



Hopewell Meeting

OHIO VALLEY YEARLY MEETING NEWSLETTER

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Quaker Quill

February 2003

Friends' Peace Witness in a Time of Crisis

-- Deborah Jordan and Byron Branson

We were called to gather in Greensboro, North Carolina January 17th-20th to consider our responses to the growing danger of global war and terrorism. "It is only the fifth time in FWCC's (Friends World Committee for Consultation) 66-year history that such a conference has been called, so this is a significant event," the program said. Two hundred and fifty Friends, fifty of those identifying as youth, from all over North America, came. Byron Branson, Deborah Jordan, Kelsey MacDonald & Eliza Rodgers from OVYM traveled together by car. (Byron had grown up in Greensboro -- his father was minister at New Garden Friends Meeting which hosted us Saturday night, so we had good directions and a great orientation to the area.)

Those attending included Yearly Meeting representatives from Evangelical Friends, Friends United Meeting, and Friends General Conference plus Quaker organizational leadership (FWCC, AFSC, FCNL, QUNO, Peace Teams and more). We came with our various expectations -- some of us hoped for a corporate statement to be issued at the end. We heard panels speak about their own peacemaking; Biblical and historical experience with the Peace Testimony; wrestling with the Peace Testimony; strengthening our peacemaking; and had chances to choose among workshops about different projects, ideas, and approaches. We had Bible study, open & programmed worship, and worship sharing throughout the weekend. We even had an open space afternoon where we created interest groups and some people continued a threshing session. About a 100 of us stood for peace and against a war with Iraq on the corner near Guilford College Saturday at dusk. By the last open worship, people were filled with reflections, thoughts, and ministry. It took an elder to close the worship reminding us that we all might feel

moved to speak but we needed to get on with the practical details of departure. It took a young Friend to remind us that this was not the end, only the beginning.

It was an extraordinary gathering - to meet with diverse Friends focused on peace in the spirit of worship and wrestle with seemingly contradictory aspects of our faith. Someone remarked how only Quakers could have planned a peace conference on the weekend when the largest peace demonstration of recent times was being organized in Washington D.C. There was no lack of information, joy, and inspiration, and it was also very much a lived experience. We didn't come up with a corporate statement but --probably more importantly-- a rethinking of, a reaffirmation of and a rededication to our living peace testimony.

Just as one Canadian Friend has witnessed against the war in Iraq for the past 12 years and talked about listening to the whispers for leadings, one young Friend who was tired of sitting inside 2 days spent some of the last morning perched in a beautiful magnolia tree listening to the whispers. This message of peace with the Earth was a part of the rethinking of our Peace Testimony.

It was clear we are each called to many different roles - some of us are stoking the fires at Meeting so others can come and be renewed, some of us are going to Iraq to witness, etc. as we each are listening deeply to the Spirit. We look forward to sharing and dialoguing with you further. To read some of the reports and reflections from the conference, check the website (www.friendspeace.org) and contribute to the ongoing discussion.

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 Claire Ferguson, Fort Wayne WG



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Feb 1 OVYM Executive Committee, Eastern Hills Friends Meeting, Cincinnati. Noon
- Feb 1 YM Planning Committee, Eastern Hills Friends Meeting, Cincinnati, 9:00 a.m.
- Feb 8-9 Teen retreat, West Richmond Friends Meeting, Richmond, IN
- Feb 16 Miami Quarterly Meeting, Miami Meeting, Waynesville.
- Feb 21-23 "Resistance and Obedience to God: a Weekend with David Ferris" led by Marty Grundy, Friends Center, Barnesville, OH
- March 13-16 Organizing for Peace: Arts and Activism, Earlham, Richmond, IN
- March 20-23 FWCC Annual Meeting, Houston, TX
- March 28-30 Shape Note Singing: A Way to Expand the Heart Toward God, Friends Center of Ohio Yearly Meeting, Barnesville, OH
- March 29 Discipline Revision Committee, Bloomington Friends Meeting.
- April 5 OVYM Executive Committee, Earlham School of Religion, Noon
- June 7 OVYM Executive Committee, Community Friends Meeting, Noon
- July 30-Aug 3 183 Annual Sessions, Earlham College, Richmond, IN



Assistant Clerk's Page

Dear Friends,

These cold, dark days of winter are a time to look inward and seek the seeds of spiritual growth, waiting in silence for the gentle whisper, the motion of Love. These are dark times, too, in the world, and we sometimes despair that the Light will prevail. I look long and hard in these dark times for signs of hope, for the first green things to emerge from under the layer of dead leaves in the garden, for the slanting of the sun's rays a little longer in the evening. I listen in my heart for God's message of hope, hearing George Fox's reminder that there is an ocean of Light that will overcome the ocean of darkness. I look around and see such an outpouring of Divine love, the fresh snow tracing dark branches in the crisp morning air, the gentle joy of new parents playing with their baby in meeting for worship, the caring work of Friends who are determined to make a difference, the silhouettes of dark trees against a rosy sky...God calls out to us everywhere, reminding us that we are surrounded by an ocean of Light and Love.

