

WOODSTOWN FRIENDS MEETING NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2009

Meeting for Business Notes March 1, 2009 9:30 am

Meeting began with silent worship. 19 Friends in attendance. The notes from Meeting for Business, February 8, 2009 were accepted.

Treasurers Report: **Jack Mahon** reported that even though we are using more heating oil than last year, the price is considerably lower. We are returning for payment our surplus orange trash bags which are no longer needed since we can now use regular trash bags.

Old Business: Valentine's Day covered dish supper and game night was an absolute success.

Committee Reports:

Ad Hoc Committees

Building Committee: **Mike Ayars** submitted the following schedule for Tuesday, March 3rd :

5:45 PM Dinner at Friends Village with our professionals (Connie, Ross, Bruce), informal discussion. All are welcome, but you need to RSVP with me by Monday evening.

7:00 PM Building Committee meeting in the Social Room. Our professionals (Connie, Bruce McKenna, and Ross Levitsky) will brief us on the process for Planning & Zoning Board meeting in April and answer any questions we may have about that process or any other aspects of the project. Connie will show us the latest set of drawings and answer questions about them.

Fund Raising Committee: **Dorothy Kramme** reported that fundraising is doing well. We are just short of our goal and will make an effort to raise the last \$25,000 we need. Let's do it for **Olivia Kelly** who is confined to a wheel chair for now. Less than 40 members have given so far. We know this is a bad economy but the committee will meet to figure out how to meet this goal. The committee expresses thanks to all those who have pledged and donated.

Standing Committees

Nominating: **Colleen Prater** has asked for all committees to submit information about what they do and a timeline of committee meetings/ topics/deadlines. The Nominating Committee will make a resource directory; for example, who to contact for cemetery information, schedule annex etc.

Overseers: **Jeff Gibson** reported that several categories of membership were discussed at their last committee meeting including "convinced" and "birthright." All younger adults may decide for themselves whether or not they want to become members when they become 18 or over. They discussed how to keep members informed who haven't been active. Mike Ayars has written letters saying it is most important to nurture and keep in communication with the people we know. According to Faith & Practice we should be more concerned about our membership. We have not been active enough in keeping in touch. But we should be more articulate about how membership is defined and how membership is maintained. People living at a distance who get our letter still consider themselves as members and enjoy our newsletter. Jack said that people could be encouraged to transfer to a Meeting near them. We also need to care for their spiritual well-being. We should be proactive and want to continue our communication. Priscilla questioned the notion of defining "membership" only by giving money. Jack Mahon said that some years ago he was asked to speak at PYM about our Meeting because it had grown in size. He thought about what was expected of members. The most important thing for a member is to participate - in meeting for worship, in social events, and that giving money was way down on the list of priorities. We have a responsibility to the well being of the Meeting, as Chris tried to clarify. We need to show that we care and value everyone's opinions. What do our members need from us? Sometimes when members' beliefs and values change we want to know that. An example is that some people no longer espouse pacifism. We also have responsibility to keeping our building and programs running as well. Let's have a First Day school session on membership. We want people to know they are welcome even if they can't always give

financial support, we cherish their spiritual support and are strengthened by their presence. Frank asked Jeff Gibson to lead the session.

Jeff asked that we please submit requests for benevolences to the Oversight Committee for April meeting for disbursement in June.

Peace and Social Justice: The Peace and Social Justice Committee met on Sunday, February 22nd at 11:45 a.m. **Priscilla Lamont** reported that there will be 2 visitors to our Meeting coming in the near future. One from the Mid-Atlantic Region for the American Friends Service Committee and another from a working group from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting which is concerned with racial justice among Friends. Our committee suggested and sent a letter of support to Charles and Caroline Tyson. **Charles Tyson** recently resigned as Mayor of South Harrison Township after receiving numerous racially bigoted threats to him and his family.

The committee will use our sandwich board and place it on the grass in front of the Meetinghouse to display messages of peace and in support of the youth in our community. The sandwich board was originally purchased by **Donna Gibson** to advertise the dates of the Ten Thousand Villages sale at the Meetinghouse. Donna has generously donated the sign for the use of the Meeting. This committee plans to meet again on Sunday, March 22nd, at 11:45 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

Reports from Affiliated Organizations

Salem Quarterly Meeting: **George & Dana Houghton** submitted the following report:

Quarterly Meeting will be held at Woodstown on March 8, 2009, with our Meeting providing soup, bread, drinks and dessert. The program will be a presentation on Quaker Quest, a popular outreach program in England, which is just beginning to be used in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. A music group from Mullica Hill Friends School will present a brief musical program.

Salem Quarterly Meeting is struggling with budget issues. Several meetings have decreased the amount of their contribution, leaving the Quarter underfunded by nearly \$10,000. Discussions of how to respond to this shortfall will be continued this month.

New Business

Chris Mahon will make new name tags. Also, there was a discussion of what help Olivia Kelly needs. She is presently confined to a wheelchair and will need assistance with meals and would like visitors. Olivia is getting physical and occupational therapy at home. Jeff said the Oversight committee is helping too.

