

Southern Appalachian Young Friends Epistle Berea KY March 19-21, 2010

If you close your eyes everything gets simple. Every time my mind starts wandering (which is often due to lack of sleep) I close my eyes and everything slows. Your temporary loss of what we call vision makes you notice the other feelings around you. How your breath comes naturally (unless you're the blond in that joke). Warm bodies surrounding you. It's simple.

March 21, 2010 – Berea SAYF retreat Theme = Simplicity

March 2009 was my first retreat. It was in Nashville. It felt so much like what I had heard about previous retreats and it felt like what SAYF should be. There were planned activities, a nice, lovely walk to the Parthenon and Bonnie. I could tell Bonnie was a true SAYFer not only from her friendliness and inclusiveness but also from her values. Although I wasn't at old Greer in April, I could still tell that it was a retreat of the same quality. That was Bonnie's last retreat. You must be wondering why I'm talking about Bonnie and not about my 1 year anniversary retreat. It's because I feel when she left, so did the spirituality and the true Quaker-ness of SAYF. SAYMA felt the same as Nashville, but from there, I could tell that the meaning and purpose of SAYF was descending. I really wish I started going at age 12 now. It seemed like SAYF was more than just seeing people you haven't seen in months, but there was something there. I can tell. Now it's disappearing, and I'd like the full experience of it so I know the true SAYF. All seven retreats I've been to have been some of the best weekends of my life. Different people and a different community than what I'm used to on a daily basis. I love it at SAYF. I'm glad I go and I'll miss the seniors in June and beyond, but SAYF needs to be more than it is. I want the SAYF I was too late to experience. I wanted to meet everybody That had graduated, besides Will and Brittany, since I already know them, but I feel the alumni had a true sense of who they are as Quakers. That was my reason for going to SAYF. To learn about Quakerism a little more, grow as a Quaker, and meet new people. SAYF now is like about meeting people and hanging out and there's not enough focus and desire for the Quaker part. I feel a lack of the spirituality in the group. I know others feel the same. I see why Kofi thought our opening circle was going too fast. SAYF shouldn't only be about what our favorite things are and inside jokes, but who we are as Quakers and our spirituality as well.

Now for the fun I've had:

"Oreo's and juice" better win the grammy!

I was the best super hero ever!

Shoutouts: Everybody is amazing! Lekey's hair is amazing. Puppets are amazing. We are amazing amazing amazing...

Oh yeah, we were celebrities and/or historical figures. Our cups said so. Johnny Weir!

That One Guy!

PS SAYF in Berea is amazing. Waiting for people until after 10:00 PM wasn't that amazing, but oh well.

PPS I channeled Taylor and predicted when Nashville was going to drive down the hill! It was amazing!

This is the first time writing one of these and I really wish I was cool enough to do haiku Wars, P.Ses, P.P.Ses, PPPSes, PPPPSes, write about things before I write them, say this is my last sentence but still keep writing, but no, I'm not that cool. So I'm just going to say how cool this retreat was. Like SAYF it's just so awesome and I never really had anything in my life that makes me happy other than SAYF and hope that it will always be in my life.

PS No p.ses

PPS just joking

PPPS Jacob & Chris you suck.

Xavier needs a hall pass. Zan needs to get his own bagel, Ian needs an electric guitar, Laney needs to make food for that guy that called and said it was crap.

Good retreat? Kinda. I didn't really wanna go at first, but I slowly started to like it. I officially don't like retreats at my own meetinghouse.

@ Delaney, So I have a hypothetical question.....* picks up phone * So I got this dead (insert expletive) in my car....

There were so many things about this retreat that I enjoyed. Rebelling against waking up with Zan, METAL window with Ian and Xavier and Pho, Chillin whit mah homies n (s-word), all that stuff.

I designate this retreat "The retreat of the lost shoes, because I could NEVE FIND MY SHOZ. Ahhh well.

