

**FRIENDLY
CONNECTIONS**

State College Friends Meeting

**July & August 2017
Newsletter**



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

Call for Articles, Photo, Thoughts - If your gift includes words, images, or just honest thoughts, please send them to the Newsletter email address: SCFMNewsletter@gmail.com

Announcements

► **Next Business Meeting for Worship: August 13 at 9:00 a.m.**

► Rise Up Singing, 3rd Sunday of every month, July 16, 4-6 pm. We're having a lot of fun singing freedom songs, nostalgic songs, silly songs, and any other kind of song that is found in the Rise Up Singing songbook. Join us! Bring voices & instruments.

► There is a new sign-up sheet for summer potluck and refreshment volunteers. We hope each member and/or attender will help with at least 1 potluck and 3 refreshment dates through the year. Visit:

<<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0B44ACA92FA57-state1>> www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0B44ACA92FA57-state1

► Friends Meeting Gardening Committee volunteer opportunity.

Friends Meeting gardening committee is meeting every Wednesday evening from 6 to 8 pm from now until October to work on the meeting gardens. We welcome everyone to stop in at any time for a few minutes or for 2 hours to help with the beautification of our grounds. Our meeting is fortunate to have so much space for natural beauty. Helping to care for this space is a fun way to be outdoors, socialize with others and contribute to our meeting. Come and join us!

► Right Sharing of World Resources is celebrating its 50th year. Read about their celebration and current projects in their newsletter, available online at:

<<https://www.rswr.org/education/newsletters/>>
<https://www.rswr.org/education/newsletters/>

► Quaker Religious Education Collaborative Gathering, Aug. 18-20, Quaker Hill (Richmond, Indiana). There will be a panel discussion on What is the Role of the Bible in Quaker Religious Education?, workshops, interest groups, and 2 nights of singing and music with Annie Patterson. For more information, including registration, go to

<<https://t.e2ma.net/click/g7he9e/0e5w7t/ssq4fdc>>
www.quakers4re.org.

► Gathering of Friends of African Descent, Aug. 25-27, Chestnut Hill Meeting House, Philadelphia. The theme this year is “The Spirit of the Lord is Upon Us” taken from Isaiah 61.1 and Luke 4:18. Come testify to the movement of the Spirit in our midst and the work of the Spirit in our communities. For hospitality and information: <<http://www.fofad.org/2017-gathering.html>>
<http://www.fofad.org/2017-gathering.html>

Calendar

Sept. 8-10 USQM Fall Family Gathering at Camp Crystal Lake

Sept.23 Quaker College Fair, Friends Center, Philadelphia

Black and Proud. Even if Strangers Can't Tell, by Rebecca Carroll, **New York Times**, April 3, 2017

“Being black in America has historically been determined by whether or not you look black to nonblack people. This keeps racism operational. Brown and black skin in this country can invite a broad and freewheeling range of bad behavior – from job discrimination to a child being shot dead in the street. For my son, though, being black in America is about more than his skin color. It’s about power, confidence, culture and belonging.

“When my son first started to black identify at about 5 or 6 years old, an acquaintance of ours asked my husband, in my presence, if he felt like we were ‘depriving’ our son of his ‘white side.’ My husband, a sociology professor and the author of two books on the failure of housing and school desegregation in the United States, said: ‘If my parents had instilled any Italian culture in me, I might want to share that with my son. But if you’re talking about general whiteness, there’s nothing there to pass down.’

“This acquaintance, it seemed, was suggesting that by encouraging our son to embrace his blackness, we were depriving him of something bigger and greater than the already big and great benefit of white privilege. That my son sees more power in centering his blackness over exploiting whatever white privilege he may ultimately be afforded is a thing of glory.”

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Locations vary to allow access to more Friends. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING (BYM)

JULY

Caring for Others

Do you respect that of God in every person? Do you search yourself for and strive to eliminate prejudices such as those related to race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation and economic condition? In what ways do you accept and appreciate differences among your friends and associates? Do you avoid exploiting or manipulating others to accomplish ends, however worthy?

