

**NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING
MINUTES OF THE 310th Session, 2005**

Sunday, July 25, 2005, 7:00 P.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Karen Way, Recording Clerk
Rima Segal, Reading Clerk*

1. Friends gathered in silent worship. Out of the silence, Linda Chidsey (Croton Valley), Clerk of the Yearly Meeting, welcomed Friends and visitors to the 310th annual sessions of New York Yearly Meeting. The theme of this year's sessions is "The Seed Cracked Open: Moving Beyond Racism."
2. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table.
3. The Clerk then read the Call to Faithfulness that was appended to last year's epistle. Out of faithfulness rises the call to live in peace with those close to home and those across oceans. In this week at Silver Bay, we are invited to "go deep together" to answer that call.
4. In the worship that followed, Irma Guthrie (Perry City) led us in a lively singing of "This Little Light of Mine." She described the silent assumptions and enduring barriers that make racism invisible to white people and all too evident to people of color. This week, by exploring our own hearts and by observing and sharing our experiences with racism, we can reduce the divisions that weaken the community of New York Yearly Meeting. We need all our lights, shining together. We pray that God will be with us to do this work.
5. The reading clerk called the roll by regional and quarterly meetings and their constituent monthly meetings and worship groups. Friends rose in response.
6. The Clerk introduced Kathleen (Kate) Lawson (New Brunswick), clerk of Junior Yearly Meeting Committee, who introduced the Junior Yearly Meeting coordinators for 2005, Roseann Press and Martha Gurvich. The coordinators then introduced the leaders of each age group.
7. The minutes of the session were read and approved.
8. The meeting closed with an extended period of silent worship, during which Friends spoke to the theme of recognizing and overcoming racism.

Monday, July 25, 2005, 10:15 A.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Melanie-Claire Mallison, Recording Clerk*

Anne Wright, Reading Clerk

9. Friends gathered together in worship. The Clerk introduced those seated at the clerks' table. She welcomed us to the annual sessions, and reminded us that our first call is to God and faithfulness. She reviewed some of the work of the Sessions Committee to make our week together go smoothly. Linda also urged us to be mindful of the materials made available to us for the week, so that we may be prepared in our sessions. She then introduced Claire Simon, clerk of Sessions Committee. Claire noted our long and friendly history with Silver Bay Association. She reviewed some of the work of the Sessions Committee to make our week comfortable for the Meeting. She requested especially that we work with our Liaison, Rose Lynn, on any problems we have during the week. Claire introduced Barbara Folkemer, interim director of Silver Bay. Barbara also welcomed Friends to Silver Bay, and noted her own history with this place. She urged us to take advantage of the Silver Bay programs, though she had read our full agenda.

10. Madeline Press reported for the High School Group of Junior Yearly Meeting telling us that so far, they have formed committees and are planning their week's program. She also read the names of those presently missing from their JYM group.

11. Anne Wright, reading clerk, read the following travel minutes: David and Perry-O Sliwa, Decorah Friends Meeting, Iowa; Michael Wajda, Goshen Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting; Valerie Groszmann, Friends General Conference, Yearly Meeting Visitors Program (travel difficulties prevented this Friend from attending); Ray Treadway, Friendship Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative, Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas. Friends approved our Clerk endorsing these minutes.

12. The Clerk introduced and the Meeting welcomed the following visitors: Nancy Diaz, Central Philadelphia Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Pendle Hill; Vanessa Julye, Central Philadelphia Meeting, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting; Timothy Barner, Friends Committee on National Legislation; Christine (Chrissie) Rizzo, Upper NYS Area Office, American Friends Service Committee; Sybil Ann Brennan, Gainesville Florida Meeting, Southeastern Yearly Meeting; Carole Treadway, Friendship Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative); Liberty Goodwin and Paul Klinkman, Smithfield Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting; Elizabeth (Buffy) R. Curtis, West Falmouth Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting.

13. Heather Cook, Julia Giordano, John Perry, and Anne Wright read the State of the Society Report, 2004. The report was drawn from 59 responses from NYYM monthly meetings, preparative meetings, summer meetings and worship groups, answering to three queries from the Coordinating Committee on Ministry and Counsel. The many reports indicate that meetings experience inward and outward change and challenge as a joy as well as painful struggle. Friends received the report.