Like seeds in the winter garden, the work of the Spirit in Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting also continues through the winter, through the efforts of our devoted and hard-working committees. This good work is preparing the soil of the Yearly Meeting, helping the way open for new growth, for healing, for new revelation and understanding. Advancement and Nurture has been visiting monthly meetings, providing loving care and support where it is most needed. The Clerical Support Ad Hoc Committee has received positive input as well as cautions from monthly meetings, and will soon be bringing a recommendation to Executive Committee that a Clerical Support Person be hired. The Discipline Revision Committee is reviewing the many rich contributions and insights from monthly meetings to see where God is leading us as a Yearly Meeting in the areas of close relationships and environmental concerns. The Peace and Social Concerns Committee has worked quickly and energetically to help us express our strong concerns about this nation's movement towards war. This hard work on behalf of the Yearly Meeting is lovingly appreciated.

I know that we are all so very busy in our lives, with work and family commitments, committee meetings and responsibilities in our monthly meetings. Some Sunday nights I tell my family that I'm "all Quakered out!" Today my inspirational calendar (thank you Susie!) reminds me that "God can pour on the blessings in astonishing ways so that you're ready for anything and everything, more than just ready to do what needs to be done." (From the Second Book of Corinthians)

May God pour the blessings on each of you in this New Year. May you be filled and nourished with the outpouring of Divine Love, even in these dark winter days, with the sure knowledge that the Light is always in us and around us.

In peace,
Lisa Cayard, Assistant Clerk

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. His eyes are closed. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their primitive form -- this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of all religiousness.

— Albert Einstein

From the Discipline Revision Committee

Dear Friends,

The OVYM DRC met on Saturday, 14 December 2002. We gratefully acknowledge the rich contributions on the environment received thus far from Bloomington, Community, Eastern Hills, Lexington, North Meadow, and Oxford. These materials provided the basis for the Committee's discussion of the direction our work on the environment should take. We suggest as the working title for this section "Friends and the Environment: Living as Part of God's Creation." The sense of our meeting was that this section should stress enduring spiritual truths. Although we had originally hoped to develop headings for specific sub-sections at this meeting, we came to see that there is not yet unity on how the treatment of the environment in the revised Faith and Practice might be organized. Furthermore, we have not heard from the majority of OVYM meetings regarding the environment, and we recognize that the energies of many meetings are currently focused with witnessing for peace.

With this in mind, we would like to direct Friends' attention to two queries in the 1978 OVYM Book of Discipline: the Tenth Query (p. 66) and the Eleventh Query (p. 67). We would also add the following queries on peace and the environment:

(1) How do you see the interrelationship between our Peace Testimony and our concern for the Environment?

(2) How can ecological injustice be one of the seeds of war? What specific actions are you taking to address or to help remove this injustice?

(3) What deeper spiritual principles underlie the specific environmental concerns that move various Friends to action?

We hope that discussion of these queries may help you to develop further ideas on the Environment that you would be moved to share with the Committee. Such discussion may also lead you to send contributions for the revised Faith and Practice on the Peace Testimony, which we would welcome for future use.

The Committee thanks those meetings that have sent us responses to the draft chapter on Close Relationships, and we of course continue to welcome your feedback on this section.

The Committee's next meeting will take place on Saturday, 29 March 2003. Please send your responses by Monday, 17 March 2003 by e-mail to rsprouse@indiana.edu or martinp@indiana.edu.



JP Lund viewing William Penn's grave and Old Jordans Meetinghouse near Jordans, England, October 2002

QUARTERLY MEETING NEWS

Joint Quarterly Meeting

Miami and Whitewater Quarters met jointly at Happy Hollow Camp, Brown County, Indiana on October 19th, 2002.

A minute was approved by Whitewater Quarterly Meeting and sent to Miami Quarterly Meeting for consideration of a review of the OVYM assessment process: "Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting currently employs a system for assessments which is historical among Friends, but our process neglects to consider disparities in membership such as age, resident or non-resident membership, and financial ability. We would like Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting to review the assessment process." Miami Quarterly Meeting considered various responses, and endorsed the request that OVYM review its assessment process.

Whitewater Quarter

Whitewater Quarterly Meeting - January 18 at Whites Institute - Family and Rehabilitation Center

Quarterly Meeting was hosted by White Rose, amid 4-degree weather and blowing but not too bad snow. Our worship and meeting for worship with a concern for business were strongly influenced by the current world situation and by our newly established Peace and Social Concerns Committee. We remained centered in our worship regarding the heaven that is around us that we so often don't recognize.

Our business meeting did agree to pass on to yearly meeting the concern that yearly meeting assessment be reevaluated to look at resident versus nonresident members, numbers in a family and available resources among members of our meetings. This has been discussed by both quarterly meetings doing the joint quarter sessions at Happy Hollow Camp in our separate business meetings.

Most of the rest of our business was reporting work already under way.

