

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



"You are the God who sees me."

--Genesis 16:13 (NIV)

"If there is any 'right' way of praying, it is that most simple and yet elusive one: to simply be yourself. A Quaker woman once told me that she was looking for 'unexpurgated prayer.' I believe that is what God is hoping for also: our being with God consciously just as we are with no censorship, no cleaning up our act, no posturing or posing--just being real."

--Gerald May, *The Awakened Heart*

December

Sunday	December 3	Rise of Meeting	Food Pantry Day *Second-Hour Discussion
Sunday	December 10	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Business (Brown Bag Lunch)
Sunday	December 17	Rise of Meeting	*Christmas Party
Sunday	December 31	Rise of Meeting	*Potluck luncheon followed by New Year's Eve Candle-Lighting Ceremony

January

Tuesday	January 16	6:30-8:30 p.m.	*Non-Violent Communication Practice Group resumes
Sunday	January 21	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Business (Brown Bag Lunch)

*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
Eleventh Month 17, 2006

The meeting is still missing the **minutes of the seventh month business meeting**. Anyone having notes pertaining to that meeting is asked to give them to the clerk.

The practice of holding **latecomers to Meeting for Worship** until 10:15 is to be continued.

Response to **Ministry & Counsel's request for proposals of programs** (evening, second hour, etc.) has been excellent. Friends are encouraged to continue submitting proposals.

The meeting approved investing in a **listing of our phone number and address in the "Yellow Pages"** on a trial basis for one year.

The 2007 **Religious Education Committee will consider a recommendation** that a qualified person be hired to care for young children during worship.

In the future, the recording clerk will submit **highlights of a business meeting** rather than draft minutes.

The meeting has received notice it is to receive a **bequest from the estate of Charlotte Ritter**.

The annual **Christmas Party** will take place following worship on December 17. Friends are asked to bring gifts from home. These could be something homemade or something already owned. They should be unwrapped and priced. Proceeds will go to the Carpenter's Boat Shop or CHIP. Friends are also asked to bring sandwiches or finger food.

Meeting for worship on Sunday, December 31, will be followed by a potluck lunch, and this will be followed by a **New Year's Eve candle-lighting ceremony**. Friends are reminded to bring candles in candleholders.

Nonviolent Communication Practice Group Starts Up in January

A new Nonviolent Communication (compassionate communication) Practice Group will be starting on January 16 at the meetinghouse, from 6:30-8:30pm.

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a unique approach to communicating, which guides us in transforming habitual patterns of communication into new compassionate ways. It is founded on simple skills which enable people to connect with the needs in themselves and others that inspire a compassionate response. Marshall Rosenberg developed the NVC method of communication during the 1960s and the civil rights era.

The intention of this group is to put into practice the principles Rosenberg created, which are described in his book, *Nonviolent Communication, a Language of Life*. This book and a companion workbook will be used as the basic material. The group will also spend a fair amount of time practicing compassionate listening, which is a key element of this new way of communicating.

For more information about NVC check the web site www.CNVC.org or call Linda Cote-Small at 563-6712

SECOND-HOUR DISCUSSION
December 3--AFSC & NCNL

On Sunday, December 3, the "Second Hour" discussion will feature a report by Jim Matlack on the Annual Meetings both of the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation, which he attended in early November. Questions and discussion to follow.

CLERK'S CORNER
November 2006



At Business Meeting on the 17th, eleven of us gathered to address the items on our agenda, which was a full one. The two subjects that come up to me as I look back on the wide-ranging discussions were Outreach and the report from the Gifts & Leadings Committee.

The first, reported by Jean Crawford, involved the idea of putting an ad in the phone book to be accessible to people who are looking for a Quaker meeting to attend. After hearing her research results, costs, etc., we agreed that Jean could ask a few more questions before making the decision to go ahead with putting ourselves out there in this way. We thanked Jean for the fine job she is doing with getting articles of our upcoming programs into the newspapers. Already we see a few new faces, and we're ready for more!

As to Gifts and Leadings, the committee agreed that the process went much more smoothly than last year, for which we are grateful. We are nearly ready to present a full slate to the Meeting for approval in December. Most of the slots are filled, and only a few more people whom we have not yet been able to contact need to be called. Also, there are still one or two openings on Peace & Social Concerns, Ministry & Counsel, and Finance. We hope that some of you will be led to try out these areas of Meeting activities. It's a great way to get to know people in a different way than just chatting after Meeting and to help out the Meeting's work at the same time. You may contact Jean Crawford, Carmen Lavertu, Claire Darrow, Pete Haviland, Linda Cote-Small, or Sally Tukey if you have questions.