14. Christopher Sammond, General Secretary, spoke, out of the silence, his thoughts gathered from his first year's work with New York Yearly Meeting. Christopher sees, for himself and for us, two concerns to focus on in the coming year: supporting smaller meetings and nurturing new growth. He particularly stressed visitation as one of the best ways to answer both of these needs. He considers this is work for all of us to engage in. If we are to grow in our own spiritual life, we

must share it with others. He lays this upon us: to search our hearts and see if we are called to visit a small meeting or a neighbor meeting. He then spoke to the growth and lack thereof in New York Yearly Meeting. From listening to seasoned Friends, he feels that we are not fully integrating newcomers into our communities or giving them reason, beyond what they gather by osmosis, to stay. Deepening our own worship will lead to openings in supporting newcomers. We have drawn in the Spirit and are full; now we are poised to burst forth with Light and intention to nurture the Spirit in others.

15. The minutes were read and approved.

16. The meeting closed with grateful worship.

Tuesday, July 26, 2005, 10:15 A.M.

Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Lee Haring, Recording Clerk
Rima Segal, Reading Clerk

17. The meeting opened in worshipful silence.

18. The reading clerk read a memorial minute for Glenn S. Mallison (1918–2005), a lifelong pacifist, conscientious objector, and social activist with a long history among Friends. He served in Civilian Public Service during World War Two, attended Earlham College, worked in Friends projects, and was active in Rochester, Syracuse, West Branch, and Ithaca meetings. With his family, he participated fully in New York Yearly Meeting sessions for over forty years. Though in his last years, Glenn Mallison lost his belief in God and resigned from membership, he is remembered for his dedication to Friends meetings and activities, and especially for his pacifism. Out of the silence Friends spoke to their memories of him.

19. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table. Victoria (Tori) Close and Natia Gorgen reported on Junior Yearly Meeting activities so far, including a presentation by William (Bill) Galvin on conscientious objection. They announced plans for the Seventh-Eighth-Ninth grade group for the rest of the week. The Clerk narrated a dream in which a business meeting was being held in the manner of the Yearly Meeting's Café Night, which reminded her of the responsibility of adult Friends to listen to our younger members.

20. The Clerk introduced Donna McDaniel (New England Yearly Meeting), who spoke to the concern for eliminating racism, and Gloria Kershner (Grass Valley Meeting, Pacific Yearly Meeting).

21. Melanie-Claire Mallison, as clerk of Nurture Coordinating Committee, introduced the business of the Nurture Section. Ian Kratzke, a student at Oakwood Friends School, described the many Friends activities at the school, concluding that Oakwood truly cares to maintain and enhance Quaker principles and practices. Then Peter Baily (Poughkeepsie), head of the school, called on all Friends with connections to the school to rise in their seats. He expressed the school's appreciation of the care provided by the Yearly Meeting. Julia Giordano (Bulls Head-

Oswego) rose to invite Friends to a reception on August 27 at Oakwood Friends, to uphold the marriage of Christopher Sammond and Barbara Rhudy.

22. Regina Haag (Adirondack) described the work of Friends United Meeting (FUM), reminding Friends that New York Yearly Meeting appoints three members to serve on FUM's board. Jens Braun (Old Chatham) reported from the recent FUM Triennial meeting about new emphases established there: evangelism, global partnership, leadership training, and communications. Christine (Spee) Braun (Old Chatham) reported that after the religious and cultural shock she experienced in the first session of the Triennial, which began with songs calling for salvation, she was encouraged when Retha McCutchen acknowledged the complexity of divisive issues, such as FUM's sexual ethics policy. Spee was helped by recalling George Fox's declaration that such a gathering is held to find out how the truth is prospering among us. She passed on a recommendation from Natalie Braun that we appoint young Friends to attend the triennial meetings.

23. Bowen Alpern (Scarsdale) reported for Friends General Conference's ad hoc Youth Ministries Discernment Committee, formed in 2004. An inspiring consultation was held in March 2005 which revealed that "the Spirit is alive and moving in a powerful and dynamic way through our high school and young adult Friends." A later meeting recommended establishing a new Youth Ministries Program in FGC, to build intergenerational community, nurture high school and young adult Friends, strengthen the communities among them, and facilitate opportunities to live Quaker faith into action.

