

FRIENDLY CONNECTIONS

State College Friends Meeting
December 2014
Newsletter



*State College Friends Meeting
611 East Prospect Ave.
State College, PA 16801
Phone (814) 237-7051*

A Note from the Editors

We send warm wishes for a happy holiday season this year.

You will notice that the Newsletter does not appear in the next few months; we have been receiving various messages about the future of the Newsletter and we'd like to gather everyone's opinions, input, ideas and suggestions so that we move forward in full consensus with the sense of the Meeting.

You are welcome to send your suggestions to the Newsletter email: SCFMNewsletter@gmail.com

Or you can drop a suggestion card into the "Newsletter Suggestion Box" that we will set up in the Meeting House

We truly want to make the Newsletter what YOU want it to be – how should it represent the Meeting? What should it publish? Who cares about it? So we appreciate your feedback.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and may the new year bring you peace, health, happiness and joy.

Deryn & Marianne

Announcements

Potluck & Refreshments: Peace & Social Action Committee will be responsible for December.

Interfaith Bell Ringing: December 19 and 20 at Meyer's Dairy.

Sign-up sheet is on the white board in the social room.

December 14th--Meeting for Worship will be at Foxdale in the auditorium at 11:15. Following Meeting, the First Day School will present their Christmas play.

Mid-week meeting: There is a small group meeting for worship and a simple potluck. For details about the mid-week meeting for worship please contact <<mailto:kerseybradley@yahoo.com>> kerseybradley@yahoo.com.

Other December dates:

December 7 Rehearsal for Christmas play

Dec.19-20 SCFM Interfaith Bell Ringing at Meyer's Dairy

Dec.21 SCFM Candlelight Meeting for Worship, 6 pm

Baltimore Yearly Meeting

The Environment

Are you concerned for responsible use of natural resources and their nurture for future generations? Do you try to avoid wasteful consumption and pollution? Do you seek to preserve the beauty and balance of God's world?

QUERIES

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Integrity and Simplicity

What does our Meeting understand to be the meaning and implication of our testimonies on simplicity and integrity?

How do our Meeting's actions demonstrate this understanding?

As a Meeting, what are we doing to encourage members to embody integrity and simplicity in their everyday lives?

How do I strive to maintain the integrity of my inner and outer lives – in my spiritual journey, my work, and my family responsibilities? How do I manage my commitments so that over-commitment, worry, and stress do not diminish my integrity?

Am I temperate in all things? Am I open to counsel and advice on overindulgence and addictive behavior, such as gambling or drink? Do I take seriously the hazards associated with addictive and mood-altering substances?

Am I careful to speak truth as I know it and am I open to truth spoken to me? Am I mindful that judicial oaths imply a double standard of truth?

Do I refrain from membership in organizations whose purposes and methods compromise our testimonies?

OUT OF THE COLD

First Day School is beginning a supply drive for *Out of the Cold Centre County*, which is an organization of churches that provides overnight stays for homeless individuals ages 18 and up, during the months of November-March. At this point in time, SCFM is not equipped to provide the overnight stays that other churches can, but we would like to contribute to this much needed service by collecting the supplies that they can use for the people who come to stay overnight. Over the past few years, many of the FDS classes have had an interest in helping the homeless and have engaged in different activities toward this end, and this is the way we would like to help this year.

Here is how you can help us to help *Out of the Cold*:
Read over the list of needed items below and bring in to Meeting by December 14. We will be delivering the supplies the following week. Kerry Weissmann will be placing a box in the foyer area this Sunday (11/23) where you can put your items.

Wish List for *Out of the Cold*:

Dental hygiene items: toothpaste tooth brush dental floss
Deodorant for men and women
Wash cloths
Disposable razors
Bus tokens
Socks for men and women
Winter hats and gloves

Many thanks from the First Day School Program!

In Friendship, Becky Misangyi and Sam Findley, Co-Clerks

THINKING ABOUT RACE

December 2014

“Misteaching History”

“... we’ve paid great attention to Nelson Mandela’s call for forgiveness and reconciliation between South Africa’s former white rulers and its exploited black majority. But we’ve paid less attention to the condition that Mandela insisted must underlie reconciliation -- truth. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission that Mandela established, and that Bishop Desmond Tutu chaired, was designed to contribute to cleansing wounds of the country’s racist history by exposing it to a disinfecting bright light.

