

FRIENDLY CONNECTIONS

State College Friends Meeting
November 2015
Newsletter



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

Announcements

Meeting for Worship with concern for Business will be held First Day (Sunday), November 1, at 9:00am. An informal potluck lunch will follow Meeting for Worship.

Remember: TIME CHANGE.....turn your clocks back one hour to Eastern Standard Time on Sunday, November 1!



Baltimore Yearly Meeting

The Social Order

Do you provide religious education, including study of the Bible and of Friends' history and practices, in your Meeting? Do you ensure that schools under the care of Friends exemplify Friends' principles?

Do you support and strive to improve the public schools?

QUERIES
QUERIES

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Ministry of Outreach

Outreach

Stewardship of Resources

Does our Meeting serve social and economic justice in its uses of property and money?

How does our Meeting engage its members in the support of the Meeting's work, its ministry, and the upkeep of its property?

How does our Meeting engage its members in the support of the quarterly and yearly meetings and other Quaker organizations?

To what extent does our Meeting rely on current members for financial support, and what role does endowment income serve?

Does the Meeting consider carefully the appropriate role of invested funds?

Am I clear that I am the steward, not the owner, of property in my care?

Do I simplify my needs, making choices that balance self-sufficiency (to avoid unnecessary dependence on others) and fair sharing of resources? Do I make choices as a consumer that support the equitable distribution of income?

Do my employment and other activities allow for use of time and energy in spiritual growth and in service to the Religious Society of Friends?

Do I contribute generously within my means to the funding of the work of Friends in my Meeting, in the yearly meeting, and in the wider world of Friends?

Fall Harvest Celebration on November 7

On Saturday, Nov. 7th, 5 pm, we are hosting the first State College Friends Meeting Fall Harvest Celebration, 88 Years of Friends in our Community. This will be our first fundraising dinner for our Meeting as well as a Celebration to honor our remarkable history and our place in the State College community.

We are inviting everyone we can who has participated in the life of State College Friends Meeting.

Don't miss it! Put it on your calendar! It will be a lot of fun.

If you want to volunteer to help with this joyous occasion, please contact:

Kerry Wiessmann, kgw11@scasd.org

By telephone: 814- 571-8909

Or

Dorothy Habecker, dorothyhab@gmail.com

By telephone: 814- 574-0606



SAVE THE DATE FOR THE SPICES of LIFE GALA

simplicity peace integrity community equality stewardship



Sunday, November 15th

4:00 - 7:00

Dear Friends,

The SPICES of Life Gala is right around the corner. It is one of State College Friends School's signature friend and fundraising events, celebrating the many gifts in our school and community.

Held at The Atherton Hotel, SPICES offers a rich array of aromas, tastes, talents and treasures – from relaxing music and delicious samplings of locally and lovingly produced foods and beverages, to silent and loud auction offerings including paintings, pottery, gift baskets, B&B stays, jewelry, collaborative student artwork, quilts, and personal services.

We hope you will be able to join us for a wonderful time, as we raise money to benefit students through financial scholarships. For a glimpse of past SPICES of Life events, visit our website: www.scfriends.org.

Suggested ticket donation: \$35.00 - \$70.00 per person. (Tax deductible)

New families are offered a complimentary pass for the evening.

Free childcare is available (with advance reservation) at the school during the event.



THINKING ABOUT RACE (November 2015) -

Between the World and Me, Ta-Nehisi Coates

Ta-Nehisi Coates' recent book, *Between the World and Me*, is written as a letter to his 15-year-old son.

In an allusion to the fact that "race" is a social construct, he refers to white people as those "who believe themselves to be white," and also refers to them as "Dreamers."

From page 107: "Part of me thinks that your very vulnerability brings you closer to the meaning of life, just as for others, the quest to believe oneself white divides them from it. You have been cast into a race in which the wind is always at your face and the hounds are always at your heels. And to varying degrees this is true of all life. The difference is that you do not have the privilege of living in ignorance of this essential fact."

