

Portland Friends Meeting Newsletter

Third Month 2014

Meeting for Worship: Sundays, 10:30a

First Day School: 2nd and 4th Sundays, 10:45a

Connections

Co-Clerks

Sarah Cushman 841-7186

Andy Grannell 878-8698

Treasurer, Contributions

Sue Nelson 391-6116

60 Shadagee Road, #2

Saco, ME 04072

Treasurer, Operating Account

Kathy Beach 741-2940

14 Drew Road

South Portland 04106

Treasurer, Special Funds

Sara Jane Elliot 749-9706

Special Needs Funds

Chris Beach 741-2940

Elizabeth Szatkowski 772-1774

Ministry and Counsel

Stephanie Richards 829-4082

Lyn Ballou 865-3888

Pastoral Care Coordinators

Shannon O'Connor 774-2578

Christina Davis, 773-4564

Religious Education

Adults: Brad Bussiere-Nichols, 772-1774

Youth: Susan Lavigne, 775-0626

Youth Religious Education Coordinator:

Anne Payson 781-2501

Use of the Meetinghouse

Jane Mullen 761-5856

E-group Coordinator

Mary Beth Walsh 797-8414

mbwalsh@mainelyaccess.com

Newsletter

electronic submissions

Heather Denkmire

pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

postal mail submissions

Liz Maier

274 Black Point Rd.

Scarborough, ME 04074

address change details

Tony Scilipoti

tscilipoti@maine.rr.com



1837 Forest Ave Portland, ME 04103

portlandfriendsmeeting.org

Advice 3: Do not fear periods of doubt and questions; they may lead to openings.

Query 3: Do you allow the Inward Teacher to work in you? Are you teachable?

(New England Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice Revision Committee, Chapter 11: General Advices and Queries, preliminarily accepted)

Monthly Events

Every Sunday: 10:30a Meeting for worship

Every Wednesday: 5:30p Meeting for worship

1st Sundays: Meeting for business

2nd & 4th Sundays: 9a Adult Religious Education

10a Singing

10:45a Youth Religious Education

2nd Saturday: 5-8p Youngish adults potluck

Marnie Grumbach 749-9666

4th Friday: 3:30-7p Preble Street Soup Kitchen

Aaiyn Foster 766-9762

Youth Religious Education News

Portland Friends Meeting believes strongly that children should have the opportunity to experience different Quaker youth offerings throughout New England. We have scholarship money for children who wish to attend Friends Camp, summer day camp at Friends School of Portland, New England Yearly Meeting Sessions, or any of terrific NEYM youth retreats. The application form is downstairs on the bulletin board, or contact Anne Payson (annepayson10@gmail.com). Submit completed applications to Lise Wagner by May 1st.

Minutes of Portland Friends Monthly Meeting March 2, 2014

Portland Friends Meeting gathered in meeting for worship to conduct business on March 2, 2014 at 9 a.m., with 15 members and attenders present. We began in silent worship, during which co-clerk Sarah Cushman read Query #4 from the Preliminarily Revised Advices and Queries, which states: "Is every aspect of your life open to the transforming power of God? What stands in the way?"

1. We found the minutes of our February 2014 meeting to be in good order.

2. Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Kathy Beach reported that we are 1/6 or 17% into the 2014 budget year. Income for February was \$2,413. Donations were low for the month. Expenses were \$3,328, leaving a negative balance of \$915 for the month. Large expenses included heat and snow plowing. Total year-to-date income is \$5,926, or 9 % of budget, and total year-to-date expenses were \$8,038 or 12% of budget. The balance for the year to date is negative \$2,112. Friends are encouraged to donate more in March.

Quick Summary of Income and Expenses February 2014 — Two Months (17%)	
Year-to-date Income	\$5,926
Percent of Budget	9%
Year-to-date Expenses	\$8,038
Percent of Budget	12%
Balance	(\$2,112)

3. Ministry and Counsel. Stephanie Richards and Arthur Fink reported for the Committee and presented the draft 2013 State of Society Report. Friends were asked to consider a draft today for the newsletter and final approval at Meeting for Business in April. This draft would be shared with April Quarterly Meeting the day before.