After an ample pitch-in lunch with wonderful casseroles made by members of White Rose, we were treated to a history of the development of Whites Institute and its founder, Joshua White. Joshua, a Philadelphia Quaker, was very industrious and creative. He is credited with several innovations in the use of anthracite coal, the development processes related to iron processing and some other aspects of the industrial revolution. He felt, since he had prospered well, he should return some of his good fortune to society. He did so by creating two boys schools, one in Iowa and one in Indiana. He met with Indiana Quakers, told them of his desires to create a place where any boy could learn spiritual values, get an education and learn a vocation. He gave \$20,000 for the purpose and turned the project over to Indiana Quakers after carefully agreed upon terms. The school currently has 120 residents, boys and girls, and oversees foster care and "aftercare" to another 200+ children. During the years the school students and staff ran a farm, were an Indian Education school 1883-1895 and have seen the facility change in other directions as situations required. Currently the students are more likely to stay from a few weeks to 10 months, where they used to be there several years. Currently the school is part of the public school system but still run privately. Their services include five offices in other locations in Indiana and lower Michigan. (If any historians out there find mistakes in my brief summary, it would make an interesting article for another Quill!!)

Miami Quarter

The next Quarterly Meeting will be held February 16th at Miami Monthly meeting in Waynesville, OH. A presentation will be given about the Quaker Heights Care Community and the new assisted living facilities. Following the presentation (approximately one-half hour), Friends will be guided on a tour of the new facilities. Children,

especially teens, are invited to attend. Monthly Meeting Representatives will meet together during lunch to nominate clerks, treasurer, and committee of two for the coming year; representatives should obtain approval by nominees before the business meeting.

Comments and queries for reflection from *Listening Spirituality, vol. II, Corporate Spiritual Practice Among Friends* by Patricia Loring:

"Of all the hierarchical levels, the quarterly meeting has undergone the most change. Its structure and functions are less clearly defined than those of the monthly and yearly meetings. In some areas, the quarterly meeting is the place to season business in preparation for yearly meeting. In other places, minutes proceed directly from monthly meetings to yearly meeting, without further seasoning. This can result in an excessive amount of business on the floor of the yearly meeting. Without discernment in the quarter, business is not well prepared for consideration, and the wider membership is not sufficiently aware of it and its ramifications to make a discernment.

Whether quarterly meetings do or do not continue to attend to business, they are also an occasion for Friends from a geographical region to come together for fellowship more regularly and intimately than they might otherwise. It can be a rare opportunity for urban and rural Friends to meet and share the differences their demographic situations make to their meetings. It is a wholesome stretch of one's sense of fellowship beyond the monthly meeting."

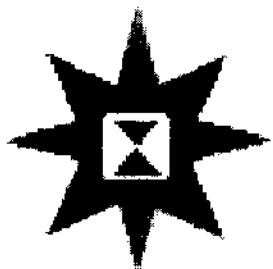
"In many meetings, ... potluck is held after worship on the day of meeting for business. Such potlucks not only supply sustenance for the conduct of business ahead, they also embody the inward communion of meeting for worship in the outward community of the shared meal and help us remember our life together."

"Do you participate in your monthly meeting's meeting for business? Were you aware that membership at the monthly meeting level automatically made you a member of the quarterly and yearly meetings?

How might we preserve structures that are spacious enough to open us to governance by the will of God? How can the loose structures that facilitate discernment be enabled to survive the importation of practices from large-scale organizations? In what ways might we continue to practice our listening spirituality in a corporate setting? How can we avoid our organizations

becoming so tight that they squeeze out the spaces in which the Spirit moves?"

"Queries: Do you find it more difficult to listen prayerfully one-on-one or in a group? Do you find it more difficult to listen in an open, humble and respectful spirit to personal matters or to issues of business that challenge your own views? Are you able to retain your sense of love and unity with someone whose views diverge from or challenge your own? Are you able to give them credit for purity of motive? What seems to disrupt your sense of unity? ... to support it? Do you find yourself impatient with those who fail to see your point of view? ... impatient with waiting to come to unity? ... impatient to get on with it? Do you seek the will of God in all things? ... some things? ... sometimes? What governs your desire? Is there a pattern in what's given over, and what's withheld? Have you found yourself emotionally distressed about some matter of business before the meeting? Were you ever able to focus on your own role in creating or maintaining the difficulty rather than focusing exclusively on the behavior of others? ... to become less attached to your own view or will? ... to come to peace with the situation of difference or conflict in the end? If so, how did that come about? Were you changed by the experience in any way?"



American Friends Service Committee

-- Submitted by OYYM representatives Deborah Jordan, Tom Bennett, and Susan Lee Barton

Your representatives to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) attended the annual corporation meeting in Philadelphia, 1-2 November, 2002 celebrating the 85th anniversary of AFSC. As Paul Lacey said, it's not exactly a happy birthday celebration since AFSC was founded to provide relief in a time of war (World War I), and we're now once again on a saber-rattling march towards war with Iraq. Yet he reminded us there is joy in gathering for the annual AFSC meeting and being about the work of a faith-based organization. Perhaps when one of our basic testimonies, the peace testimony is challenged Friends are called to do our best work.

