

**FRIENDLY
CONNECTIONS**

State College Friends Meeting

**September 2017
Newsletter**



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

Announcements

► There is a new signup genius link for refreshments and potluck through mid November. Please consider signing up. Potluck dates for October and November TBA.

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b44aca92fa57-state2>

Please sign up to help with potluck and refreshments. We hope each member and/or attender will be able to help with set up and clean up for at least 1 potluck and 3 refreshment dates through the course of the year. Duties include bringing a snack, setting up, and cleaning up.

► Save the Date! **Saturday, October the 14th** - Mark your calendars for the third annual Friends Meeting fall dinner, from 4:00 to 7:00 at the Friends Meeting House. Our theme this year is "Our Quaker Roots". Come and enjoy delicious food, good company, meet some historic Friends in person and hear the new Quaker choir. Free child care. Donations go to the State College Friends Meeting.

► This fall at Pendle Hill: <<https://pendlehill.org/learn/economic-resistance-fall-conference/#.WZSYpVWGOBZ>> Social Justice through Economic Resistance Conference, Sept. 21-24, 2017 (sliding scale registration and scholarships available! Register online or call [610-566-4507](tel:610-566-4507), ext. 137). This conference was born out of Pendle Hill's 2016 program on Visioning and Creating a Moral Economy and the lingering questions of participants of that conference – yes, there are alternatives to extraction and exploitation economies, but how do we actually move from what our system is now to what we want it to be? This conference gathers union nurses, Quakers, clergy, grassroots organizers, solar activists, journalists and leaders in corporate divestment campaigns. Confirmed speakers include the Director of Economic Activism at the American Friends Service Committee Dalit Baum, Executive Director of Philadelphian's Organized to Witness Empower and Rebuild, Reverend Gregory Holston, journalist Kate Aronoff, and clerk of Earth Quaker Action Team Eileen Flanagan.

► Interfaith Coffee Hour, Tues., Sept. 19, 6:30-8 pm

Topic: Does doubt have a place in the religious life, or in the life of faith? Webster's Bookstore & Café, State College. Contact Sarah: 814-883-5884 or InterfaithInitiativeCC@hotmail.com

► Upcoming State College Friends Meeting events:

September 17th, potluck, Meals on Wheels donations

October potluck, Centre Alternatives to Criminal Justice donations

October 14, 2017: Fall Harvest Celebration

November potluck, Centre Volunteers In Medicine donations

Calendar

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

Sept.8 PYM Middle School Friends Gathering, Lancaster

Sept.17 SCFM Meeting for Worship for Business, 9 am

Sept.23 Quaker College Fair, Friends Center, Philadelphia

Oct.6-8 PYM Young Adult Friends Fall Retreat, Fallsington Meeting

Nov.2-5 FCNL Annual Meeting, Washington DC.

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) - AN OVERVIEW

By Sunny Rehler

The mission of AVP is to build an international movement of creative conflict resolution built on affirmation, respect for all, community, cooperation and trust. Before I knew much about AVP, I became quite familiar with NVC (Nonviolent Communication), which has a similar mission. AVP, I discovered recently, includes all of the ideas and tools of NVC, as well as a lot more.

In the United States AVP is an association of community, school and prison-based groups offering experiential workshops in personal growth, community development and creative conflict management. The workshops encourage every person's innate power to positively transform first themselves and then the world we live in. (1)

AVP has gradually been growing both in size and scope since the first workshop in a New York State prison over 40 years ago. The idea was conceived by inmates at Green Haven (NY State) Prison in the 1970s, who were concerned that there was no program to prepare them for reentry. So they set out to start their own. They reached out to Quaker prison volunteers, some of whom had connections to the Civil Rights Movement, and together they created AVP. Since then AVP has spread to over 50 countries on 6 continents, including conflict areas such as Rwanda and Palestine. Although members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) were involved with its early development, AVP is non-denominational and could easily be practiced by followers of any spiritual path, as well as atheists and agnostics.

In July 2017, I had the opportunity to experience the basics of AVP at a workshop in Williamsport, PA. There were 20 participants, who completed the basic training, with the guidance of 4 facilitators. I was surprised that there was such diversity of both backgrounds and ages of the participants. The youngest participant was in her mid-20s and the oldest was in his mid-70s as far as I could guess.



AVP workshop - Photo credit: Bob Flatley

These are some of the comments, which participants wrote on their feedback forms:

“It’s a wonderful tool to help open your heart, mind, and soul.”