Arthur reminded us that the State of Society Report is what we report about our hopes and aspirations, to ourselves, and to other meetings in New England Yearly Meeting. He then read the report. Friends suggested addition of major personal events such as weddings and the death of Harold Burnham to the report. It was left that Ministry and Counsel Committee will consider this and decide whether to mention Friends by name. Their revised draft will be shared with April Quarterly meeting and brought to our Meeting for Business in April. Friends complimented the tone and writing of the report, and expressed appreciation to Arthur for his work spearheading the project.

4. Falmouth Quarter Dorothy Grannell reported that Falmouth Quarterly Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 5. Portland Friends Meeting is the host of this meeting and program, which will begin at 8:30 and go through lunch to approximately 3 p.m. The program will be provided by NEYM Ministry and Counsel and concern the minute relating to the consideration of Friends United Meeting and the withholding of funds by some meetings from NEYM because of FUM personnel policy. This continues a process of discernment which will go on further at yearly meeting this summer.

Portland Friends will need to provide morning coffee and a simple lunch. The new Events Committee will recruit food and provide some oversight for the event. It is possible that the afternoon program will draw more people than those attending the morning business and worship, which normally numbers about 20 – 25. At this Falmouth Quarterly meeting the Memorial Minutes and State of Society reports are shared, and the Quarter may complete the process of laying down Oxford Hills Friends Meeting.

(cont-)

minutes (continued)

It was suggested that Ministry and Counsel review the minute of this Meeting from approximately 3 years ago on the situation with contributions to Friends United Meeting, and that the minute be published in the next newsletter. It was further suggested that we include the sexual ethic minute. Andy Grannell volunteered to take care of this. He will also include any newsletter material which reviews this Meeting's history on the issue of equality in matters of sexual orientation and marriage.

Sarah Cushman, Andy Grannell, Stephanie Richards and Brad Bussiere-Nichols will represent our Meeting at Quarterly Meeting. Stephanie and Brad will be the representatives to the Quarterly Ministry and Counsel Committee.

5. Friends World Committee for Consultation Dorothy Grannell reported that The Executive Committee of Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas is seeking a place to hold its in-person meeting September 18 – 20, 2014. The meetings are from Thursday – Saturday and involve about 17 people. It would mean finding overnight hospitality for most of the participants since they come from all over North America and possibly one or two from Central or South America. In general, the committee seeks a meeting where they can either prepare their meals together (they pay for the cost of the food) and have one pot luck meal that is open to the monthly meeting. She asked for the advice and consent of the Meeting today before going further.

Friends welcomed the opportunity and approved offering the Meeting to the group. It was suggested that Dorothy work with the Events Committee.

6. Other Business. Heather Denkmire reminded us that the newsletter deadline is 9 a.m. Wed March 5. She is organizing the newsletter from the point of view of someone new to the Meeting, including materials which help explain what is going on and the background for many events and concerns.

Andy Grannell noted that an orange notebook labeled Ministry and Counsel is missing from the library. Please return it if you know where it is.

Kristina McCormick reported that the midweek Meeting for Worship has been taking place every Wednesday (other than in bad weather) and attended by approximately 5 people.

7. Updates/Reminders
 - a. Mid-Week Worship
 - b. March 9 – Young Friends fundraiser lunch – soup, bread, & desserts
 - c. March 15 – Extended Worship/Mid-Year Gathering of Friends from across New England at Winthrop Friends Church – Maine Friends encouraged to attend – need to register; space is limited
 - d. March 16 - 4th Simple Lunch & Tabletop Queries (Peace and Social Concerns)

We closed in silent worship at 10:00 a.m. with 20 members and attenders present, purposing to meet again at 9 a.m. on April 6, 2014, God willing.

Lyn Ballou, Co-Recording Clerk



Preschool lead teacher needed, starting late August 2014.

We are looking for an experienced early childhood educator for a classroom of 12-14 children ages 3-5. Essential skills and qualities: a strong affinity for Quaker values, love for outdoor learning, and a commitment to creating a safe, collaborative, and stimulating environment for our youngest students. We require a minimum of 3 years of experience and a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education. Salary commensurate with teaching experience. Please send a letter of interest, resumé and three letters of recommendation to Jenny Rowe (jenny@friendsschoolofportland.org) and Mary Tracy (mary@friendsschoolofportland.org) by March 29.

