



MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Damariscotta, Maine
NEWSLETTER

A simple truth of human existence is that it is vastly easier to amplify fear than it is to assuage it.

—New York Times editorial via Carmen Lavertu

March

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|-----------|------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Sunday | March 5 | | Food Pantry Day |
| | | 8:30 a.m. | Building & Grounds Committee meeting |
| Thursday | March 9 | 7-8:30 p.m. | Lincoln County Peace and Justice Coalition |
| Sat.-Mon. | March 11-13 | | * Ecumenical Advocacy Days, Washington, D.C. |
| Tuesday | March 14 | 6-8 p.m. | AFSC Maine Committee on Youth and Alternatives to the Military |
| Sat.-Sun. | March 18-19 | | * Beacon Hill Friends House events |
| Sunday | March 19 | 8:30-9:45 | Creative Listening dialog |
| | | rise of worship | Monthly Meeting for Worship for Business. Bag lunch suggested. First 20 minutes reserved for Worship |
| | | noon-2 p.m. | Sharing on State of the Meeting for 2005 report to NEYM |
| Sunday | March 26 | rise of worship | * Bridges for Peace simultaneous community vigils |
| | | | * Called Meeting for Peace and Social Concerns: potluck and conversation |
| Sunday | April 9 (rain date 23) | | Meetinghouse workday with potluck |

* 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 second building on the right, ²/₁₀ mile from the corner.

Friendly Reminders

Moving or changing your E-mail 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

Back Issues of the Newsletter and Meeting Information are available at: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

Visit www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

The Entirely Unofficial **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 2nd month of 2006

based on draft minutes by Peter Haviland

Clerk Claire Darrow settled the meeting at 12 noon, reading from Patricia Loring's article on Discernment in Meeting for Business followed by worshipful silence. Eleven members and attenders were present. The agenda was reviewed and approved. Claire expressed her pleasure at being able to serve as our clerk. The minutes of 1/29/05 were read and approved with several minor corrections.

Gifts and Leadings

The work was discussed by Carmen Lavertu, who reported that the new list shows fewer vacancies, but still needs follow up this month. It was suggested that in dividing the duties of Ministry & Counsel we consider the titles "Worship & Ministry" and "Pastoral Care" as the two committees. It was further suggested that "Communications" should include follow up for the guest book entries. The tentative report appears elsewhere in this newsletter. One Friend suggested with a mischievous grin that next year we might wish to designate Gifts and Leadings as "GULP," an acronym for Gifts, Uplift, Leadings, and Push.

Ministry & Counsel

Deb Haviland reported that the draft revisions of Faith and Practice sent by NEYM had been discussed by eight Friends here and a report was sent back to NEYM.

The committee recommended a 20- to 30-minute worship sharing session for our next business meeting to gather information to begin drafting the annual State of the Meeting report. Friends approved.

The memorial service for Natalie Wriggins held under our care at the Second Congregational Church, Newcastle, on 2/18 was recorded to have been a wonderfully warm remembrance of Natalie's life attended by about 200 people, including quite a number of her family.

Query #10

Vocations

Do you respect the value of all useful work, whether paid or unpaid, whether physical or intellectual, whether performed in the home or in the larger community? Does your daily work use means and serve goals which are consistent with the teachings of Jesus? Are you honest and trustworthy in all business transactions, prompt and just in payment of debts? By counsel and example, do you encourage young people to enter vocations which will serve society?

Treasurer's Report

There was no report this month from the treasurer or the Finance Committee.

Peace and Social Concerns

Carmen Lavertu reported on plans to visit Rep. Tom Allen in Portland on 2/24. The clerk will sign a letter authorizing Carmen and Ernie Foust to speak for the Meeting. Two or three other Friends will probably attend as well.

Meetinghouse and Grounds

Workdays have been scheduled for April 9th, June 4th, and July 9th with rain dates a week later. Friends approved. The committee has assigned its members to take a one-month rotation of responsibility for checking on conditions, availability of paper and plastic supplies, etc. A list of the assignments and phone numbers will be posted on the janitor closet door for easy reference.

New Business

Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting was reported to be planning a retreat on Quaker practice. Friends will learn more as planning proceeds. Fall Gathering is scheduled for the weekend of September 8-10. John Calvi will be the featured guest.