24. Lucy (Lu) Harper (Rochester) brought forward a minute from Rochester Meeting, endorsing a minute from the Central Committee of Friends General Conference, which affirms the spiritual gifts of Friends of gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, and transgender identity. Friends considered whether the Rochester minute should be distributed to all monthly meetings, to encourage them to consider this issue. The Nurture Coordinating Committee offered to work further with Lu on the matter. The Clerk invited Friends to remain, for the time being, in a place of discomfort.

25. The minutes were read and approved.

26. The meeting ended in worship.

Wednesday, July 27, 2005, 10:15 A.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Karen Way, Recording Clerk
Rima Segal, Reading Clerk*

27. Friends gathered in silent worship. Out of the silence, the reading clerk read a memorial minute for Howard Carrothers of Poughkeepsie Monthly Meeting. Born in 1916, Howard grew up in Indiana and Michigan. He began attending Florida Avenue Friends Meeting while he was working at the Pentagon. When a later career move brought Howard and his wife Anne to Poughkeepsie, he began a long and rich service to Poughkeepsie Meeting, the wider

Poughkeepsie community, and the Yearly Meeting. Howard's life exemplified the Quaker testimonies of peace and simplicity. He is remembered with love.

28. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table and reviewed the agenda.

29. Maia Murdoch and Martin Glazer of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth grade group of JYM read the list of children not present, and told of their group's activities in learning cooperation and making drums and other crafts.

30. Paula McClure, clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee, introduced Harold Risler, NYYM Treasurer. Harold presented the Treasurer's Report for the first six months of 2005. Harold reported that income as of July 31 is ahead of that of previous years. Friends received the report.

31. Paula McClure then introduced Thomas Martin, clerk of Financial Services Committee, who described progress on the draft of the 2006 budget. Tom predicted that this year our expenses will be down and equal to our expected income. We seek a balanced budget by 2006. Monthly meetings will be receiving a final draft of the proposed budget in August.

32. Paula introduced Steven Ross (Shrewsbury) of the General Secretary's Task Group, who read the job description of the General Secretary of NYYM. Lenore Ridgeway, clerk of the General Secretary's Task Group, then read a report on the many activities and travels of Christopher Sammond, the General Secretary. Through his numerous visitations of monthly meetings and regional gatherings, Christopher says he has "come to love the people of this yearly meeting," and has implemented substantive changes to communications among meetings, and between them and the Yearly Meeting. Other staff members have found new time to pursue special projects. Efforts are underway to prune some of Christopher's responsibilities so he can focus his energy even better. Friends accepted the report.

33. The Clerk introduced Demi McGuire and Daniel Hahn of the New York State Council of Churches. Dan described the composition and mission of the Council of Churches. Demi described the work of being a gadfly and moral voice for the New York governing bodies. The Council has fought against the death penalty, advocated criminal justice reform, worked to include NY farmworkers under the protection of labor laws, organized opposition to casino gambling, and proposed more equitable funding of healthcare. Friends are urged to visit the Council's website, nyscommunityofchurches.org, to find opportunities for local involvement.

34. Ernestine (Ernie) Buscemi, clerk of the Transition Working Group, described the composition and charge of the group. The group offered two minutes for improving the accountability and processes of New York Yearly Meeting committees. The first minute proposes Committee Queries of Accountability.

The Transition Working Group recognizes that coordinating committees have the responsibility and authority to support and hold accountable their constituent committees in their designated functions. The clerk of the coordinating committee shall initiate an annual review by each committee using the following queries as guidelines:

1. Can nominees be found to fill each class of service?
2. Is there an active clerk? Does he or she feel led to further the committee's work?'
3. Is the purpose and charge of the committee being fulfilled? Where is the life of the Spirit taking the committee?
4. Is the committee's budget created and presented to its coordinating committee in a timely way?
5. Is the committee's prior year's budget substantially spent on the activities listed in that budget?
6. Is a committee's proposed work accomplished and reported in a timely way?
7. How does the work of this committee directly serve or impact the life of the Monthly Meetings?

These queries focus on evaluating the committee's work over the past year. The responses may point to the need for the coordinating committee to help the committee better facilitate the work of the Spirit in the committee. It may also mean acknowledging the lack of life of the Spirit in the committee, which would point to the need to lay it down. If this committee's work is truly needed, it will find new form as the Spirit leads.

If, after laboring with a committee for an appropriate period of time over its failure to affirm the above queries, the coordinating committee is empowered to recommend the laying down of a committee and forward this request to the Yearly Meeting.