The Baltimore-Area Working Group on Racism usually meets 7 - 9 pm on the 2nd Sunday of the month in the Stony Run dining room. We consider issues around racial justice, share personal experiences, and plan and host special events. All are welcome to attend, on a regular or on a drop-in basis.

Minutes

STATE COLLEGE FRIENDS MEETING MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS OCTOBER 4, 2015

Meeting began with silent worship and a reading of the Queries on Stewardship of the Environment from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting:

Is the Meeting concerned that human interaction with nature be responsible, guided by a reverence for life and a sense of the splendor of God's continuing creation?

Are the decisions of the Meeting and its committees relating to the uses of property, goods, services, and energy made with sensitivity toward the environmental impact of those choices?

How does our Meeting learn about environmental concerns and then act in the community on its concerns?

How am I helping to develop a social, economic, and political system which will nurture an environment which sustains and enriches life for all?

Am I aware of the place of water, air, and soil in my life? Do I consider with care the necessity of purchasing substances hazardous to the environment? Do I act as a faithful steward of the environment in the use and disposal of such hazardous substances?

Do I choose with care the use of technology and devices that truly simplify and add quality to my life without adding an undue burden to essential resources?

One Friend responded to the queries that it made her think about Elton Atwater, who never gave up talking to our Representative. She believes we need to do that, and it would be nice if a group of Quakers would meet with Representative Thompson and approach it as a Quaker would.

Another Friend talked about the joy of seeing one of our members, Lynne Heritage, on the front page of the newspaper. This Friend also recently talked with the UBBC pastor about raising money. The pastor said that people would have less money in the future to give. The pastor added, “We have to keep up with the meeting house.” This illustrated there are unknown possible effects of the new solar panels on our roof – UBBC is seriously considering how they can do it.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

A discussion on Religious Education was added.

The review of last month’s minutes was moved up on the agenda. The clerk reminded Friends that the minutes in the newsletter are for review and are not official until accepted.

A report from Friends School was added to the agenda.

Adult RE and its plans with Worship and Ministry were added.

REVIEW OF MINUTES OF 9/13/15

The following paragraph was inserted to replace the previous second paragraph:

Kerry Wiessmann began with a brief summary of the history of RE and the changing roles of the clerks and coordinators over the years. One ongoing concern has been the way information has been passed on about jobs and the roles in RE. In the recent past, RE committee members were not clear on the role of the coordinator. Becky Misangyi’s resignation as Clerk has led RE to do some self-examination. How can we grow the First Day School, and how can we serve our children? There are not enough teachers and not enough children. The legal requirements have changed and grown and that added another category of work and level of difficulty. How do we move forward? For now, RE is putting middle and high school

children together, and putting all elementary children together. We need a Coordinator for RE for outreach and help, but do we have the number of children to support the position?

The September minutes were approved with the correction.

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION FOR REBECCA MISANGYI

The Meeting approved the following minute:

State College Friends Meeting expresses appreciation to Rebecca Misangyi for her devotion and tireless effort as Clerk of Religious Education. She has done double the work, serving as RE Clerk and RE Coordinator for the past year and a half. We value her dedication to our children and her willingness to continue to work with the Meeting on our vision for our children's religious education.

MEMORIAL MINUTE

Laurie Jeffreys read the following minute:

Eunice Merriss was born on February 4, 1913 in Waterbury, CT, the oldest child of Eric Wilson Benedict and Edith Mason Benedict. Eunice was a graduate of the Bunker Hill School and the Classical High School in Waterbury, CT, and she received her degree in Library Science from Simmons College in Boston. For six years she worked as a junior high school librarian in Meriden, CT, before transferring to the Greenwich Public Library in Greenwich, CT. While working in Greenwich, she met and, on July 7, 1952, married William Ellery Merriss, a Master Teacher in English and Latin at Greenwich Country Day School. William was a widower, so Eunice took on being a wife and a mother to William's young children, Richard and Dilys, while she continued working. Soon after their wedding, William suggested they visit the Quaker Meeting in Stamford, CT. Their visit turned into conviction, and they soon became members of Stamford Monthly Meeting. Once the children were grown and out of college, she and William were able to travel. They visited England,