Saturday, April 5, 2014

10am-2pm: Friends School of Portland's 8th annual Silent Auction & Brunch!

The annual Auction is Friends School of Portland's largest fundraising event. Funds go directly towards our operating budget and help us to provide financial aid. Please join us for delicious food, free childcare, and an array of fabulous, creative items up for bid! The auction is held on Mackworth Island in the Baxter School gymnasium.

Thursday, May 15

3:30-5:30pm Educator Workshop: Thriving as Teachers and Learners

What does it look, feel, and sound like to thrive rather than survive as teachers and learners in today's educational contexts? How can the practices of mindful awareness (physical, intellectual, and emotional) enhance communities of learners? Experience a range of practices employed in K-12 and higher education settings to cultivate skills of awareness and insight concerning the processes of teaching and learning. Engage in the science and art of mindfulness in education through experiential exercises, dialogue and presentations by facilitators Kathryn Byrnes, a scholar of mindfulness and education professor at Bowdoin College, and Irene McHenry, a psychologist, author and executive director of the Friends Council on Education. We look forward to building the community of educators integrating mindfulness in education in Maine. Held at Friends School of Portland.

Thursday, May 15

7:00pm Parenting for Peace: How can mindful awareness be of value in our learning and in our lives?

Join us for an evening of dialogue about the benefits of mindfulness for children and families. The guest facilitators are Irene McHenry, a psychologist, author, and executive director of the Friends Council on Education, and Kathryn Byrnes, a scholar of mindfulness and education professor at Bowdoin College. Learn the research behind mindfulness in education, the impact on health and happiness, and practices to use in everyday life. This event will be held at the Wishcamper Center at USM Portland.

Maine-based Opportunity for Extended Worship Saturday, 15 March 2014, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Continuing the tradition of a mid-year gathering in Maine, Winthrop Center Friends Church, Winthrop Center, Maine, is providing space for a day of extended worship. All are welcome, and we are especially encouraging Maine Friends to attend.

Morning snacks and beverages will be provided. Lunch will be a potluck. There is no registration fee, and there will be no child care.

We are asking that people register as space is limited. Please email Ann Dodd-Collins at doddco@gmail.com. Put "Extended Worship" in the subject line and include: your name, your monthly meeting, what you will bring for the potluck, your phone number, your email address. You may also call Ann at 207-832-6103.

More details will follow for those who register.



PFM Book Nook

The Adult Religious Education class asks Friends to submit the books that they are reading that are nourishing their spirits. The ones below came from Dorothy Grannell that related to the class on Portland's Quaker Family Tree. Novels, poetry, history, earthcare – whatever floats your spiritual boat send them to pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net for the next newsletter.

Thomas Hamm. *The Transformation of American Quakerism*, 2009

Examines the many twists and turns of the Quaker experience in the US. The splits, the comings together, all described with honesty and very readable.

Joshua Brown, ed. *The Autobiography of Allen Jay*, 2012

Allen Jay lived through many of the key splits in Quakerism in the 1800's and had a strong ministry to youth. His work after the Civil War in North Carolina led to the formation of the Friends Disaster Team and AFSC many years later. Thinking that the document would help to bring Friends of different backgrounds together the Richmond Declaration of Faith was written in his living room. Little did he know it would divide us rather than unite us. His writing is engaging and often humorous and leaves you with lots to think about.

The Historical Dictionary of Friends (Quakers) is a quick guide to everything you ever wanted to know about Friends and were afraid to ask. Clear and accurate across the board on all of Quaker practices and thought.

A short history of Friends in New England can be found at <http://neym.org/fandp/ch9>

What are you reading and what is its impact on you?

Peace and Social Concerns Committee—Portland Friends Meeting—Annual Report, 2013

The beginning of the calendar year saw one member and our ex officio member leaving for other horizons. The remaining five committee members then launched into the new year on the wings of a November retreat which served to bring many intended initiatives into focus.

