

**2011  
ADVANCE REPORTS**

**New York Yearly Meeting  
of the  
Religious Society of Friends**

**Prepared for Summer Sessions  
July 17–23, 2011, Silver Bay, N.Y.**

Please use the documents of this book throughout the week in preparation for business sessions, committee meetings, and interest groups sponsored by committees or affiliated organizations.

**THIS COPY BELONGS TO.....**

**NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING  
ADVANCE REPORTS**

*The documents of this publication were printed in advance of the 2010–2011 Yearbook for consideration at sessions of NYYM.*

*Please note that the budgets and expenditures of many committees may be obtained through reference to the Treasurer’s Report. Committees having their own treasurers submitted financial reports. All financial reports are for the 2010 calendar year.*

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**New York Yearly Meeting**  
**Fall Sessions**  
November 12–14, 2010  
Flushing Meetinghouse, Flushing, New York

Saturday, November 13, 2010, 10:00 a.m.

*Heather M. Cook, Clerk*  
*Margaret Obermayer, Acting Assistant Clerk & Reading Clerk*  
*Roger Dreisbach-Williams, Recording Clerk*

2010-11-01. The meeting remained gathered following morning open worship. Out of the silence, Clerk Heather M. Cook (Chatham-Summit) greeted Friends with prayer, asking Friends to open our hearts, listen in humility, act with courage, and deepen in faithfulness. She invited Friends to practice self-discipline when discerning whether to speak to the matters coming forward. She introduced those at the clerks' table and reviewed the agenda.

2010-11-02. The reading clerk called the roll, asking Friends to rise by regional meeting. All regions were represented.

2010-11-03. Andy von Salis (Brooklyn), of the host committee of New York Quarterly Meeting (NYQM), welcomed us and brought greetings from the clerks of the quarterly meeting who could not be with us. This is the first time that NYQM has hosted Yearly Meeting at the Flushing meetinghouse, the site of the first session of New York Yearly Meeting in 1696.

2010-11-04. Portions of the 2010 epistle of Intermountain Yearly Meeting were read. They sought the meaning of service in these challenging times: Is service different in the twenty-first century? Are the tools different? Are they, as a Meeting, called to engage in service? What are the gifts and challenges of giving, and of receiving? They also approved minutes on immigration and the use of military force after years of heartfelt threshing and waiting for the Spirit's leading.

2010-11-05. The Clerk reported on an American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)/New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) joint statement "A Call to Understanding and Peace," issued in August in response to the proposed Islamic Center in Lower Manhattan. It was sent by AFSC to the White House in September, in response to a request for statements on the proposed mass burning of the Qur'an in Florida. The statement is

attached and is posted on the Yearly Meeting Web site.

2010-11-06. General Secretary Christopher Sammond (Bulls Head-Oswego, sojourning at Poplar Ridge) presented his report: Funding for the Young Adult Friends Field Secretary position is not yet in place. We are clear that this work we are called to do and we need to support it.

2010-11-07. Clerk of Sessions Committee, John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), presented their report on 2010 Summer Sessions. Attendance: 574 (620 in 2009), including 127 Junior Yearly Meeting participants. Over \$13,000 was raised to support Friends' attendance at Yearly Meeting Sessions, and more than 80 of us received assistance. Suggestions for themes and plenary speakers should be shared with Sessions Committee by the middle of January.

2010-11-08. We heard the words of Isaac Penington: "There is that near you which will guide you. Oh, wait for it, and be sure that you keep to it." —quoted in *Traveling In*, Douglas V. Steere, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #324

2010-11-09. Treasurer Susan Bingham (Montclair) presented her report. The closing balance as of October 31, 2010 is \$178,000, a net change of -\$27,411. This is better than last year when the net change was -\$61,000. The net change in 2008 was a little more than -\$13,000.

2010-11-10. Clerk of Financial Services, Sandra Beer (Old Chatham), presented their report. The proposed budget for 2011 is set at \$516,311, based on what Friends have been willing to commit. The meeting approved a balanced budget and held off considering the minute until the afternoon.

2010-11-11. We heard the following from Britain Yearly Meeting *Faith & Practice*:

Live adventurously. When choices arise, do you take the way that offers the fullest opportunity for the use of your gifts in the service of God and the community? Let your life speak. When decisions have to be made, are you ready to join with others in seeking clearness, asking for God's guidance and offering counsel to one another?

—Britain Yearly Meeting *Faith & Practice*,  
Advices and Queries #27

2010-11-12. A travel minute for Margaret Lechner (Purchase) was presented. Deborah Wood (Purchase), a member of her

support committee, provided background information on the travel minute for on-going work with the Alternatives to Violence Project in Latin America. The Clerk was directed to endorse the travel minute.

2010-11-13. The minutes of the morning session were approved.

2010-11-14. Following the reading of the announcements and a period of open worship we closed for lunch to resume our prayers for discernment at 3:45 p.m.

