

**Friends met on the weekend of March 6-8,2009 at Nashville Friends Meeting for a weekend centered around embracing spirituality. This is our story:**

“Everyone wants a revolution, but.....no one wants to do the dishes”.

- Someone who knew what was up

Exhaustion! This retreat helped that I am in fact ready to graduate & fly off to college. Leaving the community will be bittersweet (mostly bitter) but for the first time I know that I will be able to let go when it is time. I don't have the words to explain myself, so I will put this topic away for now, letting it age like a fine wine until April shows me further clarity.

Alise, Therese and Laura, you were all so incredibly supportive this weekend. Dylan gets the award for most helpful newbie ever. You never hesitated to lend a hand. I love you all.

Bonnie

So I think this was one of the more spiritually fulfilling retreats I've been to. Mostly due to the drum circle (which was amazing) and just the overall ton. Plus it was small which made it calmer. Even though this was wonderful I missed a lot of people who didn't attend (like my Delly!!!).

I had a really wonderful moment on Saturday when we were all at the park and people were dancing and smiling and drumming and hula-hooping and the sun was shining and everything felt so perfect and simple and I wanted to put it on a bottle and take it with me everywhere I went. But then I just decided I should enjoy the moment. And I did. And it was very nice.

I mostly enjoyed eating cake for breakfast and walking in stilettos. However I did not like seminar that Doug gave me and Willamae because it was upsetting and unhelpful I also didn't like getting face violated/tickled. Let's work on that for next time, okay?

I missed you all dearly and I know I'll miss you the second I get in the van again. You're all such stupendous people and I hope you know that.

♥ love, love, love,

Delaney

PS Sorry if I injured you when I hugged tackled you.

PPS I missed how we didn't have a lot of music. Other than the drums and Emily and Willamae singing raunchy musical songs.

PPPS. Agh, so we danced in the highway on the way here. I forgot to tell you that. For all you parents who are reading this & are concerned for our safety, it's okay. We stayed on the shoulder and no cars were moving.

PPPPS Willamae doesn't like excess ps.

PPPPPS I have mentioned Willamae 3 (now 4 times) in this. That's so creepy.

*S. oooooooo*

*A. awesome*

*Y. young*

*F. friends*

*Wink was the most fun ever but I felt really weak. The park was so cool. I went there as my 5th grade field trip and it was no fun at all so it made it doubly happy I was at say! That man dancing was really cool. I am sooo tired. I slept on concrete last night and had the weirdest dreams so I am just talking nonsense!*

*~ Angelina*

*PS I can't wait till my Berea week! =b=0)=D*

Um.... I suck at beginnings? Well, I was really happy all of Friday for no real reason. That's a good way to start a SAYF retreat. Once we got the seats figured out, the ride was real fun. We got stuck in traffic, and then Delaney ran by our van and we were like, WTF? So we got out and danced on the highway. That was like, the best ride ever.

So we got here and nobody was here except Nashville of course! So, we all hung out doing I don't know what (it involved hats) until Atlanta finally got here. After that it was like, Guidelines! Opening Circle! Bedtime! And we learned that Brad is a country in Africa. Saturday was BEAUTIFUL!!! I'm not even going to talk about what happened before the park, I knew it would be perfect as soon as we started walking AND IT WAS. The weather was perfect and the drumming was amazing and there were so many people! I think SAYF is the best entertainment the Parthenon has seen!

Also, a wonderful addictive game was invented. Have you played IN THE CAN???? I have. Soooo... I'm cooler sooooo \* hair twist \* I invented air, sooooo.....

AND birthday cake for breakfast. Yumyumyum. I wanna sleep...uh...Lekey, you have lovely eyes. ☺ ILY!

I would do shout outs but I hate the word shoutouts plus I don't wanna leave anyone out because it makes people sad ☹ So here's one big SCREAM OUT!

SAYF: I Love you!