State-wide initiatives: Two of our members attended a January meeting of the Friends Committee for Maine Public Policy. We were hoping this committee would be a means for those interested PFM members and attenders to engage in lobbying efforts around Maine issues related to Friends' concerns, namely: Native Americans, Prisoners, Poverty and Economic Justice and the Environment. Instead, we found that FCMPP would not be continuing in the form it had been, but we continued to work on state level issues. In January, in downtown Portland, two committee members and several other PFM activists attended a rally and march to call for a reversal of the Tar Sands pipeline initiative.

Lobbying Workshop and subsequent actions: Our "shining star" of the year's efforts was certainly the FCNL lobbying training made available to Meeting and non-Meeting folks on February 2. Panelists included Jim Cason from Friends Committee on National Legislation, Dick Wagner, a former Maine State Representative, and Leslie Manning, president of the Maine Council of Churches. The panelists shared a wealth of useful information about the workings of the legislatures, and prepared the workshop attenders for practice lobbying visits. The attenders then divided up into interest groups that first prepped for, then had a visit with a "legislator," (one of the three panelists.) The group as a whole then gave positive feedback/suggestions about the interest group's presentation. Attended by over 40 people from inside and outside of Meeting; evaluation forms were numerous and overwhelmingly positive about the day's event.

The next day, committee members and two other PFM members gathered to prepare for pre-arranged lobbying visits the following day to Senators Collins and King and Rep. Chellie Pingree's offices in Portland. Each visit had a different specific focus. Subsequent to the group's visit to Chellie Pingree's office, Kyle Moulton, her field representative sent [us] a copy of the letter going from her office (and also being signed by Rep. Michael Michaud) to Secretary of State John Kerry, requesting action on measures necessary to attain a reversal to the Tar Sands pipeline initiative as it now stands. It felt like a wonderful ripple effect was in action.

Other initiatives and concerns: The Peace and Social Concerns Committee continued to bring initiatives to Meeting for Business, as well as to offer meetings on relevant topics:

1. PFM agreed to co-sponsor a May 28th talk, along with First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, given by David Zarembka, coordinator of the African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams. (We had arranged to co-sponsor him with the Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church in the Fall, 2012, but he had had to cancel at that time.)
2. P&SC brought to Meeting for Business the idea of having "holders," following the tradition of holding people in the Light. These holders would specifically be people who would "assist" those pursuing political actions on the local, state, for national level. This initiative needs more follow-up as Friends become involved these actions.
3. On March 17, 2013, P&SC held a meeting at Rise of Meeting to elicit input on FCNL's policy statement revision. Friends had been previously asked to review the current statement online before the meeting. Feedback/input was sent to FCNL by their April deadline.
4. Another Awakening the Dreamer workshop was planned for October 19, two weeks after the All Meeting Retreat. For a number of reasons, the interest in the workshop was lagging this time and the decision was made to cancel it. Hopefully it will be able to be held again in 2014.
5. In October, P&SC brought to Meeting for Business the minute from the Middlebury Monthly Meeting (Vermont) concerning gun violence that had been circulating through the monthly meetings for consideration. The Meeting charged P&SC with discerning the next step, if any, in pursuing action on this topic. In November, P&SC decided that they were not at this time called to take further action on this topic but would give whatever support they could to whomever felt led to do so.

The Ultimate Superpower

by Gracie Griffin

Interfaith Connections is a column for teens to dialogue about how their faith or wisdom tradition influences their view of life's big questions. In each issue, three teens from different backgrounds respond to a question posed by the Editorial Board, based on the theme. This quarter the Ed Board asks: Is searching for truth an important part of your faith or spiritual tradition?

Here is the first part of Gracie Griffin's beautiful response:

Truth. It is something you can wear emblazoned on your chest with a cape flapping in the wind behind you. It is a true superpower.

We think of superpowers as unattainable, as figments of our imaginations. However, these gifts are available to all of us. The other day, a speaker at my Quaker meeting told us that we each have a gift, whether big or small. Some of these gifts are not as noticeable as others. One of my gifts is my religion.