While we spent some time talking about local and national efforts to resist a war on Iraq, this is just the beginning of the AFSC's efforts. The board, staff, corporation, and committee members have completed a visioning process that has helped increase communication and focus not only among the 425 staff in 43 locations in the U.S.A. and 22 other countries, but also between the AFSC and its constituents in Quakerism at large. One result of this effort is the AFSC Strategic Plan 2003 - 2008 document released at the meeting, which is an impressive beginning in laying out the work we need to do as an organization to achieve a world :

- Where security and fundamental human rights eclipse violence and oppression.
- Where opportunities to make a living as part of a sustainable community supplant poverty.

-- Where appreciation of diverse gifts and cultures replaces exclusion and rejection.

-- Where commitment to love and dialogue prevails.

Under this vision the organization has identified six goal areas for focus: Economic Justice; Migration and Human Mobility; Peacebuilding and Prevention of Conflict; A New Vision of Justice; Humanitarian Assistance and Education; Youth. (Space considerations prevent further detail, but your representatives are more than willing to accept questions or arrange to visit you to discuss this document in further detail, as well as to receive your input.)

While this remarkable document lays the ground work for the future, AFSC continues an active presence in some very difficult regions. For example, we offer material assistance and peace-building initiatives in the Middle East, Colombia, Laos, India, Eastern Europe, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our awareness of the difficulties we seek to address grew as we learned of the difficulties our keynote speakers suffered. The deputy defense minister of South Africa was scheduled to be our main speaker. As a Quaker she has a new vision of defense. She had to cancel at the last minute when there was a state of emergency declared in one of the townships in her country. In her place we were fortunate to have Jean Zaru, a Palestinian Quaker as our keynote speaker. She was obviously very weary, yet very eloquent. She spoke personally of living in Ramallah under a state of siege by the Israelis. When questioned about her emphasis on the Palestinians, she asked how one can be balanced when the inequities are so great - an ant being crushed by the elephant doesn't appreciate neutrality.

We learned of some of the many projects that involve Monthly Meeting participation. AFSC is partnering to build schools in Afghanistan. Through our Campaign of Conscience, we are sending water purifiers to Iraq to help alleviate suffering caused by a lack of drinkable water. Contaminated water is the number one killer of children under five, and more than 90 Meetings have signed on to the pledge to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Iraq even if it violates the

sanctions. AFSC is also once again offering several work camp opportunities.

Closer to home, we heard news of our Great Lakes Regional offices: the anti-death penalty work in Ohio, the African-American cultural and leadership program in Chicago that serves 1000 youth a week, the participation in a statewide interfaith coalition in Michigan to work on human rights issues within the state as well as wider peace issues, and the regional Emergency Material Assistance Program based in Indiana.

Besides the formal reports and meetings, there's always the chance to meet new Friends. We appreciated meeting Quakers from many backgrounds. For example, Deborah shared one Indian dinner with a first generation Chinese American woman, third generation Japanese American woman, first generation African (Kenyan) American man, and who knows what generation Swedish American woman.

We heard several moving stories of faith and commitment. One was the story Tony Bing, a former colleague of Paul Lacey's at Earlham College, told about his feeling called to go to Iraq in 1990 in the first peace delegation. Those who went were offering themselves as a trade for the hostages, knowing they might never come back. Paul Lacey agreed to cover his classes knowing that sometimes staying home and supporting others is also a calling. Tony Bing continues to be active in peace building in the Middle East and reported on the fact-finding delegation AFSC sent to Iraq last summer. (More information on this trip can be found at <http://www.afsc.org>.)

Mary Ellen McNish reminded us to be ambassadors, holding a vision of the peaceable kingdom. She reminded us that the true axis of evil is "pandemic poverty, environmental degradation, and a world awash in weapons."

Our descriptions of what we learned in Philadelphia barely scratch the surface of the organization that reaches out around the world for us, carrying on the work of peace. For more information contact your representatives or view the AFSC website at <http://www.afsc.org>.

FGC Conference on Racism

Paul Kriese

Friends from most of the Yearly Meetings in the United States met for five days outside Pittsburgh to discuss racism within and outside of the Religious Society of Friends. We spent four days in nice reasonable dialogue and one day beginning the hard work of looking at and dealing with racism. We did role plays, watched movies, defined terms until we became comfortable enough with each other to talk about what is really the issue: Racism in our Meetings. Why there are so few Friends of Color (THEY do not appreciate OUR type of worship). We have a wonderful tradition so it is other people's problem (KKK members in the Religious Society of Friends in Indiana and Ohio.) We discussed expectations about finances that often sidetrack Friends of Color. We discussed how only White people can be racists. We gave examples like one Friend who had grown up in a Friends Meeting, was married in that Meeting, gave birth to two male children whom most people thought were cute until they reached 18. Then one Friend said they did not want to return to Meeting because the 'cute' babies scared them because they were tall black men.

We need to explore the racial barriers in our meetings because we live in the world and racism is there as well. The consultation members pledged to continue to work on these issues in our Monthly and Yearly Meetings and to support each other in this often lonely work. I will be discussing some of these issues at OVYM this summer.