LOVE LOVE LOVE Love Love love,

Taylor

*OK, so like, this retreat was all like...tight. Just kind of all spandexed up...and tight....Like a tiger. Very tight and smooth from th tightness. My homeboy Biko came up to the park and drummed with us, and then a whole lot of people came up, but one guy danced...that guy was cool... and his hair was all like, tight.*

*Oh! And we ate an awesome dinner, there was sooo much pasta, and it was all...tight. Small bummer tho, I won't be taped up to the pole this time, because someone, I'm not going to name names, but their name rhymes with ...'pecks' and not only did 'pecks' not come, but he was supposed to bring tape. Zan...Punch 'pecks' the next time you see him.*

*Phorest*

*PS Hold the stupid Lights here at Nashville Friends Meeting in the Light. On, off On, off, On, off On, off On, off*

*PPS Coffee and oreos are the shiznit!*

*PPS The suns not yellow...It's chicken!*

*PPPS Ian and I had a water fight ...And I won Beotch!*

Hi SAYFers! ☺ I loved this retreat. It was so much fun hanging out with everyone. Friday before anyone got here, me, Cody, and Pho-Pho were hanging out talking pics then Doug came and the Party really started. When everyone came it was so awesome. Seeing all the SAYFer kids was amazing. But before anything I want to thank Zan for being there for me when I needed to talk. YAY ZAN!!! It's been great. I've chilled with some people I haven't really talked to before like Kaitlynn and Emanuel. (Katie tickled us all last night!!!) But yah, it's been great. I loved the Centennial Park trip. It was so cool. The drums were exciting and the dancing was amazing.

Kama

Emanuel is a beast at wink. He scratched(?) me plenty just by grabbing my foot. Ian is a beast too.

This was a weird retreat but it was still fun. I had a lot of fun at the park with the drummers and I really don't know what to write about cause I'm kinda confused, so I'm going to stop now. ~ The man with the plan

Spirituality and relaxation are the keywords for me for this retreat. This trip to the park was by far the best, as it was beautiful, sunny and warm, not rainy and cold. Dancing with the wind to the beat of the drums was my true connection with my spirit this weekend. Not caring about the other people watching, the pain in my feet, or the sun surly burning my skin. It was just my body, my inner self and those drums. To those who played and those who danced with me, thank you. I've had some crazy, busy past few weeks and those few hours in the park were much needed. Also, the large amounts of free time were equally beneficial. I didn't get much work done, but I got some sleep. which is something I've been missing lately. Seeing the way everyone comforted Bethany today reminded me of the reason why I love to come here. I'm so fortunate to have met all of you and don't know how I survived before this. I love you all and hope to see you in April (my birthday month!)

Until then, Emily

PS Shoutouts!

Alise. Willamae.

Delaney – Girl I'mma come live with you

Bethany – I'm sorry about your phone. I would donate if I knew the exact location of my wallet.

Julie and Nonners (Winona) = my dancing sisters. We got that party started.

Braden – Best friend! ♥

Dex – Why aren't you here? I hate you.

Bonnie – You're super beautiful. Just thought you should know.

Phorest – I love you.

PPS Delaney and I went around and hugged all the cute people. if you didn't get a hug, we still think you are cute!

PPPS I forgot Chrissy, my darling wife's shoutout! I love you and am sorry about your grandpa. Hugs.

*There is one word I can think of that can truly & accurately describe this weekend: sayfastic! My week had been pretty blah & boring & this retreat really took care of that. ☺ Going to the Pantheon was awesome and I really enjoyed the magical drum circle there. Cuddle puddles were also much enjoyed & helped melt away my internal problems.*

*SHOUT OUTS!!!*

*Emanuel – Yay! You finally came back! ^.^*

*Kama- I love you lots & you're amazing and beautiful, plus, you are good at singing.*

*Samantha – You are also beautiful and amazing & funny, too.*

*Zan – Thanks for ramming on my hand over & over, it was pretty funny, aside from the fact that my hand hurts now.*

*Anyways, I unfortunately won't be at the next retreat because I will be getting picked up from my dad's house. ☺ Well then, I guess I'll see you all at SAYMA then.*

*Much love, Autumn*

*PS Emanuel, remember those plates last night. ☺*

After this retreat it is not at all hard to believe that I first fell in love with SAYF at a Nashville retreat. Sometimes, I forget how much I love these people, this place (SAYF is, in fact, it's own small country. It travels, sort of like the Holy Roman Empire only massively more wonderful. ) and, thankfully, this retreat reminded me of my incredible love for this. It's not the activities, and it's not about food, or anything like that, it's the people that you know, and the insane amount of nothing that you do with them, because of them, for them.....