“I really like the way the workshop brought the best out in everybody.”

AVP training programs enable participants to deal with potentially violent situations in new and creative ways. Workshops are delivered by trained facilitators and are experiential (not based on lectures). The workshops use interactive exercises, discussions, games and role-

plays to examine the ways we respond to situations, which have the potential to lead to aggressive behavior and violence.

One of the essential and valuable aspects of AVP is what is referred to as “Transforming Power”. This is the power within each person to change oneself and the situation. AVP teaches that the application of some simple techniques and/or guidelines will frequently transform a potentially aggressive and/or violent situation into a friendlier one. This may seem mysterious, but it works! As an example of some of the techniques, participants of workshops are taught to

- build up their own self-respect
- respect and care about others
- expect the best

- wait a minute before reacting
- trust one’s inner sense of what’s needed

look inside of one’s self for a non-violent path.

Allow me to give an example from my own life to illustrate this concept: During my last full-time job as a Physical Therapist, the rehab coordinator was a woman about 20 years younger than me.

I felt that she took every opportunity to prove how deficient I was. In her eyes, it seems, the therapy I offered was frequently ineffective and she seemed to delight in pointing this out IN FRONT of patients with whom I was working!

This was both embarrassing and humiliating to me and I did not know how to respond. However a close friend suggested that I just make an appointment with her to meet her privately in her office and simply say how I felt. I did this and used good communication skills

based on guidelines, which are taught in AVP. I did not criticize her in any way, but simply stated what was happening in a very unbiased way and how I felt about it. I also requested that she take me aside and speak confidentially with me, if she wanted to offer criticism.

She expressed understanding and to my surprise actually complied with my request!

All this happened well before I knew anything about AVP (or NVC), but thinking back, I actually did apply many of the techniques and guidelines taught in AVP. This illustrates the truth of a statement I found on the AVP-International website: that many of the best conflict management skills are already inside of us.(2) Perhaps many of us have just forgotten about them or become accustomed to react in ways, which may aggravate a situation, rather than improve it. We often see violence and aggression around us, so we tend to imitate what is around us. However AVP promotes more creative ways to de-escalate conflict and come to a satisfactory resolution, which respects the legitimate concerns of all parties.

In a typical AVP workshop there are “light and lively” activities, which are interspersed between the more serious parts. As an example, in Williamsport we did an activity called “Circling the Circle”. We formed a ring of hands, then two adjoining people let go briefly, while a big hula-hoop was placed around one person’s arm. The task we were given was to continue holding hands, keeping contact with our neighbors in the circle on both sides, but to find a way to move the hula-hoop completely around the circle of participants holding hands!

Such exercises allow for participants to move around and stretch and also they bring in an aspect of humor, which it seems important for effective peace and community building. As James O’Dea, former Director of Amnesty International writes in his book: “Think of the Dalai Lama, a great force for peace, constantly smiling and chuckling, even as he faces enormous challenges on behalf of his people. See how his sweetness is a flowering of nonviolence, and you will understand what a contrast such a man of peace is to the oppressive seriousness”.(3)



The United States leads the world in prison population, and our prisons, viewed as a way of protecting society from violence, spawn more violence. Over ninety percent of prisoners eventually return to society – from a prison experience that encourages violence. The AVP programs tend to counteract this cycle of violence and most inmates are grateful to learn more creative and peaceful ways to deal with conflicts.

According to recent news reports, O.J. Simpson is one of the thousands of prisoners, who have benefited from AVP. On Thursday, July 20, 2017, after 9 years of incarceration for armed robbery, O.J. Simpson sat in on his Parole hearing. During the hearing he stated the programs and steps he took to rehabilitate saying: "I took two courses (Basic & Advanced) that I guess you guys don't give much credit to. It's called Alternatives to Violence. It's the most important course anyone in this prison could take as it teaches you to solve conflict through conversation."(4)

However the benefits of AVP are certainly not limited to the situations of prisoners. Any organization could benefit from the tools of AVP to build community and resolve conflicts. Through the use of these tools I'm convinced that we can all contribute to more compassion and harmony in our families and communities.