MONTHLY MEETING NEWS

Bloomington Meeting

Jim Morgan, correspondent

Bloomington Meeting has had causes for celebration and sorrow. The memorial meeting for Dottie Day was well attended by family and friends. Meeting for worship the next day was especially deep as friends related the passing of others in the community that week.

We celebrated the marriage of Marlaime Browning and David L. Ploskonka, under the care of the meeting. We also welcomed Charlotte Hess, a long time attender, into membership. Charlotte reports that she was first encouraged to join meeting by Haines Turner.

In addition to the stories and poetry recently published by members, Mitch and Eileen Rice have produced a compact disk of their songs from their performances at the Bloomington Farmers Market. The songs have both their old-time style and social activist views.

Our December newsletter also honored Carrie Newcomer, whose eight disks celebrate Quaker values, and whose social causes include Habitat for Humanity, Planned Parenthood, AFSC and our local food bank.

We are looking forward to hosting Whitewater Quarterly Meeting in April, 2003.

Campus Meeting

- Terry Miller, correspondent

A vigil in opposition to war in Iraq continues to be held on the Wilmington College campus (the corner of College Street and Fife Avenue) on Thursdays from 12:00 to 12:30 in the afternoon. Larry and Lenna Mac Gara are heading up this effort which has included students as well as members of Campus Friends Meeting.

Violeta Tribandiene, a recent graduate of the Earlham School of Religion, spoke to Campus Friends at their first-of-the-month First day breakfast about her discovery of Friends in her native country of Lithuania and her "mission" there to familiarize her fellow countrymen with the Quaker message. To that effect, she has translated Wilmer Cooper's book "A Living Faith: An Historical Study of Quaker Beliefs" into Lithuanian. Violeta is currently interning with the Wilmington Yearly Meeting and Wilmington Friends before returning to her native country some time this summer.

Campus Friends have been very happy to welcome Bob Powell into membership. His membership was recently transferred from Yellow Springs Monthly Meeting.

Clear Creek Meeting

- John Todd, correspondent

The first two weeks of January, 2003 have been rather quiet at meeting. This is in the backdrop of a tremendous effort for a peaceful resolution of the conflict with Iraq carried on by Susan Lee Barton and other members of monthly meeting. The situation is still serious but there are now glimmers of hope because so many people are making their voices heard. The internet is now a force for peace. There are many peace websites and information and involvement through the internet has improved communication among peace activists.

The Wednesday noon peace vigil has been highly successful. The vigil has achieved recognition by city government and the town newspaper and by thousands of city residents. Today, January 15th, eight people stood in the cold and snow for one hour to witness for peace. The response of motorists and even of police workers was overwhelmingly supportive based on waves and honks. One blond haired student running in orange shorts and shirt with no gloves stopped and spoke with the demonstrators about peace for Iraq.

Meeting for worship will pick up next First Day due to the beginning of Earlham College Classes. Earlham School of Religion classes begin on January 28th. The energy and intensity of the students deepens the meeting and introduces creative fresh approaches to Quakerism.

College students from Quaker House have been active in meeting for worship and have invited the monthly meeting to attend an open house and to contribute books to its library. These students supply a fresh dynamic to Quaker testimonies by their warmth and openness to all members.

The Ministry & Oversight Committee worked over several years to prepare a pamphlet entitled "A Discernment Process for Ministry Projects." This discernment process provides helpful guidelines for all attenders and members who set up projects in the monthly meeting. It is especially useful for Earlham School of Religion students who carry out field education projects in the meeting. It was approved by Monthly Meeting for Business on 11/10/2002. Copies of the booklet will be sent out to monthly meetings.

For 2003 Carol Sexton is presiding clerk and Peggy Spohr is recording clerk. Margaret Lechner is treasurer and Cathy Habschmidt is the clerk of Ministry & Oversight. Cecile Holvik is archivist and Louise Ronald is the newsletter editor.

Dayton Meeting

David Wood, correspondent

Three of our members attended the "Nurturing the Small Meeting Conference" sponsored by FGC and came back full of ideas and enthusiasm. We are now locally advertising those of our second hour discussions with general appeal as an outreach effort, while other discussions have been related to the OVYM Discipline revision.

For our Christmas program, the children presented a skit about what Jesus' birth might have been like in a modern large city. The original script was from Philadelphia, but the children rewrote it to make it more realistic for their generation and for Dayton; adding a flute duct of a song which

represented the theme. The gifts of the "shepherds" (represented by AFSC staff watching over their materials) were health kits members put together for Iraq. The "Wise News Persons" brought their microphones and cameras to Bob's Auto Repair rather than gold, myrrh and frankincense.

Our meeting room has experienced a redecoration project, culminating in a work day in which most of the meeting participated. We find our new surroundings more conducive to worship and much more pleasing to the eye, but the additions are all portable in case we find a new meeting location.