Flushing High School, Flushing, New York  
Saturday, November 13, 2010, 4:00 p.m.

Heather M. Cook, Clerk  
Margaret Obermayer, Acting Assistant Clerk  
Elaine Learnard, Recording Clerk  
Sylke Jackson, Reading Clerk

2010-11-15. Out of the waiting worship, we heard the following:

Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things...

—1 Peter 4:8-11

2010-11-16. In the morning session, Friends heard a report from the Financial Services Committee on the proposed budget. Following that session, Financial Services brought the following to clarify their sense of the morning's discussion. Friends approved the proposed 2011 budget of \$516,311, which includes expected income of \$516,311, including anticipated covenant donations of \$459,398.

The approved budget also includes, in the event that the anticipated revenue exceeds \$516,311, the expenditures set forth in the prioritized tiers on page 7 of the proposed budget document. Any additional revenue will be used as follows: Tier One would be funded proportionately to its items, up to a limit of \$10,000; then Tier Two would be funded proportionately to its items, up to a limit of \$16,650; and finally Tier Three would be

funded proportionately to its items, up to a limit of \$6,650.

The determination of the final anticipated revenues for 2011 will be brought to Spring Sessions by the Financial Services.

Friends approved the budget with these understandings. The approved budget is attached and posted on the Yearly Meeting Web site.

2010-11-17. Friends heard a call to bring back to their monthly meetings the invitation to engage in further discernment about strengthening support for the ministry of the Yearly Meeting as reflected in the work proposed in the three priority tiers. The activities described in these items will be undertaken only if the additional funds are received from increased covenant donations or from earmarked contributions.

2010-11-18. Friends further directed Financial Services to compose, and the Yearly Meeting staff to send by postal mail, a letter to each monthly meeting explaining how additional covenant donations would be used to fund the activities described in the three tiers, should additional donations be forthcoming.

2010-11-19. The Meeting approved minutes 20 through 23 in accord with the consent agenda.

2010-11-20. Friends approved the following nominations:

Nurture Coordinating Committee (at large), 2012: Alexander Haines '10 (Mohawk Valley) [see Minute #24 below]

Aging Concerns, 2013: Carol Summar '10 (Fifteenth Street)

Elsie K. Powell House Committee, 2015: Elizabeth Powers '10 (Brooklyn), Margaret Morgan-Davie '08 (Mohawk Valley)

Young Friends in Residence, 2011: Abraham Kenmore '10 (Buffalo)

Rural and Migrant Ministry Representative, 2011: James O'Barr '01 (Cornwall)

2010-11-21. Friends approved these requests for release from service:

Listed in error:

Young Adult Concerns Committee, 2011: Amy Savage (Syracuse)

Young Adult Concerns Committee, 2012: Sarah Brown (Rockland, attender), Kayla Clark (Old Chatham), Tim Holmes (Old Chatham)

Release from service:

Advancement Committee, 2012: John Menzel (New Brunswick)

Assistant Clerk of the Yearly Meeting, 2011: Joseph Garren (Brooklyn)

Financial Services Committee, 2011: Mary Williams (Bulls Head-Oswego)

Friends General Conference Representatives, 2013: John Menzel (New Brunswick)

Elsie K. Powell House Committee, 2011: Virginia Haines (Mohawk Valley)

Youth Committee, 2012: David Eskin (Purchase), Monica Eskin (Purchase)

Witness Coordinating Committee (at large), 2012: Linda Chidsey (Housatonic)

National Religious Campaign against Torture representatives, 2012: Patricia Chernoff (Morningside)

Quaker Earthcare Witness representative, 2012: Elizabeth (Buffy) Curtis (Mohawk Valley)

2010-11-22. Friends approved the creation of the General Secretary Supervisory Committee, including the recommendation that the existing General Secretary Supervisory Task Group members continue as Committee members, retaining the existing class arrangement.

2010-11-23. Friends approved the laying down of the General Secretary Supervisory Task Group as its duties will be undertaken by the new General Secretary Supervisory Committee.

2010-11-24. Clerk of Nominating Committee, Jill McClellan (Central Finger Lakes), brought a change to the consent agenda, that Alexander Haines's appointment to Nurture Coordinating Committee be stricken from the consent agenda. Friends approved.

2010-11-25. The following was read: "... we walk by faith, not by sight." —2 Corinthians 5:7

2010-11-26. The Clerk introduced Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) Committee coclerk Christine (Chris) DeRoller (Old Chatham), who described YFIR's mission as seeking to strengthen and revitalize the Religious Society of Friends by addressing three critical areas: keeping adolescents and their families involved in the meeting; providing concrete and substantive opportunities to develop the leadership gifts of members and attenders, particularly among young adult Friends; and deepening the spiritual life and practices of individuals and the meeting.