I am a Quaker. Twice a month, I sit in a room surrounded by windows and a ceiling fan that spins lazily. The only audible noise is traffic rushing outside, yet the room is filled with people of all ages. We sit in chairs facing the center of the room, so there seems to be no front or back. No minister stands at a pulpit, reading from the Bible. In fact, no one speaks at all until someone is moved by the Spirit to share a message. Messages can be stories, quotations, or even questions. Here in this space we are equal in spirit and in mind. There is no one telling us what to do. We sit in utter silence except for the sounds of the lazy fan and the cars outside.

This silence provides time to reflect and discover the gifts inside of us. While sometimes that quiet gets drowned out by messages or even by internal whines of boredom, we can find silence in other places. There is a quote on my refrigerator at home:

"Peace. It does not mean to be in a place where there is not noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart." – Unknown.

Quakerism has helped me discover my superpowers. It supplies the tools and values for not only leading a happy life but a fulfilled one, especially if you contribute your gifts to the wider community.

Quakerism is a religion that encourages:

- Simplicity
- Peace
- Integrity
- Community
- Equality



The SPICE mantra keeps me grounded. It gives me the tools to access my gifts while I seek the truth. Some people spend their whole lives looking for truth, the ultimate superpower. Why? Truth can take us places. It can lead us to conclusions or back to beginnings. Truth can be our best friend or our worst enemy. Truth can slap us in the face and leave us spinning, unsure where to turn next. Yet, through the power of reflection, we can find truth right beside us. The power of reflection is something that continues to astound me, and I hold it very close to my heart...

We invite you to read all of Gracie's words here: <http://kidspiritonline.com/2014/02/the-ultimate-superpower/>

Same Gender Marriage & Sexual Ethics: A Brief Overview of PFM's Loving Discernment & Public Testimony (1989-2014)

Prepared & edited by: Andy Grannell

In 1988 and 1991, the Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board approved a personnel policy that affirms the civil rights and condemns violence on all people without regard to their sexual orientation, but also requires those in staff positions at FUM to refrain from sexual relationships outside of monogamous heterosexual marriage. New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) urged FUM to change this policy, asked our FUM Board members to represent this concern, and promoted intervisitation around it.

In 2009, after years of difficult discernment about withholding as a method of action, NEYM approved a mechanism often referred to as '2009-54'. NEYM's Minute 2009-54 allows Monthly Meetings to opt to withhold their portion of the yearly contribution that NEYM gives to FUM. This policy was originally approved for one year, but has been renewed several times since. It will be considered again at NEYM Sessions, next August 2-7, at Castleton State College in Castleton, Vermont.

To aid in preparation, NEYM's Ministry and Counsel has formed a working group to shepherd a process of information sharing and discernment on whether to continue the policy represented by Minute 2009-54. The working group has chosen three areas on which to focus this sharing and discernment: (i) sharing our stories; (ii) holding listening sessions with each of NEYM's 8 Quarters; and (iii) compiling resources.

During this same 1989-2009 period, members of Portland Friends Meeting undertook an process of discernment on the civil rights, same gender marriage, and public support for gay rights as an agreed upon testimony. A summary of this discernment process is entitled "The History of the Consideration of Same Gender Marriage by Portland Friends Meeting" (4pp) and is available at, "Portland Friends Meeting – Portland, Maine" web site www.portlandfriendsmeeting.org.

The following are the highlights:

- November 3, 1991: "After a two year process and loving consideration, Meeting for Business approved the following minute: 'A request from a same-gender couple for marriage or a celebration of commitment under the care of Portland Friends Meeting will be considered in the same way, we consider such a request from a heterosexual couple'."
- April 1993: "Rita Clifford carried a request that we endorse the Gay Pride March, which is tentatively scheduled for May 16 this year. We approved participating in the march, this year and next, and authorize carrying the Meeting banner which states, 'Portland Friends Meeting (Quakers) supports the civil rights for the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community'."
- November 7, 1999: "The marriage of our members Mary Hillas and Barbara Potter was carried out according to the good order of Friends at a special called meeting for worship on September 11, 1999. The depth of the silent worship and the inspired vocal ministry enriched us all..." This was the first same gender marriage under the care of PFM.
- December 3, 2006: "Friends then engaged in a deep and thorough discussion of a second of these line item donations, the annual gift to FUM. While FUM's personnel policies have raised great concern for many in our meeting and elsewhere, we ultimately recognize that FUM is an organization where we can and should address such policies, that FUM does important work in American and the World which no other Quaker organization is doing, and that some of us from PFM have participated in some of FUM's projects. For these and other reasons, the sense of the meeting is to continue the line item in our budget and to give \$145 to FUM in 2007."