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AUGUST

Outreach

Do you, as the way opens, share Friends' principles with non-Friends? Do you witness to your Quaker faith by letting your life speak? Do you make non-Friends welcome in your meetings for worship? Do you find ways to encourage their continued attendance?

PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING

JULY

Social Responsibility and Witness

How does our Meeting work:

- to overcome social, legal, economic, and political injustices, locally and in the wider world?
- for the funding of community services that does not rely on gaming income?

Does our Meeting serve the community through action on concerns for civic improvement? What actions are we taking to assure everyone equal access to education, health care, legal services, housing, and employment as well as equal opportunities in business and in the professions?

When a member has lifted up a concern, how does our Meeting respond?

Does our Meeting encourage those seeking clearness for their convictions of conscience to hold up such convictions with prayerful openness to the Light?

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Am I mindful of how my lifestyle and my investments can contribute to the improvement of the human condition, or to the exploitation of others?

Am I open to seeking clearness on matters of conscience and to assisting others in doing so? How do I respond and support one who acts out of a clear leading when I am under the weight of another?

What am I doing to work for the betterment of my community to assure the maintenance of effective public services which do not rely on funding from gaming?

Do I fulfill my civic responsibilities when they do not conflict with divine leadings?

AUGUST *Peace*

How does our Meeting act to advance peace, to oppose violence, and to support the constructive use of authority in our community, our nation, and the world?

What are we doing as a Meeting:

- to free our nation from militarization, so evident in our society and in its economy?
- to understand the causes of war and violence and to work for the development of the attitudes and institutions of peace?
- to recognize and correct the causes of violence within our communities, and to work toward overcoming separations and restoring wholeness?
- to increase the understanding and use of nonviolent approaches for the resolution of conflicts?

Do I live in the power of that Life and Spirit that takes away the occasion of all wars?

How do I maintain Friends' testimony that military training and all participation in war and its preparation are inconsistent with the teaching and the spirit of Christ?

Do I work for the establishment of alternative ways of settling disputes? Am I aware that to build a world community requires that we all face our differences honestly, openly, and in trust?

Do I treat conflict as an opportunity for growth, and address it with careful attention? Do I seek to recognize and respect the Divine in those with whom I have a basic disagreement? Do I look for ways to reaffirm in action and attitude my love for the one with whom I am in conflict?

STATE COLLEGE FRIENDS MEETING
MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS
Sixth Month 11th, 2017

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

How does our Meeting help to create and maintain a society whose institutions recognize and do away with the inequities rooted in patterns of prejudice and economic convenience?

Is our Meeting open to all regardless of race, ability, sexual orientation, or class?

What steps are we taking as a Meeting to assure that our Meeting and the committees and institutions under our care reflect our respect for all and are free from practices rooted in prejudice?

Do I examine myself for aspects of prejudice that may be buried, including beliefs that seem to justify biases based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, class, and feelings of inferiority or superiority?

What am I doing to help overcome the contemporary effects of past and present oppression?

Am I teaching my children, and do I show through my way of living, that love of God includes affirming the equality of people, treating others with dignity and respect, and seeking to recognize and address that of God within every person?

One Friend responded with, "This is a mouthful." She went on to say, "most of us try to live as open to everyone but with community it's harder to get together since we are so busy. It's slogging to change prejudices and we need all the help we can get, at least I do." Another Friend said she is struggling how to share her experiences with the Vietnam War with WPSU on the war's 50th anniversary. The problem is the consent form that seems to give all info to WPSU. She will need to talk with someone there.

The issue with social class is hard for another Friend. He finds they often seem to have the attitude that they have been victimized. While it may be true they have suffered serious injustices, sometimes it seems they expect it to continue. He felt a concern that sometimes expectations lead to that result.

Another Friend said it brought to mind an article in the local paper about three Penn State administrators where the judge called them "good people who made a bad decision, unlike others who are criminals." Her letter to the editor in response to that statement was titled "That of God in Everyone." She was so pleased that was how the paper titled it.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Two minutes, an announcement of the RE position, a Finance Committee Report, and a Friends school report were added to the Agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Peace and Social Action

Selden Smith read a report from Dorothy Habecker on “Out of the Cold.”