“In [this] issue of the School Administrator, I write that we do a much worse job of facing up to our racial history in the United States, leading us to make less progress than necessary in remedying racial inequality. We have many celebrations of the civil rights movement and its heroes, but we do very little to explain to young people why that movement was so necessary. [On Dec. 9, 2013] the New York Times described how the Alabama Historical Association has placed many commemorative markers around Montgomery to commemorate civil rights heroes like Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks, but declined - - because of “the potential for controversy” -- to call attention to the city’s slave markets and their role in the spread of slavery before the Civil War. Throughout our nation, this fear of confronting the past makes it more difficult to address and remedy the ongoing existence of

urban ghettos, the persistence of the black-white achievement gap, and the continued under-representation of African Americans in higher education and better-paying jobs.”

Richard Rothstein, in the December 2013 issue of *School Administrator*, “Misteaching History on Racial Segregation - Ignoring purposeful discriminatory government policies of the past contributes to the ongoing achievement gap”

The BYM Working Group on Racism meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, usually at Bethesda Friends Meeting or Friends Meeting of Washington. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

Memorial Minute

Friends will be saddened to learn of the death of Peg Doms, a resident of Foxdale Village, who came to Meeting with her husband Keith in 1991 and was active for many years in Meeting. Peg died peacefully on November 3, 2014 in Foxdale Village after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease.

Peg and her husband were active members of Meeting for many years. Peg served on the Care and Concern and Oral History Committees and she was clerk of the telephone committee when computers were not so common as they are now. She also helped to distribute Friends newsletters to Foxdale Friends. She attended Meeting at Foxdale once she was no longer able to attend in the Meetinghouse. Please mark your calendars to attend her memorial service, which will be held Saturday, January 10 at 1:00 pm in the auditorium at Foxdale Village.

Laurie Jeffreys

for the Memorial Committee

Minutes for Meeting for Worship for Business State College Friends Meeting

State College Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship for Business
2 November 2014

Present: Polly Dunn, Kerry Weissman, Mary Way, Roger Way, Michael Grutzeck, Lynne Grutzeck, Ann Sidone, Dorothy Habecker, Connie Wheeler, Jim Adams, Mary Haight, Larry Greenleaf, Cathy Drapcho Klein, Gary Fosmire, Renee Crauder, Elizabeth Pennock, Marjorie Nelson, Lance Lehman, Deryn Verity, Yuri Plowden, Campbell Plowden, Loretta Jeffreys, Margy Frysinger, Benjamin McNitt, Kersey Bradley, Johanna Jackson, Darlene Clark, Sam Findley, Becky Misangyi, Martin Melville, Patty Webb, Claudia Wilson, Selden Smith, Heidi Loomis

Peace and Social Action General Discussion /Worship-Sharing

Laurie Jeffries noted that Penn State English class students are interviewing residents at Foxdale about their involvements in world affairs.

Campbell Plowden spoke about two items: 1- An inmate with whom he worked with AVP who had parole revoked and is anticipating four additional years in prison.

Campbell is working on that issue on the inmate's behalf;

2 - Campbell will be displaying and selling Amazon crafts on November 30 and December 13.

Kerry Weissman spoke about a group with whom she is working regarding services for the Centre LGBTQA Support Network. They have exciting events planned for the year. The annual Thanksgiving Dinner will be on November 17, at 6 pm and all are welcome. Last year about eighty people were present. Also, they decided to award a \$1000 annual scholarship to a graduating State College senior who is active in the LGBTQA community and working toward equality for all in the future. They are requesting contributions from various religious bodies and the ACLU. She anticipates future conversations with Meeting regarding our potential financial contribution to this scholarship. One goal is to uplift the students and others who share these concerns.

Becky Misangyi spoke about a heartening incident where Ella and some of her marching band friends were gathered, and speaking openly and confidently about sensitive issues regarding sexuality.