Chris then introduced Irma Guthrie (Perry City), who spoke about Perry City's hosting YFIR. Perry City has established a structure and support committee and an anchor committee, and they are working out how much of what kinds of support is needed. The meeting has been enriched by the participation of these young people in the life of their meeting as the interns participate in committees, lead discussions and Bible study, and work with the First Day school. Although Perry City spent more than a year in discernment about whether they could host this work, the rewards of this joint work became clear to them very soon.

Each of the interns spoke about aspects of their experiences. Anna Obermayer (Binghamton) spoke about the clarity she came to in choosing the YFIR internship, about her commitment to this Yearly Meeting in which she was raised, and about the intense spiritual enrichment of having the time and space to get to know and be known by people whose spiritual background is very different from hers. Helen Staab (Purchase), the newest intern with YFIR, spoke about her clearness process for this work and her realization that it started when she was nine years old and attending Powell House programs; her clearness process helped her see this internship as a way to give back in appreciation for all she had been given.

Franklin Crump also came to YFIR after experiences at Powell House and with a desire to create a program that would provide the same safe and nurturing program for young people, both Quaker and non-Quaker, that helped him survive middle school. Franklin hopes that the interns will be able to provide some structure to help the next set of interns not to have to work so hard to get going.

Natalie Braun (Old Chatham) has found that the program has been a source of growth for all involved—the interns, the kids who attend the weekend programs, the youth community that has supported the weekends by helping out, the parents of the kids who come to the programs, and the monthly meetings the kids come from. Starting from the Powell House structure they were all familiar with, the interns have by now come to “own” the structure of their retreats. Each has a theme relating to an aspect of Quakerism. Nathalie sees the program as a seed that needs nurturing.

Chris completed the report from YFIR with the thought that expanding and contracting are part of what a living body does and though we have noted some ways that our community has

contracted, YFIR, in a leap of faith, is an expansion.

The YFIR and Perry City reports are attached and posted on the Yearly Meeting Web site.

2010-11-27. Friends heard the following read: “You must love one another just as I have loved you. It is by your love for one another that everyone will recognize you as my disciples.” — John 13: 34–35

2010-11-28. For the Witness Coordinating Committee, Fred Dettmer (Purchase), section clerk, introduced Jolene Festa (Brooklyn), coclerk of the Prisons Committee, who brought a proposed revision to the *Handbook* page for the Prisons Committee. This revision adds two items to the list of functions of that committee: outreach to prison worship group members who are in the hospital, and provision of referral assistance for those coming home from prison. Friends approved the revision to the *Handbook* page.

2010-11-29. Fred then spoke about the Sharing Fund, specifically how the fund has supported Friends' Alternatives to Violence Project work abroad, such as Margaret Lechner's work we heard about this morning. He urged Friends to make contributions to the Sharing Fund to support more such social witness work.

2010-11-30. Speaking then as the clerk of the Liaison Charge Group, which has been directed to look at a process for discerning priorities of the Yearly Meeting, Fred reported that the group has continued to work since Summer Sessions on a proposal and hopes to bring a proposal to Spring Sessions.

2010-11-31. Fred announced that there will be a Coordinating Committee weekend, the first in two years, on January 28 and 29, 2011, at Powell House, and reminded Friends that it is not necessary to be on a coordinating committee to attend.

2010-11-32. The acting assistant clerk read travel minutes from Rochester Monthly Meeting, endorsed by Farmington-Scipio Regional meeting, for members Kristina Keefe-Perry and Callid Keefe-Perry. Kristina carries a commitment to eldering, to earthcare, and to developing a network of Quaker volunteers, a national movement nurturing leadings in Quaker service where they grow. Callid has been called to learning and teaching about Quaker theology and Christian mysticism.

From Rochester Monthly Meeting, Kenneth Harper spoke

about what it is has been like to serve on the support committee for one of these Friends in their work and travel, and about the enrichment that has come from listening to Spirit and understanding how the Spirit is moving through them.

Kristina told us that she was grateful for the many greetings they and their daughter Nahar had received. Giving examples of her work as she has traveled, as a teacher at Pendle Hill, as a partner in peace-building work with members of other peace churches, as an elder, she offered a message about faithfulness and accountability, about eldering that sometimes asks us to carry heavier weight than we think we can (but we can), and about how, as we had just heard from the book of John, it is by our love that we show each other the hands of God as we do this work in the world.

Callid told us how he has tried to give over to inward work and to discipline in his meeting, and of his conviction, through this giving over: he believes Spirit can guide us and is near. Last spring, someone from the Protestant section of the Web site Patheos asked him to write something on his understanding of the Spirit. A poem he wrote in response was then picked up by a major weekly lectionary Web site and used in Pentecost Sunday sermons throughout the country. He left us with that poem:

**Bird Shadows/Holy Spirit**

My God is in the next room,  
cooking unseen feasts  
and humming;  
moments of ache before rain  
when the whole June cloud  
is ready to burst through  
though no drop has yet fallen;  
dandelion blades that insist  
adamantly they must reside directly  
in the middle of your neighbor's  
blacktopped suburban driveway;  
sights of the shadow of a bird flitting  
by the sill near the bed of an aging Grace,  
who can no longer move but counts herself  
lucky because at least she can still see.  
This is my God:  
expectant and grinning  
wild and near.

and with this prayer: "I pray we find the way forward in these days; the kingdom is at hand."