Scotland, France, Portugal, and Costa Rica, often for month-long stays. When they retired they moved to a home they had purchased on Cape Cod. After ten years there, they decided to move to Foxdale Village, a Quaker CCRC in State College, PA. Unfortunately, William became ill and passed in 1990, before they were able to make the move. In 1992, Eunice moved into Foxdale Village and transferred her membership from the Stamford Monthly Meeting to State College Monthly Meeting. She attended Meeting regularly for a while, but the focus of her volunteering was at Foxdale, as a member of the Rhodes Readers group, and as Correspondence Secretary for the Foxdale Residents' Association. Eunice was always pleasant, but never drew attention to herself. As her biographer, Myles Bane wrote, "It was once said that, 'To be truly great, one must stand with people, not above them.' Eunice fits this description." Eunice Benedict Merriss passed peacefully at the age of 102 on Sunday, 6/26/15 at Foxdale Village, in State College, PA, her home for the last 23 years. Eunice was predeceased by her brother, Douglas, and is survived by son Richard Merriss and daughter Dilys Staaterman, seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

The Memorial Minute was approved.

Laurie went on to inform the Meeting that Eunice had requested a Quaker memorial service at Foxdale. This was held on September 25th at Foxdale Village.

One Friend responded that this was a wonderful memorial minute and she appreciates it. She wishes we could know these things about people before they die. Laurie responded that she had interviewed one Friend but when he found out she wanted to publish it, he refused. Quakers tend to not want to call attention to themselves.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Buildings and Grounds

Larry Greenleaf reported.

He met with Gil Morrison, the manager of the garden level project. Bids on the work have been received. The bids for the outside drainage ranged from \$33,000 to \$18,000. The bids on the inside mold work ranged from \$30,000 to \$20,000. They are reviewing the bids.

The solar panel project is a bit behind schedule. The panels are on the roof but not yet connected to the grid. Some paperwork is being completed so the connection can be made. The monitor that will be for the community to see is a special situation and the company needs to design it. There will also be a sign outside so the public can see what we are doing. In response to a question, Larry stated that the monitor would be in the main building.

Michael Grutzeck announced that Philadelphia Yearly Meeting has a fund for renovations that may help us with the costs of the garden level work. The paperwork would need to be sent by February 1st. We do have \$35,000 designated for the work from the Deferred Maintenance Fund.

Finance Committee

Kerry Wiessmann reported. The Finance Committee did not meet this month. With the expected increase in cost of the garden level work, she noted that the Meeting could use undesignated funds that are at Friends Fiduciary. The Committee asked for agreement to use those funds.

The Meeting approved use of undesignated funds for the garden level project.

Kerry also reported on the upcoming fundraiser. Foxdale residents received paper invitations; the rest of the community received their invitations by email. Over 100 invitations have been sent. Since some people are coming from out of town, hospitality will be needed for that weekend. She asked for a volunteer to handle the hospitality requests. Claudia Wilson volunteered.

The Finance Committee requests that other committee clerks attend their next meeting on October 27th at 7:00pm. They are working on the budget and need to know what each committee needs for next year.

Advancement and Outreach

Polly Dunn reported. They have a small committee but are looking for ways to reach out. The fundraising dinner in November will be a great way for outreach and gathering of the community.

Care and Concern

Polly Dunn reported. The Committee met and discussed clerking vs. convening. Polly will be the convener. One Friend asked if we could send an article on the solar panels to PYM and BYM. Deryn Verity is working on an article for the Newsletter. It was suggested that it be sent to the yearly meetings along with the local papers' articles.