(cont-)

Same Gender Marriage & Sexual Ethics (continued-)

- May 2010 Portland Friends in its State of Society united in a statement on Positive Sexual Ethics by stating "What a joy to find ourselves in unity on a series of statements and a set of queries that we believe will be a resource in many ways." The following are several of these statements: "After prayerful reflection as a community, we are clear about the following: sexuality is a gift from God; we are created as whole beings and sexuality is part of the wholeness from youth to old age; we recognize that being sexual is part of being human, and that being responsible with this gift is a part of being faithful; we are created with desire for intimacy with the divine, ourselves, and other humans; this desire for connection is not just about sexuality...; divine assistance is needed and available in any relationship; we place a high value on faithful long term relationships and monogamy, even while we acknowledge that such is not the path of every person seeking to live a reflective moral life; and people of all ages should feel unpressured and able to have space in their lives without sexual partnerships."

There is a quiet, open place in the depths of the mind, to which we can go many times in the day and lift up our soul in praise, thankfulness and conscious unity. With practise this God-ward turn of the mind becomes an almost constant direction, underlying all our other activities.

~ Kenneth Boulding, 1910-1993

editor's note: Committee Chairs, please be sure to let me know if you have changes in your committee contact information for the sidebar of the newsletter:

pfmnewsletter@grantwinners.net

To all: please send submissions to be included "as is," rather than to be summarized or edited. Attaching images for inclusion is welcomed!

Falmouth Quarterly Meeting April 5, 2014 Portland Friends Meeting

9 – 10 am Falmouth Quarterly Meeting Ministry & Counsel

10 am – 11 am WORSHIP

11 am – 12:30 pm Worship for the Conduct of Business

12:30 – 1:30 pm SIMPLE LUNCH Portland Friends who can provide a soup, bread or dessert please contact Kathy Beach at katherinegbeach@gmail.com



1:30 – 3:00 pm Program: Listening Session facilitated by the NEYM Ministry & Counsel Working Group on NEYM Funding mechanism relating to personnel policy of Friends United Meeting

See background materials posted on Meeting Bulletin Board in foyer.

Portland Friends Meeting State of Society Report

Final draft - Feb 27, 2014

Good News! Our meeting remains strong and vibrant, a diverse community of young and older people, grounded in worship and excited about the opportunities before us. First Day School is well attended. Older teenagers have an active group of their own that often meets at times other than Sundays, and that creates a wonderful transition from school class to becoming part of the adult community. "Young-ish Adult Friends" have regular gatherings. Adult religious education programs are nourishing for many of us. We've now added a regular mid-week meeting for worship.

We asked community members for comments that might be included in this report, and received these comments (and more):

"I have been made to feel welcome"

"Portland Friends Meeting is always there! A rock for the community – stable and consistent"

"I'm grateful for this – my spiritual home"

"Meeting provides me with much needed calm and quiet."

"The messages during meeting have often spoken to me, while the silence has been life giving. A good balance overall!"

"I would like to see more leadership from M&C regarding vocal ministry and growth in that area. I think we assume people will 'get it' about ministry—but it's quite hard!"

"I appreciate our budget process and the encouragement for each committee to be as true as it can about its budget needs."

"I am impressed with the continued vitality of our meeting and its involvement in the Yearly Meeting."

Our building is sacred space. . . .We share the load [of caring for it] and reap the benefits spiritually and communally. The building is a gift from the past that is supported and shared in the present, ensuring a presence for Friends in the future.

[From a Friend spending several months abroad] "I truly miss being at Worship. We have such a variety of messages; the more brief the more impact, for me. I wish for words from young school-age attenders too."