Margy Frysinger spoke about her work regarding the upcoming election. She has been doing a lot of door to door visitation. She reminded everyone to vote.

Heidi and Kerry led a 5th -8th grade book group at the Friends School which included a discussion about transitional housing, a subject which was personal and sensitive for one of the Friends School students.

Kersey Bradley spoke about an inmate at Centre County jail. He recently completed a sentence for third degree murder. Kersey noted that he might benefit from our awareness and possibly attendance at his upcoming trial.

Lynne Grutzeck mentioned some local opportunities for service:

1 - The Food Bank box at Meeting has been emptied and could be refilled. Please remember to purchase a few extra items and contribute them when possible.

2 - Bell-ringing for Interfaith Mission will be on December 19 and 20, or sign up on Interfaith's website.

3 - Hoss's will be hosting a fundraiser for Interfaith Mission on November 9 for which coupons are available. Lynne and Michael will be there at 6 pm. This is the biggest fundraising event for Interfaith Mission.

4 - Out of the Cold: They have a wish list of needs, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant. She will post the list in the social room.

Johanna Jackson has been thinking about gleaning foods from local farms starting in the Spring and then cooking and delivering it to people in need. See her if you have suggestions or ideas about this.

Finance Committee:

Kerry reported on a first draft proposal for next year, to be discussed and brought back for approval next month. She also mentioned that Meeting is desperately low on funds

for operational expenses. If we do not have additional contributions this year, we will need to begin to use other undesignated funds, such as the Meyers Fund. An autumn appeal letter will be sent out this or next week.

Contributions are needed. The hope, per Selden, would be to balance our budget by the end of the year without using undesignated funds. Renee Crauder cautioned against that if possible.

One of the reasons for this is due to a one-time rebate to the Friends School for about \$5000. Additionally, contributions have been less.

Renee asked about including a specific suggested contribution amount in letters sent. Kerry reported that does indeed occur in the Spring annual appeal letter. There was some discussion on this.

This year we are short about an average of \$600/person. Finance Committee understands that people are able to give at varying degrees. We have been losing some of our dear Foxdale Friends, which may be impacting our budget. Marjorie Nelson wondered if everyone is receiving a letter. Margy Frysinger noted that only previous contributors have received letters. This year the plan is to send letters to everyone in the directory as well as anyone who has ever contributed in the past.

Our PYM and BYM obligations have already been paid.

Michael Grutzeck noted that he expects a generous response to an appeals letter.

Laurie Jeffries wanted to be sure that the letter include the contribution deadline of December 30. It was also suggested that members be acknowledged for their contributions of work or labor.

Renee expressed appreciation to Kerry for her thorough and thoughtful regular reports to Meeting.

Claudia Wilson suggested naming the amount of the deficit in the appeal letters. She suggested that we also might consider noting the possible contribution amount of \$12.50/week as a possible alternative to the \$600/year needed. Sam Findley noted the benefit of a monthly automatic deduction and suggested that this option be delineated in an upcoming letter. There was some discussion of the donation slot and whether to make mention of that.

We are to review this budget this month to be discussed for approval next month. Kerry and Connie Wheeler and anyone else on Finance Committee welcome comments and suggestions. Approval was requested that Yuri Plowden and Paul Clark serve on Finance Committee. This was approved.

Building and Grounds:

Larry Greenleaf reported on two major issues:

1 - The committee sought input as to whether to proceed with solar energy panels. They decided to update the estimates to reflect similar goals. Larry presented proposals from three companies, whereby we could install

solar panels on the educational wing and produce nearly 100% of our energy usage.

The three companies are Envinity, Sun Directed and Volt Solar Systems and bids range in the \$40-60,000 range. Funds for this would come from a bequest. Cathy Kline spoke to the value of decreasing the pollution we as a Meeting create, considering the impact on people around the world. Martin Melville asked us to consider the highest socially responsible company, not necessarily the cheapest estimate.