Friends approved this minute.

35. Ernie then offered the second minute, Advices to Committee Clerks. The proposed advices cover such topics as the orderly transition to a new clerk, education of new committee members, developing an annual calendar, and the proper historical preservation of important documents. Friends agreed with the intention and scope of this minute, but felt there was a need to fine-tune the minute before it could be approved. Friends are invited to send written suggestions to the Transition Working Group or attend the interest group offered by the TWG later this week. The edited minute will be brought back to the Yearly Meeting in a future session.

36. The minutes were read and approved.

37. The meeting closed with quiet worship.

Wednesday, July 28, 2005, 8:15 P.M.

Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Melanie-Claire Mallison, Recording Clerk
Anne Wright, Reading Clerk

38. Rima Segal, clerk of the Epistle Committee, read the epistle from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Called Session on Climate Change, approved June 4, 2005. PYM met "to seek leading

on the issue of climate change,” and realized “the time has arrived for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to engage the concern corporately.” To that end, they resolved to incorporate the concern into the body of their work in the world, proclaiming they must “seek ways to hold our members lovingly accountable to live in God’s world in a more environmentally sustainable fashion.”

39. The Clerk introduced the clerks’ table and welcomed us to the midweek point of our sessions. She introduced visitor William Galvin from the Center on Conscience and War. Bill has been working with our youth program this week and wants us to know that we have an extraordinary group of young people who are deeply engaged with these issues.

40. The Clerk introduced Anita Paul, clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, who began the work of the Witness Section by introducing David Kaczynski, who spoke on the New York State death penalty. David summarized the past 13 months, which have been a challenging time regarding the death penalty. He described the people who spoke at the public hearings against the death penalty, including people who had been on death row but had been exonerated. The testimonies pointed to the fact that the death penalty is a failed and expensive response to violence. On April 12, 2005, the Code Committee of the State Assembly voted down reinstating the death penalty. But David cautioned it is not dead, it is only in remission. Therefore now is the critical time to continue putting our opposition before the state government, and he noted several ways for Friends to act and continue this opportunity for nonviolence in the world.

41. The Clerk reminded Friends of our history with a Peace Tax Fund. She introduced Rosa Packard (Purchase), Corona Macheimer (Morningside) and Frederick Dettmer (Purchase) who reported on the New York City Council Hearing on Resolution 367, supporting the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill. Rosa reported that four members of NYYM are on the board of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund Bill. The work ripples now through twelve other countries who also have movements towards the goal of recognizing conscientious objection to military taxation. Corona noted that this year the United States will pay out over \$600 billion to cover current military expenditures—almost certainly more than the rest of the world, combined. She outlined the history of Resolution 367 and summarized work on this resolution. She urged us to contact City Council members and Congresspersons thanking them for their support or requesting their support. Fred offered his impressions of the hearing with City Council where each person had two minutes to speak. Anyone who went over the time limit was asked politely but firmly to conclude. Everyone but our clerk, Linda Chidsey. As she spoke the powerful words of Truth, the timer sounded and no one stopped her from finishing her statement.

42. Anita introduced Alexander Haines-Stephan and Helen Staab, who told of their trip to Honduras to build adobe or brick stoves for many families. Their trip included hard work, beautiful sights and an interesting problem with the language. They were moved by the generosity of the people and especially the children. The experience was life-changing.

43. Anita interviewed Kathleen (Katie) Lynn who visited Kenya with her grandmother Kate Lawson. Katie told how these people, who have so little, cherish deeply what they have. They worked in a clinic with mothers with AIDS, and attended the support group for these mothers who needed to find someone to take care of their children once they were gone. Katie urged us

all to want for nothing, as we have so much; we must cherish our families, and we need to be as happy to be alive as the many Kenyans she met. Katie hopes to return to Kenya some day to teach. Anita quoted Wangari Maathai, 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient: "When we introduced free primary education in the year 2003, one million children went and registered."

44. Anita introduced Helen Garay Toppins (Morningside) who spoke of her witness of tutoring incarcerated girls, inspired by seeing a slave ship exhibit where the sight of shackles for babies and young children angered and pained her deeply. By happenstance after leaving the exhibit, she read the story of John Fairfield, a 19th century white southerner who gave his life in defense of black liberation. Fairfield's life story inspired her to ask God what she too could do. God answered her by leading her to work with incarcerated teenage girls, tutoring them and preparing them for college and careers. Hanging behind the clerks' table was artwork the girls had done to illustrate their poetry. Helen ended her message by reading a poem "Dear America" written by one of the girls.