“At the May meeting for worship for business, I reported on the information I had gathered for Friends Meeting on the Out of the Cold project. MFWFB requested that I poll the meeting members and attenders to find out if there is interest in having Meeting be involved in the project and how many people would be committed to working on the project. A request for this information was in the Meeting bulletin, the Meeting newsletter and sent through the Meeting list serve.

Eight people responded positively and stated that they would help in various ways (8 people volunteered to cook meals; 5 people volunteered to stay overnight; 6 people volunteered to do various other tasks like set-up, clean-up and greeting.) Two people responded with “maybe.”

At May MFWFB, I suggested that if Friends Meeting didn't have enough volunteers to be a host church on our own, then possibly we could team up with another church who also needed more volunteers. At the last Out of the Cold board of directors meeting, I spoke with the representative from the Unity Church of Jesus

Christ about working together. They are already teamed with another small church. I also spoke with Altheda Hughes who represents University Baptist and Brethren Church about working together. She said that they have had to ask for volunteers from other churches in order to provide the services for Out of the Cold for 2 weeks. She contacted the UBBC minister and board and all agreed that they would be willing to work with Friends Meeting on Out of the Cold. Altheda and I are old friends and we both agreed that we would happily share the responsibilities of site coordinator and host coordinator from our respective church/meeting.

Friends Meeting has 4 options that I can envision:

1. Decide to not participate in OOTC3 at this time.
2. Decide to support the program by individuals from Meeting volunteering to help other participating churches as needed. I could be the contact person to hook up people from Meeting with churches asking for help.
3. Decide to team with UBBC and provide services for 2 weeks next year. Altheda explained that UBBC has ideal space for the program and that it would make sense to continue housing the guests at UBBC rather than at Friends Meeting. (This has to do with separating men and women and also ease of transportation.)
4. Friends Meeting could decide to fully provide the services for OOTC3 next year. This would be for 2 weeks in

December (December 4th through the 17th) because the rest of the weeks are already assigned to other churches.

Here are some quick facts that you might need to answer questions:

- The participating church provides an evening meal at 9:00 every night and a breakfast every morning. Some churches provide a bag lunch.
- There are at least 2 volunteers every night; one of each gender. There should be 1 volunteer for every 5 guests. The number of guests varies from 10 to 20 per night. One volunteer needs to stay awake each night.
- From October 2015 to May 2016, 95 individual guests were served.
- Volunteers are required to go through a day of training before participating. OOTC3 provides the training in the fall before the program starts.
- Every participating church needs to have a site coordinator and a host coordinator. If Friends Meeting decides to do the program on our own, I am willing to be the site coordinator but not also the host coordinator. These are 2 different sets of responsibilities.

It would be helpful to the OOTC3 program to know as soon as possible about our intentions. They need to find a church to be responsible for those 2 weeks in December so they can be sure to be able to continue to provide housing for those guests who are

depending on them. OOTC3 will be able to proceed with their work as soon as we let them know our decision.”

After discussion, the Meeting decided the best option was #3 above.

Meeting decided to team up with UBBC and help provide services for two weeks next winter.

Individual Sharing for Peace and Social Action

Marjorie Nelson announced that the person who did visiting for FCNL around the country was retiring and there will be a new person doing that job.

Bernie Hoffnar reported that Nittany Valley Water Coalition was helping to occupy the site of the proposed Toll Brothers housing. They intend to stay until the development is stopped. They

thought it might be difficult to get people to occupy the site but it has not. Signs are available at an optional \$6 cost. People are welcome to stop in at the site.

Polly Dunn was contacted by BYM for a survey on outreach. She noted that others may be surveyed as well.

Meeting approved the following minute of appreciation for Ann Ward:

Ann Ward's courageous act of building loving relationships in one of the most difficult areas of the world is a testament to the power of peacebuilding. Her use of the Alternatives to Violence program shows it is a profound way to reach the ability within people to heal and to learn to trust others. She is truly building pathways to peace. State College Friends Meeting expresses its continued deep appreciation and love to Ann for all she is doing to promote peace in the world.

