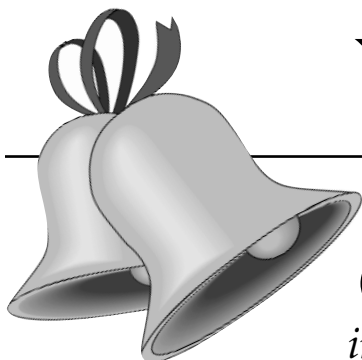


MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Damariscotta, Maine

NEWSLETTER



I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we, too, will be remembered not for our victories or defeats in battle or in politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit.

—John F. Kennedy

January

Saturday	January 4	9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Silent Retreat
Sunday	January 5		Food Pantry Day
Tuesday	January 7		* Evening meal being prepared for the Carpenter's Boatshop
Wednesday	January 8	4:00 p.m.	Ministry & Counsel committee meeting
Sunday	January 12	8:30 a.m. rise of Meeting	* Book Discussion Group Meeting discussion of consider the direction of our membership, our work, and our service
Tuesday	January 14	4:00 p.m.	Peace and Social Concerns committee meeting
Sunday	January 19	11:30 a.m.	Meeting for Business. Bring bag lunch.
Monday	January 20	1:00 - 3:00 p.m. asap	AFSC Maine Peace & Justice Committee meeting Deadline for February <i>Newsletter</i>
Saturday	January 25	10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	FCMPP meeting, Waterville
Sunday	January 26	8:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Book Discussion Group Potluck lunch and memorial service for Barbara St. John

~Advance Notice~

Saturday February 1 all day Quarterly Meeting (Orono or Belfast)

* Look inside for more information regarding these items

~ Calendar events are held at the meetinghouse, unless otherwise noted ~

Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at the meetinghouse, 77 Belvedere Road, Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m. Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Road (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north. The Miles Home Health Care building is on the corner.) The meetinghouse is the first building on the right, 2/10 mile from the corner

Back Issues of the Newsletter, along with other Meeting Information, are available at:
www.lincoln.midcoast.com/~moonlite/q-pages.htm

Friendly Reminders

Moving or changing your email address? Don't forget to notify the newsletter of your changes. Electronic subscriptions via E-mail are environmentally friendly and cost the Meeting nothing. To receive your newsletter via the Web, E-mail a request to Nancy Terrell Hall at moonlite@lincoln.midcoast.com

The Entirely Unofficial **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 12th month of 2002

based on draft minutes

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Susan Phelps presented the final draft of nominations to the meeting (see page 3). The report was approved after Diane Kirkman was added to the list of officers and committee members as manager of e-mail communication to meeting members. There were several queries and suggestions for future Nominating Committee work. One was to consider whether the committee should report every two years instead of annually due to the enormity of the undertaking. No action was taken on this query. It was also suggested that the committee should confer with committee clerks early on in the nominating process to get a grasp of the current work of each committee so that they can more effectively encourage Friends to try new ways of serving. The committee was thanked for its great job.

TREASURER

Paul Diamond reported that we have already expended most of the budgeted amounts in the Community and Friends categories. However, spending for committees has been very light. The general fund has little excess capacity. Pledges are \$2,600 below budget. In spite of this we are essentially in adequate financial health. It was suggested that the Meetinghouse Use Committee report to Monthly Meeting each year on which groups have rented the meetinghouse and any who are in arrears.

MINISTRY & COUNSEL

Charlotte Ritter reported for the committee. A Memorial Minute for Cully Miller was read and approved (see page 5). The project of contacting members and attenders in order to update our database continues.

Volunteers are needed to help with the periodic revision of *New England Faith & Practice*. Yearly Meeting's

Query #12

Peace and Reconciliation

Do you "live in the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars"? Do you faithfully maintain Friends' testimony against military preparations and all participation in war, as inconsistent with the teachings and spirit of Christ? Do you strive to increase understanding and use of non-violent methods of resolving conflicts?

Do you take your part in the ministry of reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations? When discouraged, do you remember that Jesus said, "Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace, such as the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest, and banish your fears?"

