

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

NEWSLETTER



We need a moral philosophy in which the concept of love, so rarely mentioned now by philosophers, can once again be made central.

—Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good*
contributed by Carmen Lavertu

April

Thursday	April 1	4 p.m.	Peace & Social Concerns Committee meeting
Saturday	April 3	9 a.m. - 3 pm 9 a.m. - 3 pm	Silent Retreat * Ageing with Joy and Grace, Vassalboro Meeting Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy, Waterville
Sunday	April 4	before Meeting	Religious Education Committee meeting
Sunday	April 11	8:30 a.m.	Reading Group
Friday	April 16	6 p.m. 7 p.m.	Potluck Supper Monthly Meeting for Business. NOTE RETURN TO SUMMER SCHEDULE
Saturday	April 17	2 p.m.	Memorial service for Pat Geiringer
Monday	April 19	asap	Deadline for May newsletter
Sunday	April 25	8:30 a.m. rise of Meeting	Reading Group * Earth Day workday (rain date Sunday, May 2nd)
~Advance Notice ~			
Saturday	May 1	all day	Quarterly Meeting, hosted by Cobscook Meeting
Monday	May 3	TBA	"Resisting Empire" with Logan Perkins
Tuesday	May 4	TBA	Religious Education Committee meeting
Thursday	May 6	4 p.m.	Peace & Social Concerns Committee meeting

* 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

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

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

The Entirely Unofficial MONTHLY MEETING NOTES, 3rd month of 2004

based on draft minutes by Bill Spock

Co-Clerk Ernie Foust opened the meeting with a reading by Pierre Ceresol, a Swiss Friend. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved with the correction that the three charities mentioned in the Worthy Needs Report had been approved for this year, along with the payment of \$400 to the Town of Damariscotta. These charities were People to People (\$100), CHIP (\$200), and the Ecumenical Food Pantry (\$300). There was strong support for the idea of having copies of the minutes handed out in the future, so everyone could follow along better during the reading.

Finance Committee

Bill Spock reviewed the broad financial picture as preliminary to submission of a proposed budget in April. Based on Paul Diamond's review, income is projected to be about \$2,000 under budget, but expenses may be under by \$1,600. This will still allow about \$5,000 to be allocated to reserves, as in the past. However, the trend

is for expenses to go up faster than income. The future of our landscaping also has financial implications, particularly if we will need to hire assistance for maintenance. The need for all Friends to take responsibility for the variety of tasks in and around the meeting-house became clear during the discussion.

Bill also mentioned that the Meeting will be receiving two generous bequests. The actual amounts, as yet unknown, will depend on sales of assets and final expenses of the two estates.

The New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) has requested a sizable increase in our contributions. After some discussion, it was agreed that their initiatives for young Friends are well worth supporting. It was also suggested we should help to make it possible for our members with families to attend NEYM sessions. Further information on the needs and expectations of NEYM will be presented under the guidance of Claire Darrow, Patience Thomas, and Holly Baldwin, each of whom brings special knowledge of the NEYM.

Landscape Committee

Claire Darrow and Patience Thomas are working on a proposal for monthly "family friendly" workdays, as one part of the solution of our maintenance needs. Projects like this also help to bring the Meeting together. The committee budget is expected to remain at \$700. Claire will research the cost to have gravel spread over the driveway to alleviate the mud problem and to help control weeds. The first workday is scheduled for Sunday, April 25, rain day May 2.

Ministry & Counsel

Holly Baldwin was recommended for membership and was received with "robust enthusiasm," in the words of Ernie Foust.

Jerry Wood has agreed to become a committee member, another welcome addition to Ministry & Counsel. He will not continue to serve on the Maintenance Committee. The updated list of committee members is available for download from our Web site.

The committee is working on revisions of the Handbook.

Ernie Foust has drafted the annual "State of the Meeting" report, which has been referred to M&C for prompt consideration.

Peace & Social Concerns

Holly Baldwin reported that committee responsibilities have been divided among the members, and regular meetings will be held at 4:00 p.m. on first Thursdays, starting in May. Some extra effort will be put into writing letters on subjects of critical interest to the Meeting, for consideration by the Clerk of Meeting, and possible Meeting discussion.

The Worthy Needs Report presented at the February

continued on next page

Loving Care for Our Meetinghouse Earth Day Clean-up

*Everyone is invited and needed
to join in this community-building effort!!
It promises to be fun !!!*

Sunday, April 25, 2004

*at the rise of Meeting, through the afternoon
Rain date, Sunday, May 2nd*

Where: Inside and around the grounds of the Meetinghouse

What to bring: rakes, shovels, wheel barrels, gardening gloves, little red wagons & energy

Lunch will be a potluck picnic.

