

3rd Month

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

March 2007



The kingdom of God is within you.

--Luke 17:21

We are living in a world that is absolutely transparent, and God is shining through it all the time.

--Thomas Merton

March

Sunday	March 11	Rise of Meeting	*Second Hour with Wendell Stevenson: "Brazil: A Brief Survey of Her Land, History & Culture"
Saturday	March 17	noon-2 p.m.	*Bridges for Peace
Sunday	March 18	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Worship for Business
Sunday	March 25	12:30 p.m.	*Workshop on Torture, presented by Carmen Lavertu

April

Sunday	April 1	Rose of Meeting	Second Hour: State of Society
Sunday	April 15	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Worship for Business
Saturday	April 21	9 a.m.-4 p.m.	*Retreat: "The Testimonies--Histories & Relevance for Today" with Christopher & Jean McCandless
Sunday	April 22	Rise of Meeting	Work Hour

Upcoming

Sat-Sun.	May 5-6 (tentative)		All Maine Gathering of Quarterly Meetings
Sunday	May 13	Rise of Meeting	Work Hour

*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 Rd., Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m.
 Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Rd.
 (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north--Miles Home Health Care building on the corner).
 The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, .2 mile from the corner.

Moving? Changing your e-mail address? Don't forget to let us know. Please remember that when you receive the newsletter by e-mail, you save the Meeting money and you lighten our workload. To receive the newsletter by e-mail, kindly send a request to Diane Kirkman at diane_kirkman@hotmail.com. Thanks!

For newsletters, important links, & a current calendar, visit our website: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org.

Highlights--Monthly Meeting for Business

Second Month 18, 2007

Minutes of business meetings will be handled a little differently. At the time an action is taken during a business meeting, the recording clerk will read aloud a proposed minute for approval. Soon after, the minutes will be posted on the bulletin board for all to peruse.

Two generous **bequests have been received from the estate of Charlotte Ritter**. Contribution income is slightly down; however our **finances** are in satisfactory condition. Friends are delighted with the excellent new projection equipment, screen, and room-darkening shades in the Worship Room.

Ministry & Counsel would appreciate help from Friends outside the committee with the workings of the **Winter/Spring Series** of events.

A **memorial minute for Charlotte Ritter** is nearing completion. **Memorial minutes for Jerry Wood and Lorraine Schmidt** are in process.

It is time to begin considering what to say in the **2006 State of the Society Report**. The first half-hour of the March business meeting will be devoted to worship sharing on this topic. Also, there will be a second-hour conversation on this topic following worship on April 1.

Responsibility for **greeters and closers of Meeting for Worship** has been shifted from Ministry & Counsel to the Meeting for Business.

Peace & Social Concerns will be responsible for a visit from Holly Baldwin and a Young Adult Friend from El Salvador, Raul Perez Chacon. This will take place on or about March 19 in the evening. Please join us for supper, silent worship, and conversation with Raul.

Meetinghouse & Grounds has planned Work Hours from April through October. They will be: April 22, May 13, June 24, August 5, September 9, and October 14.

Business meetings will be held on the third Sunday of the month year-round on a trial basis until October. It was felt that there were several reasons to move away from the traditional Friday evening meetings during the months with Daylight Savings Time: inconvenience for Friends who are employed, extra driving, night driving, and late hour for seniors.

The **next meeting for business** will be March 18 following Meeting for Worship. All are most welcome. Please bring a bag lunch.

A brief **meeting of the Corporation** of Midcoast Friends Meeting was also held. It authorized a change in bank accounts.



NEWSNOTES: *Nancy Booth is recovering at home from a fall. Nancy says, "the old girl is doing fine." She fell on her kitchen floor, after she was out walking in the woods all afternoon! She will be back in Meeting as soon as she is able.*

Sally Wood is enjoying Charlottesville and is settling into a new life without Jerry. She spent two lovely weeks in Vermont in January with their son, his wife, and five grandchildren. Her new e-mail is address shkwood@comcast.net.

QUERIES: Stewardship

Do you revere all life and the splendor of God's continuing creation? Do you try to protect the natural environment and its creatures against abuse and harmful exploitation? Do you regard your possessions as given to you in trust, and do you part with them freely to meet the needs of others? Are you frugal in your personal life and committed to the just distribution of the world's resources?

WORDS ON WORSHIP

This month we bring to you a writing about vocal ministry from the second draft of the NEYM *Faith & Practice* chapter on worship. We encourage you to share your thoughts on worship and vocal ministry with the Ministry & Counsel committee by contacting Linda Cote-Small at 563-6712 or [<chezcote@roadrunner.com>](mailto:chezcote@roadrunner.com)

As we wait in expectant silence, whether in an unprogrammed meeting or during the open worship of a programmed meeting, we may find that a message is forming in us. We ask ourselves whether it is meant for us alone or needs to be shared with the meeting, and whether it is to be shared at this time. It is important to allow silence between speakers for the message to be heard and absorbed back into the fabric of the meeting. Friends may need to be particularly vigilant in this discernment when worshipping in very large groups where too many and too frequent messages often leave insufficient time for silence, while smaller meetings may yearn for more vocal ministry. Those who offer ministry may experience physical sensations: many Friends speak of feeling compelled to stand, of their body trembling or their heart pounding. Others find that the message will not be set aside and needs to be expressed. Brief prayers and short messages are equally welcome, as long as the speaker remains faithful to the motion behind the words. If others have already spoken, their words may have led to this message, but in no sense is the speaker “answering” another. The messages during worship may seem to have nothing to do with each other, or they may all seem to follow a single theme. It is customary to speak only once during a meeting for worship. Ministry is expected to be appropriate to the worship setting; there are other forums for personal or social concerns.



