

Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Committee Report to Representative Committee

Annual Session 2019

When a new or shy teen arrives, they are noticed, they are brought into the fold; included, accepted, embraced. There is laughter and spontaneity; cooperation and friendly competition; games and lively AVP exercises; trips to the pond or a hike; an engaging service project; and a whole-community dance. By the end of the week, there are no new kids; there is a community of bonded friends. The snowball is rolling downhill, picking up speed and new participants and new leaders as it rolls ahead.

Annual Session 2020 – the snowball hit a wall. A handful of teens showed up, some of the activities were managed in a limited way, but none of that good stuff happened.

Annual Session 2021 – Two teens from the previous year and a few of the graduates showed up for a few hours, but none of that really good stuff happened: no new kids, no bonding, no Respectful Relationships Workshop, no AVP, no dance.

The snowball has stopped. It will take a lot of effort to get it rolling again. The committee is ready to work hard to make that happen, but the teens need to be together, to bump shoulders and tie-dye shirts, to learn about and serve the larger community; to learn patience and compassion; to listen deeply and speak their own truth.

Family Work Camp at Quaker Center drew about 13 teens of JYM age in addition to many of the graduating teens. The work was engaging and done cooperatively, the other activities were enjoyed by many. This group was self organized and a testament to their desire to meet in person. This was proof that in-person activities are needed to draw the teens in and build a mutually supportive community. But when the workcamp ended, we could not promise that Annual Session would offer the same sense of community and fun. We would like to make that promise now.

We have two teens continuing from last year's rolls and we have identified at least 25 teens throughout PacYM who might be interested if we have a venue to meet in person.

For the Annual Session 2022, we expect that the adults on the committee will have to do a lot more of the planning and implementing than in the past – in fact, most of it. Our goal is to have engaging, in-person activities, great snacks, deep conversations, a team of wonderful FRAPS. If you have any program or presentation that you want to share with the teens, you will have to make arrangements well in advance of the Annual Session: we will need every minute carefully planned to make up for the two years we lost. By the end of Annual Session, we expect to have added at least 12 new teens to our list of developing leaders, and made initial plans for several mid-year activities.

Our expectations for Annual Session 2023:

- a. We will need to arrange for larger spaces for our activities because there will be so many more teens participating than in 2022.
- b. Our snack budget will have to be increased and we may need more FRAPS.

- c. We will all – teens and adults – see clearly how our relationship with the rest of Pacific Yearly Meeting can enrich our spiritual lives and prompt us to seek higher purposes going forward.

Let us close with some quotes from a few JYM teens:

"It is extremely important for the new teens coming into JYM to have the physical connection in their spiritual communities."

"Being in physical proximity to Friends keeps the Light shining."

"We want the Light from Friends, not from our computers."

The committee members are Cedar Green and Suzanne Doss (co-clerks), Steve Leeds, Bertha Pena, Natasha Herrera, Santiago Meyer, and Faith Cantu with ExOfficio members Keenan Lorzato, the Youth Programs Coordinator, and Julie Harlow, liaison from Nominating Committee.