

WOODSTOWN FRIENDS MEETING

June Newsletter

MEETING FOR BUSINESS NOTES June 7, 2009

Meeting began with Opening Silence. There were 15 Friends in attendance. Notes from the meeting for business May 3, 2009 were approved.

Treasurers Report: **Jack Mahon** distributed the treasurer's report. Collections for year are almost at goal. This is due in large part to a significant contribution of one member.

Old Business

Casey Palmer reported that the Strawberry Supper did well, though the final figures are not in. Many things were donated this year which helped with increasing revenue, which is estimated at around \$7,000. There is ice cream left in the freezer for future use. The leftover cottage cheese containers were donated to the food pantry. **Chris Mahon** said there wasn't enough help this year, for serving tables or dish washing. Some tables did not get the full menu. Having a checklist for the servers which lists what food goes on each table would be helpful. We also need to re-introduce the list of benevolences which are supported by the suppers. Young people need some orientation for waiting tables and other tasks. Perhaps servers and other help should eat after the meal not during, when their help is most needed. An organizational meeting and sign-up sheet should be filled out in February and then we will know whether we have enough help to hold the Supper in June. **Toy Tyson** said you can't assume that people will sign up to help out. She contacts them personally. It was also suggested that a "how-to book" be written so that a formula for preparing and serving the Strawberry Supper can have continuity. We also need a "fresh" clean up crew that comes in after the Supper to put away dishes, take down tables and sweep the floor. The Take-out containers are #5 and cannot be re-cycled. **Priscilla Lamont** said that generally everyone she talked to really enjoyed the supper and the tradition of it - including the "fabulous peas!" It is one of our best fellowship and community building events within our own membership. A special thank you to all who donated food and helped create the Strawberry Supper this year.

Committee Reports/Ad Hoc Committees

Building Committee: **Mike Ayars** reported that there are now 7 companies bidding on the renovation job. Sub-contractors have been coming through the Meetinghouse. Sparks electric will handle that piece of the renovations. We have received about \$70,000 in pledge payments and have spent \$40,000. We will need additional pledge payments as we are spending the funds now. Our goal is to start the renovations before the end of July.

Standing Committees

Overseers: Benevolences for '09 were decided upon by this committee to present to Business Meeting for approval. **Gary Holmes** handed out the suggested list. In addition, there was a request for financial help in a letter from a senior vocalist student from Woodstown High School, Cassandra Moore. She has been selected to tour Europe with a U.S. youth choir. Although she is outside of the Quaker community she is a local young person who needs support. It was decided that individual members of the Meeting can give their financial support as they see fitting.

Olivia Kelly sent a request to support the Elsinboro Fire Company who has transported her to the hospital many times. It was agreed that \$100 would be appropriate.

The MAPSA, a substance abuse alliance, contribution will go to the local Woodstown Youth Center. **Colleen Prater** will write up some information about the Center's program for the Newsletter.

The Benevolences were approved with the addition of the Elsinboro Fire Co.

Peace and Social Justice [Priscilla Lamont]

We reviewed some of the projects we have undertaken this year to discuss and decide where to continue our efforts. We agreed that our goal is to follow the leadings of those who attend Woodstown Friends Meeting.

Angela Fisher described the possibility of a new project which would benefit young, low income families who are just beginning life together who lack sufficient funds and need "a leg up." Collect coupons and gift cards to distribute at hospitals where low income mothers are having babies and need baby things, ie: diapers, wipes, formula, etc

We described our Peace Vigils to Sandra Morton who was visiting our First Day class to bring us information about the American Friends Service Committee. We continue to gather for a Peace Vigil in the center of town the first Friday of each month from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

We described the Peace Table we have set up for several years at the Salem County Fair the first week in August. Angela suggested we make peace jewelry to sell at that time, which would be attractive to young people and could be a fun project for our Meeting to gather sometime to make peace jewelry. We need to find an inexpensive outlet for beads and small peace signs. We suggested looking on the internet and asking **Gail and Anna Scuderi** to help us.

Our committee invited the group from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting who are concerned with Racial Equality and Justice in the Religious Society of Friends to visit our adult First Day Class. They brought a list of important questions to consider racial equality and justice in our Meeting. We suggested a list of activities we could sponsor to welcome other church congregations and people in our community to join us.

We replied to a request from **Eric Corson** to visit our Meeting to present The Prison Visitation and Support program which is located at 15th and Cherry Sts. in Philadelphia. The program originated in 1968 to visit imprisoned conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War. In 1972, the Prisoner Visitation and Support program changed its mission to visit any prisoner who wishes to receive visits, in federal and military prisons across the U.S. They are invited to visit us sometime in the fall.

