. Thomas (1990)** writes, “I have been delightfully busy doing things Quaker this past year. I am Clerk of our quarterly meeting as well as of Wilmington Yearly Meeting Ministry & Counsel. I’m also serving as a Spiritual Director for ESR students, a member of the Board of Advisors, and teaching a Personal Spirituality class at Chatfield College, a three-year Catholic college in Brown County, OH. I was pleased to be asked to write devotions for *Fruit of the Vine* for Barclay Press and to participate in the Pacific-Northwest Quaker Women’s Theological Conference in June.”

**Ben Thornber (2004)** has accepted a call to pastor Bethel Friends Meeting in Western Yearly Meeting.

**April Vanlondon Degner (2004)** was recorded by Western Yearly Meeting at the 2004 annual sessions. She has accepted a call to pastor Fountain City Friends in Indiana Yearly Meeting.

**Daniel Whitley (attended 1967-70)** writes, “I went to ESR in 1967 from Guilford College, and then went to Baltimore Yearly Meeting as Associate Secretary in 1970, having left ESR without finishing the degree. I returned to Richmond as a spouse in 1974 and left again for New York Yearly Meeting in 1978, again without finishing the degree. To this day I have not finished the degree. But I have had a wonderful time serving God in a variety of ways, currently finishing 18 years as pastor of the Clintondale Friends Christian Church in Clintondale, New York. I treasure my time at ESR, although it has faded somewhat in memory. I still remember with great joy my mentor Elton Trueblood and my encourager and friend Clyde Johnson.”



## Our Greatest Contributions

by Jay Marshall, Dean of ESR

Thank goodness I enjoy traveling! The work of a dean requires that a generous portion of time be spent building relationships among the school's constituents. On nearly every trip, some person I have not met previously will introduce him- or herself to me as an alumnus/a of ESR.

Just as a business is known by its products and service, ESR is known largely by its graduates and their service in ministry. Graduates are an educational institution's greatest contribution to the wider society. Other contributions such as faculty lectures, publications, and workshops are important, but students who leave ESR ready to follow God's leading into ministry are our greatest contribution. The school exists primarily for that purpose. Short of excelling in that capacity, we underserve our mission. For that reason, it gives me great pleasure to encounter our alums in

ministry around the country and beyond.

A recent project reminded me that ESR graduates tend to be creative in ministry. In July, ESR hosted a dinner for the United Society of Friends Women International during their triennial gathering. We wanted to say "thank you" to that organization because, over the years, they have offered scholarship support to no less than 101 ESR students. To prepare for that dinner, we attempted to contact those scholarship recipients to ask about the paths their ministries had taken since seminary. We received encouraging and impressive communications.

This project confirmed that across the country, ESR graduates have assumed leadership roles in a variety of

settings. Our graduates include a wonderful array of traditions as well as Friends from all parts of the Quaker family.

At ESR, we are accomplishing our goal of serving as a crossroads community where persons of many faith traditions discover a vibrant community of learning. As we promote a "listening spirituality" grounded in Friends' understanding of the Gospel,

we are a school that teaches students to listen to God's call on their lives, and then helps them discern how to grow into the appropriate ministry.

This issue of *ESR Reports* highlights a few of

those wonderful people who graduated from our halls and now go cheerfully over all the earth, speaking to that of God in all people. Thank you, ESR alums, for your steady witness to God's transforming power.

**"...across the country, ESR graduates have assumed leadership roles in a variety of settings."**

THE  
DEAN'S  
*word*

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**Celebrating ESR Alumni/ae**