Midcoast Meeting considered gifts to Worthy Needs this year. After discussion, Friends approved \$300 to CHIP, \$300 to People to People, \$200 to the Ecumenical Food Pantry and \$200 to Healthy Kids—all in the Damariscotta-Newcastle area.

New England Yearly Meeting has asked us to host a Committee Day Sept. 30th, which would involve finding a space for 12-14 committees to meet in separate rooms, to eat together, and for overnight hospitality for six or seven Friends from around the New England states. Hospitality did not seem to present a problem and it was agreed to hold this matter over until next month, while Linda Cote-Small calls Lincoln Academy and one or two other local organizations for availability and costs of space.

Karen Cadbury has proposed March 26th or April 2nd as dates to hold a discussion of peace issues at the rise of Meeting for Worship. Friends approved either date.

The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Sunday, March 19, at the rise of meeting. A brown bag lunch is suggested. *All are welcome to attend.*

A Time for Light— to Meet the Challenges

by Karen Cadbury

Dear Friends,

Many of us have been drawn to the Society of Friends because we feel that it offers kind, thoughtful, and loving guidelines for living—for being with friends and family, for functioning in our communities, and for interpreting the world in which we live.

Many of us have also embraced the principle of “that of God in every person” so strongly that we are deeply affected by conflicts, wars, torture, totalitarianism, the abrogation of human and civil rights, hunger, disease, and the multitude of other challenges with which people worldwide are compelled to live.

Friends’ concept of service has always been inherently wedded to a commitment to help alleviate such suffering and—where and when possible—to institute change that yields improvement, removes pain and fear, and frees people to live happy, fulfilled, and loving lives.

The world in which we now live poses—on an overwhelmingly consistent basis—both small and colossal examples of inhumanity—brutal, savage, and devoid of care, compassion, dignity, or love. While we may accept the realization that such human behavior is historically consistent, at the core of Friends’ beliefs, we do not accept that inequality, brutality, ruthlessness, dishonesty, and destruction are the destiny of human beings. As a consequence of that belief, Friends have worked throughout our history both to alleviate the conditions that encourage or permit such circumstances and to wrestle with those whose actions, words, and deeds promote such conditions.

Ours is a small meeting. We have people with wide interests or responsibilities outside our meeting, and many of us do not have a great deal of time to devote to meeting business. As a result of this, our Peace and Social Concerns Committee has grown small in members, though it has remained large in the number and types of issues that its members have brought to the attention of our meeting.

Knowing that this historical concern for peace, justice, and the welfare of people the world over is central to the spirit and fiber of many Friends and recognizing that the scope of issues with which we could have contact is exceedingly great, the Peace and Social Concerns Committee would like to reorganize its operation and function, so that service and the heartfelt commitment to peace and the well-being of others can be a greater, more vital part of our meeting.

For this reason, the committee would like to host an evening to begin conversation about how we might work together to invigorate our meeting with the depth of feeling and concern about others that is so paramount in the lives of many of our members. At the

The State of Our Society

by Linda Coté-Small

Once again it is time for our monthly meeting to start the process of reporting on the state of our society for 2005, January through December. To begin this process for our meeting, we will conduct a worship sharing on this topic on March 19 during the first 20 to 30 minutes of our regular Monthly Meeting for Worship for Business. During a worship sharing we sit in silence, pondering a topic or query, and as the spirit moves us, we speak.

To prepare for this important session, New England Yearly Meeting encourages us to review page 244 in *Faith and Practice* and to consider the following queries:

1. What in our meetings feeds us spiritually? What can we do to create and continue the awareness of the sacred and the presence of God among us?
2. What witnesses and actions are calling to us? What form does this take in terms of action and witness?
3. What challenges and changes are facing our meeting? What blessings and gifts have emerged among us?
4. What vision do we have for the future of our meeting?
5. What vision do we have for making the Sacred more evident and alive in the world around us?

We encourage all members and attenders to participate, and we look forward to being with you at this special time to look at our blessings and challenges from this past year.



same time, we want to seek ways to manage those feelings so that we can be effective and so that the activity can add to our lives, not deplete our energy or render us insensible or overwhelmed.

If you have thoughts or ideas, or if you would like to talk about how we might work together to achieve this aim, please contact Karen Cadbury, Gretchen Hull, Carmen Lavertu, or Claire Darrow. Let us know if you are interested and available at the rise of meeting on March 26 for a potluck lunch and a conversation. Many thanks for giving this idea your consideration.

