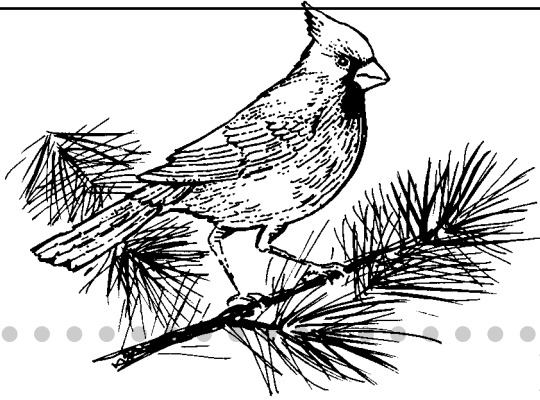


MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Damariscotta, Maine

NEWSLETTER



*Arise, shine, for Thy Light is
come, and the glory of the
Lord is risen upon thee.*

Isaiah 60:1

December

Saturday	December 6	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	FCMPP, Waterville
Sunday	December 7		Winter Discussions: Democracy Teach-in (Linda Cote-Small)
Monday	December 8	5 p.m.	Ministry & Counsel committee meeting
Tuesday	December 9	4:30 p.m.	Peace & Social Concerns committee meeting
Sunday	December 14	8:30 a.m.	* Reading Group, Spirit Matters by Michael Lerner
Sunday	December 14	11:45 a.m.	Monthly Meeting for Business
Sunday	December 21	rise of Meeting	Christmas Party
Sunday	December 28	8:30 a.m.	Reading Group

~ Advance Notice ~

Saturday	January 3		Winter Silent Retreat
Sunday	January 4	10 a.m.	Meeting for Worship and Candlelighting Service
Sunday	January 11		* Quakerism 101 (Ministry & Counsel)
Saturday	February 7		Quarterly Meeting in Farmington
Sunday	February 8		Quakerism 101 (Ministry & Counsel)
Sunday	March 14		Quakerism 101 (Ministry & Counsel)

* 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**, 11th month of 2003

based on draft minutes by Rob Patterson

Clerk Carmen Lavertu opened the meeting with a period of silence. There were 24 people present. The minutes of the October meeting were read and approved with minor corrections.

Treasurer's Report

Bill Spock reported for the Finance Committee. Five handouts were distributed. These included draft guidelines on budget and expense procedures highlighting a timeline for budget creation and a practical detailing of who pays the various expenses of the Meeting. Another handout reviewed the pledge situation indicating current pledges fall short of the budget by \$1500.00.

The committee recommended and the Meeting approved the allocation of \$2,000.00 from the Cully Miller bequest be used toward the purchase price of new chairs for the function room. The total cost is estimated at \$3850, and the balance can come from the meetinghouse account reserve which presently stands at \$2294. The committee advised the Meeting that the cost of new, energy-efficient fluorescent lighting, to the extent not covered by special contributions from members, can be paid from the capital repairs reserve. The cost of dimmable bulbs will be higher than originally

Ministry & Counsel

Upcoming Series: Quakerism 101

by Jean Crawford

Ministry & Counsel has been pondering the difference between being an attender and being a member of Midcoast Monthly Meeting. We propose a winter series of informative sessions on the meaning of membership. The dates will be January 11, February 8, and March 14th. Tentative topics are: What is Quakerism? What would you like to know more about in Quakerism? and When is it time to consider joining the Meeting as a Member? We will gear the sessions to attenders; however we urge members to attend, too, for their own edification and to facilitate a good discussion.

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?

anticipated. There was a discussion of whether they were really necessary given the added cost. Several members felt that feature was particularly useful for evening gatherings. One member suggested not replacing the existing dimmer lights until they wear out, by which time other more cost-effective alternatives may be available. The Meeting approved the acquisition of all but the replacements for the dimming lights, which will await further information on cost.