We briefly discussed bullying in the schools and what could be done to alleviate the problem. We noted there is one guidance counselor in the Woodstown Middle School for approximately 300 students. Would the administration welcome a group from the Friends Meeting to present one or more programs about bullying? Could we provide mentors in the school to counsel children who are victims of bullying? We decided to ask Philadelphia Yearly Meeting if they have a program to help us.

Our P & SJ committee has received approval to place the white sandwich board sign in front of the Meeting House with messages of peace which we will change once a month. **Carol and Sam Osborn** kindly agreed to take charge of the sign and the first message will announce the Strawberry Supper on May 30. If anyone has a short saying they would like to post please contact us .

Sandra Morton shared some ideas of programs run by AFSC. One is called HIP, which stands for Help Increase the Peace. A volunteer visits the schools with a prepared manual to present a program about conflict resolution. Bonnie Mattingly is the Project Director and Sandi will put her in touch with our Meeting.

Sandi also described the "Eyes Wide Open" boots exhibit which Gary Gillespie oversees. He houses 4000 pairs of military boots which symbolize the number of troops killed during the Iraq and Afghan wars. You need many volunteers and a field to place the boots, with dog tags and some civilian shoes from women and children representing the number of

civilians killed in these wars. Would anyone be interested in planning this project, perhaps to display at the Salem County Fairgrounds, if allowed?

Sandi also talked about the work that Ruben Chandrasekar does helping refugees settle in this country. We may seek his help if the family of Dr Kareem from Iraq, is able to secure a visa to move to the U.S. How could we help them accommodate to the life of small town Woodstown?

Priscilla also mentioned that Woodstown Friends Meeting had contributed to the Morning Star Baptist Church when they celebrated their 100th Anniversary and shared their commemorative booklet.

July's Meeting for Business will be held on Sunday 12 July at 9:15 AM. Meeting was concluded at 10:30 with silent worship. -- Minutes submitted by **Terry Fox- Ragone**

Committee reports may be emailed to:

Frank.Lenik@leicaus.com

Notes from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Clerks Newsletter

July 29 – Aug. 2 – Summer Sessions at DeSales University. Mark your calendars for this wonderful event! The theme for the Summer Sessions is: "Living Up To the Light". Earthcare will also play a prominent role at sessions. Online registration will be available: (www.pym.org), or call the Registrar at: 215-241-7232. Feature speakers include: **Joe Volk** (Keynote Speaker, FCNL); **Hollister Knowlton** (PYM Earthcare WG); **George Lakey** (Swarthmore College); **Carl McGruder** (Nat'l. Council of Churches); **Peter Brown** (co-author of "Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy - featured selection for "One Book, One Yearly Meeting"); **Melanie Douty-Snipes** (Snipes Farm). Workshops - a number of interesting topics include: Quaker Quest; God's Economy, Leading in the Light in Challenging Times; Cultivating Awe. Visit www.pym.org for complete list.

July 29-Aug. 2 The Children's Sessions focus this year is earth care. Join us as we worship, play, and learn about earth care in the Spirit! Contact Children's Sessions Coordinator **Elizabeth Piersol Schmidt** for more information. childrensessions@pym.org; 215-241-7236.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FRIENDS EVENTS:

Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions - come and join us in the Middle School Friends program at DeSales University for PYM's annual Summer Sessions! We will meet during the morning and evening adult plenary sessions for an awesome program that will nurture the seeds of Quaker faith, practice and witness within each of us, while getting to know each other and having a lot of fun along the way! Contact: **Elizabeth Walmsley** at elizabethw@pym.org; or 215-241-7171; or 800 220 0796 ext 7171.

YOUNG ADULT FRIENDS EVENTS:

June 19-21 (Fri.-Sun.) - Young Adult Friends (YAF) Retreat. A PYM Young Adult Friends Retreat will take place at a meetinghouse to be announced. This retreat will focus on community building, fun, relaxation and exploration of joy in our spirituality. The retreat is being planned by the new Young Adult Friends Working Group, in collaboration with PYM Young Adult Friends Coordinator. More information will be coming on the YAF website: www.pym.org/education/yaf. Contact: **Sadie Forsythe** at 215-241-7075, sadief@pym.org.

Aug. 14-15 (Fri.-Sat.; 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.) - Teacher Training on Conflict Resolution. Register now for the PYM Non-Violence and Children Working Group's annual training for elementary and middle school educators. -- "**Building Safe Communities in our Classrooms and Conflict Resolution Skills in our Students**" to be held at the Fourth and Arch Street Meeting in Philadelphia. This two-day workshop will provide participants with practical strategies to build a caring classroom community, teach kids creative conflict resolution skills, help students learn to manage their anger, integrate conflict resolution teaching into an ongoing classroom curriculum and support kids' resiliency. Scholarships available to PYM members. Childcare gladly provided by request. A \$40 fee includes training, meals, information packet and handouts. Contact: **Elke Muller** at elkem@pym.org or 215-241-7223 for more information and to register.