Eastern Hills Meeting

- Darlene Palmer, correspondent

On October 24 Eastern Hills Friends Meeting, along with Community and Cincinnati Friends, enjoyed the 4th Annual Friends Peace Lecture in Cincinnati with guest lecturer Lori Heninger. Lori is the Quaker representative to the United Nations. She spoke about the economic roots of violent conflict. We enjoyed music by the Wilmington College Chorale, displays and refreshments as well as the opportunity to visit with Quakers from across Cincinnati.

The women's group continues to meet regularly. In December we gathered at Cassandra Staple's home to make cookies and cards. In January poetry was shared at Martha Viehmann's home. The monthly gatherings have a strong core of attenders and further gatherings are planned in the coming months.

One of our young Friends, Nathan Coppock, spent three weeks at a church retreat in the mountains near Guatemala City just after Christmas. He was one of four students chosen from the Cincinnati area to participate in a summer camp experience organized by the Children's International Summer Village (CISV) which plans these foreign exchange programs for 11 to 18-year-olds. The purpose of the summer camps is to break down barriers between different cultures in order to

promote international understanding and the building of friendships. This year's theme was Peace Through Understanding. In order to fully experience the lifestyle of the region, students spent their first three nights with a local host family. They worked with students from nine different countries on a fundraiser for the Doris T. Allen School, a local school funded entirely by the Children's International Summer Village. The Cincinnati students were accompanied by an adult leader from Earlham College, Curtis Gutter. If you would like additional information about CISV, contact Jim Coppock at 513 321-3696.

On December 22 the Meeting enjoyed our annual Christmas party. The tree was decorated with items needed by a local shelter, the Drop Inn Center. After a potluck lunch we enjoyed the talents of many in the meeting. Visual and performing arts were shared, and we felt truly blessed by the many talented people in our group.

Fall Creek Meeting

Eileen Pierce, correspondent

Fall Creek Monthly Meeting has new life with the addition of a new attender and the return of Glenn A. Tyson after a lengthy illness.

In September we were only able to send one of our members to the Nurturing Retreat held in Rosholt, Wisconsin.

On October 3rd we lost a very dear F/friend. A long time member of Fall Creek, Maude R. Ward passed away. On October 27th., we held a memorial for her and the Meeting House was packed with over one hundred fifty (150) friends and relatives. It was a very moving celebration of her life. The memorial was led by William Henry.

In November Fall Creek Monthly Meeting House was alive again with a group of Young Friends from OVYM for their annual weekend retreat. Besides their usual agenda they cleaned the Meeting House for us, for which we are grateful.

Several members of our meeting still hold positions in the Quarterly and Yearly Meeting.

Since August, the rotation of the Clerk within the membership has worked out really well. It has given each one of us the opportunity to learn and to experience the responsibilities of being a Clerk. It is a big responsibility and should not be taken lightly and cannot be learned over night.

Several Job Descriptions have been approved and put into effect, which have helped to support and structure our Meeting in a more meaningful way.

In 2003 we will begin studying Quakerism 101 led by someone from OVYM Religious Education Committee.

Queries are read and discussed at each business meeting.

The Meeting House is always open to the Community for gatherings.

Lexington Meeting

Kelly Feibes, correspondent

Many personal milestones were marked in the latter part of 2002: one young Friend earned her driver's license and another passed the qualifying exams for her doctorate, oral and written. Another Friend married. One Friend has recovered well from surgery, and two others are enjoying new hearing aids. Our meeting's extended family has grown through one birth and three adoptions. One Friend suffered the tragic loss of a nephew.

We continue to make adjustments to accommodate the growing number of young friends among us. A childcare committee has been formed to provide childcare for all meeting activities. Our FDS committee is trying to find volunteers who will commit to several weeks at a time so that they and the children get to know each other. In the meantime, the FDS committee has been restructured to become a Religious Education

Committee, which includes 3 subcommittees. These subcommittees are Adult RE, Teen & Middle Youth, and Children's RE. A coordinator will take on the "buck stops here" position for our Religious Education Program. It is hoped that this task may eventually evolve into a paid part-time staff position. Adult RE has recently included a series of discussions on the works of Parker J. Palmer. We were also grateful to have a potluck program presented by Sharon Wallace and other members of the Louisville delegation that went to Palestine last April.

Previously, we had shared music just before meeting for worship most weeks while reserving one "Silent Sunday" every month. However, Silent Sunday will be laid down for now since we have not observed it recently, and no one has objected to its absence.

We have experienced financial difficulty this year, and Friends will hold a special called Business Meeting to consider our finances and 2003 budget.

We have, nevertheless, had some fun over the holidays! Our annual Christmas party was a great success, and this year we also enjoyed a New Years celebration with a potluck and worship.

Several of our youth participated in the OVYM Middle Youth Quaker Mini-pilgrimage in September. They reported having a great time.

Two of our members attended the September Friends General Conference gathering in Wisconsin. We were grateful for their reports on some of the workshop and conference highlights. One result of the conference is that the name of our Oversight Committee has been changed to Care and Nurture.

Miami Meeting

- Tom Nowel, correspondent

Greetings and blessings from Miami Monthly Meeting.