Friends directed the Clerk to endorse these travel minutes.

2010-11-33. Following announcements, including that the date for the next Meeting for Discernment will be held on February 26, 2011, at Rahway-Plainfield Meeting, the meeting closed in waiting worship.

Flushing Meeting, Flushing NY

Sunday, November 14, 2010, 9:00 a.m.

*Heather M. Cook, Clerk*

*Margaret Obermayer, Acting Assistant Clerk & Reading Clerk*

*Karen A. Reixach, Recording Clerk*

2010-11-34. The meeting opened with silent worship. Out of the silence, the body heard Psalm 25:21: "May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you."

2010-11-35. Clerk Heather Cook introduced those at the clerks' table, reviewed the agenda for the morning, and invited the recording clerk for Saturday afternoon, Elaine Learnard, to read those minutes. Friends approved the minutes from Saturday afternoon.

2010-11-36. The Clerk announced that Purchase Quarter has approved laying down Stamford-Greenwich Meeting. We hope to hear a full report from the quarter in the future.

2010-11-37. Clerk of the Sessions Committee, John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes), reported on these Fall Sessions. One hundred twenty-six people attended at least part of the time, including youth. There has been an active youth program. New York Quarter, which is the host for these Fall Sessions, has relied heavily on Flushing Meeting for arrangements. Friends spoke of the joy of hosting and attending Sessions at this historic place.

2010-11-38. Clerk of Nurture Coordinating Committee (CC), Cheshire Frager (Flushing), offered the proposed *Handbook* page for the Youth Committee for first reading. After the reading clerk read the proposed page, Friends were reminded that comments to Nurture CC are welcome. It is anticipated that the page will come to Spring Sessions for consideration for approval. The proposed page can be viewed on the Yearly Meeting Web site.

2010-11-39. NYYM Representatives to the combined North American/African Friends United Meeting (FUM) Board meetings, Christopher Sammond and Ann Davidson, reported on the meeting in Mabanga, Kenya, in July 2010, as well as their visitation to the United Society of Friends Women International (USFWI) Triennial and the Quaker Men International Triennial, both held outside Mombasa, prior to the meeting in Mabanga. Their written report is attached and will be posted on the Yearly Meeting Web site.

Their presentation began with a graphic video of what it is like to travel on the roads of Kenya and then was accompanied by photos of the many events and places they visited. Ann Davidson, who first went to the USFWI meeting in Kenya in 1992, reported that well over 1,000 women came together for worship, Bible study, singing, opportunities for service, speakers, and fellowship. USFWI is similar to the women's meetings among early Friends in offering opportunities for leadership development and engagement in Spirit-led business.

Ann spoke of the healing work that she and Christopher offered, laying on of hands and offering verbal prayer. Ann emphasized that "one of the things I feel is so important is what I can learn from the Kenyan women and the way they live out their faith. The relationship isn't one way—with me going over and helping/ministering to the Kenyans. I go for nourishment and refreshment in such a way I can't get anywhere else. I am immersed in the Love and Light and come back filled." Christopher also spoke of the vibrant faith of Kenyan Friends, and of one Friend's statement, "We know we have received only a part of Quakerism. We want the rest of it." He told of holding a question in his heart about how to share the gifts that Friends from United yearly meetings carry in a way that would be helpful to the Kenyans.

Christopher spoke of the work of Friends Church Peace Teams during the postelection violence at the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008. Afterward, victims and perpetrators were forced to live together by the government, and Quakers were entrusted with the work of mediating, a powerful peace witness. Recently, the constitution was being approved in Kenya, and some Friends came to clearness that it was important to maintain a neutral public stance despite their personal opinions in order to remain trusted intermediaries, should those election results engender more violence.

Christopher described being in a small group at the FUM

board meetings, made up of North American Friends from both United and Orthodox-only yearly meetings and African Friends. At one point one of the North Americans had just shared an extremely pessimistic assessment of the condition of FUM, and the possibilities for restructuring. He was trying to discern if he was led to share anything in response to that critique, before the group moved on to another topic, when one of the leaders of a Kenyan yearly meeting asked, "Christopher, do you have anything to say?" allowing him to share what he was sitting with. This Friend had worked extensively with Christopher three years previously at the board meetings in Kakamega, where they had labored over different understandings of gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender personhood and ministry.

His sense is that the mood has shifted dramatically, that Kenyan Friends are hungry for what we have to offer. He described several opportunities for service. And while they may benefit from our sharing, we will receive as much, or more, than we give. By coming to Kenya with open hearts, we can be nurtured by the deep faith and joy of Friends there.