Does anyone have a volleyball set we can use?

Query #1

Meeting for Worship

Are Meetings for Worship held in expectant waiting for divine guidance? Are you faithful and punctual in attendance? Do you come in a spirit of openness with heart and mind prepared for communion with God? Do both silent and vocal ministry arise in response to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Do all other activities of your meeting find their inspiration in worship, and do they, in turn, help to uphold the worshipping group?

Monthly Meeting Notescont'd fr. p.2

Meeting for Business was approved. Patience Thomas will notify Paul Diamond of the amount of the check for the Heifer Project. The decision of the children was to purchase milking goats. A Heifer Project grant doubles the order.

Members were requested to send comments to Augusta to prevent the cuts in human services anticipated in bill LD1919.

Meetinghouse

Caroline Miller reported preliminary findings that acoustical ceiling tiles for the social room would cost between \$250 and \$700 (depending on type), plus labor. Sally Wood noted, with general agreement, that the new chairs seem to have had a marked improvement on the acoustics. The Religious Education Committee was commended for their organization of the room and supplies.

The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Friday, April 16 at 7 p.m., following a potluck supper at 6 p.m. All welcome. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING MARKS THE RETURN TO OUR SUMMER MONTHLY MEETING SCHEDULE.

Resisting Empire Teach-in

On May 3 Logan Perkins will convene an evening presentation looking at the corporate systems of food, energy, and the military as tools of empire and making the case that the U.S. is acting as an empire. She will also be showcasing steps to be taken in resistance to empire. Details in next newsletter or TBA.

Visit

www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

Emergency Contact Information

Forms for supplying emergency contact information to Ministry & Counsel will soon be offered to anyone who hasn't filled one out in the past. These are for listing names and phone numbers of people to contact in case of emergency and may be especially helpful for anyone living alone. They are kept on file at the meetinghouse under the care of Ministry & Counsel. Those who already have a form on file will be encouraged to review it to make sure it is up to date. For further information, contact Jean Crawford, 236-4176, jeancraw@midcoast.com.

First Day School

Religious Education Options for Youth

By Patience Thomas

On March 6th I attended a day-long retreat for New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) Youth Workers. The day was divided into four parts:

1. Building a shared mission
2. Developing a retreat program
3. Building safety in youth programs
4. Nuts and Bolts: The "Tool Box"

Besides extremely valuable information and input, the day was full of delicious food, singing, silence, and storytelling. Facilitators Kevin Lee, Wendyl Ross, and Marybeth Toomey were excellent.

I came away with a "tool box" of new ideas and ways to reach out to youth. I anticipate using some of these ideas in First Day School. Moreover, I feel eager and informed to work with youth and staff to create rewarding retreats.

There are numerous religious education options for youth beyond our First Day School. Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting offers a youth program for ages 6 to 16. The next Quarterly Meeting is May 1st at Cobscook Friends Meeting in Washington County.

Week-long programs for grades 2-12 are offered at the annual NEYM sessions. This summer NEYM will be held August 7-12 at Bryant College in Smithfield, Rhode Island. This year's theme is "And who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). Additionally, there are retreats scheduled periodically throughout New England, planned by youth and staff.

Families are encouraged to explore these options. A full list is on the bulletin board at our meetinghouse or available at www.NEYM.org. There is a wonderful network of staff and resource people who make these events both productive and rewarding.

The Advices

Consider with care how God reaches us in Meeting for Worship. To every Friend is given a share of responsibility for the Meeting. Friends are advised, therefore, to be diligent in attendance at Meetings and in inward preparation for them. Let us be concerned to enter reverently into communion with God and with one another, to yield ourselves to the influence of the divine presence. Then what is evil in us may be weakened and the good raised up. God calls each one to the service of the Meeting; let us be obedient and faithful, whether by word, by song, or by silent waiting, and let us receive the messages of others in a tender spirit.

Notes on NEYM M&C

by Glenn Dwyer

On Saturday, March 13th, New England Yearly Meeting Ministry & Counsel Committee convened in Amesbury (Massachusetts) Meeting House at 9:30 a.m. Our concerns covered a broad range of issues including unity of the society, finances, sexual abuse in Friends meetings, gay marriage, elder passages, changes in meeting locations, traveling Friends in Israel, Iraq, Afghanistan, and vigorous efforts directed toward the passing on of the testimony and history of Friends.