Deb Seabrook performed at Crescent Moon coffee house in Mullica Hill for Pennies for Peace which was very enjoyable.

Grace Hoover, who is 104, is in the hospital.

Please send info and personal notes to Priscilla (pblamont@salemcompany.com or 769-3381) for the upcoming newsletter.

Upcoming Dates:

March 22nd First Day Class – visitors from PYM to discuss Racial Justice

March 27 – 29 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting sessions, 4th & Arch Street, Phila., PA

April 12th at 2:00 pm Memorial Service for Ella Richman.

May 17th - First Day Class – Middle Atlantic region representative of the American Friends Service Committee

Correspondence

Disciples Food Pantry sent a thank you letter for money, food and volunteers. They serve an average of 150 families per month. There is still a need for support.

Next Meeting for business: Sunday April 5th at 9:30am.

Committee reports may be emailed to: Frank.Lenik@leicaus.com

NEWS FROM OUR FRIENDS

Debra Lenik is participating in a study abroad, which is a requirement for Goucher College in Baltimore Md. Goucher is the first college in the United States to require a study abroad in order to graduate. Debra is in her junior year and is working toward a degree in Political Science. She is presently in London, England for an internship in the heart of British politics. Debra has been assigned to work with MP Ian Stewart in the House of Commons. Scholars also undertake 2 lecture courses, designed to provide good background knowledge for the internship experience. In addition, students work on an individual research project of their own choosing. Debra seems to be enjoying the sights and culture of England and is planning to find a local Quaker meetinghouse. She hopes to take a few weekend trips to neighboring countries before her return home in May.

Dawn Boughal was off to Mexico in February on an educational trip with the Monarch Teachers Network Group sponsored by ERIC. This particular group provides information about monarch butterflies in workshops for teachers. According to Dawn, the monarchs who fly from Canada and the U.S. south to Mexico, live for nine months. They "sleep" in the mountains near Mexico City and just about now, they awaken and fly to Texas to lay their eggs in the milkweed. Those butterflies only live for three months, die, the eggs hatch and fly further north, lay eggs, die and their eggs hatch and those butterflies fly north to N J and Canada, never having made that trip before. Dawn was in Mexico to view the millions of Monarch butterflies in one colony. She walked 1500 feet up the mountain to see and hear the butterflies, then rode a horse on the return trip down the mountain. On the way back, almost to the pasture, a runaway horse spooked Dawn's horse and she fell, breaking the humerus bone in her left arm. Talk about good luck/bad luck, one of Dawn's colleagues is an emergency room doctor. Dawn was treated in a hospital in Mexico, then flew to Newark, NJ to obtain surgery in the U.S. to correct her broken bone. Just this week, Dawn has returned to her teaching position as a reading specialist at the Pinelands School and though she is not allowed to drive, Dawn is blessed with a sister, Chris Mahon, who teaches at the same school.

Jane Lankitus continues to receive chemotherapy in a bout with lung cancer. Jane explained that she undergoes chemotherapy for three weeks, then has one week off. She explained that blood tests indicate an improvement and Jane is eager to see the results of a CAT scan this week to provide further evidence that the cancer is disappearing. We have our fingers crossed, and better than that, Jane is in our prayers.

What began as a case of indigestion on February 13th, landed **Jean Cheeseman** surgery ! She is now resting comfortably in room 124 in Health Care at the Friends Village and would welcome your cards full of best wishes.

Hats off to Jake Spina who painted new lines on the Meeting House parking lot and created a walkway to the Peace Pole as a project for a Boy Scout badge. The lines look nice and are very helpful. Thanks Jake.

David Lamont's First Day Class today completed a fourteen episode video titled Jesus of Nazareth a screenplay by Franco Zeffirelli and Anthony Burgess. A few of the well known characters in the Bible were played by Peter Ustinov as Herod, Anne Bancroft as Mary Magdalene and Rod Steiger as Pontius Pilate. This interpretation of the story of the life of Jesus led to many good class discussions.

Grace Hoover died Saturday night, March 14th, at the age of 104. A Memorial Service is scheduled for Saturday, March 21st at 2 p.m. in the Meeting House.

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Check out the March issue of the **HOPE Bulletin** published by the Peace & Social Concerns Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Due to its length, we will not print it in our newsletter, but it is very informative and contains many important resources. Look up www.pym.org and go to the link for Peace and Social Concerns, where you will find the **HOPE Bulletin**.

Consider a new book titled YES TO THE TROOPS – NO TO THE WARS, which tells the story of a unique witness for forty years by Quaker House, in Fayetteville, NC. Since 1969, Quaker House has been a persistent and visible witness for peace - close to Fort Bragg which is one of the largest U S military bases. More than fifty thousand GIs have called their hotline for help. This is a remarkable saga of persistent, creative peace action, full of implications for future work to end war and find alternatives to militarism. The book is 244 pgs, illustrated, \$15.95 Go to www.quakerhouse.org or email: gpr@quaker.org

Please think about sharing your news of you and your family with our Friends Meeting through the newsletter, so we can get to know each other better. Contact Priscilla Lamont at 760-3381 or write pblamont@salemcompany.com