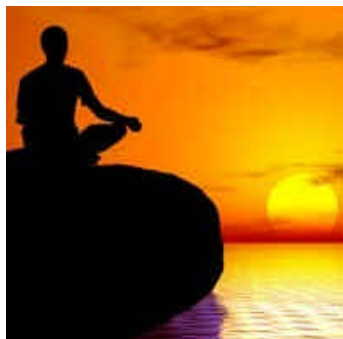


11<sup>th</sup> Month

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

November 2008



Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.  
 -- Mark 4:39

Not merely an absence of noise, real silence begins when a reasonable being withdraws from the noise in order to find peace and order in his inner sanctuary.  
 -- Peter Minard

### November

Saturday	Nov. 1		Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting--"Nature & Spirit: Exploring our Ecological Identity," Blue Hill
Sunday	Nov. 2	Rise of Meeting	Potluck Lunch, followed by "Quakerism 101"
Thursday	Nov. 6	4 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Gifts & Leadings Committee Meeting Ministry & Counsel Committee Meeting
Friday	Nov. 7	6 p.m.	Maine Council of Churches 70th Anniversary Dinner Freeport, ME [See Oct. newsletter for details.]
Sunday	Nov. 9	8:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	*Reading Group *"Simplicity & the Environment: A Celebration of John Woolman & the Installation of Solar Panels on Midcoast Friends Meetinghouse"
Sunday	Nov. 16	Rise of Meeting	Monthly Meeting for Worship for business
Sunday	Nov. 23	8:30 a.m.	*Reading Group

### December

Sunday	Dec. 7	Rise of Meeting	Potluck Lunch
Sunday	Dec. 14	Rise of Meeting	Christmas Fair & Party

\*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.

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**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](mailto:diane_kirkman@hotmail.com). Thanks!

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For newsletters, important links, & a current calendar, visit our website: [www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org](http://www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org).

## Highlights

Meeting for Business, Tenth Month 19, 2008

**Correspondence**--A request for funding of the Scholarship Fund at Beacon Hill Friends House was received from our friend Holly Baldwin. The Fund supports a visitor for one year at Beacon Hill Friends House. The request was referred to the Worthy Needs Committee.

**Meetinghouse & Grounds Committee**--Paul Diamond outlined preliminary ideas for memorial-stone guidelines. The stones would be flat, of modest size, with birth and death dates. They would lie close to the Memorial Circle. Further, three options will be considered: 1) for uniformity, the Meeting could buy and hold several stones, 2) we could install a formal, graveled area surrounding the stone circle for placement of memorial stones, or 3) memorial stones could be placed less formally in the grass low enough so as not to interfere with mowing. Friends are asked to weigh these options in preparation for approving guidelines at next month's meeting for business. Meanwhile, Ministry & Counsel will consider qualifications to be eligible for a memorial stone.

**Ministry & Counsel**--Rachel McGinness reported. The committee's recommendation that Suzy Hallett become a member of the meeting was welcomed with enthusiastic approval and Suzy expressed her gratitude. Friends are asked to review the draft of Chapter 4 for the revised NEYM Faith & Practice and give feedback. Rachel distributed to committees a sample State of the Committee report.

**Peace Center**--Andy Burt distributed a sample flyer about the solar panel celebration "Quaker Simplicity and the Environment" on November 9.

**Treasurer's Report**--Paul Diamond presented a financial report for the period from June 1 to October 15.

**Peace & Social Concerns**--Carmen Lavertu distributed new booklets from FCNL (Friends Committee on Legislation) entitled "Building Structures for Peace." She also distributed "A Minute on Peace" from Wellesley (MA) Monthly Meeting adopted by New England Yearly Meeting at Sessions 2008. The Meeting decided to co-sponsor the Alternative Gifts Fair in December.

**Religious Education**--Karen Cadbury reported that the existing table has been lowered. The bequest from Charlotte Ritter will go toward youth-size chairs and a swing set.

**New Business**--The Meeting has received a request from a Friend for financial assistance to attend a program. This would come from the Conference Fund. A process was recommended and approved by the Meeting: a co-clerk, the clerk of Peace & Social Concerns, and the clerk of Ministry & Counsel will meet with the applicant, having authority to allocate up to the amount already in the budget. If the amount of the request is more than budgeted, a matching fund for private donations will be set up. We will hold a Christmas Fair on December 14 to benefit a worthy cause to be chosen by the young people of the Meeting. We will invite Sylvia Tavares, Jayne Dwyer, and other artists and craftspeople to come sell their wares. Friends will bring useful used items to donate for sale. A letter from attender Joyce Young requesting permission to create an organic garden on the property was referred to the Meetinghouse & Grounds Committee for consideration and recommendation to monthly meeting next month.

The next meeting for business will be held Sunday, November 16, at the rise of meeting for worship. All are welcome. Please bring a bag lunch. The entire pending minutes of the October meeting may be found on the Meeting's website at [www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org](http://www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org) and on the bulletin board at the meetinghouse.