Peace and Social Action

The clerk asked members of the community to report on individual endeavors. Sue Knox, as a member of the PA Prison Society, has attended a program at the county prison each month. An example was a yoga class presented by Dean and Rebecca Learner. Sue met with seven inmates in September who had issues they wanted to discuss. She and a partner met with each inmate privately one-on-one. Many are frustrated by delays, which the prison society cannot change. Sue noted there are some serious offenders at the county prison; some are awaiting transfer to the state prison. One highlight

was that 14 inmates were able to have a garden this summer. The prisoners are generally not allowed to be outside.

Marjorie Nelson reported that she had her first visit to Rockview Prison with another woman. They visited with two inmates. One was not part of the general prison population due to his mental condition. He needs a phone card to talk with his mother.

Ann Ward has sent some updates to Dorothy Habecker. One was a picture of Ann in a flak jacket because she was going into an area where there is fighting. She asks us to hold her in the light. Someone asked to see the picture. Darlene Clark will print it out and post it.

One Friend asked that we reach out in appreciation to Lynne Heritage about her work that led to her picture being in the paper.

Kerry Wiessman reported that the Centre LGBTQA Support Network showed a movie on Matt Shepard at the State Theatre. There was a good turnout, but fewer students than expected. Kerry realized that many were too young to know about Matt Shepard and his story needs to be told. There are two support groups. One is for families of LGBT people and the other is for people coming out later in life. Kerry gave kudos to Kersey Bradley for his attendance at the Friday night events. On Monday, November 16th at 6:00pm, the Thanksgiving dinner for LGBTQA will be held at the Meeting House. Kerry said this is a wonderful event and there is always someone who says this is his or her only Thanksgiving dinner. She encourages Meeting members and attenders to join the dinner.

Martin Melville reported that he is deep into his current class, and it has led him deeper into ministry. He is writing and doing a series of podcasts on rural culture. One is on Latin American liberation and Pennsylvania loggers. The hardest part has been learning the technology to do the podcasts.

Kathy Drapcho Kline reported that the Cropwalk is to be held on October 18th. It supports many organizations.

Religious Education Discussion

Jennifer Nicholas reported from her notes on the called Meeting to discuss Religious Education that was held on September 25th.

The attendance was sporadic (in and out) but included parents, teachers, and caring members of the Meeting at large.

Positive Reports:

- Good report on monthly service activity connecting our youth with Foxdale
- Collective sense that we are blessed in the presence of a dedicated community

Present Wishes and Concerns:

- This is not a time to assume extra events, roles, and responsibilities. The teachers present at the meeting expressed a strong need to focus their energy on what is happening in their classes.
- There is a shared sense that the Worship and Ministry Committee (or others) could possibly manage Adult RE, Right Sharing, and maybe the candlelight service. Ann Sidone, clerk of Worship and Ministry, will discuss these matters with Worship and Ministry. Someone also noted that the Friends School does Right Sharing and a connection could be made there.
- Expressed wish for children in RE to experience regular, reflective contact with nice, caring peers and be confronted with serious thoughts in a calm environment (spoken in the context of not assuming extra events/responsibilities that interfere with this nourishing regularity).

- Ideas for RE curriculum include: supporting relationships, Quaker history, service, Quaker values, thinking about the world differently
- There is a need for someone to address the Quaker perspective on relationship issues relevant to teens.
 - o Martin Melville says PYM has a parenting section on their website with lots of good resources.
 - Keep open to opportunities to serve as they arise (e.g., witness marches) and pay attention, but be selective; no current energy/resources for more, such as basement to be transformed into a homeless shelter; this idea was mentioned as a possible future service project involving low- and high-skilled labor.
 - Good to have the opportunity to see each other outside of Meeting.
 - Expressed preference for no "kid-token activities" (e.g., expecting them to perform for adults)
 - Need to avoid burning out good people by asking too much of them.
 - Be practical. Avoid taking on extra events and activities unless people feel led to do so and there is buy-in as needed from parents, teachers, and/or kids.
 - We should not have high expectations of regularity (spoken in the context of discussion about extra events)
 - Staffing:
 - o Selden Smith offered to serve as a guest teacher for Quaker History 101, adapted to different age groups.
 - o Marjorie Nelson offered to serve as a guest teacher, willing to speak from experience as AFSC in Vietnam once or twice a year. Marjorie also mentioned exposing middle- and older-age children to information about Quaker Voluntary Service, FCNL, Habitat for Humanity, etc.
 - o People should be approached individually (preferred) and collectively regarding their interest in contributing to RE.
 - o Karen Anderson requested help from anyone interested in teaching the Bible.