An All-Meeting Alert from Claire Darrow, Clerk

The members of the Gifts and Leadings Committee, formerly known as the Nominating Committee, have been laboring over their tasks, assigned by the Meeting, to fill the work slots that are needed to make the Meeting a vibrant spiritual center for us, and a strong and present presence in our communities and the world. We have found some people to step up and fill the places on the various tasks (read "committees") that we need in order to function well and do what we feel necessary to keep ourselves going.

But a glaring gap has arisen, and we ask you, the people who care about the Meeting, to think hard about how you can use your gifts to fill it successfully. *The Newsletter*, produced so faithfully by Nancy Terrell Hall over the past 14 years, will no longer be her job, as she will be retiring at the end of this calendar year. She has done more than her share. That newsletter is one of the most important connections we have, particularly with those who live far away but still care about what's going on in Midcoast Meeting. They say they enjoy our newsletter very much, and want it to still keep coming. Even the staff at New England Yearly Meeting say that ours is the one they read first, and it is one of the best they get from all over New England.

How much does the newsletter mean to you? Would you miss it if it were not coming to you each month? Are you willing to assess your own capabilities and gifts and put them to work for the welfare of the Meeting? There are many things we can do to make the newsletter simpler, but those decisions are in the realm of those who take up the challenge. We need writers, nudgers (to contact people who have an idea or an upcoming meeting or program which needs publicity), and particularly someone who knows how to do layout or is willing to learn. A few can share this job if they combine their talents. We hope to have a period of instruction to make the transition easier.

Please look into yourself and think of the health of the Meeting and what you can do to help, and take the leap into something new, knowing you will have the help of others whenever you ask and the help of God before you ask.

Quaker Initiative to End Torture

With the support of Friends World Conference on Consultation (FWCC) the Quaker Initiative to End Torture (QUIT) invites you to register for its first conference, June 2-4, 2006, at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina., via our Web site www.quit-torture-now.org. We are proud to announce our Friday night keynote speaker, Jennifer Harbury, author of *Truth, Torture, and the American Way: The History and Consequences of U.S. Involvement in Torture*. Please visit our Web site for news of events and share this notice with others. We invite meetings to send one or more members/attenders to the conference, so they can report back on how Friends can bear a constructive, broad-based witness on this crucial issue.

The conference arose from a deep concern of our friend John Calvi, who has long worked with many torture victims as a massage therapist and healer. More recently, he became convinced that more needs to be done. As he put it:

"Increasingly, there are corners without Light in American culture and places of American domination where there is no longer simply the threat of abduction, imprisonment or death, but also the likelihood that this includes torture... What was once small and secret is now widespread, public, and stated policy. Opposition to torture would be the essence of Friends' Peace Testimony, practice, and faith and would add to our history.

"Because there is indication that torture will continue and increase, I believe it is time for Friends to study this with a conference. Let us become informed, spread information, and choose action in education, investigation, prevention, and treatment."

FWCC's Peace Issues Working Group has endorsed this concern, as have the following Friends groups (thus far): Baltimore Yearly Meeting, South Central Yearly Meeting, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative), Canadian Yearly Meeting, Frederick (MD) Meeting, Medford (NJ) Meeting, Birmingham (AL) Meeting, Matinecock (NY) Meeting

Concern over torture has been growing among religious groups and other peace workers. Friends can play an important role in this gathering work. We believe this conference will be an important place to start.

The Advices

In our relations with others in our daily work, let us manifest the spirit of justice and understanding and thus give a living witness to the Truth. While trying to make provision for ourselves and our families, let us not be anxious, but in quietness of spirit trust in the goodness of God. When we suffer from unemployment, let us seek the support and encouragement of our Meetings. When we have a choice of employment, let us think first of the service that we may render. Let us be ready to limit our engagements, to withdraw for a time, or even to retire from a business that we may be free for new service as God appoints it.

Bridges for Peace Connecting Communities

by Gretchen Hull

Sunday, March 19, 12 noon - 2 pm

Bridges for Peace, simultaneous community vigil
March 19, 2006, is the 3rd anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Three years and you're out! Bring them home now!