References:

(1) <https://avpusa.org/>

(2) <https://avp.international/>

(3) "Cultivating Peace, Becoming a 21st Peace Ambassador" by James O'Dea (Shift Books, 2012)

(4) from AVP-USA website, recently released

Baltimore Yearly Meeting

The Social Order

Do you promote social justice and make your life a testimony to fair dealing? Do you seek to understand and appreciate differing cultures and social values? Do you support fair treatment of all regardless of race, gender, age and other differences? Are you concerned for those in our society who are disadvantaged? Do you take your full share of civic responsibility by voting and giving service? Do you oppose the use of land, labor, technology and capital for human exploitation or in ways destructive to other living things?



QUERIES
QUERIES
QUERIES
QUERIES

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting *Ministry of Outreach, Outreach*

What are we doing as a Meeting to communicate our presence and our principles to the community around us? Does our Meeting's ministry of outreach lead Friends to share their spiritual experiences with others?

What are we doing to invite persons not in membership to attend our meetings for worship and to encourage their continued attendance? How does the Meeting welcome visitors? Are we sensitive to the needs and hesitations of each visitor?

Are we tender to the needs of isolated Friends and Meetings, and to nearby Meetings seeking support?

How do I ground myself in the understandings of my faith? Am I clear about my beliefs? How do I prepare myself to share my faith and beliefs with others?

Does my manner of life as a Friend attract others to our religious society?

Do I seize opportunities to tell others about the Religious Society of Friends and invite them to worship with us?

Is my manner with visitors and attenders to our Meeting one of welcome?

Collaboration



QUERIES
QUERIES

In what ways does our Meeting respond to opportunities to join with other faiths in worship, in social action, and in spiritual dialogue?

How does our Meeting encourage its members to seek opportunities to meet and work with Friends worldwide?

What opportunities have I taken to know people from different religious and cultural backgrounds, to worship with them, and to work with them on common concerns?

What opportunities have I taken to know, to work, and to worship with Friends outside of my own Meeting?

State College Friends Meeting
Meeting for Worship for Business

August 13, 2017

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Attendance: Gary Fosmire, Darlene Clark, Yuri Plowden, Connie Wheeler, Bernie Hoffnar, Campbell Plowden, Lisa Gamble, Claudia Wilson, Johanna Jackson, Polly Dunn, Cy Merriwether-deVries, Ann Sidone, Melady Kehm, Renee Crauder, Suzanne Howell, John Howell, and Marjorie Nelson

Reading of Queries on Peace from PYM

All approved the agenda with additions

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds: The dishwasher is leaking (approx. 5 yrs old) – B & G will follow up. The dining area lights are blinking and someone was notified to replace the fluorescent bulbs. The parking lot lights are repaired. Level surfacing of the parking lot has been completed. The gutters were evaluated – they are in working order but will need replaced at some point. B & G will continue to monitor. The electrical situation at the Meeting House needs addressed – an electrician is working on the problems. The fire alarms need repaired – Meeting received a notice from the borough – it is being corrected. Bernie was thanked for his service.

Finance:

Treasurers' report from Yuri Plowden:

January through the end of June – balance is \$15,187 in checking. We have received 40% of anticipated donations at \$18,534 out of \$46,000. The % of donations at this point is good, however, due to big expenses for maintenance, the cash is lower than we would like. If people feel led to make some of their annual contributions sooner rather than later, that would be helpful. Meanwhile, if the balance falls below \$5,000, the treasurer will transfer money from deferred maintenance.

Big expenses to date:

\$2190 for the parking lot

\$1834 for parking lot electric

\$2500 for the lawn mower

Total: \$6524

We recommend changing names on the bank account due to new positions. – remove Selden Smiths' name and add Gary Fosmire, as the new Clerk of Meeting. Remove Kim Kelmors' name and add Yuri Plowden, a new co-clerk of Finance committee.

Business meeting approved these changes. Connie Wheeler(treasurer) and Kerry Wiessmann(co-clerk) will remain on the account. With the transition to a new RE Coordinator/Clerk, we closed the Visa card issued to former

Clerk Sunny Rehler. Opening a Visa card for Becky Misangyi, new RE Coordinator/Clerk was recommended. All approved of this request.

BYM request for next year is \$5012, \$1,000 more than last year – the new request is closer to what we used to pay. BYM is adjusting its calculation for Meeting contributions to help smaller Meetings. Finance committee will send this request in 2 parts as our cash flow improves. We may need to cover the extra request amount with the \$500 previously slated for BYM camps. We hope to cover both and will wait until the end of the year to send in the camp donation.