Shaver's Creek Clean-up (Spring event):

- Johanna Jackson may help coordinate this.
- Possible interest in participation from the Meeting at large, which could include service followed by a space for Meeting (Johanna Jackson suggested maybe the indoor upper classroom)
- Dorothy Habecker spoke of the need for some people to participate at the regular location for consistency.

Black Mo Event:

- Several indicated their warm appreciation for this event.
- Mixed feelings arose. Noted positives- including bonding of children, but some expressed concern this is more popular with parents than children.
- Sam Findley will look into making the reservations but needs to be reimbursed by Meeting.
- Parents may be asked to contribute financially to reservations this year.

Harvest Meal:

- Collective sense that children need to be asked first to gain buy-in prior to a commitment made about if/what role they play. (This point was made more than once, in the context of other event planning, too.)

Christmas Season Activities:

- Christmas pageant:
 - o Expectations and scheduling make this event problematic for teachers, parents, and children.
 - o Shared sense that parents and children do not feel led to participate.
 - o Recommendation to not do it this year although sincere gratitude for the energy and initiative that has been undertaken in the past and present related to this event.
- Candlelight service:

- o Considered beloved and a time of deep reflection for kids; spiritual preparation valid
- o Some expressed concern that two events in a day is a lot for families, but Meeting or evening service could be either/or.
- o Campbell and Yuri Plowden may have volunteered to oversee this service.
 - Query raised: Should Meeting for Worship and caroling be combined the day of December Meeting at Foxdale?

Intergenerational Breakfast:

- Karen Anderson volunteered to get a sense of whether there would be family buy-in for this, possibly an event in January

Opportunities for Community Building:

- LGBTQ Friday Night Live at Webster's (a monthly event)
- potlucks at each other's houses
- seeing a movie that is consistent with Quaker testimonies

RE Leadership: Queries for Meeting at large:

- What kind of vibrant youth space does the Meeting wish for?
- Which committee is the best 'home' for adult religious education?
- Are there other RE functions (in addition to ones addressed here) that other committees could take on?
 - Our sense is that a paid leader/director of RE is wise. What would be this person's job description and list of responsibilities? (One Friend may be interested but, like any candidate, would need to first see a clear, well-documented job description and list of responsibilities.)
 - If the Meeting chose to move forward with determining an RE leadership position, who would participate in this? Would the Personnel Committee play a role?

Resources at large:

- Reach out to compatible churches, services, and organizations:

- o FISH (Fellowship in Senior High) at State College Presbyterian
- o RE and related activities at State College Unitarian Fellowship

In summary, Jennifer said, there was a collective sense of feeling blessed after a substantive discussion. This is not a time, however, for extra events – we need to focus on the RE classes. We also need to be thoughtful about any decisions. We need to listen to our children, our teachers, our parents, and the Meeting at large.

Another Friend suggested we should change from an attitude of scarcity because what we have is wonderful.

Kerry Wiessmann said that she would like to see an RE coordinator but there is not a Personnel Committee to supervise the person. Anyone hired would have the same situation as other hires, with no one to talk to about any problems.

On a completely separate subject, Kerry Wiessmann said that she and Beth Resko would direct the Christmas Pageant this year. They want it to be intergenerational, but will make it all adults since it takes up all of December for RE classes. She asked people to come forward and volunteer to be in the pageant, though she also has some people in mind to ask to be in the play.

Ann Sidone announced that Worship and Ministry would take on the candlelight service.