Each year on the anniversary of this war we have made a call for community gatherings on bridges throughout Maine and other states. This year more than any other we must give a voice to those who have never participated with us before. Are you, the people, willing to be out there, visible and strong, in your own towns, on your bridges and town commons, once more demanding an end to this war and engaging in dialogue with others? Please let me know if you would like to help organize this effort. Join a network of communities calling for an end to the three years of occupation. List your event at peacebridges@peacebridges.org

Through its network of simultaneous vigils, Bridges for Peace joins United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) in its call for a week of events on the third anniversary of the war: Our national coalition will help local groups organize a range of events and activities throughout the week of March 15-22, with the goals of increasing the visibility of grassroots antiwar sentiment and bringing new people into this movement. We encourage groups to plan educational events and protest actions, including vigils, marches, rallies, non-violent civil disobedience and other creative activities and to publicize them by listing them on the UFPJ website calendar <http://www.unitedforpeace.org/modinput4.php?modin=50>.

These activities might include:

- * actions to expose the local costs of the war
- * efforts to support the growing movement against military recruitment
- * activities aimed at pressuring members of Congress and other elected officials to speak out against the war
- * events to highlight the attacks on our civil liberties
- * programs that address issues of corporate accountability
- * protests demanding that all of our troops be brought home now!

From:

<http://www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=3172>

A Journey with John Woolman

by Carmen Lavertu

"A Journey with John Woolman" began on February 26th after worship and the social hour. We will meet at least once a month for as long as we need. Participation requires a deep reading and contemplation of Woolman's mystical experiences and his profound ethical beliefs found in the *Journal*. We are also looking into getting copies of *Plea for the Poor*. When there is little time to read, one could simply ponder his statement of (Quaker) belief:

"There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and age hath different names. It is, however, pure, and proceeds from God. It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation so ever, they become brethren, in the best sense of the expression."

If you were not at the first meeting of this group on February 26th but would like to participate in March, please contact Carmen (354-9556, lavertu@prexar.com) to find out what date the group agreed to meet.



A Small Decision to be Made

by Claire Darrow

Work is underway on updating the email communication chain and the calling chain. We think it a good idea to ask people how they would like to be contacted. Email is vastly easier to use, faster and more reliable than telephone contact. But we know some people do not have access to email, and we want to be able to contact all who wish to be reached in the case of "breaking news." You have three options: email, telephone, or no contact at all. If you wish to change the way you are currently receiving updates, please let me (371-2447, cdarrow@gwi.net) know by the next monthly meeting, March 19, what your preferences are. Then we can go forward with this work and complete it soon. Thank you.

"Read, every day, something no one else is reading.
Think, every day, something no one else is thinking.
Do, every day, something no one else would be silly enough to do. It is bad for the mind to continually be part of unanimity."

—Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781)
German Dramatist (via Carmen Lavertu)

Upcoming Events at Beacon Hill Friends House

by Holly Baldwin

Beacon Hill Friends House (Boston, Massachusetts) invites you to attend the 2006 Weed Lecture, "Being Faithful as Friends: Individually and Corporately," to be presented by Deborah Fisch on Sunday, March 19, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. Worship at 10:30 with Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, simple lunch at noon.

We live in times when much of the world is in crisis, when our nation is at war, when we do not always agree with the policies our political leaders have chosen to put in place on our behalf. How do we live faithfully in these times? What work can we do as individuals and as community? Deborah is holding this theme and the invitation to speak in prayer and in her heart, trusting that if we are all faithful in opening ourselves to God's message, God will be faithful to give Deborah the words to say to us.

Deborah Fisch serves as coordinator of Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries Program and as staff for the FGC Ministry & Nurture Committee. She is the clerk of Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative). Deborah lives in Des Moines, Iowa, and is a member of Paullina Friends Meeting. She has traveled in the ministry to many meetings in the U.S. and Canada and has spoken and led retreats or workshops for meetings, FGC Gatherings, and other Friends gatherings including the 2003 FWCC conference on peace at Guilford College and the Midwinter Gathering of Friends for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns in 2005 at Ghost Ranch, New Mexico.

Beacon Hill Friends House presents this annual free lecture in memory of past directors Ernest and Esther Weed. For directions and to learn about the house and its programs, visit www.bhfh.org. Childcare will be provided during the lecture.