45. Anita introduced Ernie Buscemi, who has worked for twenty years with AIDS patients. She spoke of her call to this work beginning with sitting and holding babies while they died of AIDS. She feels she is a vessel for God's love, and her many years of work have given her life lessons: gratitude and forgiveness, and the ability to pray in a loving communion with God. She will do this work for as long as she can do this work.

46. Anita introduced Patrick Nugent, who serves as coprincipal of Friends Theological College in Kaimosi, Kenya, along with his wife Mary Kay Rehard. He and Mary Kay are both members of West Richmond Friends Meeting, Indiana Yearly Meeting. After September 11, 2001, the couple were called to ask God if more was wanted of them. The opportunity to head the Friends Theological College was opened to them, and they applied. They work with students who are in their early 20s to their 60s, teaching them to become Quaker pastors through a three-year program. A church pastor in Kenya today must also be a community leader and activist. Their courses now reflect this important aspect of a pastor's work, even including training in the Alternatives to Violence Program and AIDS counseling. As a result, some of their former students have been hired by the Kenyan government.

47. The minutes were read and approved.

48. The meeting closed with full and heartfelt worship.

Thursday, July 28, 2005, 10:15 A.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Lee Haring, Recording Clerk
Rima Segal, Reading Clerk*

49. Friends gathered in worship. Melanie Storie and Margaret Matthews reported on the activities of the primary-age group of Junior Yearly Meeting. The Clerk reminded friends that Thomas Martin, Carol Rice, and Christine DeRoller are carrying to JYM information about the

work of the adult meeting. She informed Friends that Ellen Flanders has been hospitalized, and that James Atwell has left this session to care for a beloved friend who is ill.

50. Word was received of the recent death of Robert Turner, a former member of Alfred Meeting, later a member of Sandy Spring Meeting, Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

51. A memorial minute was read for Charles Varian (1909–2005), a Friend well known in the Yearly Meeting and longtime member of Rahway & Plainfield Meeting. Among Friends Charles Varian was a dependable note-taker and newsletter editor, and for many years volunteered in the Yearly Meeting office. He was also a naturalist who often worked at the grounds of the McCutchen, where he was a trustee for many years. Upright, truthful, and gregarious, Charles Varian touched many lives and gladdened many hearts. Friends spoke tenderly their memories of this Friend.

52. The Clerk announced that an additional meeting for worship with attention to business will be held on Friday, July 29, from 4:15 to 5:45 p. m. She reviewed agenda items for today and tomorrow.

53. Peter Baily, head of Oakwood Friends School, introduced Joseph Gosler, new president of Oakwood's board of managers, and his wife Sheila Wolper.

54. Ernie Buscemi clerked the remainder of the morning's session. She presented the consent agenda. With one change, the nominations were approved. At their request, the following Friends were released from the services indicated.

- . Committee on Conflict Transformation: Rick Townsend
- . Friends Committee on National Legislation, class of '06: Sue Clark
- . Right Sharing of World Resources, class of '06: Jean Benninghoff
- . Committee on Expenditure of the H. H. Mosher Fund, class of '06: Kevin Johnson

55. Paula McClure, for General Services Coordinating Committee, advised Friends that two reports brought forward yesterday—the report of the General Secretary's Task Group and the job description of the general secretary post for the Yearly Meeting—will be posted on the Yearly Meeting's Web site, and that hard copies are being prepared.

56. Jeffrey Aaron, for Sessions Committee, presented a minute about rescheduling our wintertime Representative Meeting, approved by the General Services Coordinating Committee, the Sessions Committee, and its Representative Meeting Subcommittee, describing the minute as the result of a long and wide process of discernment. The minute recommends that the planned dates for future Representative Meetings be moved from the first weekend in December to a weekend that falls in November, two weekends before the day called Thanksgiving. The minute further recommends that the first representative meeting with the new date be scheduled for fall 2007, in order to provide sufficient time to schedule those dates with a local host committee. Friends approved this minute, with its suggested change.