John 14:27 NEB

report on proposed revisions is due next April. The clerk asked if there were Friends who might like to read *Faith & Practice* together. Carmen and Earnie Foust expressed willingness to do this. The Meeting at large was encouraged to review individually the New England edition of *Faith & Practice* with an appreciation for the fact that it is a living, and therefore evolving, document.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Paul Diamond read a proposal drafted by Vicki Diamond for a potluck meal of beans and rice to be held on New Year's Eve before the candlelight service. The idea was enthusiastically approved.

PEACE & SOCIAL CONCERNS

Nancy Booth reported for the committee, suggesting that the Meeting prepare the evening meal for the Carpenter's Boatshop on January 7, 2003. This task is normally carried out by Ruth Ives, who is very ill. This would show our support for Ruth in her struggle and for the Boatshop in their ongoing good works. The idea was approved.

Friends expressed their appreciation for the fact that the Hull family is spearheading the Heifer Project this year. (See related piece on back cover.)

Carmen is planning to visit our shut-in members this Christmas morning and New Years Day, and she invited Friends to participate individually or with her, according to the specific needs of each shut-in. Visiting plans should be coordinated with Ministry & Counsel.

The committee continues to work on other issues including bridge peace vigils, advancement of restorative justice concepts in our region, and awareness among youth of alternatives to the draft.

MEETINGHOUSE COMMITTEE

Pete Haviland reported for the committee. It was recommended that the sign at the end of the driveway be replaced with a larger one. This was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Plans are being made for a group trip to Boston to attend a reception and view Quiet Helpers, an exhibit from the German Historical Museum being presented at the Boston Public Library by the American Friends Service Committee. The exhibit will be ongoing from January 4th through February 26th.

Dick Harris reported as representative to the Maine Interfaith Power & Light Project that there are two options available to the Meeting regarding participation in this "green" power effort. The one that is available right now is the purchase of so-called "green tags," which encourage production of environmentally friendly power. Dick recommended that the Meeting purchase 4 green tags at \$20 each in the com-

continued on page 4

Monthly Meeting Notes.....cont'd fr. page 2

ing year. It was noted that our early action could influence others to participate. No decision was made at the meeting, but it was recommended that we monitor the ongoing actions of the project.

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The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Sunday, January 19, 2003, at the rise of Meeting. Bring lunch if you wish. ALL WELCOME.

Nominating Committee

New Committee Assignments for 2003

The Nominating Committee has completed its work and the new committee assignments have been approved by Monthly Meeting. The insert included in this *Newsletter* is formatted to fit in your Handbook. If you receive the newsletter electronically, please download the "committees" pdf file and print it out. It will print on 2 letter-size pages which, when trimmed, will fit into your Handbook. If you prefer, you can pick up a single printed page in the *Newsletter* box in the meetinghouse. Copies of the Handbook are available at the meetinghouse. If you do not have a copy of the Handbook, which outlines the responsibilities of the various committees, please ask Carmen Lavertu for one.

First Day School Progress

by Rachel McGinness and Sarah Ewing

The log kept for First Day School reports three meetings. There were a few others that did not get recorded. So far, the students have done craft projects, explored outside looking for signs of sleeping life, and at the last meeting they expressed some ideas for activities they'd like to do. The First Day School Committee is working with the children to develop their ideas into a plan for future classes. The book *Thee Hannah* by Marguerite DeAngeli will be read one chapter per week. Then the group will talk about the reading and do an activity that ties into the reading.

The First Day School students have put together a list of supplies that they'd like to have available for art projects. Before purchasing anything, we'd like to see if anyone has any of these items to donate. If you have any of the following that you can contribute for First Day School use, please contact Sarah Ewing, 832-6924, <sarah_ewing@sad40.k12.me.us>

Popsicle sticks, Paint (tempera), Scissors, Paint brushes, Glue sticks, Double-stick tape, Colored paper, Pencil sharpener, Glitter, Glitter shakers, Stapler, Good story books (which could lead to activities), Dictionary, Board games, Playing cards.