In addition to the lecture, the Quaker Studies Program presents: "Weaving the Blessed Community, Sharing our Journeys," with Deborah Fisch, Saturday March 18, 2006, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; tuition \$25.00.

In this workshop Friends will have the opportunity to reflect on their spiritual journeys to this point and begin to develop skill in sharing them with others. Sharing our personal journeys helps us to better connect with each other and is an integral part of weaving the tapestry of a blessed community. Pre-registration is required. For information and a registration form go to www.bhfh.org/qsp/QspIndex.html. If you have questions, call Shearman Taber, QSP coordinator, at 617-965-7042 or email qsp@bhfh.org

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

from the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) newsletter

Mark your calendar now! This March you have the chance to take part in two exciting events happening in Washington, DC. A national media symposium, organized by FCNL, will examine how to increase media coverage of Native American issues, and the fourth annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days, which FCNL cosponsors with many other faith-based organizations, will provide practical tools for people of faith seeking to influence the government.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days (March 11-13, 2006): More than 1,000 people of faith will participate in the fourth annual national gathering of grassroots progressive religious activists in Washington, DC. Participants will focus on a broad spectrum of international and domestic policies and develop strategies and tactics to advocate for building a just global community that nurtures peace, alleviates poverty, and protects the integrity of God's creation. FCNL is sponsoring this year's Ecumenical Advocacy Days along with more than 30 other faith-based groups.

The event will provide Friends, church leaders, lay people, and others interested in advocacy with a mix of worship, music, prayer, issue briefings, speakers and advocacy training workshops. The three-day session ends with a day of lobbying during which participants will meet with their representatives in Congress to communicate their concerns about domestic and foreign policies. Find out more at www.advocacydays.org. To subscribe to FCNL legislative, policy, and action alert lists: www.fcnl.org/forms/forms.php?type=ls.

"We seek a world free of war and the threat of war.
We seek a society with equity and justice for all.
We seek a community where every person's
potential may be fulfilled.
We seek an earth restored."

Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy

Update on Four Directions Development Corporation

by Ernie Foust

During the Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy meeting on February 11, Tom Ewell brought us up to date on the success of the Four Directions Development Corporation. Sixty-four loans are out with no problems. He added that the significance of the program becomes clear when we realize that historically blacks and Native Americans were denied the opportunity to acquire capital. The Giving Winds Project of the Maine Council of Churches continues to accept funds for the development of capital for the tribes.

Holding Natalie in the Light

by Patience Thomas

In the manner of Friends, the memorial service for Natalie Wriggins took place at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle on Saturday, February 18th. The sun beamed through the stained glass windows, casting a double ring of vibrant colors—Natalie colors. This image seemed to symbolize two wedding bands, similar to those close relationships formed in Natalie's life. Her embrace of life was like her wonderful embrace of her friends. She was generous with her hugs, and her wide-open arms and words made one feel loved and ever so special. Her presence and nature made for a moment in time where everything stopped except her listening ear and words of caring concern. Between her words were thoughtful pauses, which often connected with a previous remembrance or concern for the person. She was all about you and, as was mentioned at the service, she was "selfless." Her very being was that of compassion and kindness.

In the sanctuary, both the silence and the messages intermingled to make a beautiful tapestry of the magic which Natalie cast on our lives. As I reflect on the service and the celebration with Natalie's art work at Round Top, I am able to discern important lessons. I suspect that the Quaker influence on Natalie's art was ever present. Her vision depicted nature, animals, and people with a depth of beauty and simplicity. I feel she spoke to us about looking at life's wonders with close intention. If our intention is to "be" with those we encounter, we will greet them with love, acknowledge their goodness, and listen deeply. The gift we can give each other is to learn from each other. If we can cultivate the gift of recognizing the inner light, we can bestow that gift on others. I am struck by Natalie, the teacher, who lived these lessons.

Natalie lived her life to the fullest. She captured the beauty of light in her art. Her vision was amazingly keen and clear and, at times, softened by fog. Natalie was a soft, gentle soul with many lessons to give us, from which we can gather her wisdom. We are fortunate to have shared her nest and her gifts. May we walk slowly in the light knowing that she is holding our hands.

"Again and again some people in the crowd wake up.
They have no ground in the crowd,
And they emerge according to much broader laws.
They carry strange customs with them
And demand room for bold gestures.
The future speaks ruthlessly through them."