Several years ago, the City of Portland decided to redo the section of Forest Avenue on which we are located, and that required us to do research and work to identify and update water and sewer connections, deal with a tree that may have been threatened, and address some issues with drainage on our parking area. That led us into a period of continued attention to building-related concerns. In 2013 we replaced the meeting house roof, rebuilt several of our large windows, and addressed other building concerns. This focus on the material turned out not to be a distraction from our spiritual concerns, but, rather, an expression of our concern for right care of property.

Recognizing that our building is sacred space, and that many Friends are not familiar with all the building "systems", a new group has offered workshops on how to use all our appliances in support of events such as weddings, memorial services, and large events sponsored by regional or national Friends groups.

State of Society Report (continued)

Also part of this consideration, and a burning concern for many Friends, is the condition of our earth, global warming, and common disregard for these issues. Our Earth and Spirit Committee carries a deep, Spirit-held concern for the care of the earth, and has helped us share our personal experiences in honoring nature and learning from its rhythms, take time learning together about actual bonding with trees, and in turn bonding with all species. Their query to us – “What more is possible for me in my relationship with the earth?”

Another spiritually grounded project involved caring for our meeting history. Our Library and Archives Committee has collected and filed all of our newsletters, minutes, and other reports from 1975 onward. These have also been assembled into archival volumes that are available for our use, and are being put in digital form for easier access.

Portland Friends Meeting is active with efforts on a range of social concerns – some by committees, and many by individual Friends. Our Peace and Social Concerns Committee cosponsored a workshop on lobbying, with resource people from FCNL, that helped us learn how best to communicate views to our senators and representatives. On the next day, members of our meeting were preparing for meetings with these officials. And we have been cooperating with other Friends meetings in Maine to advance positions that Friends support.

Our relatively new Leadings Committee completed discernment on its fifth round of applications. Funded with the yearly proceeds of a bequest, we supported Friends sharing stories about work with Native Americans and Non-natives that occurred between 1987 and 1993, sending a young friend to a work project in Nicaragua, and developing a laundromat/community service project. Not all of the approved projects were able to get off the ground, and the committee has had to develop some agility in learning how to discern and support leadings that don't come with major institutional support.

We've come to recognize that our Nominating Committee plays a significant role in our growth and stability. Their work defining committee roles, and actively soliciting community engagement has been significant and inspiring.

This all sounds overwhelmingly positive. And yet we seek more. Can we strengthen our music and give more encouragement to non-verbal expressions of hopes, anxieties, delights? Are we too dependent upon the work and faithfulness of a few “pillars” of the meeting – Friends who have made themselves available for so many projects?

And how can we all become clearer about our leadings, and about what we have to declare in this world? These and other questions will lead us as we begin this new year.

The Friends School of Portland is a separate Quaker institution, but one closely associated with our meeting. Teachers, administrators, and student families are members of our meeting, and we all deeply value the school. It certainly is part of our spiritual community. The school's recent decisions to purchase new land and begin fundraising for their new building have excited many Friends, and yet also raised concerns. Bringing Quaker process into our somewhat secular institutions remains a challenge for us, as we bring our work into the world.



Save Your Stamps for Quaker Fundraiser

Here is an easy way to support a number of Quaker organizations. Either of these web pages explains the project in detail: <http://www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org/stamps.htm>

If you are willing to donate any of the items in this list (ask friends and family, too!), they are being collected a basket or manila envelope with a sign on it in the parlor at the Meetinghouse:

- Cancelled stamps, except no flags or liberty bells.
- Cut up to ¼" of envelope around the stamps. Recently released forever stamps are especially valuable.
- Domestic stamps prior to 1946 post marks in original condition, leave attached to envelope. Foreign stamps--current and older post marks in original condition--leave attached to envelope.
- Picture post cards, stamp attached, unused picture post cards, or black and white post cards (high value).
- Stamp collections
- Greeting cards, such as Birthday, Halloween and get-well cards, before 1940's
- Baseball cards
- Coin collections
- Historical paper, including photographs, documents, prints, autographs, etc.



If you have any questions, contact: Earl Walker/Quaker Missions West, 650 Harrison Ave., Claremont, CA 91711, Phone: 909-638-6764

Now, Friends, deal plainly with yourselves, and let the eternal Light search you, and try you, for the good of your souls. For this will deal plainly with you. It will rip you up, and lay you open, and make all manifest which lodges in you; the secret subtlety of the enemy of your souls, this eternal searcher and trier will make manifest. Therefore all to this come, and by this be searched, and judged, and led and guided. For to this you must stand or fall.