Not that I always enjoy it. I would much like to give back the (thoroughly unhelpful) lessons Doug gave to me and Delaney which only served to make us more awkward – the next time a see a boy I will make a nom-grunt noise, and start laughing hysterically. Incidentally, if I get locked up due to crazy, you are coming to get me out. They just couldn't handle it.

Bonnie, my dear, since you won't be at graduation, and we didn't get to whisper nice things in each other's ears during the angel walk, I will whisper them now, via paper. You are amazingly amazing which is, I am aware, silly & superfluous, but it's true. Also, you have an inner and outer beauty that is almost as big as your mouth. (That's a lot of beauty). But you are far more than enormously gorgeous, you are also unexpected (MEAT!) and fabulously poodle-esque. No, but seriously I'm not really sure what to say. Trapping you with words would be like expecting a butterfly pinned in a box to remain a lifelike – ridiculous, impossible, a sin.

I spoke of beauty in the opening circle of this retreat, there has been so much beauty here.

Watching you all spin & flail, unconcerned by sun & calluses, watching lily and natalic scream with joy, fear. Whatever it is a child feels, and you, everyone of you, here. Now, yesterday, forever, whenever, whatever.

With love, Willamae Boling

✧ *Dancing in the park yesterday with you all, having our delight and openness shared with the other park-goers and letting our inhibitions go so we could be absolutely in the moment, helped to create probably the best birthday party I could ever imagine having. The music, the acceptance and the beauty of the day gave me great joy. Growing older is pretty wonderful when you've got a loving community!*

✧ *I'm so glad to have Braden, Laura and Judy with us this weekend. I love new people coming into this community and sharing their true selves and their gifts with us.*

✧ *As always, I'm blown away by the love, support and acceptance y'all show one another and me. I wish we could bottle what is created at SAYF retreats so the rest of the world could get a dose.*

✧ *I quite enjoyed avoiding watching that sad, sad movie with Doug and Lincoln. Too bad y'all are so short....*

*With great love,*

*Mary Linda*

*PS It was really great having Winona and Julie with us for a few hours! Love you girls!*

SAYF was an experience that I'll never forget. Quakerism is just a whole new idea to me. An incredible idea, that is. Before my friends explained to me what it was, I just assumed that I was supposed to believe what I was told in church, and felt kinda guilty because I didn't. Now though, in this open community, I'm free to believe whatever I want, and I like that.

Everyone here was incredibly nice too. I mean, where else can you find people that can raise over \$60.00 in ten minutes just to help out a friend? It's incredible, and I can't wait to come again.

Well I had to say this SAYF was great. Heck it was great getting here. Both of our van's kids got out and had a side of the highway dance party...so much fun!!!

Well anyways, when we got here it was nice and calm. It was nice seeing old friends and meeting new faces. Well Saturday was great because the weather was perfect and so relaxing, we got to lay down & dance to the sound of people drumming. Then back at meeting we had lots of free time and great food for dinner.

Thank you for Phorest for telling us about the Canadian Bagel Deer...where do they work? So anyway.....

Nighttime mildly sucked because I had the worst headache, and water didn't help. Thank you the FAPs who liked my hair, but dreadlocks will never be an option for me. So I'm too tired to think. I love you all and will miss you and will see you in SAYMA.

Tim

PS If anyone sees a stray shamrock ring, I'm missing mine.

