

**SAYF Worship Journal**  
**Nurturing/Steering Committee Retreat**  
**August 2015**  
**Swannanoa Valley Friends Meetinghouse**

*On the weekend of August 28-30, 2015, the Nurturing and Steering Committees of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.*

Dear SAYF,

I learned a lot about people this retreat. It was nice to spend time with all of you, especially younger Nurturers who I don't know very well. I'm proud of all of us for the tremendous amount of work we put in. It is strange to look back at where I was last Nurturing compared to where I am now. A lot has changed but this community continues to be loving and accepting.

Strangely enough, the most spiritual part of the retreat for me was the ride up. I just felt very at peace. Maybe I just get spiritually car sick.

Love,

Charlie ☺

*P.S. Jonah please type this epistle in 12pt "Chiller" font so it will look like dripping blood and it will seem more menacing and mysterious like I secretly am a monster.*

**I haven't enjoyed a retreat as much as this one in a while. I really needed this. I've gained so many sweet moments of people laughing and just enjoying each other's company. I hope I will be able to remember all of these fantastic moments so I can look back and remember what a great first nurturing retreat I had. I couldn't have asked for a better one.**

**Julia**

Hello SAYF,

I think this was a good first nurturing retreat for me. I think we got a lot of important stuff done, and I had a lot of fun this retreat, enough though the business meetings lasted a combined total of more than eight hours. Right now, I'm feeling pretty tired, both physically and spiritually, because we stayed up pretty late, and we had some intense Quaker process (that's a good and band name!) I feel happy that I can contribute in this way to the community, and I look forward to coming in the future. Thanks for all this, SAYF.

- Julian

Dear SAYF,

*For the first time in my SAYF experience, I find myself at a loss for words. Hopefully that bodes well for this year in respect to my position as clerk. This retreat was for so many reasons, incredible. I go home today with a renewed sense of hope and love, and know I'll be okay because it won't be long until I see you again. Anna sends her love, and I know we all send ours right back to her.*

*"We were together,*

*I forget the rest."*

*-Walt Whitman*

*endless love*

*and always gratitude,*

*Laura Kelley*

Dear SAYF,

This is it for me, the mad rush, the beginning of the end, the final count down. As much as I hate to say it, this is my last year as a Southern Appalachian Young Friend. It's been what some might call "a bumpy ride." I'll admit that, at times, I didn't want to come, but I'm so honored to have spent the time that I have with all of the beautiful people both in this room & out in the world.

Quaker process is a very interesting thing to me. Nowhere else in the world have I ever seen such a unanimous effort to discern the will of a group of individuals than I have this weekend. Grave mistakes were admitted to this weekend, and the nurturing committee saw a dark hour, but out of that dark hour I saw both nurturer and steerer exemplifying Quaker introspectiveness and thoughtfulness about the issue at hand in relationship to the testimonies of integrity and community that I believe to be one of the most divine things I have ever experienced. I have sat in Meetings older than James Hicks & questioned the presence of God, but no longer, because I saw him in that room.

Never have I been more proud to be a member of this nurturing committee, and more passionate about SAYF as a whole. Here's to a good season, I'll be seeing you all in September.

Cheers,  
Sven

"Find your ears before you search for words"

Dear SAYF,

**It's not often that I write epistles, but I'll try to keep this short as I can.**

**There have been times in SAYF when I felt my presence there was purely superficial, and that while the community welcomed me with open arms, I was a non-essential piece of it, failing to contribute very much.**

**Your words last night when deciding our co-clerks helped me to dispel the last of those thoughts, and I sincerely thank all of you. I may not show it very much, but this position means a lot to me.**

**Much love,  
Ethan**

**OPERATION "F\*\*K YOU, SHE'S A GIRL" IS THE PROUDEST I'VE EVER BEEN OF THIS COMMUNITY.**

- V

Dear SAYF,

Wow, long time no see. This is my first retreat since November. A lot has changed since then. I changed schools halfway between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of last year, turned 18, got a tattoo... The break from SAYF made me miss all of y'all. I go to a Christian school now and have all of these beliefs and ideas bore into my head, I've missed the freedom of this community.

This retreat was a good start, from the sleep deprivation, to getting left on a run, to the late night talks this made my weekend. Time to go back to my mountain of school work.

Until next time,

Katie

**I'm so proud of this community, but more specifically the nurturing committee. When most groups of teenagers encounter a problem, they dissolve into arguments & cold pricklys. When this group of teenagers encounters a problem, it morphs & evolves to meet it. Where many groups might falter and fail, this one survives, & not only that, but it thrives. Because of all of you, so many lost, frightened teens have come out of their shell, because with you all, they feel really safe (ha). While the FANs are fantastic and make SAYF possible, it is because of every, single, one, of you that SAYF is as special as it is. So if you ever are feeling like Asa & you just want to make a difference to someone, rest easy...  
... you have.**

All my love,

Levi Saderholm

And it begins. The beginning of the end. The first retreat of my last year. I didn't realize how much I needed SAYF until I got here on Friday night. For the past month I've been completely overwhelmed with school work and college applications, etc. I brought work with me to the retreat, but I'm glad I never got the chance to do it. I really needed this break.

Overall, I think the retreat was pretty successful. 9 hours of business meeting is taxing mentally and physically, but a lot of really good things came out of it. My love, trust and commitment to this community grew more than I ever thought possible. Thank you all for your understanding and acceptance. See ya in September!

Peace,

Asa