57. Melanie-Claire Mallison, clerk of Nurture Coordinating Committee, brought forward two recommendations: that the Committee on Disability Concerns be laid down, and that the Yearly

Meeting appoint a resource person for such concerns, under the care of the Nurture Coordinating Committee. Friends approved the recommendation. At the suggestion of the Nurture Coordinating Committee, Sarah Faith Dickinson (Butternuts) was appointed as the resource person for disability concerns for a term of one year, ending in 2006.

58. Melanie-Claire brought forward two requests from the Women's Concerns Committee: that this committee be laid down, and that a women's concerns contact and budget line be maintained under Nurture, or another appropriate Coordinating Committee. The requests bear the approval of the Nurture Coordinating Committee. Friends approved both requests. At the suggestion of Nurture, Anne Liske (Albany) was appointed as a resource person for women's concerns for a term of one year, ending in 2006.

59. Anita Paul and Frederick Dettmer, clerk and assistant clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, brought forward this committee's recommendation that the Yearly Meeting lay down its Committee on Latin American Concerns. Witness Coordinating Committee would receive requests for funding of activities in this area. Friends discussed this recommendation and deferred further consideration of it to a later session.

60. Linda Chidsey read the report of the Worship and Action Working Group, which consists of herself, Victoria (Vicki) Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), Lu Harper (Rochester), and Frederick Dettmer (Purchase). Out of their worship and work together, members of the group have experienced a quiet and persistent inward change. They expressed a desire to speak their experience and encouraged other Friends to do likewise; they expressed gratitude for those who uphold them in prayer; and they encouraged Friends to engage actively in work that aims at dismantling the institutions of war. Friends received the group's spoken report and were reminded to read a written report already distributed.

61. Elizabeth Enloe (Fifteenth Street) and Christine (Chris) DeRoller (Old Chatham) reported on a retreat that gathered together clerks and staff of the Quaker United Nations Office, the New York Metropolitan Regional office of the American Friends Service Committee, and New York Yearly Meeting. This group has met for four years, doing good work together and maintaining a vision of the common work of these Friends organizations. Their most recent retreat brought greater clarity to their peace witness, with a sense that the testimonies of simplicity and integrity are constantly being tested. They felt spiritually grounded and also found areas that need further attention. Chris held up a section of water pipe, which keeps outside forces from collapsing it and allows water to pass through it, thus generating power. Imagine, she said, that this pipe is a Friends organization—Powell House, AFSC, QUNO, NYYM—with spirit flowing through it while resisting outside forces. What feeds the stream is our monthly and yearly meetings. Friends received the report.

62. The minutes of the morning session were read and approved.

63. The meeting ended in silent worship.

Friday, July 29, 11:00 A.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Karen Way, Recording Clerk
Anne Wright, Reading Clerk*

64. Following a program of worship, Junior Yearly Meeting members Ta'Jana Lee and Nora Mattson from the Kindergarten–First Grade group described singing about magic pennies and making dream catchers. In serious play, they learned that "One little thing can make a big difference." Alanna Badgley read the list of children who were not present.

65. Out of silent worship, the reading clerk read a memorial minute for Alan Walter Pike. Born in Freeport, Long Island in 1928, Alan served in the Korean War and attended college on the GI Bill. While working as an apprentice social worker he met his wife-to-be Joyce Haynes, known as Jody. Together they helped found Conscience Bay Friends Meeting on Long Island, where they became members. Later they moved to Syracuse Meeting. Throughout his adulthood, Alan was active in monthly and regional meetings, the Yearly Meeting, and the American Friends Service Committee. He worked on many issues of social witness, including establishing the AFSC Akwesasne Environmental Justice Project. His integrity and commitment helped build the foundations of several organizations, ensuring their survival. He is remembered for conscientiousness, fortitude, kindness, generosity, and humor. Friends spoke warmly of his ability to listen, his reliable advice, and the comfort, now missed, of his loving strength.

66. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table.

67. The Clerk introduced Rima Segal, clerk of the Epistle Committee, who gave the first reading of the epistle that will be sent from the Yearly Meeting to Friends everywhere. Paper and pencils were distributed so that members could write comments. Rima then read the epistle again.

68. The reading clerk read a travel minute approved by Alfred Friends Meeting and Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting commending Nadine Hoover to the people of Ache, Indonesia, as a person with "a warm heart, a gentle smile and a laugh you cannot forget." The minute has been returned with an endorsement from Ache thanking Nadine and the people of America for their generous help. Friends instructed the Clerk to add the endorsement of the Yearly Meeting.