*Dear SAYF Community,*

*This has been a beautiful, spiritual weekend for me. The drumming in Centennial Park was a event I will always remember. We created a community event that embraced people from many age groups and cultures.*

*I noticed this weekend that this community did a good job of staying together and supporting each other. I love to watch you caring for each other and growing in leadership.*

*Bonnie, I appreciate all your work and your words to the community. I remember a few years ago, at a retreat here in Nashville, when we discussed you becoming a nurturer. That memory kept popping into my head as I heard you begin candle circle with a deep and meaningful query. Doug has a fabulous taste for cool shoes.*

*All around me now is silence. I don't think I remember SAYFers in the past forming an Epistle group that was this worshipful. You are a wonderful group of young people. Keep loving each other.* Ceal

We had a Really really small planning committee for this retreat...namely Bonnie and Dick. I know how much work that is. Thank you soooo much for all your work and for the million ways you both help SAYF thrive and grow. Bonnie, I learned a lot from you this weekend about how to approach subjects from new and different angles - and how a few well spoken words is often better than long explanations. Thank you.

I had an absolute blast in the park and will always remember this retreat.

Love, Therese

When I got here everybody gave me hugs and didn't seem mad at me which was a really big surprise considering the fact that I haven't been able to come to the last bunch of retreats, and I really am sorry and have missed you guys. I went to bed late as usual and was tired in the morning, but I drank some coffee and was fine. I really enjoyed my time at the park. I watched the yo-yoers and listened to the drums while the guy with the really long dread danced to it. It was great and when we got back I hung out with Kama and then took a long waited and greatly needed shower. After dinner we played the game "Push" and had a great time, but the wink game wasn't that great this time. Now it is almost time to go and we've forgotten a very important thing, duck-taping Phorest to the pole.

~Emanuel

Mach 6-8 2009 Dylan

This was my first time at SAYF and its probably the most fun and the most comfortable I've felt in a long time. Everyone here is so nice and open. I feel like I know more people and I know them better than I had at two years of private school.

Everything here is either fun or not boring. We made up a game at the park called "in-can" and so far everyone else who's played it thinks its awesome. What I'm trying to say is that something like that would seem boring if you didn't have friends to play it with. The park was really cool but I don't think I liked it as much as some people. Wink was AMAZING. I think I did pretty good and it was a ton of fun. Only maybe one thing I didn't like about SAYF was I heard way too much gossip I thought.

PS SAYF was awesome!

*I loved this retreat. I was kind a tongue tied as usual but I quickly settled back into being at SAYF. I love going to Centennial Park and doing the drums. I got a little burnt but I still had a great time. It was cool seeing some newbies and some familiar faces. Also, I enjoyed hanging out. Basically I'm really glad I came.*

*Pawt*

*Poit*

*Patwick*

*Pat*

So...uhh...hair twirl... I invented SAYF..so, uh, just maybe a little bit better...uh..yeah. Anyway. this retreat has been/is/was amazing. I have noticed the lacking in spirituality mentioned about past retreats, and this one seems to have set us back on the Quaka track of awesome.

I never thought that I could be worshipful when surrounded by a bunch of strangers recording me dancing with their blackberries. Kudos to the guy with the dread. The drumming circle drew in people from everywhere, and that's pretty difficult thing to do.

"Imagine" has been stuck in my head this entire retreat. John Lennon obviously had never been to SAYF. Well, too late now!

Random highlights (unfortunately inside jokes)

- bringing two awesome newbs and meeting other ones.
- getting way high on the (happy) highway
- inventing the best game ever with Phorest and Kofi. (If you haven't played In the Can, I'm bringing it to Old Greer in April).
- Dancing to the sick beats at the Parthenon
- Coffee (even though I literally got NO SLEEP last night because of it)
- Being Penelope....again and again and again.

This is such a beautiful caring community. Like a magic mirror, because it brings out the best in everyone.

This past week was honestly the most excruciating wait of my entire life. That's why I had to count down the hours starting at 72. And now here I am, having to start all over counting the days until I am surrounded by more love than seems humanly possible once again.

Maybe that's why I believe in something higher. Because I see it in you guys.

Peace homey q's.

Lekey like Becky

PS No guitar again? Jeezus. Chapel Hill you are missed.