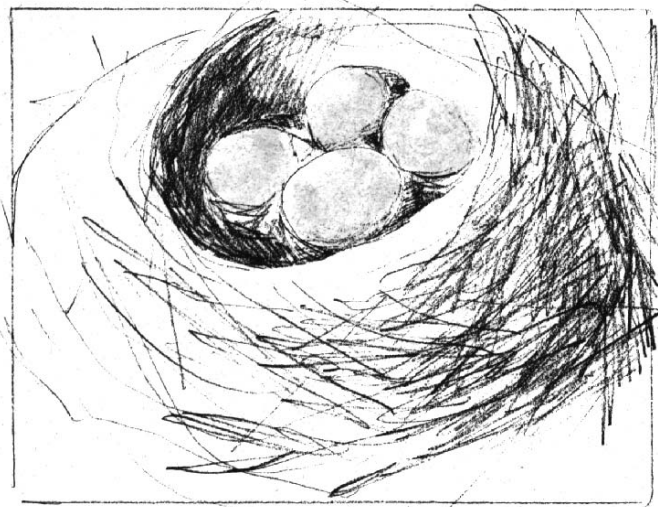
—Rainer Maria Rilke (via Carmen Lavertu)

Memories of Natalie Wriggins

by Rachel McGinniss

Midcoast Meeting of Friends held a memorial service for Natalie Wriggins, who passed away January 3rd. The service was held at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle, February 18th. The sanctuary was almost filled to capacity with Natalie's friends and family. Peter Haviland opened the service giving a brief but clear description of a Quaker memorial service, as more than half of the people present were not Quaker. The service was beautiful. A meditation time took place, then people, one at a time, rose and shared from their hearts their encounters and feelings of Natalie. There was enough time between speakers to allow for what was said to flow into the minds and hearts of those present. Sarah Ewing was able to move, unnoticeable, from person to person offering a microphone to the speaker so that all could hear what was being said. There were stories about Natalie's art, stories of family encounters and celebrations, stories of Natalie's reaching out to help friends, and much more. All that was said captured the spirit of Natalie with such beauty.

One of the main themes that prevailed was that Natalie made each person she encountered feel special. As one person said, she thought she was the only one that Natalie cherished. After an hour Peter brought the service to an end and directed people to go to a reception at Round Top where Natalie's beautiful art was on display. Within a short time the gallery was filled with Natalie's friends and family. Sharing memories of Natalie continued as people viewed her art and enjoyed the food that had been prepared by several people. The day outside was a "Natalie day," with sun, clouds, snow, and a powerful wind. I could see Natalie sitting out in her field, creating a beautiful Maine landscape on such a day. As I left Round Top, the strong wind embraced me and it felt like a Natalie Hug. Thank you, Natalie, for being.



Nest sketch by Natalie Wriggins

Looking at Wal-Mart from a Bigger Perspective

by Betsy Terrell

During Meeting for Worship on the February 19th, Carmen Lavertu read from John Woolman:

“Oh! that we who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be in God only, may walk in the light, and therein examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and the garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions, or not.”

Standing in line at Hannaford's, I overheard the clerk talking with a customer. Several things she said made me think again about the Damariscotta/Wal-Mart situation.

“Yeah,” she said, “they called me, and I said, ‘Bring it on, I want Wal-Mart, Burger King, Target, you name it,’ and they hung up on me. Sure, I’d love to shop at all those cute little stores downtown. But I can’t afford it.”

I wonder about the working people of Maine, the ones whose families have lived here for many generations, some of whom are forced to sell parts or all of the family homestead because they cannot afford to pay the taxes. I saw this happen on Cape Cod as well. Wealthy individuals and families come from away and buy up land—especially along the coast—build beautiful houses, and the taxes go up.

There ARE a lot of people who live in this area who can’t afford to shop at most of the stores downtown. And when you have an extremely limited budget for basic family necessities, naturally you are going to

shop at the place that has the best prices. You can’t afford the luxury of taking into account the rest of the issues behind those low prices.

I think about Woolman’s comments about the seeds of war and how adversarial the Wal-Mart issue has become. Have we taken time to really think about what’s fairest for all? Instead of facing off in two camps—“Vote Yes” and “Vote No”—could we search for a solution that takes into account everyone’s needs?