Following the presentation, Friends reflected on their own experiences of encounters across cultures. We also noted that our approach of "staying at the table in love" during struggle and impasse (practiced over many years in our own Yearly Meeting and over the last three years with Friends United Meeting) has been affirmed by the 2010 moving experiences described by Christopher and Ann.

2010-11-40. Friends approved the minutes of this session.

2010-11-41. The Clerk concluded our sessions by observing that we have been held, we have received ministry. The first Quaker missionaries came to this area in 1657. Let us be missionaries to our own meetings, to our own communities. Let us speak of what has touched and changed us this weekend. Let us live ever more fully in that Light and Truth. Friends settled into silence in preparation for joining worship with Flushing Monthly Meeting, to reconvene at Oakwood Friends School for our Spring Sessions April 1–3, 2011.

## Attachments

### **Joint Statement of American Friends Service Committee and New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) on Park51, the Islamic Community Center in New York City**

#### ***A Call to Understanding and Peace*** **August 31, 2010**

People of all faiths share histories of intolerance and persecution. In the early decades of our existence, Quakers were feared and the practice of our faith was against the law. We were persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, and executed in England and in the colonies that later became the United States. We recall these shared struggles for acceptance when religious freedom is threatened. We are taught by our faith and experiences to embrace understanding and compassion and the quest for truth. We bring a commitment to peace and the use of nonviolent means to resolve conflicts.

We were here in New York City on September 11, 2001, and mourned with the loved ones of individuals of all faiths who were killed or injured, reaching out to that of God in each and every one. We experienced the loss of a sense of security and well-being. We, too, experience the pain and grief that remain. We have worked steadfastly with victims in the aftermath, and have challenged actions that lead to further loss of life. We concern ourselves with the threat of harm when those on different sides of disputes cast “the other” in the role of the despised and deny their voice, their humanity, and their rights. We call now, as we did then, for the end to the cycle of violence.

The controversy over Park51 reflects our own human condition. We need to look unflinchingly at this less-than-inspirational image of ourselves and use it to gain wisdom, rather than distracting ourselves by creating further discord. The discord reveals that although some have mended, for others, wounds remain unhealed. Honest differences continue over whether retaliation is justified and is a precursor to strength and security; or whether retaliation is a futile act inviting the escalation of hostilities and greater forms of violence. Differences also continue over whether skepticism and distrust are necessary and valued as a way to protect ourselves; or whether optimism and trust are productive values to act upon. As Friends organizations we adhere strongly to the latter worldview in each of

these instances.

Of the possibility of an Islamic Community Center near the site of the World Trade Towers, or a different place of the Center’s Board’s choosing, we harbor no suspicion. We dare to imagine the site of the World Trade Towers surrounded by the evidence of our nation’s commitment to religious freedom, and our nation’s pluralism. We welcome it alongside current mosques and other houses of worship, and other interfaith and community centers near the site and throughout our city. We believe Park51 is a commendable plan that offers the community of New York City a site for recreation, exhibition and performing arts, education, interfaith opportunities, prayer, and global engagement. The Center’s proponents are extending themselves in friendship, with a vision of a vibrant and diverse interfaith community and nation.

The controversy surrounding the Center must not further threaten individuals, our city, or our nation. As disparate as non-Muslim opinions may be on the building of the Center, so too may be the feelings of Muslims whose privacy is again catapulted into the public sphere, and their security made more vulnerable. We must work together to stem the rising tide of fear and the threat of harm and persecution and violence here and throughout the country. We stand with those who fear re-tribution and retaliation for their views or their membership, whether they be Muslims or otherwise. We call for the end to political posturing and purposeful misstatements that poison dialogue, stigmatize individuals, inflame the worst in our human nature, create divisions in our society, and promote a view of America as anti-Islam. Such demagoguery has no place in our society, and stooping to it for political gain is unconscionable.

In furthering our mission to transform conditions and relationships and to nurture the faith that this conflict must and can be resolved, we engage these questions:

- What religion has not had terrible acts committed in its name and in violation of its most basic beliefs?
- What do we understand to be “hallowed” ground? What do we understand to be its proper uses?
- How do we understand and reconcile our pain and the pain of others?
- How do we truly listen and mend the wounds of loss, suspicion, and hostility?

We have had centuries of experience reaching out to those

characterized as “the enemy,” finding and connecting with the Divine which resides in us all. We know that violence and intolerance breed more of the same and that extending ourselves in love and compassion can have a profound impact on even the most hardened of hearts. We support open engagement, civil dialogue, and deep listening to truly hear what is being said and meant. We believe and pray that God’s enduring power and love can guide us to a positive way forward. This is our faith.