The whole day was spent touching on various aspects of these and other issues. I was able to spread the joy of Bridges for Peace and our "Quakerism 101" sessions. The following are some other impressions I got on the sense of the meeting:

- John Greenleaf Whittier (who built Amesbury Meeting House), Lucretia Mott, and Elizabeth Frye all probably embarrassed members of their meetings.
- Friends must be encouraged to live their faith and not be judging of one another over differences in practices.
- One seeks to do what must be done, and if God isn't ready to do it, it's not going to happen.

I came away feeling that much work is needed.

"Looking down at sin, and corruption, and distraction, you are swallowed up in it; but looking at the light that discovers them, you will see over them. That will give victory; and you will find grace and strength; and there is the first step of peace."

—George Fox, in a letter to Lady Claypole

Resisting Empire Understanding the Role of Space in U.S. Global Domination April 23-25, 2004

Woodfords Congregational Church
202 Woodford Street
Portland, Maine

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Helen Caldicott

International panel of guest speakers and presenters. Workshops, rally, plenary sessions, networking. Registration fee is on a sliding scale, \$15-\$60, so everyone is encouraged to attend, regardless of ability to pay.

Sponsored by Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space (207) 729-0517
www.space4peace.org

NOTE: This event is not related to the presentation with the same title to be given by Logan Perkins and described on page 3.

E-mail from South Africa

From Georgina Mbambo

February 20, 2004

Dear Claire,

When you sent an e-mail to me in December I was in Zimbabwe on holiday and at the same time trying to help the only Quaker Center in Bulawayo, which works with the impoverished people in the rural areas. I only came back to work on the 20th January for endless meetings. I however want to acknowledge that the money you and other Friends raised was received by the Clerk of the Meeting here and forwarded to the Centre. While I have taken so long to respond, I wish to convey my profound thanks to you and other Friends for all the effort you put into this work, it is not easy, and needs a lot of commitment, even for us as Quakers. This will go a long way to enable us to take forward the voter education process to the underprivileged people who do not see the need for casting their votes. Many people still remain poor here in Cape Town, and it is those that we target, and poverty creates a lot of anger and conflict, so we must not give up. Please take a big thank you to your Meeting for me and a special one to yourself for being our ambassador.

I however have bad news in telling you that I shall soon be leaving the Quaker Peace Center through retrenchment, I have lost my job, as the center tries to restructure and have fewer people. Money is a problem, and funders do not see Cape Town as a priority anymore. They are paying more attention to other provinces. The existing mediation service will continue to receive support from the center, as they play an important role in their communities, and I am glad to have been the driving force in training and setting up these services. I shall continue to do peace work elsewhere, maybe set up a consultancy so I can do direct intervention in conflict resolution. God will provide, I am sure. It is partly the reason I took so long to come back to you. I was disappointed at the beginning, but I have accepted it and can talk about, now.

Temperatures are above 30 degrees with heat and we are burning. If we could, we would send some of it to you, because it must be very cold there.

I will say good-bye for now, as I need to go to the townships to see the women.

Peace and God bless,
Georgina

Volunteers Sought

Kno-Wal-Lin home healthcare agency, which provides in-home nursing care, personal care assistance, social services, and physical and speech therapy to patients in Knox, Waldo, and Lincoln counties, is seeking people who can volunteer some time to support the services being given by their employees. For information, contact Joy Chamberlin at 594-9561.

What NEYM Does for Our Meeting

by Claire Darrow

I have to assume that Midcoast Meeting wants to be a player in the larger world of service. If that is the case, the New England Yearly Meeting does a lot for us.

In the first place, YM serves as command central for communications with the New England meetings under its care. It conducts its business via the Permanent Board when the whole YM is not in session. It serves as a liaison between meetings and quarters. There are enrichment and information programs that go all over the area, with people trained and experienced in many matters which concern our meetings. We have hosted quite a few of these visitors over the years, and always the response seems to be that their presentations are informative and/or inspirational.

As was mentioned at the last Monthly Meeting, NEYM youth programs are vibrant and meet the needs of our many young people within the greater New England area. Children are on the waiting list for retreats and programs which are offered. The staff is excellent and enthusiastic. One of my daughters claims that Young Friends, the teen program, was about the most positive influence on her life at that time. I can't have asked for more.

The administrative staff does the housekeeping for such a big organization, keeping lists current, producing the Minute book each year, keeping in touch with other Friends' organizations, answering the many questions which come in every day, and so forth.