Save the Date

Dinner & Video to Benefit Seeds of Peace Camp

by Andy Burt

On Saturday, March 1, 2003, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., at Second Congregational Church, Newcastle, Midcoast Friends Meeting and the Midcoast Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will join together to prepare and host a Middle Eastern dinner to raise scholarship money for Seeds of Peace Camp. A deeply moving video produced by campers from Israel and Palestine will be shown, and we will have musical entertainment featuring authentic Middle Eastern songs. Tickets for the dinner will be sold ahead of time. We also hope to hold an intergenerational crafts workshop for the two congregations sometime before the dinner in order to create gifts that can be purchased that evening to further benefit the camp.

Andy Burt and Gretchen Hull are heading the committee for Friends and will work with a group from the Fellowship. Any Friends who would like to serve on the committee or join in this effort in any way, are invited to contact either Andy (882-6848) or Gretchen (563-5416). We will need teams to help prepare food (Andy will come up with easy-to-follow recipes and the ingredients) and folks to help with decorations, set-up, clean-up, etc.

This should be a wonderful community-building endeavor. Beth Israel, the synagogue in Bath, and some other congregations have indicated an interest in helping. Our goal is to raise \$3000, the amount needed for a scholarship.

AFSC Exhibit 1/4 ~ 2/26

"Quiet Helpers—Quaker Service in Postwar Germany" at Boston Public Library presented by AFSC and the German Historical Museum, Berlin. Carolyn Miller will be a guest of honor at a reception on Sunday, January 12, from 1 to 3 p.m. A group from Midcoast Meeting is planning to go down to Boston with Carolyn for the event. If you would like to go, contact Carolyn (236-8706) or Carmen Lavertu (354-9556) for further details.

Book Group Update

By Paulding Phelps

Our next book is *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg. We will probably get the paperback for about \$12. I've put in the order and have 2 that haven't been spoken for. If anyone would like to reserve one, call me: 633-6636. We will next meet Jan 12 and will start the book then.

Winter Reading

By Carmen Lavertu

Books are especially important to me when I have difficult ideas to contemplate. Here are two books I think are most worthwhile in understanding issues of war. The first is *Revenge* by a young American journalist, Laura Blumenfeld. Her father, while visiting Jerusalem, had been shot (but not killed) by a young Palestinian. Laura Blumenfeld set out to learn what motivated this aggression, and to understand from both sides the role of retribution in the persistent and worsening Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Her book examines everything that perpetuates the idea/emotion in relationships, from personal to social and cultural groups, and to nations. So often, we say (or read) that there would be peace if we stopped seeking revenge, as if this were a mere decision to be made. But much more than an act of will is involved—revenge is deep in our personal or cultural psyche; it is structured in relational norms and social traditions. This is a very good book to stimulate reflection on this problem for humanity.

The second book I am recommending at this time is by another journalist, Chris Hedges. His book is *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*. Hedges covered every recent carnage in El Salvador, Africa, Bosnia and Kosovo, as well as the Gulf War, ten years ago. His book is a reflection on his experience as witness to violence and brutality, but that is not all. There is a deeper problem. It is the fascination with—indeed, the addiction to—violence for those participating in it, including the journalists. This we know since Homer wrote *The Iliad* (“The Poem of Force,” as Simone Weil wrote it in an unforgettable essay), but who among our men in Washington reads the classics? This book brings forth in a current setting and with actors we know all too well the problem set forth by Homer. Hedges wants us to see that war is always evil (even when it is believed by most to be necessary); it destroys innocents and participants, avengers as much as aggressors, and not only the combatants but even those who are only witnesses. Jimmy Carter said the same thing in his Nobel Laureate address: “War may sometimes be a necessary evil, but no matter how necessary, it is always evil, never a good.”

Periodicals also offer insightful reading. The Meeting has subscriptions to several interesting ones including the following:

Heron Dance

Lee Rushmore has given the Meeting a subscription to the quarterly *Heron Dance*, published in Vermont, which features art, poetry, essays, and other articles. The artwork is beautiful, watercolors of northern New England natural and wilderness scenes. The editors declare their purpose to “explore subjects at the center of human existence but often at the periphery of our

culture: the search for meaning, our connection to the natural world and our creative spirit.” The November issue and an art supplement may be perused in the Meeting library. Thank you, Lee, for this lovely gift.