*Heather M. Cook, Presiding Clerk,  
New York Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends  
Elizabeth Enloe, Regional Director,  
American Friends Service Committee,  
New York Metropolitan Regional Office  
Christopher Sammond, General Secretary,  
New York Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends  
Benjamin Warnke, Clerk,  
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### **Perry City YFIR Report**

Fall Sessions, November 13, 2010

Perry City Meeting (PCM) has been hosting the YFIR program since September of 2009. It took us about a year to become clear to host the program, and even after deciding to take it on there were still doubts about whether or not we would have the energy, time, or resources to make it work. As the program has grown our concerns have been overshadowed by the benefits of having these young adult Friends with us.

Besides leading the youth retreats, which happen monthly on the average, the interns have been involved with PCM in different ways. Anna has been leading adult education classes before worship on Sundays. It has been a joy watching her shine. Her classes have attracted from six to ten people on a regular basis. The readings have been deep and inspiring, and our discussions have stretched us to new levels. Sometimes it feels as if the ideas are beyond where we are as a meeting, but it is good to be challenged in new ways.

Franklin and Natalie have been helping out with the First Day school whenever possible, and Helen, as the newest intern, is finding her way with us. The energy, enthusiasm, and openness of these Friends is wonderful to experience. Franklin has endeared himself to one of the younger Friends in First Day school by giving her special attention, and Natalie has been working with an older young Friend whenever they are both at meeting. These personal connections with the few young Friends who come to Perry City are making a difference for them.

All four interns bring wonderful energy that is nurturing those of us who are working with them. We trust that they are growing by being with us also.

Perry City Meeting formed two committees to oversee the program and support the interns. The Logistics and Support Committee reviews recent retreats, deals with some money issues, addresses house needs, and helps them look at the practical realities of sharing an old house while living and working together. The Anchor Committee, made up of the interns and their elders, focuses on supporting their spiritual journeys through this process and helps them look at where the challenges are to being open to the full experience. Each of them also serves on a standing committee of the meeting.

It has been a challenge to find a balance between providing too much or too little direction/support/assistance. We are still working on this. As a small meeting, our human resources are limited, and a few Friends have done much of the work. We are also continuing to explore our relationship to the Yearly Meeting YFIR Committee in the division of tasks needed for administering the program. As we live into this work, we are facing challenges and learning from our mistakes and from our successes.

### **The Young Friends in Residence First Year Report**

Submitted by the YFIR Committee of NYYM, August 2010

A perfect spiritual work should fit like a deep breath. It should bring in new life-giving energy and clear out waste. It should fill to capacity and stretch in all the right places without overwhelming. And it should be work that engages the individual as well as the corporate body. —*John Calvi*

John Calvi’s quote really captures the feeling that was present when we (YFIR interns, Perry City Friends, support people,

and the YFIR committee) gathered this summer to reflect on YFIR's first year up and running. It has been a year of surprises, joy, challenges, and growth. It has been a good year, an affirming year. The importance and strength of the Young Friends in Residence program (YFIR) has shone through the bumps and uncertainties, which are so often a part of starting something new. When we asked the interns, "Would you recommend this internship to your friends?" the answer was, "We already have." What follows below is a summary of the work to date, things we've learned and what we hope to accomplish in the coming year.

### **The Mission**

YFIR is designed to strengthen and revitalize the Religious Society of Friends by addressing three areas critical to the continued, or restored, health of our meetings by:

- Keeping adolescents and their families involved in the meeting
- Providing concrete and substantive opportunities to develop the leadership gifts of members and attenders, particularly among young adult Friends
- Deepening the spiritual life and practices of individuals and the meeting.

### **The Structure**

YFIR is a joint collaboration between Perry City Monthly Meeting, which serves as host, and New York Yearly Meeting, which serves as the sponsoring organization. Two to four young adult interns live in the Beloved Community House (a name chosen by the first interns) in Newfield, NY, ten miles from Perry City MM. The interns run a youth program for 11- to 14-year-olds consisting of six to eight weekend retreats per year. They are also engaged in both inreach and outreach work with Perry City Monthly Meeting. They are active in Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting and New York Yearly Meeting. They receive a small stipend, room and board, plus a modest amount of travel money.

The intern positions have been advertised on the NYYM Web site and Friends General Conference Web site, through contact with the clerk of Young Adult Concerns Committee in NYYM, and by word of mouth. The last method has been the most effective. Applicants are required to submit a written application outlining their relevant experience and describing

why they are called to this work. They are also asked to have a clearness committee and to submit a letter from that committee. The clearness committee has been a very moving and powerful experience for both the applicants and the committee participants. Interns have shared the clarity that has come to them through the assistance of the clearness committees even when they were initially skeptical about the process.

YFIR received its first two interns, Anna Obermayer and Franklin Crump, in September 2009. Both Anna and Franklin have committed to stay for a two-year term. Natalie Braun joined them in January 2010 and has agreed to stay for a little over one year. Helen Staab will join the group in September 2010. The YFIR Committee is actively seeking an intern to replace Natalie beginning in February 2011.