Finance committee would like to confirm at business meeting if we will host an Annual Dinner, Saturday, October 14. Friends approved. An effort will be made to secure donations. Finance recommends making this a fundraiser due to current and upcoming major maintenance expenses. All who are willing to help make this happen, please contact Kerry Wiessmann.

Religious Education:

Gary read an email correspondence from Becky Misangyi which stated, “ I am the new RE coordinator(Sunny has stepped down). FDS will begin on September 17, a little later than usual because of Camp Crystal Lake. Crystal Lake weekend will be on September 8-10(earlier than usual). Please contact Becky if you

are willing to sub either as an assistant or lead teacher.” The plan is to have 3 FDS classes this year.

Library:

Melady Kehm has been serving solo on the library committee. She stated that the library is not being used as it once was and she would like to pare down the books on the shelves. A discussion ensued and it was suggested that folks respond regarding their book interests from our library and meeting can then review the library contents again. Melady would like someone else to clerk this committee, but is willing to assist. Gary will ask Nominating Committee to find a clerk and will report to the next Business Meeting.

Friends School:

Lisa Gamble shared that this is transition time – summer camp is finishing and teachers are setting up for fall. They spent time looking at conflict as an opportunity for growth and are looking at ways to restructure the school. There has been greater involvement from Friends Meeting at the school. Denise DeGeorge worked with restorative practice and Kerry Wiessmann will be working on this topic as well. Lisa attended an enrollment management workshop and brought back ideas for Friends School.

Outreach and Social Action:

Polly has been unable to find a box of bookmarks that we give to new visitors – please contact her if you know its whereabouts. The outreach pamphlet needs updated---the committee will review our materials and decide what might be most helpful.

Draft minutes of appreciation:

Minute for Sunny Rehler

State College Friends Meeting extends a warm thank you to Sunny Rehler for his year of service to the religious education of the Meeting's children. We recognize it can be a challenging endeavor to coordinate the adults and children and organize the activities. We thank him for all his efforts over the past year.

Minute for Ann Sidone and Friends School Board

State College Friends School has had a difficult year. The Meeting would like to thank Ann Sidone as clerk of the Board and the rest of the trustees for their loving dedication to the school. The Meeting very much appreciates their careful discernment process as they considered the way forward. The Meeting will continue to hold them and the school in the Light.

All approved of minuting these 2 individuals.

Johanna Jackson read a thank you note to SCFM:

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the money to attend Friends General Conference this year. With your gift, I was able to delve into the spiritual life at FGC, without worrying about money while I was away. It was my first time being in the company of so many Quakers -- odd and interesting people from throughout the US and Canada. (Someone said it was where all the oddballs come together.)

I want to share with you that while I was there, I experienced a deep sense of healing in the hands of strangers. I felt washed and crashed by the Spirit. I could trust people nearby to hold me in it. It's been four weeks since returning, now, and the memory of it is with me still.

And thank you for helping me connect to other Young Adult Friends. Sometimes I feel adrift in a sea without peers. I spent time with so many Quakers, young and old, and I can take heart that we all sustain each other!

With warmth and Love,
Johanna Jackson

All approved minutes from Business Meeting on June 11, 2017

Announcements:

Camp Crystal Lake will be held September 8-10(Friday-Sunday). They have made it financially possible for anyone to attend this year. The title is “Soaring Together: Heights, Voices and Spirit. All are encouraged to attend all or parts of the weekend.

BYM Spiritual Formation Program retreat will be held September 8 - 10 at the Priest Field Retreat Center in West Virginia.

The pamphlet Sacred Intersections: Spiritual Formation Program will be referred to W & M for review.

FCNL Annual Meeting will be held November 2-5 in Washington DC. Marjorie Nelson would appreciate a ride if anyone is driving.

Johanna Jackson made a request to having our meeting names/faces more accessible – ie put the members/clerks of committees’ titles on the photo board. She will discuss this with Polly Dunn.

Next Business Meeting: September 17. All approved.