I am not supporting Wal-Mart. Personally, I’ve read a lot of information about their policies and I object to most, if not all, of what they stand for. But just fighting against them isn’t solving the real problems. In some sense it seems to me similar to going to war in Iraq to stop terrorism. Something created the terrorists. What was it? Something has created a group of people in America who find no other alternative than to work at and shop at Wal-Mart.

I’m not saying we shouldn’t try to change the zoning rules. But maybe we also need to take some time to query ourselves about some of the bigger, deeper issues in our community, our country, and our world: the growing gap between those who have and those who have not, what it’s like to live on an income level at which every day brings difficult choices—between paying for heating fuel and buying food, for example. Where are the solutions to these problems going to come from?

It’s just too darn easy to bash Wal-Mart. What’s much harder, but more important, is to look at the underlying causes in our society that have led us to Wal-Mart and all the related ills and seek solutions which will work for everybody.

Rooms/House for Rent

Note from Tom Bulger,

Farmington Monthly Meeting:

Stress works against anyone fighting cancer. Nan Stone, of Belfast Meeting, was told that she was losing her tenants within days of being told she had cancer. She needs to pay the mortgage and now has no income. Please use whatever methods you feel appropriate to get the word out that Nan is looking to rent this house. We are hoping to help Nan find renter(s) she can be relaxed about.

Share or rent a unique house in a beautiful setting 7½ miles from Belfast center: Up to 3 bedrooms available in a large sunny, shared house in the woods in Swanville. Rent 1, 2 or all 3 at \$400/month per bedroom, including utilities and heat.

Mostly furnished, with sauna, washer/dryer, dishwasher, ski/hiking trails. Children welcome, no dogs, no smoking. Security deposit & references required. Please call 338-0842

FMI: Tom Bulger (maoriora@hotmail.com), Carole Beal (carole@acadia.net)

Compassionate Communication Practice

by Linda Coté-Small

On February 27, the Carpenter’s Boatshop in Bristol was the site for an organizing meeting for a new Nonviolent Communication Practice group. In his book, *Nonviolent Communication, a Language of Life*, Marshall Rosenberg points out the noncompassionate way we use language and suggests a number of ways we can change how we listen to ourselves and others and how we communicate.

The practice group will use Rosenberg’s book, and the *Nonviolent Communication Companion Workbook, a Practical Guide for Individual, Group, or Classroom Study* by Lucy Leu. The intention of the group is to practice what we are learning from reading the book. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Linda Coté-Small at 563-6712 or chezcode@gwi.net for further information.

GIFTS & LEADINGS (Nominating Committee) REPORT —2006

Submitted to Monthly Meeting, 2nd month 2006 by Jean Crawford, Claire Darrow, Paul Diamond, Barbara Foust, Deborah Haviland, Peter Haviland, and Carmen Lavertu

OFFICERS

Clerks of Meeting: Claire Darrow
Assistants: Jean Crawford and Carmen Lavertu
Recording Clerk: Rob Patterson (Pete Haviland, alternate)
Treasurer: Paul Diamond
Statistical Recorder: Diane Kirkman
Archivists: Deb Haviland, Carolyn Miller, Pat Spock
Public Relations: Jean Crawford

Representatives to:

Quarterly Meeting: Carmen Lavertu
New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM): Claire Darrow
NEYM M&C Com: Louisa Gray and _____
NEYM Finance Com: Bill Spock
Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy: Jim Matlack
Community Housing Improvement Project (CHIP): Nancy Booth
NEYM Earth Care Team: Andy Burt (with Peter Arnold, Steve Gorry, and Anna Needham)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Worship and Ministry

(Term expires in December of year listed)
David Cadbury, 2005, continued in 2006
Nancy Nyberg, 2006
Rowan Rowntree, 2007
Linda Coté-Small, 2008

Pastoral Care

Deb Haviland, Carmen Lavertu

Peace and Social Concerns

Nancy Booth, Karen Cadbury, Earnest Foust, Gretchen Hull, Carmen Lavertu, Katrina Rickerman, Laura Zylstra

Religious Education

Sarah Ewing, John Gass, Susan Rockwood (summer), Patience Thomas, Sally Tukey

Finance

Bill Spock, clerk, Paul Diamond, Earnest Foust, Todd Garth, Peter Haviland, Carolyn Miller

Communications (Directory/Mailing/Calling chain)

Paul Diamond, convener
Diane Kirkman, e-mail chain
Meeting clerk, ex officio
Nancy Terrell Hall, ex officio
Pat Spock, database/ mailing lists

Newsletter/Web site

Nancy Terrell Hall, edit./prod. (2006 LAST YEAR); Betsy Terrell, copy editor (2006); Diane Kirkman, proofreader; Anna Needham, reporter; Guy Marsden, Web site; Steve Gorry, Saray Ewing, Sally Tukey, circulation.