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### Planning on Using the Meetinghouse for Your Committee Meeting?

To all committees: If you are planning to use the meetinghouse for a committee meeting, please remember to contact Jean Harris at 563-5531 so that your meeting time can be officially scheduled on the meetinghouse calendar. Since Jean is the person outside organizations call in order to schedule use of the meetinghouse, she can tell you if the meetinghouse is available for your meeting. She is also well informed about renting the space to outside organizations. We appreciate your attention to this meetinghouse detail.



## **A Minute on Peace**

**Adopted by the New England Yearly Meeting at Sessions 2008/submitted by Carmen Lavertu**

The following Minute on Peace from NEYM Sessions is being sent to all Monthly Meetings for study and response. The Peace & Social Concerns Committee, of which I am a member, is planning a Called Meeting in March or April. I urge all Friends, individually or in Meeting programs, to prepare for a strong Quaker witness in 2009 against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and in general against the militaristic thrust of our government. Contact me with questions, willingness to participate, responses, or concerns: Carmen (354-9556 or [clavertu@gmail.com](mailto:clavertu@gmail.com)).

*We live in a nation which spends more than the rest of the world combined on armed forces and armaments and which is now engaged in wars in two separate countries. The application of violence in these wars has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths and injuries, incalculable material destruction, and a profound deterioration of the moral standing of our nation. As Friends and human beings, we are deeply ashamed of the immense harm that our nation has inflicted on the people of Iraq and Afghanistan. We are disturbed that our national military and financial aid is so often employed abroad in support of powerful economic interests without regard for considerations of justice and self-determination for the people of other countries. In our own country, we witness daily the impoverishment of our social life--the deterioration of our infrastructure, the failures of our schools, and the inadequacy of our health care--resulting from the diversion of resources into armaments and war-making.*

*When we confront the imperatives of the national security state, we recognize that fear, hatred, and insecurity of the citizens are exploited to generate consent for a so-called "war on terror" which has no defined goal and no foreseeable end. Neither a quest for revenge nor an unreasoning fear of the consequences of revenge against us, as embodied in the increasingly intrusive and repressive campaign for "homeland security" is admissible from a spiritual perspective. With the Psalmist, we say, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." "Be still and know that I am God."*

*We reject all acts of terrorism, among which we include incursions and bombing by organized military forces that destroy homes and kill and maim innocents, however unintentionally. We do not support the "war on terror" and call for a reengagement in international governance and a major decrease of the military budget to generate a genuine peace dividend for desperately needed investments in infrastructure, education, health, and human services, and steps toward conservation and renewable energy sources.*

*We are mindful that Friends' testimony on peace calls us "to root out the causes of war from our own lives and from the political and social structure about us." We are urged to "seek, through God's power and grace, to overcome in our own hearts the emotions that lie at the root of violence." We seek, always, to live lives that testify to the presence of the divine Light in ourselves and every human being. We strive to overcome our own fears so that we can be centers of peace, a calming influence in an increasingly anxious world. We will remember what 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."*

*We, as a Yearly Meeting, call upon all our meetings to consider this minute during the coming year and to identify how to take action on the concerns raised. We also call on New England Friends to gather in a called Meeting for Worship in early 2009 to address the concerns raised in this minute.*

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### **ABOUT THE QUERIES**

From *Faith & Practice*: Friends have developed the Queries to assist us to consider prayerfully the true source of spiritual strength and the extent to which the conduct of our lives gives witness to our Christian faith. To these ends, the Queries should be read frequently in private devotions and regularly in monthly and quarterly meetings.

In using these Queries, meetings should be aware that our standards of conduct do not derive from an outward set of rules but rather from the life and teachings of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament, from the examples offered by the spiritual experiences and lives of those who have preceded us, and from our own encounters with that inward revelation through which "the way, the truth, and the life" see expression today.

## *The NEYM Faith & Practice Revision Continues*

We have received a new packet of information from the New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) Faith & Practice Revision Committee. The Revision Committee is looking for feedback by February 1, 2009, on the working paper for Chapter 4: "Integration of Faith and Life--The Meaning, Understanding and Use of Testimonies." The packets include whom to contact with your feedback.

Also included in the packet is the revised Chapter 9: "A Brief History of Friends in New England." This chapter received preliminary approval at the 2008 NEYM sessions. They feel the revised chapter is clearer and more accurate.

Feel free to take a copy available for you on the credenza.

If you have any questions concerning either chapter, please contact Linda at 563-6712 or [chezcote@roadrunner.com](mailto:chezcote@roadrunner.com).

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### **ABOUT THE ADVICES**

The Advices have served Friends for many generations in their search for a life centered in the Spirit. Arising from the experience and aspirations of successive generations of Friends, the Advices are illustrations of how they seek to carry their faith into all aspects of life.

Advices first appeared in the form of epistles sent among Friends to encourage and strengthen each other in their faith. The earliest surviving collection of Advices was issued from Balby in England in 1656. Its concluding statement begins, "Dearly Beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by . . . ."