The discussion concluded with Kerry Wiessmann noting that RE has, with some intentionality, decided they will join the programs for the middle school and high school children. They would continue with the elementary program.

Friends School

Dan Hendey reported the year is going smoothly. He listed several items: the Middle School recently put on a successful field day, there are still budget concerns, and two events are coming up: Meeting for Worship on 10/25/15 and the Spices Gala on 11/15/15. The Board is also updating the school's bylaws.

Ann Sidone reported for the Friends School Board of Trustees. When Meeting is held at the school on the 25th there will be a Quaker Q&A at 10:30 for school parents. After Meeting there will be school tours for people from the Meeting.

Ann also reported on the school bylaws. The changes will need approval from the Meeting. The first change that is being considered is changing the wording for Quaker Trustees from "Members of the Religious Society of Friends" to "members of the Religious Society of Friends or regular attenders as certified by the Nominating Committee of the Meeting." This is not the final wording. The school board will continue working on it.

One Friend asked about the size of the school's Board. Ann said it is "no fewer than 10, no more than 13." So about 6 Friends are needed. Someone suggested that rather than regular attenders it could say active attenders. Someone else noted that the Quaker board members nominations do need to go through the Meeting's Nominating Committee since the school is under the care of the Meeting. Gary Fosmire, clerk of Nominating Committee, said he would prefer the bylaws state "Nominating Committee of State College Friends Meeting" rather than it including other Meetings. Previously, Quaker trustees had been nominated through the Trustee Committee of the School's board and not through the Nominating Committee of the Meeting. There needs to be direct dialogue between Friends School and the Nominating Committee. Ann Sidone noted that the Bylaws said there should be consultation with Nominating Committee and

the Friends School Trustee Committee but another Friend noted that it was done that way in the past but it's been a while. The process does need to be reactivated.

Dan Hendey went on to report that one big section of the school's strategic plan is to be more deliberate about the board and training board members. In going through the bylaws they saw many things that need to be changed. The process has not always been what it should be.

Another Friend added that increasing contact between Friends School and the Meeting is a focus. The Intention is to make it an ongoing interaction.

Adult Religious Education

Dorothy Habecker reported. Since we don't currently have an adult RE program, she is calling to reactivate it. She met with Worship and Ministry about ideas and she is interested in making things happen for the spiritual growth of adults in the Meeting.

Listening Projects is where Dorothy would like to start. This is an opportunity for trained individuals to listen deeply to other individuals. Dorothy would like to see us do that on the topic of Adult RE. "What are you desiring as an adult Quaker?" Dorothy is offering training in Listening for about 10 people. It is a two-hour training and she is excited to get started. The listening is done one-on-one.

Another Friend brought up that the Meeting had done something similar in the past but in small groups. Dorothy expressed openness to having it be one-on-one or small groups, depending on which led to comfort for people. Right now she wanted to see if there was interest in being a listening volunteer and having the training. Brosi

Bradley, Martin Melville, and Lynne Grutzeck volunteered. If anyone else is interested please let Dorothy Habecker know. This is not a committee; it is more a one-time event that will take a short amount of time.

Yearly and Quarterly Meeting Activities and Programs

Selden Smith reported that today is “World Quaker Day” and we are encouraged to send greetings to other Quakers around the world.

Correspondence

Selden Smith reported there is an Arch Street Meeting House benefit on 10/23/15 to raise money for the building.

The next Business Meeting for Worship will be held on November 1, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Selden Smith, Clerk
Margy Frysinger, Recording Clerk

Present:

Larry Greenleaf
Kerry Wiessmann
Claudia Wilson
Cathy Drapcho Klein
Yuri Plowden
Polly Dunn
Lynne Grutzeck
Michael Grutzeck

Jo Bewley
Dan Hendey
Jennifer Nicholas
Darlene Clark
Brosi Bradley
Martin Melville
Dorothy Habecker
Laurie Jeffreys
Susan Knox
Elizabeth Pennock
Ann Sidone
Marjorie Nelson
Gary Fosmire
Renee Crauder



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