*What ways can I be more nurturing?*

*When I'm discouraged, distraught, distracted or down by what I witness, do I find a way to tell those in the community about that discomfort and invite them to help me? Do I invite those here to learn & grow, to fully live into their most beautiful parts, by letting them know my insights, my needs, my perspective? Am I honest here, in ways that foster the growth of my light and yours too? Do I hold a place for your light to grow?*

*And when I'm having a hard time holding that place, knowing how to foster the Light in that place between me and you, not knowing the next place to turn, do I get help from a loving participant in this weekend, invite trusted Friends, nurturers or FAPs to walk with me towards that discomfort. Do I look to the Light in you, letting you know what is blocking me from knowing the potential & power of that Light in the place from where I look at things & you look at things? Do I learn that I do not need to do it myself, that I need to let others be with me. Do I let you nurturer me, & lean on you too? Do I know that I don't need to do it by myself? In truth, that I cannot fix it on my own? Do I know that I am not an Island here, that what makes this weekend powerful is the way that we learn from one another to lean on one another even as we fall & tumble. Let us not be Islands, let us be a land of love and Light & let that light flow out & over our lives. Let m be one with you and you one with me.*

*Laura Grace*

*PS Thank you Judy for being a wonderful 1st time FAP. It was great to be your mentor & I hope someday you will be my mentor.*

This retreat was kinda depressing, but not really. Bethany's phone got broked, and that was the main thing, but Wink was Pitiful (with a capital P), and I felt like a horrible person after watching Changeling because I wasn't sad. And that's the bad news. The good news is that we danced on the highway on the way down, I saw my amazingness SAYF buddies again, and this was my first time in the Nashville Meetinghouse. Tis amazing. The park was excellent fun, as was the drumming circle, and the war between Phorest and I which I won, by the way. I was disappointed with the cereal. No Lucky Charms?! It's not SAYF without Lucky Charms. Or shoutouts. SO here they are

Tim: Fishy Fish Manipulation Dance! Part Z!

Angelina: Sherman the Waffle

Phorest: Scoop

Delaney: That sweater vest is really tyt (pronounce 'tight').

Bonnie: I just met a girl named B-Bonnie....

Kama/Laura: God. I haven't drawn this poorly in ages.

Emily: Dead baby? Fur rug?

Zan: What on earth did they do to your elbow?

Well, this was fun. I'll see Old Greer!

- Ian

PS Tim and I need your consent to be in the SAYF Trading Card game we're making. Although it would be quicker just to tell us if you don't consent.

Who Got Sunburnt? NOT THAT MOTH FLIPA!

On my first SAYF retreat.....

One thing that struck me was the similarity of the group experience to my experience of four months in the woods when I was sixteen. We were 26 tenth graders coming together from all over the US, but mostly the south, to the lush green mountains of North Carolina. The goal was to create a strong ‘trusting’ and loving community within those months where all felt welcomed, supported, and empowered. Sounds like perfection, and it was as close as I’ve ever been, the best four months of my life, but it came with some sacrifices among which we were not to have exclusive or sexual relationships (of any sort) and most difficult of all, no technology. Being only 5 years older than some of you, I’ve grown up with a strong reliance on my cell phone, computer etc and the thought of abandoning my social life, all the people I’d been in school with for eleven or more years frightened me. Despite these fears I went on to OA (Outdoor Academy) and found that those sacrifices were blessings in disguise that helped the whole community (faculty, staff and students) form deeper more meaningful relationships with others and within ourselves to find “who we were” at that moment & help us to continue to find out who we are. This is also the place for that experience; and I would like to plant this seed of my experience, and hope that the extent of the use of technology is continued to be looked at and deeply examined as an asset to the Young Friends community in regard to the testimony of simplicity during the retreats,

FAP Judy Scoville

I like the rooms here because there are so many places to get away and have some silence. The walk was fun. The guy with the big braid was cool and so were the yoying guys in the corner. Wink was okay except for the part where almost no one played and the floor was very slippery. I made new friends I think. Why do people steal food? That was a good retreat. Anonymous AKA Chris

PS How do you spell Anonomous?

PPS I drew a birdie.

That were fun. I liked the drive down. We caught in a traffic jam, and we totally got out and got high on the highway (Dancing on the shoulder was fun). Wow. That walk to the park was awesome. My hand hurt after all that drumming. Then when I got back, we watched Changeling. Sad movie but good.

Then there’s wink. I actually won some games!