Gifts and Leadings (Nominating)

(Term expires in December of year listed)

Jean Crawford, 2006
Peter Haviland, 2006
Carmen Lavertu, 2007
Claire Darrow, 2007
_____, 2008
_____, 2008

Meetinghouse and Grounds

Dottie Albright, Andy Burt, Claire Darrow
Paul Diamond, Steve Gorry, Dick Harris
Pete Haviland, Carolyn Miller, Patience Thomas, landscape. *We anticipate full participation by members and attenders in projects undertaken by this committee*

Meetinghouse Use

Jean Harris
(Meetinghouse Committee representative)

Hospitality

Claire Darrow, Barbara Foust, Deb Haviland, convener
Pat Spock, Janice Rickermann

Library

Barbara Foust, Deborah Haviland, Nancy Nyberg

Meetinghouse and Grounds Committee Rotation

Please cut out the following and have it handy for when you need it. These are the people to call when there's something wrong or there's an emergency or something that should be looked into.

| | | |
|------|-----------|----------------|
| 2006 | February | Steve Gorry |
| | March | Pete Haviland |
| | April | Claire Darrow |
| | May | Paul Diamond |
| | June | Carolyn Miller |
| | July | Carolyn Miller |
| | August | Andy Burt |
| | September | Steve Gorry |
| | October | Pete Haviland |
| | November | Paul Diamond |
| | December | Claire Darrow |
| 2007 | January | Andy Burt |

THE MDI Non-Violent Communication Group presents:
A Non-Violent Communication Workshop
With Gina Cenciose; Certified Community Building Facilitator
April 7-9, 2006

Otter Creek Community Hall (5 miles south from Bar Harbor, Maine on Route 3)

Non-Violent Communication (NVC) is a model for clarifying our ability to listen, speak and relate to others in a way that is non-judgmental, authentic, and compassionate. NVC was developed by Marshall Rosenberg, PhD, during the United States' civil rights era of the 1960s and has been used internationally to teach communication skills that lead to peaceful and mutually respectful dialogue.

The weekend workshop is held with a Friday Night Introduction open to the general public by donation. On Saturday and Sunday registered participants will learn the basic premise of NVC and practice dialogue skills with each other. Anyone interested in fostering caring, compassionate communication can benefit.

What NVC Teaches:

- Needs are universal and a natural expression of life;
- Desires are strategies we use to meet life's needs;
- Recognizing when strategies are in conflict and responding to the underlying need/feeling creates compassion and empathy;
- We can distinguish thoughts and opinions from feelings and learn how to express/receive feelings clearly, honestly, and without using/hearing blame, criticism, or judgment;
- We can make requests to have our needs met (as opposed to demands)

- Healthy relationships are based in empathy;
- Empathy is defined as a state of being fully present to what is. The ability to listen with empathy creates mutual respect, compassion, and cooperation.

Workshop Schedule:

Friday, April 7, Public Introductory Lecture, 7-9 pm
Saturday, April 8, Registered Participants, 9 am-5 pm
Sunday, April 9, Registered Participants, 9 am-4 pm

Friday night's introduction will be open to the general public—please make a donation. Only registered participants may attend Saturday and Sunday sessions. Total cost for Saturday and Sunday is \$45.00. CEUs can be obtained for attendance at all three sessions. **Saturday—Sunday workshop is limited to 40 participants, so register early!** The minimal cost of this workshop is made possible by community support and previous NVC workshop participants. If you find the workshop valuable and can afford to, please consider making an additional donation. There are a few Financial Aid positions open if you cannot afford to pay and would like to help out. FMI, call Deborah Page, coordinator, MDI NVC Trainings, at 207-288-3541.

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

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