Ministry & Counsel

Jean Crawford, clerk of the committee, reported that the committee had discussed a thoughtful letter from a Friend regarding membership and the Death Record Book. It led to a minute citing the committee's unity in recommending to Monthly Meeting that the Death Record Book should be limited to members. The question of methods for recording the deaths of non-members did not result in a uniform position being taken. Another question brought to the committee was the appropriateness of having non-members on clearness committees for membership. The thinking of the committee was that, under ordinary circumstances, the participants in such a clearness function should be members of the Meeting; however, they do not feel that a precise policy on the matter is either necessary or desirable. The committee proposes a series of winter discussions on the meaning of membership. (*See article at left.*)

Nominating Committee

Andy Burt distributed a preliminary report showing that many committees and offices have willing participants, but a number of uncertainties still exist, the most important being the position of clerk. Someone has been approached and is giving the matter consideration.

Carolyn Miller suggested that Meetinghouse Committee be just two members plus the clerk of Landscaping and Maintenance. The committee will consider this suggestion and make a recommendation to Meeting. Another member suggested that we consider making all appointments for a two-year period to avoid the annual struggle to fill the many vacancies. This, too, will be considered by the committee. A member suggested that greater awareness on the part of the Meeting community about committee functions might be helpful.

Meetinghouse Committee

Carolyn Miller reported on the search for replacement chairs for the social room. The relative virtues of metal and plastic versions, including price, ergonomics, cleanability, and stackability were discussed. Andy Burt volunteered to pick up examples of the

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New Reading Group Topic

by Carmen Lavertu



The Meeting Reading Group, which meets twice a month, on the second and fourth Sundays, at 8:30 a.m. before Meeting for Worship, will begin a new book in December. It is **Spirit Matters** by Michael Lerner.

Many of us know the author as the editor of TIKKUN magazine; the Meeting has a subscription, and you can find a current issue or back copies on the credenza from time to time. Some years ago, Friends in the Peace and Social Concerns committee read an essay by an American rabbi who was sympathetic to the Palestinian plight and had some good ideas for reconciliation. We learned that after publication of his essay in TIKKUN, so many cancellations had been received that the life of the magazine was threatened. Not that our gesture would help save the magazine, but we subscribed because we wanted to learn more about the peace movement in Israel and among American Jews. We wanted affirmation of our witness against the occupation of Palestine while maintaining the attachment and deep love we have for the Jewish people.

Michael Lerner is a scholar in the rabbinical tradition; he is an impassioned speaker and writer. (Some of us went to Bowdoin College to hear him in person a few weeks ago, when he spoke about the Old Testament tradition of compassion for “the stranger”—an ancient teaching that may guide us in transforming the world of violence that currently prevails.)

Spirit Matters addresses a major ambition of Quakers: to deepen our spiritual nature while we participate in the transformation of the world. So often, we find that we must retreat from social and political involvement in order to maintain the peace of our hearts and minds, and we find that active involvement in political interests is upsetting, emotionally and intellectually—we so often give in to anger, frustration, and confusion. Yet, we know that to live fully as loving and compassionate persons, we need to balance spirituality and activism. We want to be so imbued with love and compassion that our relationships are nourishing

and supportive, that we can reach out to all those less fortunate than ourselves, that we can be involved in our communities, locally and nationally, to bring out a more just polity, and that we can, above all, know that it is possible to envision a world of peace and justice.

This book will not only give us the profound learning of this author, but I am sure it will stimulate our own thinking, and provide questions for interesting and worthwhile dialogue.

Friends who cannot participate in the the 8:30 a.m. discussion may think about obtaining and reading the book. A special discussion session could be scheduled at a more congenial time. To order the book, tell your independent bookstore it is published by Walsh Books, Hampton Books Publishing Co., Inc., and to find out more information on the Internet, go to www.hrpub.com

Note on Pledges

2003-2004 to date, October 31, 2003

by Paul Diamond, Treasurer

In the last fiscal year, 2002-2003, the Meeting received 53 pledges, totaling \$19,339. So far this year, 20 of the above have not yet pledged. Their total last year was (\$5,415), but 8 people have pledged this year who did not pledge last year, totaling \$2,110. Nine people have pledged more this year than last, for an increase of \$920, but 7 people have reduced their pledges this year by a total of (\$1,420).

Thus, our total pledges to date, including 17 unchanged from last year, are \$15,534. From those who have not yet pledged, we may reasonably expect \$3,000—meaning that our total pledged income will be about \$18,500.