~ Margaret Fell, 1614-1702

Attention All Friends with regard to the Meetinghouse

We are sometimes finding the lights on and the meeting room thermostat above 57 when they should not be this way. If you come into the building at any time, individually or with a group, please be sure about these three things when you leave:

1. Both doors are locked. (Please test them from the outside to be sure they do not open.)
2. All lights are off inside the building (except for emergency sign lights).
3. The thermostats, particularly the one in the meeting room, are set at 57 degrees. (If you do not know how to do this, please call Liz Maier, Chris Beach or one of the meeting Co-Clerks Sarah Cushman or Andy Grannell to let one of us know.)

Also, please call one of these folks if you come into the meetinghouse during the week and find an outer door unlocked, lights on, or the heat set too high. Thank you!



Portland Friends Meeting: Who's who, and what do we do? Nominating Committee

There are about 125 individual and committee positions that Friends fill each year. Most of the work of the Meeting is done by folks filling these positions -- from Co-Clerks of the Meeting to Treasurers to Committee Clerks and Committee Members to the folks who close up the meetinghouse, put out the newsletter, teach our youth, remind us of Earth and Spirit, tend to our library and cemetery, and on the list goes. Our meeting works as well as it does because of so many of us step forward to help.

It is the Nominating Committee's job to facilitate the placement of folks in these positions. From late September of any given year until early January of the next, Nominating does its heavy lifting. We meet a few times as a committee, communicate often by email and phone, and individually contact those who have been doing the work of the Meeting, and discern who will continue in their current roles, who will step down, and who might be willing step in to fill openings. It is quite a process, carried out by former co-clerks and others who have a good sense of the whole meeting and of its members and attenders. This year, Nominating's members are Rob Levin (Clerk), Brad Bussiere-Nichols, Stefanie Fairchild, Muriel Allen and Chris Beach. As always, we are grateful to and applaud each of you who helps Portland Friends Meeting thrive.

A Sure Sign of Spring – Seed Catalogs!

Durham Friends Youth group will be selling Fedco seeds in about 2 weeks. We are repackaging top quality 2014 seeds- **organic seeds when available**- in small packages for \$1-\$2 Please contact Wendy Schlotterbeck if you are interested. schlotterbeck@roadrunner.com

If you let Wendy know what you might like to purchase she will deliver them to a convenient location. (Portland Friends Meeting) Here's the list:



205 - Provider Bush Green Bean OG

285 - Kentucky Wonder Pole Bean

761 - Green Arrow Shell Pea OG

883 - Sugar Ann Snap Pea OG

1313 - Marketmore 76 Slicing Cucumber OG

1611 - Zeppelin Delicata Winter Squash OG

1720 - New England Pie Pumpkin OG

2042 - Scarlet Nantes Carrot

2109 - Early Wonder Tall Top Beet OG

2498 - Walla Walla Sweet Spanish Onion

2550 - Tye Spinach

2712 - Black Seeded Simpson Lettuce OG

2729 - Red Salad Bowl Lettuce OG

2988 - Winter Lettuce Mix

3023 - Arugula OG

3036 - Bright Lights Chard

3312 - Fiesta Broccoli OG

3375 - Ruby Perfection Cabbage

3467 - Nero di Toscana or Lacinato Kale

4106 - Honeydrop Cherry Tomato ECO

4149 - Heirloom Tomato Mix OG

4517 - Caribe Cilantro OG

4879 - Bachelors Button Mix

4920 - Pacific Beauty Calendula Mix

5035 - Sensation Mix Cosmos

5038 - Bright Lights Mix Cosmos

5288 - Jewel Mix Nasturtium

5500 - Autumn Beauty Mix Sunflower OG

5599 - Sunflower Sampler

5731 - State Fair Mix Zinnia



Portland Friends Meeting
1837 Forest Ave
Portland, ME 04103

Address Service Requested



Next newsletter deadline:
Wednesday, April 9, 9pm

submissions: pfnnewsletter@grantwinners.net