

## *Message from the Editor*

Dear Friends,

At the last Representative Meeting of Canadian Yearly Meeting in November 2008, Young Friends and Young Adult Friends were challenged to report about their efforts of building bridges between different branches of Friends around the world. This request was asked in response to a report given by the ad hoc committee that is looking at Canadian Yearly Meeting's relationship to Friends United Meeting. This committee wrote: "One reason (for CYM to stay affiliated to FUM) is the profound work that our Young Friends and Young Adult Friends are doing to build bridges across our differences. What started at the World Gathering of Young Friends in 2005 is continuing. Our Young Friends and Young Adult Friends deserve our support in their work. Young Adult Friends around the world feel a leading to reach out to one another within the Society of Friends to seek loving unity. One YAF said that 'Young Adult Friends would feel abandoned if CYM were to withdraw from FUM'."

The request to hear about the experiences of YF/YAFs in Canada as they encounter Quakers around the world directly tied into my hope for this issue of the *Sporadical*, for I knew we as Young Friends have stories to tell about our friends whose forms of Quakerism may differ from those we grew up with.

As a naturalist, I know that a diverse ecosystem will be resilient; it will be beautiful, healthy, and full of life. As I read over the submissions that have been gathered for this issue from the Young Friend community in Canada, I can tell you that in our experiences of the diversity of Friends we have found beautiful, loving relationships that challenge us to bear fruits. In this issue you can read how our differences create the fertile ground that the Society of Friends can grow out of. I hope you are as excited as I am about the future of Friends!

Yours faithfully,  
Rebecca Ivanoff

*Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3)*

## **How Lucky I Am**

By Katrina McQuail

Kitchener MM, currently living in Seattle

I have always felt that my life is split across the political border between Canada and the USA. I was born and raised a Canadian by two previously American parents. My entire extended family lives in the USA and so I spent many a holiday sitting in the backseat of a car traveling down to visit with them. This feeling grew as I attended Friends General Conference (usually held in the US) Camp NeeKauNis and Canadian Yearly Meeting. As a dynamic young person in a rather stifling rural community, the deep kindred friendships I developed with my peers at these events became the sustaining relationships in my life. My relationships with my Quaker friends have always been first and foremost on my list of priorities.

Attending Earlham College in Richmond Indiana for my undergraduate degree introduced me to even more American and international Quakers and made me aware of opportunities previously unknown to me. One of these opportunities was the World Gathering of Young Friends (2005). I was selected to be one of Canadian Yearly Meeting's representatives to the WGYF. There, I met even more Young Quakers from around the world, learned about our diversity and differences when it came to practices, and our similarities in Spirit.

Though it can be exhausting and frustrating to have F/friend communities at such a distance, I would not trade them for the world. In some ways it has meant that I have led a very compartmentalized life - spending this week with this group of F/friends here, and then spending time with these F/friends there, none of whom knew each other, but heard about the others through me. But as we've grown, so have the opportunities and interest of Young Friends to attend gatherings other than their own camp or Yearly Meeting sessions, and so my world, though spread across the globe, grows smaller and smaller.

I feel having a diverse group of F/friends spread across the globe and theological perspectives has been such a gift. How lucky