

FRIENDLY CONNECTIONS

State College Friends Meeting
May 2015
Newsletter



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

A Note from the Editors

Thanks to the 22 or so people who wrote to us, completed our surveys, and or spoke to us personally to give feedback about the future of this Newsletter.

As the official voice of the Meeting, the Newsletter should represent the Meeting to the world; as a place where Quaker values and attitudes are explored and discussed, we feel that there is a place for ideas and thoughts that “prickle” us to some extent. We should not be immune to ideas that make us think but all pieces should strive to be respectful and fair.

This is an inherent tension that we don't claim to have overcome. Instead, we stopped the presses for a few months to find out what the members of Meeting want to see in the pages of this monthly publication.

You'll find a relatively concise summary of what we learned from you below. As always, we welcome further comment and contributions; please send your writings, announcements, and comments to SCFMNewsletter@gmail.com

Your editorial team, in transition,
Deryn Verity & Marianne Stevens

We are putting out a call for someone who would like to take over the Editorship duties of the monthly Newsletter. This could be two people! You'll work with us for the next few months and start working alone sometime in the fall or early winter. After nearly four years of editorship, we welcome a fresh voice!

Announcements



State College Friends Meeting
Arts Sharing Coffee House
at Foxdale Café
Saturday, May 30
7-9p.m.

Friends Meeting students and members will perform!
There is room on the schedule for you too! Please share a poem,
story, song, instrumental music, visual art, or dance.

Performers and artists:

Contact Karen Anderson at karen@turningflower.org or
Kerry Wiessmann at kgw11@scasd.org or call 814-238-1764

All are Welcome!!

Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Personal Way of Life

Do you live in accordance with your spiritual convictions? Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs and in service to society? Do you practice simplicity in speech, dress and manner of living, avoiding wasteful consumption? Are you watchful that your possessions do not rule you? Do you strive to be truthful at all times, avoiding judicial oaths?

QUERIES

Do you strive to develop your physical, emotional and mental capacities toward reaching your Divinely given potential? Do you cultivate healthful and moderate habits, avoiding the hazards of drugs, intoxicants, and over-indulgence generally? Do you try to direct such emotions as anger and fear in creative ways?

(See: Early Quaker Testimonies: The Practice of the Life of the Spirit Personal Life)

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Education

What is our Meeting's role in the life and support of Friends' education? If supporting or maintaining a Friends school, have we developed an appropriate relationship of Meeting and school? What is our role in the spiritual life of the school and its maintenance of Friends' principles?

What does our Meeting do to support education in the wider community?

What help do we provide for the children and adults in our Meeting to pursue the education they seek, whether academic, technical, or vocational? Do we make provision for children in our Meeting to attend a Friends school?

How do I show my concern for the improvement of public education in my community and in the world?

Am I aware of what Friends schools are doing and of their plans for the future? How do I show encouragement and support?

"The Hero's Fight: African-Americans in West Baltimore and the Shadow of the State," by Patricia Fernández-Kelly, was published Feb. 1, 2014, by Princeton University Press. See <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/10328.html#.VPHv1BBwbLw.gmail>.

If you click on the link, you may be struck by the unconscious bias in one sentence in the summary: "While ordinary Americans are treated as citizens and consumers, deprived and racially segregated populations are seen as objects of surveillance, containment, and punishment." It is easy to infer that, by "ordinary Americans" the writer means "white Americans," since "racially segregated populations" clearly means populations of color. We (whites) still tend to think of ourselves as the "ordinary" Americans. Even this blurb writer has fallen into that trap. One can only wonder what Fernández-Kelly thinks of that description of her book, if she has noticed it. One can also wonder how often any of us fall into that same trap.

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaisons at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting for publication in their newsletter or other means of dissemination. The WGR 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.

Results of the Newsletter survey

The easiest way to summarize the many comments that we got from the Meeting members who returned the Newsletter survey or wrote to us on email is this: Don't change too much!

Many of you like the "cheerful" and "positive" visuals, the "graphics" and "color online" which give it "pizazz" and a "very professional" look, and one person noted the "upbeat attitude" of the current design. We had comments noting the "sense of community the Newsletter represents" and most respondents agreed that the Newsletter "contributes something unique to our outreach" (quoting the survey question).

Only 2 people opted to "lay it down" though a couple of people did suggest that the free-standing Newsletter has seen its day and that the issues should be posted on the website only. Votes regarding a different schedule of publication came in loud and clear: once a month is best. Several people suggested that there should be a "link to the Newsletter" on the website in some form.

While many of you noted that the current design is "colorful and easy to read," there were several specific requests for changes and additions. For example, the Meeting should use a blog on the website to publish announcements, since a blog can be updated more readily than a monthly publication. More "news & activities of the Friends School" and reports on "personal activities related to...the larger community, e.g., Bell Ringing" along with "profiles of weighty Quakers in our Meeting." From the multiple choice lists, the most popular choice was "reflections on spiritual issues and/or Quaker history." As always, we welcome these types of contributions and will be very pleased to publish them! Unfortunately, our schedules do not really allow us to research, write and produce such articles on a regular basis.