69. The reading clerk read a travel minute for Newton Garver from Buffalo Meeting, who will visit Bolivia and Peru with Jens Braun of Old Chatham Meeting and Clemence Mershon of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Newton and his companions plan to further the work of the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund, and to connect Friends in those countries to the activities of the Friends World Committee for Consultation. Friends instructed the Clerk to endorse this minute.

70. The reading clerk read a travel minute for Vicki Cooley from Central Finger Lakes Meeting. Vicki currently serves on the AFSC national board and the NYYM Worship and Action Working Group. She will be a plenary speaker at Baltimore Yearly Meeting next week.

71. The minutes of the session were read and approved.

72. The meeting closed with silent worship.

Friday, July 29, 2005, 4:15 P.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Lee Haring, Recording Clerk
Anne Wright, Reading Clerk*

73. Friends gathered in quiet worship.

74. The Clerk announced the names of the Friends at the clerks' table. Anne Wright introduced Clinton Pettus, new regional director of the Middle Atlantic Region of the American Friends Service Committee, headquartered in Baltimore, visiting us with his wife Kathryn. Kathryn and Clinton are attenders at Wilmington Friends Monthly Meeting. Clinton Pettus told us that his and Kathryn Pettus's journey to Silver Bay from Baltimore was an occasion for learning patience and perseverance.

75. Helen Staab, accompanied by a large number of young Friends, brought forward a message from the Senior High School group attesting to their upholding of the testimony of equality. "Despite all differences," says the message, "including but not limited to differences in belief systems, gender, physical attributes, or sexual orientation, everyone has the same Light Within and so deserves the same rights and respect. Our concern is that each person be recognized for their Inner Light." Valuing each person gives us the "opportunity to become closer to the Light." Friends spoke with deep feeling and approval to this message from younger Friends; the younger Friends described how it came into being, under the influence of the Holy Spirit. At the request of the group, the message was appended to this year's epistle from the Yearly Meeting to Friends everywhere. Monthly meetings will be asked "to labor with this topic and forward our witness to their high school groups." Friends stood hand in hand to sing "We Shall Overcome."

76. The reading clerk read a travel minute issued and endorsed in 2003 for Carol Holmes (Fifteenth Street), with an endorsement from Western Yearly Meeting expressing gratitude for her presence at their sessions.

77. Ann Davidson (Farmington) described the program in which a few Friends have been traveling in ministry to smaller meetings and worship groups, with financial support from funds to which all Friends are invited to contribute. The advisory group for this program asks the traveling Friends to report back on the Light that is present in the meetings they visit. As one of the traveling Friends, Carol Holmes pointed out that the benefits of such ministry can not be measured in a tangible way. She spoke to the importance and rewards of intervisitation, especially when accompanied by a companion or elder. She invited Friends to make such visits among meetings. Young Friends would be especially welcome on such visits. Carol ended her message by quoting Lloyd Lee Wilson: "if I am faithful to this drawing to meet with certain Friends, if I am agreeable to meet with God and them where they are, something divinely good will happen."

78. For the Worship and Action Working Group, Linda Chidsey reviewed the origin and activities of the group, which has been under the care of the Liaison Committee. That committee

has suggested that the oversight of the Worship and Action Working Group might be shifted to one of the Coordinating Committees. Friends agreed to take up this question at a later session. Questions about the funds designated to be used by the group, about the method of appointment to it, and about its continuance remain to be considered.

79. The minutes were read and approved.

80. The meeting ended in silent worship.

Friday, July 29, 7:00 P.M.

*Linda Chidsey, Clerk
Ernestine Buscemi, Assistant Clerk
Karen Way, Recording Clerk
Anne Wright, Reading Clerk*

81. Meeting began with the handmade sounds of a rainstorm that grew to a roar and then quieted into silent worship.

82. Kate Lawson, clerk of Junior Yearly Meeting, opened the business of the evening by introducing this year's JYM coordinators, Roseann Press and Martha Gurvich. Roseann and Martha will continue as coordinators next year, joined by Jennifer Lindop. They reviewed the successes of the week, and introduced the multifaceted epistle from Junior Yearly Meeting to the Yearly Meeting.

The Kindergarten–First Grade group displayed colorful dream catchers while group leader David Gerhan described the week's games and crafts celebrating light. With an electric candle burning brightly and music playing, the young ones danced their happiness onstage while the entire meeting swayed in response.