Religious Education

Sunny Rehler reported. On Mother's Day the children made breakfast for their mothers. On May 21st Chi Quong had 15 people attend, three of whom were under age 18. Other highlights were a slide presentation by Katie and Levi Loomis-Adams on civil rights sites they visited in the south, planting flowers, and having an ice cream social to finish the First Day School year.

Next year, the same teachers will continue but Sunny will not be continuing as RE Coordinator. He will be available to help with the transition.

Finance Committee

Connie Wheeler reported. The dinner for Housing Transitions brought in less than \$400 and the trunk sale brought in \$99.75. Since the plan was to send \$500 for each dinner's group, they were combined and sent to Housing Transitions.

A request was made that the Meeting revisit opening Meeting fundraisers to the public. That will occur sometime in the future.

Nominating Committee

The list of members for Committees was presented. A couple of changes were suggested.

Meeting approved the Committee List for the next year, with the changes.

Religious Education Coordinator Position

Connie Wheeler reported that the position has been announced and a notice sent out via email. The Personnel Committee will meet and do interviews. Let Connie know if you are interested in the position.

Buildings and Grounds

Bernie Hoffnar reported. The Committee has been working on several items:

1. The parking area lights. The bid was higher than expected at \$2200. This has already been approved.
2. The parking lot surface repair will take 1 or 2 days. They are trying to schedule the work around the use of the meeting house.
3. The arrangement with the Jewish Community Center daycare in case of emergency has been set up. The teachers have come over and know where the key is hidden.
4. The annual backflow water inspection has been completed. No problems were found.

A question was asked about whether the water leak was fixed. Gary Fosmire responded that the contractors who were doing the electrical work found an incorrect connection so water was running back into the building. That should now be fixed.

Friends School

Ann Sidone reported. Eight students graduated in June. The Fun Fair, held mostly indoors because of weather, was successful.

The Board has wrestled with several issues but now has settled on a way forward. A teacher's sudden departure upset a number of parents. After investigating, the Board has concluded that the Head of School acted appropriately. Another issue involved bullying. The actions taken did not bring the desired results. They are working with the Friends Council on Education to help Dan and the school. Throughout this time, the school lost several families. Next year's enrollment could be as low as 85 or 90 students, after 114 last year.

Claudia Wilson, also with the Friends School Board, requested that if people ask about the process, the school did a Quakerly process to discern the way forward. This is different from the corporate world. She asked that Friends report this if they hear things about the school. Johanna Jackson asked Friends to pray for the school. Gary Fosmire reminded us that the school is under the care of the Meeting, and that Ann has spent a considerable amount of time on school matters. Ann responded that all of the Board has spent a lot of time with the school. Another Friend said we need to consider how we can financially support the school.

FRIENDS ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER LOCAL CHURCHES

Selden Smith announced that the Meeting is cohosting Ramadan Iftar at the Meetinghouse on June 17th.

CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

A letter from Mary Pennock Sears was read requesting removal of her membership and that of her daughters, Sarah Sears and Hannah Sears. This will be passed on to Worship and Ministry.

Selden read a request for contributions from the Fellowship of Friends of African Descent. They are planning a trip to Ghana. Selden will post the letter.

OTHER MATTERS

Ann Sidone read the following Minute of Appreciation for Selden Smith:

State College Friends Meeting thanks Selden Smith for his years of serving as clerk of the Meeting. His organizational skills, his cheerful leadership, and his ability to sum up the sense of the Meeting during discussions have been very appreciated. We reluctantly release him to other things, and we wish him a very happy retirement from clerking and his work.

Meeting approved the minute.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

The minutes from May were approved with one date correction.

Next Business Meeting for Worship: August 13 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Selden Smith
Clerk

Margy Frysinger
Recording Clerk

ATTENDANCE:

Kerry Wiessmann
Bernie Hoffnar
Polly Dunn
Claudia Wilson
Becky Misangyi
Sunny Rehler
Renee Crauder
Susan Knox

Connie Wheeler
Martin Melville
Yuri Plowden
Johanna Jackson
Gary Fosmire
Marjorie E. Nelson
Ann Sidone

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RETURN REQUESTED