LORAIN SCHMIDT



Lorraine Schmidt, a long-time member of Midcoast Meeting, died in December 2006, a few days before her 99th birthday. She was living in a nursing home in Vermont, near her family, and was alert and caring until the end. Lorraine and her husband, Eberhardt, were founding members of our Meeting.

Ministry & Counsel's Outreach Programs: *What's Happened So Far and What Is Coming*

Last fall, the Meeting began a project to increase its outreach to the community. It approved Ministry & Counsel's recommendation that we plan events that would include the public and Jean Crawford's offer to write articles about upcoming events. Ministry & Counsel also recommended that we purchase projection equipment and room-darkening shades so that we could screen films, and the Meeting approved.

Following four very successful programs in the fall, we are now in the midst of a Winter/Spring Series that promises to be at least as successful. Participation by the public has been gratifying, and we believe the observed increase in visitors to Meeting for Worship is at least partially attributable to increased awareness.

Guy Marsden's "Sustainable Living" workshop took place on the evening of January 30. Turnout was plentiful, and audience participation by Friends and visitors alike was enthusiastic. Guy spoke from his own experiences concerning sustainable living practices small and large. There was special interest in Guy's conversion of his barn/workshop and his domestic hot-water system to solar heat.

Andy Burt's workshop, "The True Cost of Food," on February 11 and a preceding light lunch, provided by the Hospitality Committee, were also well attended, with many visitors from the public. Andy screened the Sierra Club's film *The True Cost of Food* about the detriments of "factory farms." Jean Matlack from the Rockland Universalist Church told about her congregation's relationship with a local farmer; then the farmer gave further useful information on how Community Supported Agriculture can help all involved. We also heard from Amy Bruckstead from Morris Farm.

The next Winter Series event will be a "Workshop on Torture" by Carmen Lavertu, March 25, at 12:30 p.m.

Ministry & Counsel has organized some events that are not so much for outreach as for the direct benefit of the Meeting. On January 28, Pete Haviland led us in a second-hour conversation on the sense of the meeting. We considered how meeting for business can be at least as worshipful as meeting for worship and how the sense of the meeting goes beyond consensus to realization of essential truth.

On March 11, Wendell Stephenson will give a program about Brazil, a brief survey of her land, history, and culture. Wendell and his wife have family living in Brazil, and they spend part of every year visiting there. Wendell emphasizes that, of course, the public is welcome to attend this event.

A daylong retreat is planned for April 21. Our meeting is excited to have a Traveling Ministry Retreat with Christopher & Jean McCandless from Burlington, Vermont. They are dynamic, seasoned Quakers with gifts of vocal and pastoral ministry supporting meeting communities, clerking, peacemaking/conflict resolution/listening, and prayer. They have agreed to facilitate a day-long retreat (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) on "The Testimonies: History and Relevance for Today." They are willing to have up to 30 participants. There will be no charge. Ministry & Counsel requests that you register with Linda at 563-6712 or chezcote@roadrunner.com by March 31 if you plan to attend. After March 31, the workshop will be open to our local community.

Upcoming in June:

June 9--New England Yearly Meeting Committee Day hosted by Midcoast Meeting at Great Salt Bay School, Damariscotta.

June 10--Poetry Workshop with Martin Steingesser, more information by April.

--from Jean Crawford and Linda Cote-Small

ADVICES: Stewardship: *Friends are advised to consider our possessions as God's gifts, entrusted to us for responsible use. Let us free our time and our abilities to be able to follow the leadings of the Spirit. Let us cherish the beauty and variety of the world. Friends are urged to speak out boldly against the destruction of the world's resources and the difficulties that destruction prepares for the future generations. Let us guard against waste and resist our extravagant consumption, which contributes to inequities and impoverishment of life in our own and other societies. Let us show a loving consideration for all God's creatures. Let kindness know no limits.*

From the Peace Bridges Web Site
(www.peacebridges.org)

JOIN with
Bridges for Peace
March 17, 2007
12 noon to 2 p.m.
in Your Community
on the fourth anniversary of the war

A list of bridges for the anniversary witness is available at the Web site. (The phone number posted was 207- 767-3012.)

Good work finds the way between pride and despair.

It graces with health. It heals with grace.

It preserves the given so that it remains a gift

By it, we lose loneliness:



we clasp the hands of those who go before us, and the hands of those who come after us;

we enter the little circle of each other's arms,

and the larger circle of lovers whose hands are joined in a dance,

and the larger circle of all creatures, passing in and out of life, who move also in a dance, to a music so subtle and vast that no ear hears it except in fragments.

--from What Are People For? by Wendell Berry

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