Currently support for the interns includes a Logistics and Support Committee at Perry City MM that addresses housing issues, use of the meetinghouse, and youth retreat reports and plans. There is an Anchor Committee, which meets monthly and serves as a sounding board for the interns as they work on various aspects of the YFIR program including youth retreats, intentional community building, and allowing them to speak to where they are on their spiritual journey, serving without expectations, but with intent of observing and supporting the interns' journeys. The Anchor Committee is composed of the three Friends serving the interns as elders. Originally the hope was that there would be an at-large member on the Anchor Committee from each of the three closest monthly meetings as well. An invitation was sent out in early spring, but to date the anchor committee remains primarily a Perry City effort. This coming year the Yearly Meeting YFIR committee will work with Perry City Friends and the existing Anchor Committee to invite more regional participation. The Ministry and Council Committee at Perry City MM has also taken an active interest in the work of Anna and her Quakerism 101 classes and Bible study sessions. The interns spoke of the importance of having a place to hold ideas for support and clearness.

Friends acting as elders for the interns are a critical piece of the program. When done well the support provided by the sharing between elder and intern grounds and deepens the work. It allows for intentional reflection and wrestling. Interns shared about how they could feel the difference pre-elder and post-elder in their experience of the program. Eldering is a traditional Friends' practice that is currently enjoying a revival.

Because it is unfamiliar to many of us, Mary Kay Glazer and Margaret Obermayer facilitated an Elder workshop in August 2009 as a prelude to the YFIR program. Mary Kay later met with the interns in the early spring to talk about spiritual nurture and their experiences to date. She will be conducting a retreat for the interns and their elders in September 2010. Implementation of this piece of the program has been challenging, particularly in finding Friends able to serve as elders and in matching interns to elders. We have learned much from this and will be more mindful of this piece as we bring new interns on this year. We now have a written description of what we are looking for in an elder, and we will develop a more thoughtful process for identifying elders.

### **The Work**

The interns have held five middle school retreats and a high school workshop. They have three more middle school retreats and one high school retreat scheduled through November. Their outreach and inreach work has included: AVP workshops at Auburn prison; Quakerism 101 classes focusing on *Silence and Witness* by Michael L. Birkel and *Essays on the Quaker Vision of Gospel Order* by Lloyd Lee Wilson; monthly Bible studies and developing curriculum and leading First Day school for middle school and older youth. They have been named to Perry City's Ministry and Council committee, Building and Grounds committee, and Peace and Social Action committee. They have worked with youth and adults at NYYM Spring Sessions and Farmington-Scipio's Spring Gathering and Friends General Conference. They have hosted two Circle of Young Friends retreats and traveled to Wichita, KS, for a Young Friends Gathering. This past July, they led the Sunday evening family worship at NYYM Summer Sessions, worked with Junior Yearly Meeting, and attended business and committee meetings. For the personal spiritual nurture that grounds their work, the interns met regularly with their elder and their Anchor Committee and attended programs at Powell House and Pendle Hill as time allowed. Much growth has occurred in their spirited, deep conversations with one another on long car rides and around the table.

### **Results**

#### IMPACT ON MONTHLY MEETINGS

While it is too early to determine the long-term impact of the

program on Perry City and Ithaca Monthly Meetings, there are some things we can say. Perhaps the most poignant result to date is the mutual tenderness and real appreciation for one another that is evident between the interns, Perry City Friends, and others involved in the work of the program. It has also brought to light the power that one small meeting has when it takes a leap of faith and embraces something new. As one Perry City Friend put it, Perry City Monthly Meeting (a small meeting off the beaten path) is now on the map in a way it has never been before. As the interns led the community worship at the annual sessions of NYYM, one Perry City friend beamed, "They're from our meeting." Early questions that Perry City MM considered prior to committing to host YFIR were if it would have the energy to get this started and if it would be worth the work. The answer to date is that it has definitely been worth it. The enthusiasm and energy that the young Friends bring are uplifting. New faces on committees have been so welcome. Anna's classes (Quakerism and Bible study) have reenergized the Ministry and Council Committee and stretched participants as she has brought in new books and resources. Franklin and Natalie's work with the children at Perry City has helped foster connections between Perry City adults and children. The energy of the Beloved Community House touches the meeting as well, and the hope is to deepen that connection this coming year. Perry City Friends speak of how they are impressed by the level of commitment and exploration the young Friends bring to their work. They have also come to understand just how busy young adult Friends are. Looking at the balance of travel away with time spent at Perry City MM and the Beloved Community House will be something that the YFIR committee will work on with the Anchor Committee and the interns this coming year.