Willamae will continue to be mean to Delaney, Xavier will learn Jumpstyle, Ian will get a Stratocaster and I"LL BE HAPPY

From - That kid named Lincoln

Simplicity. Definition given to me was "not taking more than you need". What a simple way to explain simplicity. Also a Quakerly way. When sitting at a worship, Quakers use as few words as needed to share messages. When eating food, Quakers take as little food as needed. It is a kind of discipline or practice that can be hard to follow all the time.

But maybe by trying this, I hope to find something....more meaning in the words that we share, and more value in the food that we eat. I feel grateful to share this weekend with you at Berea.

Love, Mari

SAYFers really need to spend more time outside. For the next retreat we should find a cave to stay in, only the cave is full of bats, so the people who want to stay in the cave have no choice but to come outside and throw Frisbees, blow bubbles light fires and perform skits with the rest of us. Love, Jordan

What a great weekend. Thank you to all the Berea planners. You created a retreat that was very relaxing and restorative. The skits were incredible – SAYFers are talented. The fire at the end of the day on Saturday was the perfect touch. It was beautiful out under the stars. Love, Robin

All hail the Sandwich King! Who needs Sub-Way when you can have me in your house for free?
All I need is a little place under your bed, and silly hat.

Chrissy just said "5 more mins. Yall" So I got to wrap this up.

Shoutouts!

Falcon – In spite of ourselves we'll end up sitting on a rainbow.

Xavier – Haa-booo!

Ian – This must be weird...reading my shout out about you.

Lenin – I'll learn a whole bunch of drinking songs for next time.

Chrissy – You owe me 900 hugs.

Terra – Enjoy the sandwich. Please stop biting me.

And to everyone else who I couldn't get to because we're out of time: "Was it as good for you as it was for me?"

- Forrest

- PS You don't think I would end this without a million P.S.'s first do you?

Oh wow, a Berea retreat. I thought it would never happen....

So planning this retreat was pretty fun, and I think we did alright. And although I am too tired to think clearly, I will do my best to write something funny and/or meaningful about it.

We Bereans (well, most of us) got here at like, 7 o'clock. We did a bunch of set up stuff, and then we waited. Finally people started showing up...but it took a while. Saturday was so ridiculously gorgeous. The skits were great, and the walk was great and the bubbles were great. Oh and the swings. I spent like all day on the swings.

And of course the bon fire was nice. And all the lovely stars. I should really learn more constellations.

Now for the part with inside jokes.

Emma: You and Emma took her shoes off so she could play sayf? :P

Madelyn: Are you Bunny flavor, or Kitty flavor? And have you ever pissed someone off....a roof?...into the ground.....

Miyoshi: You're my hair-sister! * high five *

Hannah: Had a few jars?.....)

Lekey: I'm so glad I have someone like you in my life. Don't ever change. ♥ PS
Tofu?

Terra: There's an app for that.

Yeah, soooo.... I'm excited for sleeping. * loses train of thought * I guess that's all.

Love, Taylor

P.S. Do you have a flag?

With simplicity

our hearts drown a thrashing world

in deeper silence.

Aaron

Never enough time to do/say/be/think/try/talk about everything. Always too much time between retreats. In some ways, this was the best retreat ever. In some ways, most of them are. I hope y'all enjoyed Berea retreat 2010 cause we really wanted you to.

With love, Lekey

PS Fun Intimidating Great Happy Times club. The first rule is don't talk about it. The second rule is don't talk about it. Love you guys.

Smores and star gazing with Stina, Santha and Zan was most meaningful to me. It bought you away from the world and we reflected on the future and sang Beatles songs. Hanging out with Alise was also a lot of fun. Sorry that you sound like a frog right now. Lol. I have one more retreat to go and although I'll be sad, I'm glad for all the new friends that I made.

Chantal

So as I think of what to write and remember when Stina, Chantal, Zan and I were gazing at the stars and how the world faded, I slowly remember the Graduation Tests. I have this week. I was supposed to study for the science portion for tomorrow, but oh well simple pleasures. Those two words bring to mind so many wonderful things. Like waking up in the morning to really great orange juice, staying up late with friends, sneaking around the house at three am for food, bubbles reading, pencils, being around people who care, smores, a nice bonfire, this list could go on forever for me.

Shoutouts!

Bethany – I can't wait for our week long honeymoon!