If everybody pays as pledged or expected, our total income will fall below our income budget of \$20,000 by about \$1,500.

Call for Tablecloths

Where, oh, where have our Meeting tablecloths gone? We had 6, and now we have only 2. I visualize kind people taking them home to wash, washing them, then putting them on the “to be ironed” pile for instant burial. Please scratch around to see if they might be there. Thank you.

Love, Barb (Foust)

CHARLOTTE RITTER PAINTINGS

ON DISPLAY AT GEORGE SCHOOL

SIX WATERCOLORS FROM ARCTIC TRIP

OPENING RECEPTION WITH ARTISTS

SUNDAY DECEMBER 7, 2-4 P.M.

WALTON CENTER, GEORGE SCHOOL, NEWTOWN, PA

GALLERY OPEN MON-FRI, 9 A.M.-5 P.M.

BY APPOINTMENT ~ 215-579-6695

Something to check out if you happen to be traveling to/in Pennsylvania

metal and plastic ones in Portland on her next trip so that members can compare the two. While the decision seemed to have come down to a choice between the 2 models, a member brought to Meeting an upholstered chair from Portland Meeting which she found very comfortable. Several people expressed support for this new example. More on the chair question will follow.

Peace & Social Concerns

Ernie Foust reported that only three people showed up for Logan Perkins teach-in on the FTAA (Trade Agreement of the Americas) held at the meetinghouse on October 30th. He said her presentation was well done and that it was too bad more people hadn't come to hear it.

Ernie will serve on the Worthy Needs Committee for 2004 as the committee's representative.

Holly Baldwin's discussion about holiday consumerism will be on November 30th. November 28th is National Buy Nothing Day. A member asked about the nature of the observance and questioned the "sloganism" and the unfair impact on local merchants who depend so heavily on a busy holiday season. It was suggested that we buy locally when we need to but try to refrain from doing so on that date.

Linda Coté-Small will lead a "Democracy Teach-In" on December 7th, highlighting the little things we all can do to further democracy even in the current threatening environment.

Other Business

The 11/23 meeting of the Book Group will focus on David Nyberg's book, **The Varnished Truth**, with the

Notes from Friends on the Move

Judy, Reuben, and (Baby) Marie Bailey. We just learned that the Baileys have temporarily moved to Skowhegan while they build a house in Hartland. Their address is 213 Madison Ave., Skowhegan, ME 04976. Phone: 207-474-9757.

*The Quaker Motto Calendar:
A Gift from the Havilands*

For a number of years Pete and Deb Haviland have enjoyed giving family and friends the Quaker Motto Calendar at Christmas. Again this year, Pete and Deb would like to spread their gift to all members and attenders of Midcoast Meeting. Calendars will be on the credenza in early December. Please take one and enjoy it, with love and wishes for a joyous and peaceful year 2003.

author present to take part in the discussion. A new book will be started in December.

Claire Darrow gave her "final final" report on the South African project and stated that the project grossed a little over \$6000, from which expenses were deducted. The cost of a container has already been sent to South Africa, and the remaining proceeds will be sent to the Peace Center in Cape Town. The committee there has indicated that the money will be used for education about voting rights and the importance of participation in the elective process as well as education about gender-equity issues. The project is concluded and has been judged a great success.

Guy Marsden has expressed interest in preparing information to be posted on the Meeting's Web site that will highlight steps the Meeting has taken to make the meetinghouse more environmentally friendly. Other information on eco-friendly issues and environmental stewardship may be included as well. The Meeting expressed support for the idea. (Note: This new page has been posted under the "Concerns" tab at the Midcoast Meeting Web site. Ed.)

Carmen Lavertu reported that the Worthy Needs Committee is "spinning." By this she meant that it has not yet accomplished the job set before it. It seems there are questions about the need for a separate committee, and the "mission" of Worthy Needs seems to be in question. She reported that some people feel that Peace and Social Concerns could accomplish the work of this ad hoc committee.

Record Keeping

Some time ago Carmen Lavertu sent out requests to committee clerks asking for reports on what records they maintain of their committee's activities and where those records are kept. She has received some replies but requests that clerks who have yet to respond do so in a timely manner.