These were not the only topics we addressed. A generous bequest from Charlotte Ritter designated specifically for First Day School activities was a nice surprise. Now we need to have children come and enjoy what we can do for and with them. I hope it happens in the near future.

The Christmas Party will be held on December 17, and we have planned something new: bring a lightly used item, priced to sell to raise money for a worthy cause which we will decide about at our December Monthly Meeting. Children can bring a toy they are ready to part with, as long as it is clean. Jane Dwyer and Sylvia Tavares will also be selling their lovely handmade jewelry. Bring finger foods to share, which will also add to the festivities. We hope someone will be able to play Christmas carols and we can sing a little. Anyone has woods where they can cut a Christmas tree for us? This is an everyone kind of party. See you there!

From Ministry & Counsel--

We are grateful for and appreciative of the effort you are making to be at Sunday worship by 10 a.m. We are also grateful to those of us who wait patiently in the lobby/library until 10:15 to enter the worship room. This has contributed to the essential quiet of the first part of the meeting. Many members have commented that that quiet at beginning of worship has been beneficial for them.

QUERY: Personal Conduct

Do you live with simplicity, moderation, and integrity? Are you punctual in keeping promises, careful in speech, just and compassionate in all your dealings with others? Do you take care that your spiritual growth is not sacrificed to busyness but instead integrates your life's activities? Are your recreations consistent with Quaker values; do they refresh your spirit and renew your mind and body?

NEWS NOTES
by Deb Haviland

Nancy and Chuck Boothby recently celebrated their 60th birthdays and retirement with a trip to Fire Island, New York (where Nancy grew up summers), and upstate New York visiting friends. Their house in Waldoboro is on the market, and they are living in Sedgewick, where they have had a home for many years. They will be in Sedgewick through 2006 and will then take an extended trip down the East Coast, and in March a trip to Amsterdam to visit their daughter. A wonderful way to start retirement. **Leon Appel**, Nancy Boothby's father, is still at Quarry Hill and is doing well. He is responsive and happy to have company. **Theta and Jim Torbert** are doing well in Whitefield. Their new address is 527 E. River Road. Jim is retired and their daughter Alice lives nearby and is expecting her first child, a son, in December. Their daughter Laura has three children. **Marijane Fall** wants to remain connected with Midcoast. She has been back in Maine for 11 years but hasn't visited for some time. Her new address is 2 Belmont Terrace in Gorham. She is a professor at the University of Southern Maine, has a private practice in counseling, and is looking closely at retirement from teaching. **Rob Patterson** had knee-replacement surgery on November 17 and is doing well. November 21, he moved to Windward Gardens in Camden for rehab and may be there a week before going home. His phone is 230-0307. **Clay Patterson** is a sophomore at Marquette University (WI). He is an avid sports fan and has an outside job working with a major fund vendor who delivers to the NBA Milwaukee Bucks. He loves college life. **Meg Patterson Gillespie** lives in Wiscasset and leads a busy life with husband, Mike, and sons, Matthew and Joey. Matthew celebrated his 4th birthday in November. Meg is doing private-duty CNA nursing and working toward getting her RN degree. **The Lohmann-Griffin Family** has resettled in Yarmouth and all are well. (Please see Janet's letter below.) **Tom Ewell and Cathy Whitmire** have moved. Their new address is: 4774 Hansen Dr., Clinton, WA 98236.

A Note from Janet Lohmann

Greetings Midcoast Meeting,

The Lohmann-Griffin family has finally landed in Yarmouth. We moved into our home in August, and so far everyone has settled in quite nicely. Conor started at Yarmouth High School, Jake is in 5th and Gracie in 2nd. Michael is enjoying his job as Greely High School's Athletic Director, and Janet loves her 15-minute commute to Bowdoin! We are also attending Portland Friends Meeting, where the First Day School has 60 (SIXTY!) kids. There is a great high school program that Conor is involved in, and Jake and Gracie are active in their First Day activities as well.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to all of you for your kindness, generosity, support, and love. Midcoast Meeting was a sanctuary for us during our four years in Rockland, and it will always remain a special place for us. In August when we were unpacking we came across three pieces of pottery that Charlotte Ritter gave the kids. While much of our house lacks any decorations ("Quaker plain" as Gracie says), Charlotte's work is prominently placed. It honors her memory and our time at Midcoast Meeting.