Several respondents commented how much they liked to read and think about the queries before Meeting, so of course we will continue to publish them in every issue.

Brevity was a concern among some respondents. Several people noted that they did not want to read “sermons” or “long pieces” and questioned whether the Newsletter should be a forum for “personal musings and reflections.” Personal pieces should be “screened” before being published and one respondent suggested that if the Newsletter is to be continued at all, it should be “much more Quakerly”; in general, it was suggested that all pieces chosen for publication should “reflect the spirit of our Meeting.” At the same time, most of the surveys had checks in all the boxes (essays, reflections and announcements), suggesting that variety is welcome.

Interestingly, more than one person asked if an “abbreviated” version of the Newsletter, including a digest of the Minutes, was an option, but given the Newsletter’s function as publication of record, we believe that we do need to publish them in full. That said, it might be a good idea to have the minutes available for perusal earlier in the month for people who need to review them. As a matter of routine, it would be very helpful if the person who acts as Recording Clerk for the Meeting for Business would send a draft of the minutes to the Newsletter mailbox as their earliest convenience. That way, a free-standing version could be posted in the mailbox while the larger-print Newsletter version would come out when the whole issue is published.

So no enormous changes are in the works; we will continue using occasional images of seasonal themes, given Friends’ commitment to the stewardship of nature, and we will continue to welcome individual pieces that are relatively concise and that demonstrate thoughtful reflection on the issues being discussed. We thank you for your responses and your support and again invite interested individuals to consider taking up the Editorial reins at some point in the future.

Minutes of Meeting for Business, Fourth Month, 2013

State College Monthly Meeting Religious Society of Friends Meeting with Concern for Business Fourth month fourteen, 2013

State College Friends Meeting for Worship for Business

April 12, 2015

Attendees: Kerry Wiessmann, Connie Wheeler, Polly Dunn, Martin Melville, Campbell Plowden Gary Fosmire, Lynne Grutzeck, Mary Haight, Cy DeVries, Renee Crauder, Sam Finley, Kersey Bradley, Dorothy Habecker, Libby Pennock, Seldon Smith, Yuri Plowden, Michael Grutzeck, Larry Greenleaf, Cathy Drapcho Klein, Dan Hendey, Claudia Wilson

Reading of Queries

Nominating Committee – Gary Fosmire reporting

1. Committee descriptions have been published in the newsletter; will have additional copies available next First Day.
2. Have requested all committee clerks to review committee membership to identify those continuing on and those whose gifts might be better utilized elsewhere. Have had limited responses from clerks so will be contacting each clerk individually to gather this information.
3. Have identified all the individuals who serve the Meeting as “officers”, e.g. clerk, recording clerk, etc.
4. Will have a list of committee assignments available next First Day and ask individuals to review their assignments and inform any of the members of Nominating Committee if they would like another assignment or if they haven't been assigned to one or more committees. The committee

assignment sheets will be in the form of a work sheet so that individuals can enter preferences on it.

5. We now have a much improved directory of members and attenders and will be using that to contact those individuals to ascertain where they would like to serve the Meeting.

6. Our time line is to have a working draft to the Meeting by next business meeting and a final roster to the Meeting by business meeting in 6th month with new assignments to begin by 7/1/15.

Members of Nominating Committee:

Louise Sandmeyer and Gary Fosmire (co-clerks), Renee Crauder, Loretta Jeffreys, Johanna Jackson

Request that nominating also contact high schoolers to see if/how they would like to serve Meeting. In 2015-2016 there will be five high school students.

Care and Concern - Dorothy Habecker reporting

- Kersey Bradley applied for membership. He has had his clearness committee meeting, and one month of layover. Friends formally approve his membership. Those interested in a Welcoming Dinner please contact Dorothy H.
- Care and Concern has begun some discussion about how to handle requests for financial emergency aid: topics include, where will money come from, how to build this fund, and criteria for making the decision on who and how much. PYM has grants for such things, but timeliness of funding may be too slow for emergency situations.

Finance Committee Quarterly Report - Kerry Wiessmann

- Finance Committee is making changes in how we approach fundraising based on ideas from PYM. Changes include: photo insert in annual appeal; thank you notes to every contributor (we haven't been doing this for years) people can designate that they don't want TY; special TYs for large donations, first time donors, welcome back TYs; newsletter blurb; and fundraisers for organizations we support in our budget. The

first of these fundraisers will be an Arts Sharing and Talent Night at the Foxdale Café. Tentative date is late May.

- Meeting will be blessed to eventually receive a bequest from Steve Thierman.

Selden Smith (Clerk) received favorable response from Foxdale administration about possibility of holding an event in their auditorium as a *bona fide* fundraiser for Meeting. This is based on Foxdale's special relationship with SCFM.