Our Field Secretary, Jonathan Vogel-Borne, tries to reach as many of our meetings as possible each year, though there are just so many weekends in the year, and 77 meetings under YM's care. Last year he visited 33 meetings and 8 Quarterly meetings, as well as attending 50 committee meetings, plus 13 special ones organizing Sessions, and 13 wider Quaker events. This is outreach!!! At the end of his report, which you may find in its entirety in the Minute book, he said, "Early on in this work I became aware that the most important contribution I could make to the life of NEYM was to be present, centered in prayer. No amount of going here and doing that would have any effect if I was not faithful to God's prompting."

There are others like Jonathan, who are involved in the day-to-day working of the YM. They are interesting, dedicated people who care about the world around them. It's a perfect example of putting one's faith out there as a very visible example of how to live life and make it count. The YM coordinates our voices, which carry more weight from a larger group, and it increases our visibility to others.

I am happy to report that NEYM is growing bigger each year, in the face of a troubled and unhappy world which often seems to have gone greatly wrong. I am glad that our children will have it as a teacher as they grow up.

And this is only the tip of the iceberg.

Ageing with Joy and Grace: A Retreat for Everyone Alive

Saturday April 3, 2004

Vassalboro Friends Meeting, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Vassalboro Meeting will be hosting a retreat, "Ageing with Joy and Grace." The day will alternate between small-group telling of stories, and whole-group workshops on practical matters related to ageing. Sessions will include:

- Telling stories of people who have been models for us in experiencing ageing with joy and grace. Time also for those who wish to get clear on people who were not such models.
- Preparation of wills.
- More stories: How to talk to the dying, and being with them. What was positive about the experience? How was I not able to be with the person or the fact of death?
- Medicaid and long-term care.
- Time to stretch, with a field trip around the cemetery (if the weather cooperates).
- Lunch will be a potluck. Even if you just bring a sandwich, make it something to share.
- Practical session on preparing a living will, presented as a workshop for writing one (which will be notarized by Joann Austin).
- More stories about how death can be a stimulus to life.
- Logistical last wishes at time of death.
- Closing with singing, then silence with grace and joy.

Barbara Foust (207-582-8615, barbkfoust@aol.com) will be going and would love to hear from other Midcoast Friends who plan to attend. For more information, contact Richard Kelly, Clerk of Vassalboro Meeting, 207-622-8792.

The University of Maine Peace Studies Program presents

**PEACEMAKING IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
INNER PEACE, OUTER ACTION**

June 18-20, 2004

*Featuring Sulak Sivaraksa, Doug Allen, Colman McCarthy,
Jonathan Wilson, Wayne Newell, Kathy Kelly*

Sponsored by Peace Studies Program, The Maine Humanities Council, and others

"We are one human family and one earth community with a common destiny."* By educating ourselves in ways of peace, we lessen the fears and fixed ideas that divide us. This conference is meant to give a forum to those who are exploring themes of peace in a rich variety of ways, from spirituality to art, from storytelling to dance, from native rights to veterans rights, from compassionate living to restorative justice and reconciliation.

* from the "Earth Charter"

For conference content questions, call The Peace Studies Program 207-581-2609. For registration questions, call Conference Services Division 207-581-4094. E-mail: csd@umit.maine.edu

Conferences Services Division Website: www.umaine.edu/conferences

Kathy Kelly on the Importance of Simple Living

contributed by Carmen Lavertu

Kathy Kelly is founder of Voices in the Wilderness, who made frequent trips to Iraq before the war and assisted people like Tom Jackson (New Hampshire Friend) to document the suffering of the people of Basra during the UN sanctions period. She came through Maine last summer, and some of us heard her speak about her experience in Baghdad during the war last year. Last fall she was arrested at the School of the Americas for committing civil disobedience. The following is an excerpt from a long letter published on Friday, March 19, 2004, by CommonDreams.org.

How could we live differently, with less consumption and waste? Let me answer for myself. I consume far more than my fair share of jet fuel, electrical energy, and water each year. It's time to start rationing myself. The old adage, "Live simply so that others can simply live," comes to mind.

I'll have a refresher course in simple living during the late spring and summer of this year when I'll be an inmate in a US federal prison for four months. The prison-industrial complex is a cruel extension of US war-making against the poor in our country, but I hope this prison sentence, for nonviolent trespass on US military installations, will serve me as an incubation period, a time of adjustment while living with less, and a time to hatch new ideas about how to live more simply after I leave the prison. I hope all of us will find ways to slow down, find more leisure time, and in our times of rest reflect very seriously on Secretary of State Colin Powell's encouragement that we "get together to defeat organizations determined to kill and destroy innocent people." I hope we can get together to nonviolently defeat US militarism, at home and abroad.



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