Our contact information: 35 Sandy Brook Ln., Yarmouth, ME 04096. Ph. (207) 846-3834. jlohmann@bowdoin.edu



Please save cancelled stamps. We collect cancelled stamps to raise money for Quaker missions--U.S. commemoratives and especially stamps from other countries (Christmas stamps are good ones). We have lost a great collector, Charlotte Ritter, and another great collector, George Sparks, is moving away (he'll continue to send us his stamps). Let's follow their example and bring our stamps to the Meeting. You can read about this program on our web site. Keep in the Light Richard Castner, who has taken responsibility for this endeavor and who feels poorly at this time. (Happy holidays, Richard, and thanks!)

~A Message from Anna Needham~

Hello, dear Friends.

In the morning when I wake in my room in the roof of this wooden house, I see the most glorious pictures through the window of the ginger orange of the young beeches, whose topmost branches are just outside. And, hey, I am in Maine. Yet only a week ago I was in Brussels and very much a European. I want to write about the QCEA Conference on Peacebuilding in Europe, which I attended as an MM rep, before being completely taken over by this other life (just now, there is a storm going on outside this cosy cottage, as Maine does what it does best, and pours with rain).

Peter Colman (the other MM rep) and I talked hard at the airport as we waited for the little plane to flip us back to Leeds. How could we capture the atmosphere of hope, despair, challenge, complexity, and excitement with which we had come away? It was a real privilege to hear speakers of such high calibre speak from the heart of Europe as it were. The European Union is a most exciting experiment, flawed in many ways but venturing into new territory. Members of the EU have, of course, ceded a little of their sovereignty for their membership, which raises the possibility that the greater good of all citizens can supersede that of individual states. Just imagine what might happen if the UN had that from relinquishing of some statehood from all its members --so that the UN could speak with one voice and the enforcement of its laws and the protection of its people was entrusted to a permanent UN peace force. Wishful thinking? Yes, but perhaps the only way forward if there is to be peace and if we are to slow down the heat-up of the planet. Maybe the experiment in Europe can be a small pointer in the right direction. Of course, the EU is flawed, as all our democracies are flawed, and of course, it is bureaucratic, but it is a start to something new in the way nations might negotiate their living together.

Two speakers, Alan Pleydall (of QCEA) and Carne Ross, challenged us to engage with the flaws in the societies in which we live. Carne Ross, a disenchanted former diplomat, gave up a career in diplomacy to found Independent Diplomats, a small group who use their skills and experience to fight on behalf of the many peoples who have no effective representation, nationally, regionally, or at the UN. He spoke of small elites (of which he had been one) drafting policies (even on Iraq), often knowing little about the country and less about the people who would be affected. He spoke of Kosovo's constitution being

drafted without a single Kosovan being involved. He begged us to be more vigilant and to hold our own MPs and government to some kind of transparency. To keep our ideals, we ordinary citizens have to challenge and engage and never for one moment think that others know best what to do in our name. "You Quakers must get out of your comfort zone. Our government is doing terrible things in our name and it is up to us to stop them." This was a powerful plea to shout when we saw bad practice, to persistently and intelligently show up the injustice in our democracy, and to do what we can to make our society more just. This is the war of small things. Peacebuilding is an everyday thing and the way we live and the laws we devise are vital activities for the peace builders (a better term than "pacifist" with its passive overtones). Alan Pleydall challenged us on our pacifism too. He made us think hard about protecting the disadvantaged, the oppressed, and those killed within their own states, as in the Sudan. He made us think, too, that there were occasions when an early military intervention might save a vast number of lives. As a pacifist, he confessed to not knowing how that sat with him. If I am honest, I don't know how it sits with me either.

The structure of the European Union and the infrastructure needed to implement its policies are vast and complex. Some time had to be spent talking about just how it worked and trying to get our minds round the overlapping of the names. Do you, for instance, know the difference between the European Council and the Council of Europe? I certainly didn't before I went, but my newly learnt knowledge did impress the young civil servant (a lawyer from the Health Commission) who sat next to me on the bus going to the airport. It was so very interesting to talk to her and to hear from her what it was like to work in that place. She had just the same sense of passionate involvement as all the other speakers we heard over the weekend. Friends, the EU is exciting. Read about it, look it up on the net, write to your MEP but don't take it for granted.

--Anna

P.S. After I had written the above, I went to a talk at Damariscotta Meeting (my spiritual home when I am here) about Iraq. It was given by Jim Matlack, retired director of the AFSC. He was scathing about the incompetence and blindness of George Bush and his administration. One of the questions he was asked was who would speak truth to the administration, and, after some thought, he said that he hoped Europe would.

ADVICE: Personal Conduct

Let us bring the whole of our daily lives under the ordering of the Spirit. Let our faith free us from crippling fears so that we may live adventurously. In relations with others, let us exercise imagination, understanding, and sympathy. Let us live and work in the plainness and simplicity of true followers of Christ.