Treasurer's Report – Connie Wheeler

- Currently we're at 13% of our budget – approximately \$7000. This is close to where we were last year.
- Checking account looks healthy but it's because solar panel money is still in there. That balance will go down with solar panels and mold remediation.
- Snow removal was high this year – cost reflects salt and gas – not for labor.
- Religious Education Black Moshannon costs will eventually come out of Fiduciary. Payroll is on track.

SCFS Report– Dan Hendey

- Enrollment season is in full swing – enrollment is looking good. Graduating class is large this year.
- Upcoming and Recent events – Fun Fair May 2nd, Mary Ziegler Retirement (after 35 years) Sat. May 30th pm, Right Sharing Dinner in conjunction with Quaker Life – about 35 people; word of mouth is still best recruitment device for school;
- Meeting for Worship will take place at Friends School next First Day April 19.

Building and Grounds Report – Larry Greenleaf

- Solar panels – in process of choosing company based on a questionnaire. Questionnaire will enable more consistency between bid information to better compare the two companies under consideration.
- Mold removal in basement – Work will take place in summer when school is not in session (May 29th is last day of Friends School, first week of June is end of FDS). Don't know how long this project will take to complete since we don't know what we'll find. Gil Morrison is current project manager. As a result of Friends' concern that that this project in particular should be completed as soon as possible, Michael Grutzeck volunteered to be contact to Gil Morrison to facilitate implementation of the remediation. Friends approve.
- April 25th is tentative day for grounds cleanup. Dorothy Habecker volunteered to contact High School Guidance Counselors to see if students can help with grounds clean up as part of their volunteer service hours. Friends approve. This process will be easier if we have HS volunteer forms available to be signed as soon as service is complete.

Peace and Social Action – Dorothy Habecker

- Ann Ward's Facebook – She organized first Iraqi-Kurdistan AVP workshop
- Denise DeGeorge – interview with Benjamin Prado, from AFSC. Link to a webinar about his work: <http://www.afsc.org/story/recap-moving-away-militarism>
- Eileen Flanagan – spoke at Pasquerilla Spiritual Center – Quaker author of 'Renewable'. Book is available for borrowing. Book focused on EQUAT (Earth Quaker Action Team). EQUAT has been focusing on PNC involvement with mountain top removal. PNC just decided to defund this. Dorothy has address of where to send letters of support to PNC. PNC was initially started by Quakers. Friends approve that Dorothy will write a letter on behalf of SCFM. Concern: is there discrimination? Is PNC discriminating against a specific company the way it might discriminate against a housing project, for example? PNC had to change their entire

corporate policy in order to divest – particularly relevant since PNC advertises itself as green.

- Centre LGBTQA Support Network – will be raising funds for scholarship. Friends approved sending scholarship info out on our listserve. To date, there are no specific guidelines for using SCFM listserve to disseminate information. If we already support a group, it's probably appropriate to send info out.

Memorial Minutes – written by Laurie Jeffreys

Howard Darnell

Bob Crauder

Steven Thierman

Friends accept these memorial minutes with much appreciation to Laurie Jeffreys.

Upcoming Events

- April 26th – Gathering in Blacksburg, VA – Blue Ridge Gathering, coordinated by FGC. See Martin Melville for more info.
- Worship at Foxdale, 11:15 am on May 10th.
- Regular First Day Meeting for Worship at Foxdale at 10:15am.

Visitors are much appreciated

Clerk's correspondence

Annual AFSC report available for perusal

Minutes from March Meeting are accepted

May 3rd next Meeting for Business

Meeting ended with silence

(Update to March minutes; did not appear last month in the Newsletter)
Finance Committee Report (March 1, 2015)

Finance committee met with two representatives of PYM yesterday (2-28) from 9-11:30 a.m.

They had a lot of good ideas for us. We will discuss these and you may see some of them in the coming months.

Solicitation letter for 2015 will be going out in the next week.

The last \$8,000 check from the Tuttle estate was received this month, so that there is a total of \$51,000 from the Tuttle estate. This was deposited into our checking account, and the solar panels are likely to be installed by the end of this summer.

The \$23,555 received from the Deborah Austin's estate has been deposited into our checking account. The finance committee's recommendation is to leave it there until the mold mitigation project and the solar panel projects are complete, so that we know where we stand financially.

The money will serve as a cushion as we see how quickly contributions come in this year.

For the first two months of this year, we have spent \$1400 more than we received in donations. Nonetheless,

As of yesterday, we are officially registered for on-line contributions to Meeting through the PYM website.

Submitted by Kerry Weissmann

SCFS FUN FAIR!

SAVE THE DATE: Put Saturday, May 2 on your calendar for the annual State College Friends School FUN FAIR (rain date: May 9), 10am to 3pm: Family fun featuring games, prizes, live entertainment, food, silent auction, and more. Tickets for games and food are available at the door. All proceeds benefit the Annual Fund. Fun and games include the Bounce House and popular games for young children, ages 3 to 12.



Contests such as limbo for older children, parents, and grandparents!

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RETURN REQUESTED