Native Peoples, Environmental Concerns and Sacred Sites. The PYM Indian Committee would welcome the opportunity to share two DVD documentaries that speak eloquently to environmental and Native American concerns. In these two films – "In the Light of Reverence" and "Homelands" – Native peoples speak about their concerns to protect sacred sites and the environment. Members of the Indian Committee would be pleased to share these films and conversation about them with interested Monthly Meetings or Quarterly Meetings. We would especially like to share them with Young Friends and Young Adult Friends. Contact: **Lois Kuter**, Recording Clerk, Indian Committee at lkuter@fast.net or 215-886-6361, to make arrangements.

Friends Hospice 706 West Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Tyla Ann Burger, Executive Director www.friendshospice.org

I would like to thank the many of you whose donations make up the contributions we have received so far; your support throughout the continuing life of Friends Hospice is invaluable. Please spread the word of our work, and need for support, as widely as you can. We know a number of Meetings are considering how they can help. I thank all for their care and would like to answer any questions. I also know a number of you have had setbacks in these economic times. I hope you know that your prayers are as valuable to us as other contributions, and that you will share your concern for our support with others.

There is a misunderstanding that Friends Hospice simply provides some minor support to people going through tough times or that we are simply an advocacy group. However we are a fully licensed and Medicare/Medicaid certified hospice that operates and cares for people 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week. We have no holidays – just celebrations of people's lives as they move through their journeys.

We recently served a young woman who had been traumatized years ago when she had been imprisoned and tortured by a killer from whom she eventually escaped. Her life became a life on the streets, of crack addiction and eventually HIV and liver disease. After 15 years of fighting addiction and disease her body cannot fight anymore. Her life is drawing to a close. Her restlessness and need for freedom prevent her from accepting institutional care. Because she has no address or caregiver, and an active addiction, hospices will not care for her—except for Friends Hospice.

CONGRATULATIONS

Jess Kloss grew up in Woodstown Meeting and Mullica Hill Friends School. She attended Princeton Meeting with her boyfriend and told them that she was a member of Woodstown Monthly Meeting, since that's where she really feels that she belongs. Jess is graduating from Princeton University on June 2 with an AB in Astrophysical Sciences and a certificate in French. She will be spending the summer in Paris doing an internship with the French Astrophysical Society, following last summer's internship at the Goddard Flight Center at NASA. In September she will be starting a Master in Science program in Medical and Science Journalism at Boston University.

Gordon Kelly, son of Olivia and Larry, will graduate from Salem High School on June 22nd. He has been accepted at Salem Community College to study Nuclear Technology.

Worship Sharing There will be Worship Sharing in place of First Day School during the summer from 9:15- 10:20 a.m. in the Social Room beginning June 28th. This time is a chance to share with one another our everyday experiences, challenges, hopes and spiritual search in a meaningful context. A different facilitator each Sunday will try to pose questions that will help attendees share their experiences, thoughts and insights. Everyone is welcome. Child care is provided at this time.

Book Club A new group is forming with the intention of reading a book in the spiritual realm, then gathering to discuss your ideas about what you have read. The group will meet in the Social Room, the third Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m., for approximately one hour, beginning July 19th. The first suggested reading is "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time," by Marcus Borg. Please feel welcome to attend.

Spiritual Formation Group This group will gather once a month, beginning Wednesday, June 17th, 7 p.m., at Jeffrey Frisone's house, 47 West Avenue to help each other deepen our sense of spirituality. The plan is to read works that help contemplate spiritual ideas, to pick a spiritual practice to try every day, then meet and discuss how they are doing. A person may try yoga, walking and meditating, journaling or Bible study, for example. This group asks that you make a commitment to attend every month for six months to help build trust and intimacy. For further information, contact Dana Houghton 478-2550.

Vacation Bible School in Woodstown July 20, 21, 22 and 23rd 7 – 8:30 p.m.

This year we plan to gather in four different churches to watch and discuss the PBS documentary "Beyond Our Differences." [Please](#) join us.

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| • Monday | Spencer UAME Church - Bailey Street | Theme: Love |
| • Tuesday | Friends Meeting- with St Joseph's | Compassion |
| • Wednesday | Morning Star Baptist Church - Eldridge Hill Rd. | Forgiveness |
| • Thursday | Asbury Methodist - 149 South Main St. | Justice |

Upcoming Dates:

June 20 – Saturday, 6:00 p.m. Blue Rocks game in Wilmington.

June 21 – Closing Meeting - 9:15 -Breakfast 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. Worship
Outside, weather permitting

July 3 – Peace Vigil 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Center of Woodstown

July 5 – Meeting for Business 9:30 a.m.

