

Junior Friends Epistle North Pacific Yearly Meeting, 2012

The Junior Friends were generally quite content at this year's annual session, both spiritually and mentally. We were more spiritually open and aware this year than previously, but there is still much improvement needed before something such as business meeting can become meeting for worship for business. Mentally, our group is just as accepting as it has always been, and we are excited to welcome any new members. We have introduced many of our new Junior Friends to our traditions while encouraging them to begin traditions of their own.

In the Junior Friends opening circle this year, we wanted to introduce future members to our process and foster the creation of a Central Friends Code of Conduct, so we invited the Central Friends to participate in our opening circle and to be privy to listen to our Code of Conduct so that they were able to learn about not only the additional freedoms but the additional responsibilities of becoming Junior Friends.

In general, we have continued many of our previous traditions, but we have also added on some of our own. The practice of playing card games is an essential part of the Junior Friends tradition. The various games we play are often the first instance of inclusion for newcomers while reuniting old friends in a friendly and yet competitive game. The day trip outing was another place for Friends to bond, and the Ultimate Frisbee and ever-present card games encouraged teamwork and cooperation within our community. We also began an impromptu game of volleyball that went late into the night with a complete lack of rules. It was a lovely game, and hopefully will continue well into the future. In addition we continued our age-old tradition of playing capture the flag with the Young Friends which, as always, ended without a distinct winner, but was incredibly entertaining nonetheless. We also had an interest group for a future service group for Junior Friends in which we discussed possible locations, dates, and how to include people who just graduated who did not have an opportunity to participate in a previous service trip.

Junior Friends are a spiritually diverse group. Although Junior Friends are all in different places in our spiritual journey, we are all moving forward towards being able to speak in different tongues, especially to each other, so that we may become a stronger community. Our community nurtures all Junior Friends no matter what their spiritual state may be or where they may be in their search for their own inner light. The visit our friend in residence, Bonigno, paid to us could not have been more timely. He inspired our willingness to come together from different walks of life as those on the Youth Pilgrimage and gave us a better understanding of the origin of the Quaker faith and our current place in it. We also pretended to be salamanders. The theme of spiritual diversity was found elsewhere still; Junior Friends were inspired and moved by the speakers who attended the FWCC and their unique experiences. All in all it was an excellent NPYM and spiritual diversity was recognized and celebrated.