Tikkun

“To mend, repair, and transform the world.” The Meeting has a subscription to *Tikkun*, a bimonthly Jewish critique of politics, culture, and society, edited by Rabbi Michael Lerner, a well-known peace activist in this country. Several years ago, when the present Intifada and the Likkud party’s military response began, we read that the magazine was in danger of ceasing publication because of the journal’s, and especially Rabbi Lerner’s, sympathetic views toward Palestine. The Peace and Social Concerns Committee then ordered a subscription. Each issue is packed with informative articles that interest Friends: on every aspect of the struggle in Palestine/Israel and on the politics of war and peace in our country, as well as articles of a spiritual nature. For those of us who have always loved the Jewish traditions and people and who have supported a nation for them, yet have been extremely distressed at the Occupation and brutal oppression of Palestinians, it is helpful to feel in solidarity with the peace movement in the Jewish community. We recommend to all Friends that they take a copy home to become acquainted with this unique and rich literature (back issues will provide as much information and spiritual nourishment as the latest).

Book Review

Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life

reviewed by Connie St. John

This book by Philip Simmons is delightful—ecumenical, humorous, and serious alike. This quote from the book jacket gives the gist of its message:

Philip Simmons was just thirty-five years old in 1993 when he learned that he had ALS, or Lou Gehrig’s disease, and was told he had less than five years to live. As a young husband and father, and at the start of a promising literary career, he suddenly had to learn the art of dying. Nine years later he has succeeded, against the odds, in learning the art of living. Now, in this surprisingly joyous and spirit-renewing book he chronicles his search for peace and his deepening relationship with the mystery of everyday life.

I was particularly drawn to this book because of a friend with ALS who is determined to live out his life and to work as usual. This is a book worthy of our attention irrespective of when our life ends.

Connie has kindly donated a copy of this book to the Meeting library. ED

George Macculloch (Cully) Miller

1920 – 2002

Midcoast Friends Meeting has experienced a feeling of emptiness with the passing of Cully Miller. From 1946 until his retirement in 1985, Cully taught Social Studies at Moorestown (NJ) Friends School, conveying his passionate concerns for social justice to generations of students. In addition to trips to the UN, he conducted simulated United Nations debates, having students represent different countries and points of view, always attempting to achieve a thorough understanding of differences while seeking to explore just and non-violent solutions to the divisive issues of the day. He started a program to bring inner-city children from nearby Camden, New Jersey, to Moorestown Friends. At a Memorial Service held at Midcoast Friends Meeting this fall, he was affectionately remembered by former students for his skills as a teacher and for his caring attitude and respect for his students.

Following retirement, he and Carolyn moved to their beloved summer home of Rockport, Maine, building a new home there, with space for their varied year-round activities. They transferred membership to Midcoast Friends Meeting and were actively involved in building the meetinghouse in Damariscotta.

Cully was an avid athlete as a teenager, playing hockey and rowing, among many other sports. He was also known as a sailor, generously sharing day trips with friends and acquaintances on his large catamaran, the *Cully Cat*. He was on the board of Singing City in Philadelphia, as choral music was one of his joys. He was a graceful and enthusiastic ballroom dancer. He studied and taught photography, collected cameras and photographic equipment, and produced marvelous prints considered to be at a professional level by many admirers. His photographs of the Camden-Rockport area are archived in the Rockport library, and several individual art collections include his prints.

Though he described himself as being brought up as a conservative Episcopalian, he was exposed to Friends in school, and this interest matured at Antioch College, where he attended Meeting and became a Friend. He was a conscientious objector during World War II. There followed a lifetime of community involvement and public service, which took him to Nigeria, Nicaragua, and Israel/Jordan with a Singing

City troupe. He took part in the Martin Luther King march on Washington. He worked on his local Community Relations Council and Planned Parenthood in Camden, New Jersey, on the AFSC Personnel Committee, and League of Women Voters. Cully was active in Open Housing of Burlington County, New Jersey. He became keenly involved in local affairs in the Camden-Rockport (Maine) area, where he knew and was greeted by many, many people. He and Carolyn have been integrally involved in the many activities of the Midcoast Friends Meeting.