In view of the evils arising from the use of tobacco and intoxicating drinks and from the abuse of drugs, Friends are advised to consider whether they should refrain from using them, from offering them to others, and from having any share in their manufacture or sale. We should not let the claims of good fellowship or the fear of seeming peculiar influence our decision.

Let us maintain integrity in word and deed. Holding to the simplicity of truth, let us keep free of oaths. Remember how widespread and diverse are the temptations to grow rich at the expense of others, and how apparently harmless indulgence often leads by degrees to wrong-doing. Let us avoid and discourage every kind of betting and gambling and commercial speculations of a gambling character.

Friends have always held that the sacred nature of a sexual relationship is affirmed only in marriage. In recent times, however, some Friends have found such affirmation in other contexts. Let us be certain, in any case, that we hold up to the Light any sexual relationship we may be considering and reject any relationship that may violate the integrity or spiritual welfare of either of the partners or of others. No relationship can be a right one which makes use of another person through selfish desire.



The Quaker Motto Calendar--A Gift from the Havilands

For a number of years Peter and Deborah 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 peaceful and joyous 2007.

From Gifts & Leadings--

The work of Gifts & Leadings Committee has been very easy this year. The response from all members was prompt and eager. The positions for "officers" and committee memberships are nearing completion. The final report will be made at the December Monthly Meeting (a daytime meeting on the 10th). There are several areas that we want to strengthen and therefore invite Friends to search their willingness to serve, perhaps to try something they haven't done before, or take up committee work they may not have done for some years.

--A person who has a gift for leading a committee is needed in Peace & Social Concerns.

--Ministry and Counsel is in a process of discerning how approximately two more volunteers could help them meet their broad and varied commitments

--The Finance Committee would like another member willing to join in the stewardship of the Meeting.

The list of "Officers and Committee for 2007" will be posted in the Meetinghouse all month. We urge everyone to review it for their final commitment or to find another place for their participation in the coming year.

Questions can be addressed to a member of the committee: Linda Cote-Small, Jean Crawford, Claire Darrow, Peter Haviland, Carmen Lavertu, and Sally Tukey.



~JERRY WOOD~

It was with great sadness that we learned that Jerry Wood died of long-standing cardiac problems in Charlottesville, Virginia, on Monday, November 13. He and Sally had moved to Charlottesville a year ago to live with their daughter Ruth and grandchildren Nathaniel and Laura. The family had a memorial service at the Charlottesville Meeting, and there will be another one in Worthington, Massachusetts, at the church where Jerry was a pastor for many years. He will be missed by many Friends.

Advent Vigil for Disarmament--An Invitation from Steve Burke

Please join the 7th Annual Advent Vigil for Disarmament at Bath Iron Works to be held the four Saturdays in Advent (December 2, 9, 16, and 23) from 11:30-12:30 in front of the BIW Administration Building on Washington Street in Bath. We choose to vigil at Bath Iron Works during Advent, as this is the traditional time in the Christian calendar to prepare for the birth of peace as the light is born into darkness.

BIW builds the Aegis cruise missile destroyer, a nuclear-capable warship whose Tomahawk missiles were used to bomb Baghdad during the "shock and awe" campaign at the beginning of the Second Gulf War. Costing over \$1 billion each, these ships steal from the poor in our country and help create the conditions that have now brought us to endless war.

We believe that we cannot prepare for peace and for war at the same time. We recognize that true security comes in our ability to love our brothers and sisters at home and abroad as well as to share the world's resources equitably.

Please join us to say NO! to the production of weapons of mass destruction in Maine. Please join our efforts to truly prepare for peace by speaking truth to power in a world filled with fear.

FMI: Smilin' Trees Disarmament Farm: 763-4062 or Jack & Fay Bussell, Maine Veterans For Peace, at jafabussell@zwi.net.

Messenger
by Mary Oliver

My work is loving the world.
Here the sunflowers, there the hummingbird—equal seekers of sweetness.
Here the quickening yeast; there the blue plums.
Here the clam deep in the speckled sand.

Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?
Am I no longer young, and still not half-perfect? Let me keep my mind on what matters,
which is my work,

which is mostly standing still and learning to be astonished.
The phoebe, the delphinium.
The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture.
Which is mostly rejoicing, since all the ingredients are here,

which is gratitude, to be given a mind and a heart and these body-clothes,
a mouth with which to give shouts of joy to the moth and the wren, to the sleepy dug-up clam,
telling them all, over and over, how it is that we live forever.

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