July 20 – 23 Vacation Bible School 7 – 8:30 p.m. Woodstown churches

July 29 – August 2 Annual Sessions at De Sales University

August 18 -- Picnic at Hospitality Creek Campground in Williamstown. Come early to swim and bring a covered dish for picnic dinner. Lunch meat tray and bread provided, bring beverage and eating utensils.

OBITUARIES

Grace Ellis Hoover, 104, of Woodstown passed away on March 14, 2009 at Friends Village. She was its oldest resident. Born in Haddonfield, New Jersey, Grace was the daughter of the late Albert Ellis and Estella Dobbs Ellis. She was preceded in death by her husband of 40 years, Clarence Hoover. Grace received her musical training at Hyperion School of Music in Philadelphia. For many years, she and Clarence provided piano and violin lessons from their Woodstown home on North Main Street. In 1943 Grace joined Woodstown Monthly Meeting where she and Clarence organized the First Day School orchestra. Some of the people who were members were the Palmers, Dan Zehner, Bill and Joe Pettit and the King boys. I'm sure there are others currently in Woodstown Meeting who participated in the Hoover's orchestra. Grace was a long and devoted member of the Daughters of the American Revolution-Oak Tree Chapter, Eastern Star, Salem County Historical Society and the Woodstown Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Friends will remember Grace and her wonderful contribution to music. A memorial service was held on Saturday, March 21 at 2:00 in the Woodstown Friends Meetinghouse.

Joseph Colson Pettit, Jr., 87, died peacefully on May 17th, surrounded by his family. Born in Woodstown, son of Joseph and Jennie Parker Swing Pettit, Joe graduated from Woodstown High School in 1940. He worked alongside his father and brother Bill on the family dairy farm near Harrisonville for many years. Joe and his brother also performed carpentry work until his retirement. Joe was a member of the Religious Society of Friends, the Woodstown Moose Lodge, the National Rifle Association and the Auxiliary at the Friends Village. He enjoyed woodworking, traveling and big game hunting. Joe's sense of humor was enjoyed by all who knew him. He loved his family, singing, country music and playing his harmonica. Joe is survived by his wife of 60 years, Gladys Jane, his daughters Beverly Jane and Eileen, his son Larry and their spouses. Joe enjoyed six grandchildren, his sister Mary and several cousins, nieces and nephews. A Memorial Service was held at the Friends Meeting on June 6th at 11 a.m.

Ursula L. Ayars, 91, passed peacefully from this life to the next on June 5, 2009 at Friends Village in Woodstown, NJ, where she had resided since 2001. Ursula was born December 28, 1917, in Geneva, New York to the late James and Lena Seamans Loman. She grew up in Geneva and attended school there. During World War II, she worked for the munitions industry at the Army Ordnance Plant in South Jersey and in Nebraska. Her work there was recognized with the World War II Victory Commemorative Medal, awarded to civilians who worked in direct support of the war effort. Ursula met her husband Maurice Waddington (Mike) Ayars during her time at the ordnance plant. They were married on December 2, 1945, and enjoyed 59 years of marriage before he died in 2005. Ursula enjoyed a rewarding career as an elementary school teacher, teaching 4th grade at the Grant Street School in Salem, NJ and then, after moving to Laurel, Maryland, teaching in the Beltsville, Maryland, school system from 1962 until her retirement. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education from Glassboro (NJ) State College in 1962, attended night classes while teaching and caring for her family. She and her husband Mike moved to Severna Park, Maryland, in 1981, and enjoyed their golden years living in the waterfront community of Round Bay, spending time on their sailboat and the beach and tennis courts there. They moved to Friends Village in 2001. Ursula's hobbies included bridge, golf, gardening, boating, needlework, and reading. She also enjoyed traveling and camping. Ursula was an amateur birdwatcher who enjoyed being out in nature. Family and friends fondly remember her cheerful good nature and slightly wacky sense of humor. Ursula is survived by her son Mike of Harrisonville, NJ; daughter Lynda Ayars Wilkinson and son-in-law David Wilkinson of Severna Park, MD; sisters Marcia Flick of San Antonio and Roslyn Burke of Oxnard, CA., and a number of nieces and nephews. Ursula was a member of Woodstown Friends Meeting, and one of the founding members of the Annapolis Friends Meeting. Burial will be at the convenience of the family in the Friends Burying Ground in Salem. A Memorial Service will be held on Friday, June 12, from 1 PM to 2 PM at Friends Village in Woodstown. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Ursula's memory may be made to the Friends Village.

The Newsletter will take a vacation during July and August. Hope to continue in September.....save your news! Meanwhile, see you for Worship Sharing and Meeting for Worship.