The Second and Third Grade group focused their week on the Inner Light. They sang their week's activities and their exuberance in special verses of "This Little Light of Mine." The body of the meeting joined in the last verse: "All around the world, I'm gonna let it shine."

The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grade group arrived onstage with handmade drums. They described a busy week, culminating in the creation of a special Adirondack chair, decorated with ribbons and blessings and designated for the NYYM Clerk so she can sit outside and watch the children play. Older Friends were encouraged to add their own blessings to the chair before leaving for home.

The Junior High group gave their report as a rap song performed by Tori Close and Kristin McGiver. The verses described a visit from Bill Galvin on how to "stay peaceful in draft time," a conversation with Dorothy Garner, a trip to the beach with the Second and Third Grade group, focused dialogues on racism and negativity, and games, hikes, and play, all wrapped together in a remarkable epistle, dropped on the grownups like a "peaceful missile."

The High School group offered an unforgettable skit featuring a deadpan report of the group's actual accomplishments, read in a pseudo-adult drone while an apparent inebriate tottered about in the background. This duo was quickly replaced by a parade of young men who removed their shirts to reveal a different day of the week on each back and the main activity of that day on each front. After joining in a lugubrious verse of the song "River," this group and other high school students danced and partied off the stage to considerable applause.

Natalie Braun reported on the first Alternatives to Violence Basic workshop to be held during JYM. Eighteen young people (12 of high school age, 6 older) completed the workshop; one participant reported, "it was awesome." When prompted, many members on the floor held up squares of colored paper to indicate the wide dispersion of AVP training.

The Circle of Young Friends reported a week of renewal. With the support of NYYM's Young Adult Concerns Committee, CYF is now a strong community of several dozen people between the ages of 18 and 35. The week was spent renewing friendships through games, massages, ice cream, and long talking. The group is working to envision ways to engage more fully in the life of NYYM while offering a spiritual home during the early adult years of transition, travel, and change.

Friends received the epistle from JYM with great pleasure.

83. The Clerk introduced those at the clerks' table and turned over the clerking of the meeting for business to Ernie Buscemi.

84. Ernie Buscemi reported that the Worship and Action Working Group had held a meeting over dinner and wished to make a presentation in response to issues raised in the previous session. Ernie introduced Thomas Rothschild (Brooklyn), who reviewed the mission and the accomplishments of the group. Tom explained that the Transition Working Group has already been charged with evaluating the Worship and Action Working Group and with analyzing where the group and its functions should be placed in Yearly Meeting structure, how to provide for the management of funds designated for the group, and how members of the group will be nominated (see Minute 65 of July 30, 2004). Friends approved having the Worship and Action Working Group continue until Representative Meeting in December, when a report from the Transition Working Group is expected.

85. Linda Chidsey returned to the clerks' table and resumed clerking.

86. Claire Simon, clerk of Sessions Committee, reported that 637 participants attended this session of Yearly Meeting, 184 of whom were members of Junior Yearly Meeting. Cafe Night raised \$7,059, the Tagless Tag Sale raised approximately \$1,400 and the Fun(d) Fair raised \$1,322. This means that over \$9,000 was raised for the Sharing Fund and Powell House. The next Representative Meeting will be held December 3–4, 2005, at Albany Academy for Girls in Albany, NY, hosted by Northeastern Regional Meeting. Spring Representative Meeting will be held April 1–2, 2006, on Busch Campus of Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ, hosted by Shrewsbury-Plainfield Half-Yearly Meeting. The next annual sessions of New York Yearly Meeting will be held at Silver Bay, NY, July 23–29, 2006.

87. Anita Paul, clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, again brought forward the proposal to lay down the Latin American Concerns Committee. Witness is in the process of choosing an individual to serve as focus person for Latin American concerns within the Coordinating Committee. Friends approved the laying down of the Latin American Concerns Committee.

88. Rima Segal, clerk of the Epistle Committee, gave the second reading of the New York Yearly Meeting Epistle to Friends Everywhere. Friends labored far into the night over the problem of how to talk about racism without seeming to endorse the discredited language that reinforces the construct of race and injures humans. Friends approved the epistle after several emendations, and on the condition that Carol Holmes would work with the epistle committee to develop an additional paragraph that will describe the process of our labor.

89. The minutes of the session were read and approved.

90. The meeting closed with silent worship.