

# Pacific Yearly Meeting Youth Programs Coordinating Committee Report to Representative Committee 2022

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**Requests to Monthly Meeting Reps and PYM Committee Clerks:** Please share these links with your meeting.

We encourage everyone to check the PacYM website for:

- Our regularly updated [intergenerational calendar](#)
- Information and application forms for [grant funding from our Youth Programs Fund](#)
  - YPCC accepts year-round grant applications for youth and intergenerational projects and events, or event attendance assistance.

### **Spirit's Movement Amongst Us**

The members of the Youth Programs Coordinating Committee (YPCC) recognize the spiritual challenges to Quaker Youth that have been brought on by Covid 19. We acknowledge that the experiential process of learning Quaker faith and practice is lost for youth when we do not meet in person. The committee and the Youth Programs Coordinator are currently seeking ways to engage the youth of Pacific Yearly Meeting while facing the social restrictions that are still necessary. The YPC Committee held a one-day virtual retreat in late January to seek input from Quaker youth about the Quaker-centered activities that interest them, at in-person meetings as well as on Zoom. We also examined ways to gather safely: outdoors, in small groups, in intergenerational settings. Although Quaker youths prefer to meet in person, we also sought insight about ways to make virtual meetings interesting.

The Quaker youth at the retreat stated that they want more of the following in-person activities:

- Doing things together: work, service, camping, playing games, and eating
- Taking leadership roles, fitting in, making friends
- Spending time together working and playing in intergenerational settings
- Being close to the Earth through camping and being outdoors.

The following virtual activities were listed, although the JYM group quickly grew bored and frustrated with Zoom events, which did not last many months:

- Games and hang-outs
- Online games
- Talking over Zoom.

### **Recommendation to RepCom regarding where and how we meet for Annual Session**

Although the children's program had the success of field trips this last year, our teen group has not found the same success with smaller gatherings. Much of the joy and success of our teen programs have been the empowerment and independence we enable for our teens while

sharing spaces at large gatherings like quarterly meetings and annual sessions. With the graduation of older teens and no opportunity for younger teens to participate due to the pandemic, our teen group is smaller and disconnected. Looking forward to annual session, the Youth Programs Coordinating Committee makes the following recommendations to Rep Com.

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## **Recommendation 1.**

- Annual Session should have an in-person component that includes Junior Yearly Meeting. We recognize that there is currently a smaller group of teenagers than usual who might attend annual session, yet we believe that there is value in offering Junior Yearly Meeting to those who are able to attend.
- A specific and firm registration date for annual session should be established. If registration is very low, then Junior Yearly Meeting should be canceled.

## **Recommendation 2.**

- Accept the reality that if annual session is all virtual, teenagers will choose not to attend.
- Offer summer camping experiences for teenagers as a replacement to virtual annual session.

## **PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE YOUTH PROGRAMS FUND THIS YEAR**

**YAF packing** - For the third year YAFpacking succeeded in getting more Young Adult Friends (YAF) outside and sharing the bonding experience of a trail together.

**Teen Camping- Russian River-** The CPQM teen group pivoted when Quarters were canceled and were able to gather with a few families at a campsite.

**YAF Work Camp at Quaker Center-** Eight YAFs gathered for service at Quaker Center. This inspired collaboration between the YPC and Quaker Center and led to another work weekend and plans for future gatherings.

**Fall Family Fellowship-** A Woolman family weekend was successful for the children's group component but failed to provide a program suitable for teens. The Woolman A-frames were very suitable for a covid friendly pod set-up and families were happy to mask up and enjoy each other's company outdoors.

**Graduation Gifts** - What better way to connect through a pandemic than with that ever exciting unexpected mail at your door! Packages were filled with love, treats, a book, and a few other things to support the JYM graduates who graduated without any formal recognition last year due to the pandemic. Responses were enthusiastic.

**YAF Work Weekend** - Fifteen YAFs gathered for service and fun at the center and wished they had had more of these types of gatherings. Grant funding allowed the event to be free of charge to attendees, which made it more possible for YAFs to attend as well as feel comfortable canceling due to coughs which did happen last minute. Retaining walls were put in and friends requested more Quaker time at future weekends on a three-day weekend to make the travel more possible.

**Teen Ice Skating** - This event was canceled due to the surge of Omicron both in the world and our community.

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Observation: Most grant requests now come with a line item for rapid tests. While these can be challenging to acquire, they do make a significant impact on the feeling of safety at an event.

[Grant fund summary sheet](#) provides a list of projects funded since the inception of the Youth Programs Fund.

## **WORK OF THE YPC THIS YEAR**

As YPC, I have been hurriedly enjoying picking up all the various pieces of coordinator work. From June through December, we averaged one attempted in-person gathering a month. This was a great learning pace although challenging as many of the events were attempted for the first time. It was also a bit disappointing that many elements were canceled or modified to be less than planned, but what can you do in a pandemic? A significant portion of energy has also been devoted to the database project and trying to build back connections with families, teens, and YAFs. The Youth Programs Fund has been crucial to enabling event experimentation and creating events and things to offer our Youth community. As is due for a coordinator's role, many hours are joyfully spent with a wide variety of Quaker Committees. The running count is a bit amorphous but at least eight committees see the YPC as ex officio. I have been excited to connect with Woolman and Quaker Center and we have begun to fold each other into our plans more and more. I look forward to connecting both centers' summer camps more than in the past and hopefully we can start some harmonious resource sharing of all kinds.

## **Next year**

We hope to see more camping and environmental service opportunities for youth going forward. COVID permitting, we will ramp up from virtual game nights, to half day activities outdoors, to overnights and hope that annual session and summer camps can be in person. We are working to create more harmonious support between the YPCC and Quaker Summer camps.

## **LIST OF YPCC MEMBERS**

Elinor Steffy, Kiernan Colby, Nancy Mellor, Nathan Secrest, Melissa Lovett-Adair, clerk.

Keenan Lorenzato, ex officio as YPC

*Submitted by Melissa Lovett-Adair, clerk*