June 2017 budget to actual
2017 Budget vs Actual
 January through June 2017

	<u>Jan - Jun 17</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Donations			
Contributions	18,534.00		
Donations - Other	0.00	46,000.00	0.0%
Total Donations	18,534.00	46,000.00	40.29%
Gain or Loss on Investments	5,792.55		
Interest and Dividend Earned	0.81		
Investments	3,072.78		
Rentals	7,412.00	18,000.00	41.18%
Special Events Income	5,659.86	3,000.00	188.66%
Total Income	40,472.00	67,000.00	60.41%
Expense			
Committees			
Advancement and Outreach	338.00	0.00	100.0%
Clerk	0.00	50.00	0.0%
Library	0.00	50.00	0.0%
Memorial Committee	0.00	50.00	0.0%
Music	0.00	110.00	0.0%
Outreach and Social Action	262.24	1,000.00	26.22%
Peace and Social Action	127.34	0.00	100.0%
Religious Education	269.45	1,000.00	26.95%
Worship and Ministry	200.00	800.00	25.0%
Total Committees	1,197.03	3,060.00	39.12%
Facilities			
Building and Grounds	2,363.90	2,230.00	106.0%
Deferred Maintenance Account	477.00		
Friends School rental rqmts	0.00	1,200.00	0.0%
Gas and Electric	2,004.14	3,000.00	66.81%
Grass Cutting	2,640.56	100.00	2,640.56%
Liability Insurance	3,167.00	2,860.00	110.73%
Refreshments and Supplies	492.29	700.00	70.33%
Snow Removal	14.83	800.00	1.85%
Water Sewage and Refuse	644.25	1,200.00	53.69%
Facilities - Other	2,190.00		
Total Facilities	13,993.97	12,090.00	115.75%
Friends Organizations			
AFSC, FCNL, and FGC	0.00	300.00	0.0%
Baltimore Yearly Meeting	2,000.00	4,000.00	50.0%
BYM Camps	0.00	500.00	0.0%
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting	3,750.00	7,500.00	50.0%

	<u>Jan - Jun 17</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Upper Susquehanna Quarter	0.00	2,000.00	0.0%
Total Friends Organizations	5,750.00	14,300.00	40.21%
Helping Those in Need			
3rd Way Collective	936.00		
Care and Concern	800.00	2,000.00	40.0%
CCWRC	720.00	500.00	144.0%
Conference Fund	0.00	700.00	0.0%
Food Bank of State College	0.00	500.00	0.0%
Housing Transitions	500.00	500.00	100.0%
Interfaith Human Services	765.00	500.00	153.0%
Park Forest Day Nursery	0.00	500.00	0.0%
Total Helping Those in Need	3,721.00	5,200.00	71.56%
Office Expenses			
Event Expense	737.76	1,000.00	73.78%
Flowers	128.79	300.00	42.93%
Newsletter	294.79	250.00	117.92%
Office Supplies	0.00	500.00	0.0%
Telephone	693.96	1,100.00	63.09%
Treasurer and Administration	1,533.20	800.00	191.65%
Total Office Expenses	3,388.50	3,950.00	85.79%
Payroll Expenses			
Gross Wages	9,975.69	24,000.00	41.57%
Payroll Service	790.87	2,000.00	39.54%
Payroll Taxes	763.12	2,000.00	38.16%
Worker Compensation Insurance	41.00	400.00	10.25%
Total Payroll Expenses	11,570.68	28,400.00	40.74%
Total Expense	39,621.18	67,000.00	59.14%
Net Ordinary Income	850.82	0.00	100.0%
Other Income/Expense			
Other Expense			
Building renovation	2,699.21		
Total Other Expense	2,699.21		
Net Other Income	-2,699.21		
Net Income	-1,848.39	0.00	100.0%

State College Friends Meeting

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2017

	Balance Sheet	Jun 30, 17
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Checking/Savings		
Friends Fiduciary		
Diana Walker-Spanier Peace Fund		4,012.06
First Day School Fund		15,268.90
Library Literature Fund		2,893.05
Mook Fund		14,835.29
Myers Fund		15,453.47
Norma White		20,290.39
Total Friends Fiduciary		72,753.16
PSFCU checking		15,187.26
PSFCU deferred maintenance		16,953.66
PSFCU Oral History		3,945.67
PSFCU savings		2,306.56

Balance Sheet	Jun 30, 17
Total Checking/Savings	111,146.31
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	-275.00
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>-275.00</u>
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds	325.00
Total Other Current Assets	<u>325.00</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>111,196.31</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>111,196.31</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	-831.09
Total Accounts Payable	<u>-831.09</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	
Local	128.77

Balance Sheet	Jun 30, 17
LST	56.42
State	170.88
Total Payroll Liabilities	<u>356.07</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>356.07</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>-475.02</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>-475.02</u>
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	155,224.98
Unrestricted Net Assets	-42,060.46
Net Income	-1,493.19
Total Equity	<u>111,671.33</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>111,196.31</u></u>

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RETURN REQUESTED