Cully died August 31, 2002, after a short illness. The last few years of his life were burdened by a gradually progressive loss of memory, though he always bore witness to the essential goodness of human beings, both in his personal demeanor and in his loving concern for others.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Carolyn Pickett Miller; by his daughter Debbie Miller Hull; by two granddaughters, Sandy and Gabby; by a grandson, Chris; and two great grandchildren, Grace Breese Laber and Samuel Dixon Laber. His second daughter, Jennifer, died in 1999.

Cully will be warmly remembered by all who knew him for his innate curiosity, his caring concern for others, and his gentle, loving nature.

The Advices

Every human being is a child of God with a measure of God's Light. War and other instruments of violence and oppression ignore this reality and violate our relation with God. Let us keep primary, therefore, Friends' concern for removing the causes of war. Let us seek, through God's power and grace, to overcome in our own hearts the emotions that lie at the root of violence. At every opportunity, let us be peacemakers in our homes, in our communities, and in our places of work. Let us take care that we who declare against war do not nourish the seeds of war in our possessions. Friends are urged to support those who witness to their governments and take personal risks in the cause of peace, who choose not to participate in war as soldiers nor to contribute to its preparations with their taxes. Let us support in all possible ways the development of international order, justice, and understanding.

Finally, dear Friends, let us follow steadfastly after all that is pure and lovely and of good report. Let us be prayerful, be watchful, be humble. Let not failure discourage us. Let our whole conduct and conversation be worthy of disciples of Christ.

Carpenter's Boatshop Dinner

Midcoast Meeting will prepare dinner for the Carpenter's Boatshop on Tuesday, January 7th, in support of Ruth Ives and the ongoing boatshop program. If you can help with this event, please contact Nancy Booth (563-3464).

Heifer Project

By Earnest Foust

This past week I was reading a little booklet from the Heifer Project, admiring the pictures of the various animals and the people who are their new owners. The excited reaction to these animals and their significance to the future of the needy recipients was both specific and universal. I was reminded of the flock of chickens my family kept at the back of our lot when I was a boy. The flock played a role in the family economy—not a central role, but it was significant and personal. “Brownie,” the Rhode Island Red rooster, enjoyed displaying his independence by flying over the fence and into the garden, but he returned to the coop when asked by Mother to do so.

For over thirty years, Barbara and I and our children lived on a seventy-three-acre farm in Pennsylvania, where we had as many as forty sheep at one point. Again, the operation was not central to our economic existence. The experience varied from being simply an additional responsibility, hard work, cause of small disasters, moments of laughter, and, yes, absolutely joyful, sublime moments of wonder and awe. Once you have heard the low guttural nurturing sound of a ewe with a new lamb in the darkness of the barn, you never forget it.

All this is to say that, although we have long supported the Heifer Project, we have been struck anew by the significance of this gift of life to people living in poverty and close to nature, where the economic significance of farm animals is vital.

We have yet to decide what animals to choose and where they will go, but we intend to do something significant. Electronic “birds” deposit money monthly in our accounts. We want to put some organisms, with four legs or two, that bleat, moo, cackle, or crow into the hands of people who will care for them and help them multiply and prosper in a way that most of us have nearly forgotten or maybe never knew.

The Heifer Project is a well-established program that has been operating for many years. A colleague, now retired, spent a summer before college with a boatload of heifers bound for Europe. In addition to providing animals, it involves training in animal husbandry, sharing the offspring of the donated animals within the community, and above all, opening the way to prosperity in traditional ways.

To learn more about The Heifer Project, visit their Web site at www.heifer.org

Midcoast Meeting of Friends
PO Box 714, 77 Belvedere Road
Damariscotta, ME 04543

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