Holiday Programs

Friends discussed possible dates for a holiday celebration and a welcome reception for new members. It was decided that both could be on the same date, and that December 21st was the best date. As a result, Monthly Meeting was moved to 12/14, one week earlier than usual.

In the closing silence, Carmen invited Friends to speak the names of those who need special care at this time. A number of Friends were mentioned and those present were encouraged to hold them in The Light in the coming days and weeks.

The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be at the rise of Meeting for Worship on December 14th. This is a week earlier than usual to accommodate the holiday season and its many demands.



Some of the garden staff at work

which has crisis all the time. My working schedule has been very busy away from Cape Town in remote areas with no electricity and no laptop. Two of us had to go out to deal with conflict for just more than two weeks just before you came back from your vacation with your husband. Then it was report after report and planning for next year, then it was deaths of one of the women mediators you met and two other grown-up children of those women you met—because I work with them, I was pulled to help with so many issues.

Last week we were at a 3 days workshop away from the townships using the remainder of the money you sent for the container with the same women mediators you saw in order to discuss plans on how we can be more effective next year, how are we going to reduce the violence which we are experiencing. The scary part was when we spoke about HIV/AIDS as it has affected almost all our mediators, this is an emotional topic, but I said it must be discussed, and now people are beginning to be open about it. It is the only way to deal with the issue, some women will now talk about it to other community groups.

You can see how special you are with your Meeting. We told the women that part of the money which has enabled them to go out and reflect on their lives came

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.

from you, they were very happy as some of them have never been out for such an experience. They send their many thanks to you and the Meeting. We have our training for this year and are working very hard on next year's plans, we are definitely going ahead with training on democracy and human rights next year, as many of our people suffer because they are uninformed about their rights.

The money that you send will be used in the coming year starting last week in January. I am trying a video for you, which will include the container and meetings held to discuss mediation, and some mediation, I hope. My friends, let me wish you all to be well and do extend my sincere thanks for what you are doing for the QPC (Quaker Peace Center).

I must go home and cook for my family now, it is 18 hours to the clock. I just wish I had my own computer then I can also work from my house. I am trying to save to buy a second hand one, I am sure I'll do it early next year.

In peace, Georgina



Many of the staff buy vegetables from the gardens

Stamp Project Update

Friend will remember our ongoing participation in the stamp project of Mattapoissett (MA) Friends Meeting. Richard Castner has volunteered to periodically mail the accumulated stamps to Mattapoissett. Sales of the stamps benefit organizations such as the Friends World Committee for Consultation and the Ramallah play center for Palestinian refugee children.

All stamps are accepted; the most valuable are U.S. special issues and stamps from other countries. Look for the collection point on the Peace and Social Concerns bulletin board in the social room at the meetinghouse. For more information, visit our Web site.

Visit
www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

South Africa Letters

E-mail exchanges between Claire Darrow and her South African contact,
Georgina Mbambo, of the Quaker Peace Centre, Cape Town

From Claire Darrow to Georgina Mbambo, 10/13/03

We had a wonderful time at the fundraising dinner and silent auction last Saturday, although the rain was pouring down. The auction alone made enough to fund a whole container! I was very pleased. After the dinner we had a program on restorative justice, which I gather has been used in South Africa, and perhaps in your area. It seems like a kind and thoughtful way to deal with people, though I'll bet it's hard to do.

I will be away for ten days, having a small vacation with my husband. As the money is still coming in, I don't want to send a partial remittance unless you want it right away. (If that is the case, let me know before Wednesday.) It should be enough to get you some help for your educational



Georgina Mbambo at the gardens

projects. It might be as much as nearly \$3600. I've been overwhelmed at how much people have been moved by my story about you and interested in you and your mediators. I was SO glad to get their pictures, and one of you!! Thank you very much. I am still being asked about a picture of a container. It's just because people are so interested.

Take care of yourself, my Friend
Georgina,

Claire

From Georgina Mbambo to Claire Darrow, 11/11/03

Claire You Are Very Special,
First of all is my apology as usual, I am so bad at time management especially here at QPC, we quite often work on crisis because of our environment,

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

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