Delaney: gwir. Whir. Shurp forr shuck..

Ian: Croiry! It got my leg!

fofo (yr moco – jelly beans...

- Lincoln



Haiku Battle!

Ian

SAYF is lots o fun.  
First time in Nashville Meeting  
It was amazing.

I agree madam.  
Puns aren't the best jokes ever.  
But dome are funny.

What is this nonsense?  
Renaissance ketchupicing  
is the best there is!

Oh, the agony  
Of potatoes in great pain  
while used in cake making!

Aaargh! Another pun!  
Two-thirds of them are P.U!  
What's with the big paws?

Oh, it would at that.  
Three blondes walk into a bar!  
Got a drink named Bob?

Taylor

Sayf is amazing  
Sayf is safe! haha hapun.  
not very funny.

Refrigerator.  
It has five syllables.  
perfect haiku word.

What? Ketchup Icing?  
for French fry cakes, I presume.  
potato misuse!

Potato Hitler  
What a heinous vegetable  
gouges their 'eyes' out

I am not a bear!  
Just don't walk into a bar!  
I'm sure it would hurt.

Jellybean watch theft  
Or rearranged furniture  
They swam with their arms.

THE WINNER IS.....

TAYLOR

Dis retreat was fun!  
Dis drum circle was fun!  
Shoutouts:  
Kofi: crushed nuts wit that Sunday?  
Zion: don Vito don Vito!!  
Patrick: In think you're right...  
Christopher: Hey, You there!  
Emanuel: That #@!@!#\$!# HURT!!!  
Zan: I shoot you susquach!  
Nia McCalla

This was an interesting retreat, so, on the way down to lovely Nashville, there was a traffic jam. So we all got out of the car and started party boy in it up on the side of the road :D We provided entertainment for all of the onlookers who were wishing they were as cool as us, and we also enjoyed ourselves. Then, we finally arrived. The following day we went to the park where we fit six people on the broken swing and listened to the drummers drum, it was cool seeing how quickly the park filled up to watch and listen to the music. A few dancers even joined. I was just about to fall asleep but then we started heading back, me - shoeless. Then we just kinda hung out and stayed up too late, as always, and now we're here. Thank you, everybody, for helping me with the phone issue. I really love every one of you.

- Bethany

PS Phorest wasn't taped to the pole .\_.

PPS Sorry the handwriting wasn't the best, Samantha helped me write :P

PPPS I know where Zan hides his bellybutton. Zan can't feel his feet ☺

this retreat was nice even though nurturers had a hard time w/4 of us & tons of you people, and it was hard to control a big mass of people who are having loads of fun but other than that I've had a good weekend and I'm glad I came because for the most part it got my mind off of things that have made me upset recently. I thank you all for holding Christina (Chrissy or Stina) & her family in the light. It mans a lot not only to me but to her as well. Well, until April.

♥ Santha

*This weekend was great. I was in a bad mood because of the drama at home. Then on top of that my step-grandfather died Saturday. So it was great to be around all the other Sayfers and the newbies, but inside I just wanted to burst into tears. Thank you all for being there for me. I ♥U! Oh by the way amazing drum circle yesterday.*

♥ ya Kaitlynn Tippin

*PS The game of "Push" was interesting, but fun thanks to Doug.*

This was an awesome experience. I have been wanting to come to SAYF ever since I was told about it. I felt that I could learn about Quakerism more if I came and I did. Religion has been an issue of mine for a while. I've stopped listening in church because I didn't know what to believe. Wicca was an option I was going for until I found out about the Religious Society of Friends and SAYF. There have been struggles on my part against forced religion and being dragged to a really conservative Baptist church against my will it seems. Going to this retreat meant a lot to me. I thank my friends for telling me about SAYF and I thank everybody I met for making me feel welcome in my first SAYF retreat. Thank you Friends!

- Braden Mills, Berea Friends Meeting

PS \* twirls hair \* I'm a Quaker. I have three best friends: Tomato, Liza Minnelli and George Fox. PPS On a serious note, I feel like I have fought for a while now, and I won. I'm literally a Friend.

♥© PLH!