Dylan – You 14 not 15? I swear you 13 Forever like I'm 12 (Alise).

Zan – It won't change too much if we are still here.

Stina – why we so crazy?

Chantal – It is because you are black. I love you though.

Ugh I can't think of any more shout outs! My mind isn't functioning. Until Celo!

♥Jacob (S.T.)

Pee-es * whisper * Jacoooooobb!

This was probably the most painful retreat yet but it was also one of the best. I love this meetinghouse and the activities were awesome which I must say the weather helped with. All I have left to say is I love you all very much and will miss you all.

Zan

PS First rule of Fun Intimidating Great Happy Time club: Don't talk about Fun Intimidating Great Happy Time Club.

It is such a rich and wonderful silence we are sharing together this morning and I am so happy that it is with all of you.

Love, Therese

This sayf retreat was awesome, especially since Gressa was there. - Gressa

How did Quakers evolve/change from the standard of “plain clothing” to how we dress today?
How did the job of the neighborhood yard committee need to adapt to the needs of a community in New Orleans following Katrina?

Two of three questions that occurred to me during epistle writing and meeting for worship this morning.

-Adrienne from Asheville

I grow tired of hearing about how much I have changed about my “vener of cynicism” about my unhappiness. I like to tell myself that the only reason I am unhappy is because three years in a public high school has been so frustrating and being surrounded by people who assume you idiocy is soul-crushing.

It isn't true.

I came here this weekend and I realize that it is not just frustration with public school and the stupidity therein. But I do not know what it is. I do not know why I feel I have no choice but to be bitter and cruel to the people around me.

And Sayf. I have no idea why I am telling you this. You do not care for me, despite my best efforts, I cannot truly care for you. We do not know each other. I do not recognize you, or know your names, just as I am certain you do not truly require my presence.

I get open when I am tired. My apologies.

WB

I am glad for having had time this weekend for thinking, conversing, laughing. The nap and laugh in the sun with Annie were divine. I do not regret the slight sunburn. It was such a good idea, not only because I haven't seen you in ages, but also because I felt more rejuvenated when it was over. Blowing bubbles in the park was sparkly and colorful. Cuddles with Delaney were perfect even though she fell asleep after the bedazzled flying frog with a tail. I even enjoyed toasting bagels for breakfast this morning. Thank you.

XOXO, Ellen

It's wonderful to be at sayf and to see all these beautiful people, who I love. I really love sayf....but I've felt something missing lately. I feel like we've lost something spiritual. And it's become more of a big sleepover, which is fine.....if we still remember why we gather.

Dear Alise,

I love you.

♥ Chrissy

This retreat was awesome, if I do say so myself. We were so pumped up planning this. It was ridiculous. This retreat was ridiculous, too. I really enjoyed play committee, and think that activity went over really well. I piggy-backed Zan all the way up the big hill on the way to the college, had a great milkshake, and piggy backed Zan, like half the way back. The new Savior Xavier vids are going to be great. When he hits it big, get all of them. So cool. Speaking of hitting it big, Oreos and Juice is going to be our big break through. All of you should come to all of our concerts. Or maybe we'll be the next Jon Watts or something. Then in the evening, I went to go dance. For those of you who went, you know how awesome it was. For the rest, well, never mind. Phorest is waiting but not any more so I'll try to wrap this up.

Bethany: It's okay! There's nothing to be scared about.

Jordan: Haboken poken!

Lekey: Oreos and Juice! Girl, we'll be so great!

Willamae: You're creepy. And blind. But mainly creepy.

Annie: It's about time.

Tessa: You can be whatever you want to be. Don't let people hold you back from your dreams!

Terra: That Wink game last night was LAME!

Laney: And the princess saved the day on her magical sparkly blue unicorn...The End.

Lincoln: You're awesome. And your guitar is awesome. But you are more awesome.

Ellen: I don't think we hung out enough, because I can't think of any inside jokes. We should do it more.

I reeeeeeally hope this retreat was good, because it's the only one I'll be able to plan at my home meeting. But it's too late to look back now. Have fun on your trips home (as I will in the 10 minutes it takes me to walk home Ha!) and see y'all in April.