In October the Meeting approved its officers and committee assignments. Milton Cook continues as Clerk of the Meeting as does Tom Nowel as Assistant Clerk (Recording Clerk) and Bill Hoch as Treasurer. The Meeting sadly accepted resignations from Seth and Marjorie Furnas as members of the Ministry and Oversight Committee due to health and transportation issues. Both have served the committee for decades.

The Meeting hosted the annual Waynesville Thanksgiving service this past November. The White Brick was nearly filled to capacity. The Meeting House was also filled with singing, preaching, recorded music and two politicians. This diverse group also worshiped in silence for ten minutes. The Meeting provided deserts and refreshments following the community event. The service was a gift and opportunity for the Meeting to share with the Waynesville community.

The opening of the assisted living facility at Quaker Heights is scheduled within the next month. Miami Friends look forward to this opportunity to further serve the community.

The American Friends Service Committee will sponsor the "Journey of Hope" during Ninth Month, 2003. The "Journey" will include family members of murder victims who are opposed to the death penalty. Although this event is nine months in the future, Friends look forward to sponsoring an evening presentation at the White Brick Meeting House. More information will be forthcoming.

The annual Christmas program was scheduled for First Day prior to the holiday. The morning began as Friends caroled in the halls of Quaker Heights Nursing Home. Meeting for Worship was followed by a carry-in brunch and entertainment by Meeting teens who had hastily formed a rock and roll band for the occasion. Travis Cook, Zack Cook and Will Nowel, the so-called "Holy Rockers," played rock versions of Christmas carols and mixed in a little current pop music. A number of families traveled this year during the holidays, and attendance was down from previous years. Those who attended enjoyed the spirit-filled morning.

Plans are being made for a series of "Quakerism 101" classes on First Day mornings early in 2003, and the Meeting's Bi-centennial Committee is planning for this important event during Tenth Month, 2003. The Meeting is challenged by declining members and attenders.

We wish all of you a new year filled with blessings, happiness, and strength in family and Meeting.

Oxford Meeting

Camilla Flintermann, correspondent

The Oxford Friends Meeting has had an active autumn. In mid-October, at the request of her family, we hosted a memorial service for our dear friend and attender, Linda Sheppard, who died suddenly. In early November, we co-sponsored an "Empty Bowls" lunch, which raised nearly \$2,300.00 for a local anti-hunger program. It was such a success that we expect to do it next year, with help again from the United Methodist Church and the Miami pottery students (who contributed 230 hand-thrown bowls).

We have also joined with other Oxford peace activists in a weekly vigil in the uptown park, protesting the looming escalation of war with Iraq.

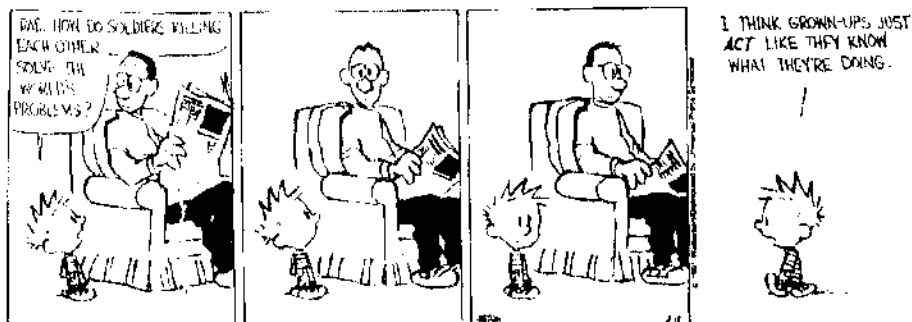
We again celebrated our "Advent Event", with food, fellowship, and fun. Cecilia Shore, though flat on her injured back, created a wonderful "Jeopardy" game for the occasion, to test, explore and expand our knowledge of Iraq. This tied in with our service project, which this year was filling health kits for AFSC to send to Iraq. The new director of the Campus Ministry Center where we meet, and her husband, were our guests and we are glad that even with many changes there, we will still be able to meet at CMC, as we have for many years.

We continue to work on Discipline Revision and plan for Quarterly Meeting in February.

In January, new officers assumed their responsibilities:

- Clerk - Roland Duerksen
- Recording Clerk - Cecilia Shore
- Treasurer - Mary Duerksen
- Ministry & Oversight - Roland Duerksen, Cecilia Shore, Nani Ball, Steve Angell, Bonita Porter, and Mary Duerksen
- Correspondent - Camilla Flintermann
- Publicity - Barbara Diehl
- Newsletters - Camilla Flintermann
- Representative to the Campus Ministry Center Board - Sandra Ward Angell
- Hospitality - Lolita Holmes
- Librarian - Nani Ball
- Outreach - Andy Garrison & Cynthia Durgan
- Peace and Social Concerns - Mary and Roland Duerksen and Bill Wines

Calvin and Hobbes



NEWS FROM OUTSIDE OVYM

Friends World Committee

Announcements from Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas :

1) The Wider Quaker Fellowship is working on a mailing focused on youth, to go out in the Spring or summer of 2003. Youth and people working with young people are invited to submit articles, poetry, drawings, stories, and other such reflections on some aspect of your faith. The Wider Quaker Fellowship mailings go to many non-Friends wanting to learn more about Friends and maintain a connection with Friends, plus isolated Friends and anyone else who wants to receive the mailings. For more information contact Susan Lee Barton (765-939-1449, susanleeb@fwcc.quaker.org) or Vicki Hain-Poorman (215-241-7250, Vickip@fwcc.quaker.org).