Kerry anticipates lesser incomes for Meeting members in the future given the economy. Consequently, this would be a tremendous investment. She notes that the lowest bid is a Philadelphia bid which does installations nationwide. Perhaps the other bidders might be able to reduce their estimates so that we could use a more local company. We have about a \$43,000 bequest for this project. We could also choose to generate less income for about a \$30,000 project.

It was decided to trust Building and Grounds and Finance Committee to proceed with the best bid/estimate of their choice. Larry reminded us that this work will ultimately pay for itself.

2 - Water issues in the basement.

Over the past month, we have discovered that the garden level classroom area has been wet. A section of wall was removed to examine the wall behind it. It was wet and

deteriorating. There has been no official testing for mold. Two air exchangers run continuously for radon and other pollutants. They are working well. There are no obvious current health issues.

Building and Grounds Committee suggested hiring a company to investigate and repair if necessary, including plastering, containing contaminants, removing items, repair what needs to be repaired, possible mold mitigation, replacing a finished wall in the classroom. This might include digging up areas from the outside. This could be expensive.

We would use deferred maintenance money to do this. An estimate of \$10,000 could be low. The decision to use deferred maintenance funds can be made by the clerk of Building and Grounds along with the clerk of the Meeting. There are about \$30,000 in this fund currently.

It was approved that we move forward with this.

Cy offered gratitude to Building and Grounds Committee and all who have been working on this.

A minute of appreciation was expressed for Michael's work after the mold area in the basement was exposed.

Larry would like to quantify the amount of mold before and after the repair. This is likely a problem that has continued for a long time.

Building and Grounds will meet next on Monday at 6:30 pm. All are welcome.

Advancement and Outreach:

Polly has been trying to keep the outdoor bulletin board updated as to upcoming events. Other bulletin boards are in the social room and Peace and Social Concerns. Polly invited people to include names, phone numbers, emails on the bulletin board.

There were some concerns expressed about nurturing our community, such as in the welcoming of new members. It was suggested that abbreviations be avoided in written and spoken reports so that all can be better informed.

Coffee and refreshments that are available prior to meeting and afterwards are times that are offered for informal and important relationship building.

A portable photo printer might be purchased in order to keep our photo board updated.

Regarding the newsletter, there have been some concerns, especially regarding the editing of individual contributions. The question was asked as to whether the newsletter is serving its intended function, given other communication means which are available, such as the listserve, the website, the bulletin, etc. Is the newsletter still relevant and necessary? And, if not, what might be better? Cathy Klein noted her appreciation for the written queries. Support was expressed for the publication of the newsletter. Selden noted that it is a significant part of our online presence, our online face and that we need to be discriminating about what is included.

Laurie Jeffries suggested including a column in the newsletter which would profile members.

The importance of quality editing was noted, and gratitude was expressed for the diligent and skilled work of our current editors, Deryn Verity and Marianne Stevens. They have been editing the newsletter for two years. Deryn asked the question, "What would the Meeting like to be included in the monthly newsletter?"

Anne thanked the newsletter committee for their consistent contributions.

All are welcomed to participate in the committee.

Care and Concern:

Kerry asked that we begin to be clear about gender language. Katy Lumley-Sapanski might invite someone to come and educate us about the use of gender language.

Denise DeGeorge was planning to travel to Ireland to do volunteer work with Brethren Volunteer Service.

Let Care and Concerns Committee know if anyone is aware of folks who might benefit from contact from someone from this committee.

Appreciation was expressed to those who chose to attend the Climate Change March recently in New York City. Thank you notes are being written for participants.

Campbell spoke about youth membership. We will be starting to contact young people who are associate members and are now 21 and eligible to become members.

We welcome hearing from anyone who is in that window of age.

Friends Committee on National Legislation– Marjorie Nelson noted the November 20-23, FCNL Annual Meeting. She is distributing copies about choosing issues of importance to take to that Meeting.

James Bradley is our designated representative to FCNL. He might go to the annual meeting if the Meeting could fund his registration. He can apply to Finance Committee for this.

Kersey spoke about Midweek Meeting for Worship on Tuesdays from 5:00-5:30 currently. All are welcome.

Closed with silence.

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RETURN REQUESTED