Ian

The simple things were the most meaningful at this retreat. Daffodils, bubbles, capes, songs, hugs, and oranges.

What would you do if you found a dead rabbit in your shoe?

I would make a stew

Hopefully it wouldn't taste like shoe or poo.

You're all very lovely people and I like you all. I also liked being outside so much. And I like Willamae.

I like you too? (Willamae).

Napping was rampant at this retreat. As it should be.

Ohhhhh if only our time together wasn't so brief. Because it is very brief and I am so tired.

Wait, I don't usually do shout outs but this is very important;

MADLINE: The SAYF community is missing a piece of light now that you have gone. So is my life. You are wonderful and beautiful and though our time together as SAYfers is over, I am not done with you! I am so excited for our possible road trip this summer. Wait I just realized that the beginning of this sounds like you are dead and this is your eulogy. Public Announcement: Madeline is in fact not dead. She is just not coming to any more retreats and will not be at her SAYF graduation which is terrible.

Okay, I love you ALL a lot. Until we meet again,

Delaney

At first I was nervous about this retreat because we (the Berea people) planned it, but I think it turned out great. I learned that blowing bubbles is one of my simple pleasures ☺ and I loved the bonfire. It was so relaxing. I got a lot of sleep for a SAYF retreat so I'm awake for epistles for once!

♥ Bethany Traynham

PS I wish Angelina could have come. :’D

I really liked it when Zan went in the thorn bushes to rescue a baseball bat and a ball...then he was all like, “ow” and went on. Also! PhoPho + Viagra jokes = HILARIOUS.

Oh! And wink...It got really crazy when they asked something about “whoever thinks oreos and juice will make it big”. Ian and Lekey are PURE genius!

♥ Reona D.

So at first I was skeptical about this weekend. Since us Berea folks were hosting it, I was so much more nervous than usual. But it turned out to be unnecessary concern because this weekend was funazing!!! Everything was amazing, from Opening Circle to Wink last night. I really hope that everyone else enjoyed it as much as I did. Now for the traditional shout-outs: Zan => I'm sorry that everyone else drank your Birthday Monster before you.

Miyoshi => You come back!!! Oh, and you should definitely start that folk dancing club at your school.

Nick => Thanks for “saving” everyone on the playground.

Lekey & Ian => “Oreos and Juice” is officially my favorite song! !

♥ Autumn

PS There is a slim chance I may not be here next retreat. I may have a college visit that weekend.

I don't really have much to say. So as always the retreat was amazing. It was full of laughter, hugs, amazing people and music. But now it comes to an end).

Shout Outs

Christina - I love you and I'm always here if you ever want to talk. Lekey & Ian - oreos and juice

Newbies - I'm happy y'all came, I hope y'all decide to come back!! (:

I will see you all in April.

I ♥ U!

Kaitlynn Tippin

This SAYF was awesome as always, the most meaningful part was the way the people were so friendly and nice. I am as always sad to have to leave but can't wait for the next sayf. I thought the meetinghouse was cool and that the snacks were great. Overall this was awesome weekend and I can't wait for April.

I ♥ SAYF

Naomi

Tim Traynham

Ha, I have to admit I was nervous to have SAYF in Berea. It turns out it was silly to be. Ever since we Bereans got here to set up it was great. I bought the hugest lollipop ever...Hannah ate most of it. It was nice when the first few cars arrived, especially Nashville. Now I know SAYF is against violence but reuniting with Zan met a beat down must ensue. I won of course because apparently I shanked him with my fist. Apparently Karma was heavy on me because I then got knocked down by several people (soon to be up on Youtube and Facebook video). The sleeping arrangements went well with me being surrounded by friends. I only got 1 hour and 15 minutes of sleep...blame Gressa!!! LOL Saturday started out well with the silent breakfast with this strange concept of silence I had a hard time following. The next was the skits. I thoroughly enjoyed rapping, you know I see possibilities! After lunch the walk up town was both entertaining and just gorgeous to be outside. Free time was fun even though Tessa kept falling asleep on us. :P Dinner was delicious and was so filling. I got to cutely share a potato with Xavier. The bonfire turned out well even though I only enjoyed it shortly. I enjoyed my smore and the extremely blackened smore Gressa made me. (Tasted good though). Again sleeping surrounded by friends is the best. I couldn't quite keep up with PhoPho's stories though something about Celtic women being trapped in the candles of Fire Gods.....or something like that. I also couldn't figure out Xavier's obsessions with babies and oil. I thoroughly enjoyed trying to conversate with Gressa and falling asleep mid-sentence. I will miss everyone of you and can't wait till next retreat. But.....Shoutouts:

Tim's Shoutouts!

Zan: What a Label B**** ha you my man love the fights and the jokes...Wangsta call me!!

Xavier: AHHH!!! Dot Dot Curve the best singing Booch was amazing but I call being SPANKY next time.

Tessa: Lame you kept falling asleep wanted to hang with ya more ha ha next time though.

Gressa: Ha Ha You're the best late night buddy ever. Sorry for our little mishap :P

Paola: Okay Sorry I didn't sleep beside you but really what am I, man #11 or some where down your list! :P

Delaney: You're a kitty MEE-OW. I will love ya forever.

Micala: You're so cute in your stylish outfits. Thanks for making Paola jealous! ☺

Lincoln: IPOD WHORE

Lenin: if you ever need a man to take care of you I call you first! :P

Eminemi: Yo, was crankin? Reppin yo lyrics fo sho. Thanks for the help.

Dearest Community,

This was a long trip but so worth it to be here in the Berea meetinghouse. This was a wonderful place to celebrate the first day of Spring.

The skits yesterday were creative and fun. The Meeting for Worship with attention to laughter was the best.

I appreciate how well everyone cooperated together and took care of each other. Thanks to those who did special little favors for me! This has been a joyful FAPing experience.

Love, Ceal

I'm pretty sure this was the best one yet. But maybe not. I was asleep for most of it. I felt like everybody got a little closer though. And that was nice. These retreats always seem so short, the nights are practically like the days since: No one...sleeps.

I'm worried and scared about my reaction to leaving every body. Which will hit the second we pull away.

I loved playing with bubbles & eating milkshakes in downtown Berea.

So fun. Will miss you lots.

♥ Tessa

A Short Story

By Taylor and Madelyn

Once upon a time there was a chair. It was a very mean chair. If anyone sat on it, it would bite them. So nobody wanted to sit in it. It was sold to a furniture store guy who didn't know it was a biting chair. So, one day the Guy was really tired and he decided to take a quick break from work. He sat in the chair...and it bit him. He jumped up and screamed. His friend was all, "What happened?" And so furniture guy (whose name was Curtains) was like "That chair BIT ME!" His friend said "Um dude. Chairs don't bite". "DUDE!" yelled Curtains, "It TOTALLY did bite me!"

His friend still didn't believe him. So Curtains said "You try sitting in the chair!" The friend, whose name was WINDOW walked over to the chair and was all, "Bring It!" The chair decided it would play a trick on Curtains, so it didn't bite WINDOW. So he got up and said "Hey it totally didn't bite me! What now?". "FIGHT" Screamed Curtains. But the biting chair was bored by this. So it called on its friend, the rolling chair, to trip the two fighting furniture guys. The rolling chair burst through the door and crashed into WINDOW. He fell on to the original chair. This time, it did bite him. So he was like "OW! You were right! It bites!" So they turned around and glared at the biting chair. It glared right back at them and growled. It was scary. So WINDOW jumped out the WINDOW. Luckily since it was a furniture store, there was a random bed underneath the WINDOW, because they were two stories up. This left Curtains all alone to defend himself. So he grabbed the nearest vase and stuffed it in the chairs mouth. He then proceeded to jump out the same WINDOW as WINDOW. Unfortunately for Curtains, when WINDOW had landed on the bed he had accidentally pushed it out from under the WINDOW. But there was a pile of beanbags under the bed! So Curtains was saved. WINDOW and Curtains congratulated each other on being saved. And that's when the refrigerator landed on them.

The End