Friends find their essential unity in their profound and exhilarating belief in the pervasive presence of God and in the continuing responsibility of each person and worshipping group to seek the leading of the Spirit in all things. Obedience to the leading of that Spirit rather than to any written statement of belief or conduct is the obligation of their faith.

Yet the Advices should have a quickening influence in shaping our daily lives. Their reading is intended to remind us that all aspects of our lives are under divine guidance and to heighten our awareness that in all our relationships we act in the sight of God.

*--Faith & Practice of New England Yearly Meeting of Friends (1985), p. 205*

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### **Living in the Spirit: Putting Faith into Action**

The Spiritual Transformation Program "Living in the Spirit, Putting Faith into Action" continues this year with a curriculum of readings in social transformation. I was a part of the VQM group that met last year, and I attended the fall retreat at the Meeting School a few weekends ago. The very rich, inspiring curriculum includes:

Spiritual work: Strengthening our daily practice and our participation in the life of our meetings, while encouraging each other in transforming the way we live our daily lives.

Intellectual work: Setting Quaker theology, history, and action within a broader context of strategic nonviolent action for a just, peaceful, and environmentally responsible society,

Community work: Sharing with each other our concerns and actions, our struggles and hopes; building a network of concerned Friends who are called to spirit-led action.

Practical work: Supporting each other in seeking and following specific leadings for action on individual or shared concerns (nurturing a "personal political practice").

The Quarterly Meeting group intends to continue meeting at Quarterly meetings (since traveling is difficult for the six of us from Midcoast, Vassalboro, and Farmington), and this year, there will be a Google discussion group for all New England Friends who enroll. I would truly like to hear from Midcoast Friends interested either in knowing more about this deep-work program or in forming a group in our Meeting. You can reach me at 354-9556 or [clavertu@gmail.com](mailto:clavertu@gmail.com).

*--Carmen Lavertu*

**The Peace Center Presents: Quaker Simplicity and the Environment  
Sunday, November 9, 2008--Midcoast Friends Meetinghouse**

**11:30:** A Tour and Presentation of the New Solar Electric System by *Andy Burt*

**12:00:** A Simple Lunch with Local Foods (Provided by the Meeting)

**1:00:** A Presentation of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Quaker John Woolman and His Commitment to a Life of Material and Spiritual Simplicity by *Ruah Swennerfelt & Louis Cox, Founders of Quaker Earthcare Witness*

**2:30:** Second Tour and Presentation of the New Solar Electric System

This program is open to members of the community. For more information, please call Brewster Grace at 594-8082 or Karen Cadbury at 230-0436.

### **Request for Support**



Linda Coté-Small is going to take a training course through the Nonviolent Communication Network in Maine. The nine-month course focuses on integrating

compassionate ways to connect with and communicate with others. This training will enhance Linda's ability as a facilitator in the Alternatives to Violence Project conducted in Maine's jails and prisons, a project sponsored by Friends. Linda plans on sharing her experiences with the Meeting through a talk and in the newsletter.

This program, which includes four residential retreats, costs a total of \$2,515. The Meeting is contributing \$150 to help Linda obtain the training. (The Meeting's contribution is all that our current budget allows for conferences.) Linda would greatly appreciate any additional contributions that members of the Meeting might make to help her meet the costs of this unique educational experience which will further her peace leading. Contributions to assist Linda further should be sent to Treasurer Paul Diamond, 73 Pascal Ave., Rockport, ME 04856. If you have questions, please contact Linda Coté-Small at 563-6712.

### **REMEMBERING GEORGE SPARKS**

A beautiful memorial service for George Sparks was held on Saturday, October 4, at the meetinghouse. Many family members and friends were there to celebrate George's life and to speak of his love for family and friends and of the way he lived his life according to the Quaker principles he cherished.

The Meeting received a generous contribution and a lovely note from his brother Donald Sparks. The note read:

*This gift is in the memory of my brother George C. Sparks, who died on September 6, 2008, in Pensacola, Florida, where he lived near his daughter Susan McFarland.*

*He was an exceptional person, a quiet man, a kind man, and a talented artist.*

*He designed many promotional boxes and later on started his own business to produce them. Many times he would sell a design for a special box, and after selling it he would return to his office and design a machine to make it. An incredible talent.*

*He was my very good friend as well as my brother.*

*He was interested in everything.*

## READING GROUP

The Book Group meets in the meetinghouse at 8:30 a.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of every month before Meeting for Worship. In October, we read and discussed *Amish Grace* by Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher and will conclude that discussion in the first November session. Although we have not yet decided on our next selection, the topic will be forgiveness. All interested Friends--all readers--are welcome to join us.

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"Remember, O my soul! that the Prince of Peace is thy Lord; that he communicates his unmixed wisdom to his family, that they, living in perfect simplicity, may give no just cause of offence to any creature, but that they may walk as He walked!"

--from *Journal of John Woolman*, Chapter IX

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