2) Susan Lee Barton, FWCC Midwest Field Secretary, is looking for people to accompany her on visits to various Friends' Meetings in our region. Visits in the next few months will include northeastern and central Ohio, southern Ontario, eastern and central Indiana, central Illinois, and eastern Tennessee. This is a great way to meet wonderful people and learn more about the various traditions and worship styles among Friends. For more information and a schedule, contact Susan Lee at 765-939-1449, susanleeb@fwcc.quaker.org, or P.O. Box 2471, Richmond, Indiana 47375. Susan Lee would also love an invitation to your Meeting!

3) The Section of the Americas annual meeting will be held 20-23 March, 2003 in Houston, Texas. All Friends are welcome to attend in addition to representatives from all over the Americas and the Caribbean. Please contact Susan Lee for registration forms.

Right Sharing of World Resources

The RSWR Board of Trustees met in Richmond, Indiana October 25-26. The Board acknowledged that RSWR is at a pivotal point of opportunity and held a searching and deeply rewarding meeting. Actions taken by the Board included:

- Approval of moving the RSWR office to Richmond, Indiana, as soon as reasonably possible
- Welcoming three new Board members: George Kegode (Northern); Muktha Jost (North Carolina, FUM), and Phil Harnden (New York)
- Receiving the final version of the RSWR video
- Approval of the 2003 budget, with \$178,000 available for grants to projects
- Receiving a report from Board member, Bob Barns, on his September trip to Sierra Leone, and recommending expansion of RSWR's work in Sierra Leone
- Receiving a report from Roland Krcager on his visit among Friends in Kenya, affirmation of RSWR's interest in expanding this effort, and approving three Kenyan Friends project
- Approval of three new projects, funded from the 2002 budget
- Approval of ten continuing (multi-year) projects from the 2003 budget
- Approval of ten new projects from the 2003 budget, including Friends' projects in India, Uganda, and Kenya
- Approval of a policy of receiving restricted giving for specific projects.

ORGANIZING FOR PEACE:

Arts and Activism

Thursday-Sunday, March 13-16, 2003
Richmond, Indiana

What is the intent of this event?

- Explore the connections between art, activism, and spirituality;
- Learn tangible skills in organizing for peace;
- Equip participants with specific skills in nonviolence;
- Nurture gathered community of students and church members

Who's going?

Church members and leaders from Brethren, Mennonite, and Quaker traditions and ecumenical friends; college and seminary students from peace church schools and beyond; artists, dancers, musicians; YOU.

You will have a chance to:

- Integrate diverse styles of worship, silence, prayer, visual art, music and dance into your work for social change
- Explore the connections between Christian faith and social change work, and strengthen your own rootedness in faith and spirituality
- Explore the connections between art and justice work
- Build your ideas for activism into a plan that involves and inspires
- Learn methods for successful small group organizing and facilitating
- Network with other college students and church members who are interested in building a nonviolence movement

You will leave with:

- Relationships and networks for continuing your ongoing work for social change
- Ideas for integrating arts and organizing
- Perspectives on strategic nonviolence
- A spirit refreshed from a time of celebration and community

For lots more information and to register, please visit the conference website:
<http://www.brethren.org/oepa/seekingpeace/ofp2003.html>

... Or contact Kim Stuckey, 410-635-8706,
kstuckey_oepa@brethren.org.

Initiating Sponsors: Baker Peace Fund of Bethany Theological Seminary and On Earth Peace (a Church of the Brethren peace education organization: www.brethren.org/oepa); Lead sponsors: Earlham School of Religion, the Plowshares Peace Studies Collaborative of Earlham, Goshen and Manchester Colleges, and Peace Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary



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**Come to Yearly Meeting at Earlham this summer from
Wednesday, July 30 to Sunday, August 3!!!**

Our theme for the sessions will be "BE PATTERNS. Living in the life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars." Bob Schmidt from Northern Yearly Meeting will be our keynote speaker on Friday, Thursday will be a musical evening from members of OVYM. Workshops will include Parenting; Racism; Discernment and sustaining of leadings of individuals and meetings; Living in the power led by the teens; Simplicity/Sustainability; Peace and Social Concerns will lead one based on their discernment at the time; and Bible study. This year we will be adding evening worship on Wednesday.

We are looking forward to Bob Schmidt's presence with as he will be attending all of our sessions. Several of us were privileged to hear Bob at the Nurturing Conference in Wisconsin in September and felt he would add fresh insights and depth to our yearly meeting sessions.