Ithaca Monthly Meeting sends several of its youth to the youth retreats. Adults from Ithaca Monthly Meeting have also participated in Anna's classes. Ithaca Friends now have a member on the Yearly meeting YFIR Committee who is actively seeking ways to more fully involve Ithaca MM in the program in the coming year

### **Intentional Community**

The intentional community aspect of the program has been a source of real growth. Each of the interns stressed the importance of this part of the program. The diversity of the interns

has been a key component in this. The three first-year interns span the young Friends' spectrum in terms of age, dietary inclinations, personality, theology, and faith practices. What they all have in common is integrity, passion, and a deep commitment to one another and the program. The work of forming a Beloved Community (the name they have given their home) has been hard but really meaningful and really, really good. Working at meeting the needs of all has stretched them in good ways. Adding the spiritual dimension brings whole new levels to the community aspect and to communication with one another. The interns have also embraced radical hospitality—opening their home to traveling Friends, parents of youth attending the weekends, and young adult Friends on the move. This coming year will bring further discussions on balancing time in community and away, deepening the connection between the Beloved Community in Newfield and Perry City MM, and ensuring Sabbath time for the interns.

### **Interconnectedness—Meeting New People**

YFIR was designed in the hope of strengthening bonds across generations and meeting affiliations. While this has indeed occurred, much more has happened. Interns have been moved outside their normal circle of Friends and have met new people within the yearly meeting across ages and interests. Older and younger Friends are connecting with the interns and with each other through the work of the interns. Through travel to Friends General Conference, Pendle Hill, and the Young Adult Friends gathering in Wichita, the interns came to know the breadth and depth of the wider Quaker community. Interns expressed how good it was to hear one another share about their experiences of these events since each intern approached them from a different place. Hearing all these perspectives amplified the learning.

Differences have provided many growth opportunities, which the interns have fully embraced. In the words of one of the interns, learning how to deal constructively and lovingly with others on a different spiritual path was an area of unexpected but cherished growth. Early tensions and misunderstandings of who was in charge of what offered another area for Friends to tenderly work out issues and learn from one another within and across generations. Mutual respect, trust, and appreciation blossomed. Difficult situations are being handled with care and with the help of diverse Friends across the yearly

meeting. This work strengthens us all.

The parents of one of the of the interns shared that “the real growth in all three interns, and the connections that all three have made with Perry City, FSRM, and NYYM have been what has impressed me the most. I’m so excited about the listening, sharing, respect, and openness across the theological spectrum... they went into the program being completely and thoroughly ‘Quaker’ yet meeting someone just as completely Quaker whose understanding of what that meant was very different. And they gave themselves the space to listen and grow in understanding.”

### **Youth Program**

The interns all expressed how much they enjoy the youth retreats. “It’s what we’ve done best with the least number of mistakes.” “Once we’re with the kids, it makes sense why we do the rest.” The youth program is like the solid grain of sand around which the pearl is formed. This is the one piece of the YFIR work that all the interns have some experience with, knowledge of, and skill at. This is where they have had enough confidence in their abilities to most easily take the lead. Ideas gathered at an initial planning weekend with the youth formed the basis for the next several retreats, much to the delight of the younger conference participants. (It is always empowering to see your ideas fleshed out and made real.) Other young adult Friends and older Friends have been eager to help support the interns by being adult presences and resource people at the youth retreats. Teens from around the yearly meeting have volunteered as counselors. The youth retreats share Perry City’s meeting space on Sunday and so have made it a tradition to invite monthly meeting Friends and parents to eat lunch with them. The interns have created a loving, fun, healthy space where youth, young adults, and older Friends learn from and support one another. The youth participants agree. They eagerly await upcoming conferences, and they are spreading the word. They are inviting their friends, including several non-Quakers and not-yet Quakers. They also have a strong sense of being part of something new and helping to shape it and contribute to it.

### **Being interns—steps on each of their journeys**

Each of the interns has had a role in the results of the YFIR program as described above. This is what they were selected to

do. They were also chosen with the realization that individuals doing a short-term dedicated job are enabled by that experience to develop further the abilities they already have, to find new aspects of themselves, and to find next steps in their career and personal spiritual paths. This report does not attempt to describe how these personal changes have been experienced by each of the interns. Sometimes an individual doesn't even realize until looking back later the extent of those changes. Still, each of the interns can affirm that this has been a year of personal growth, opening ways and choices. For all of us involved in supporting the program it has been a true gift to be witness to this.

### **Finances**

Support for the pilot program has come from a number of sources. We received \$20,000 from the Thomas H. and Mary Williams Shoemaker Fund, \$10,000 from the NYYM Trustees, almost \$8,500 from Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting, \$1,000 from the Nurture Coordinating Committee of NYYM, and contributions from Butternuts Quarter, Ithaca Monthly Meeting, Binghamton Monthly Meeting, and parents of youth attending the retreats. Each intern also received a Clarence and Lilly Pickett Leadership Grant. The NYYM office handles payroll and receives grants and donations to the YFIR fund. Ithaca Monthly Meeting is handling payment and record keeping for local expenses. Perry City Monthly Meeting has been wonderful in offering a home to the program, providing a house at cost to the interns, and giving them encouragement, oversight, and friendship.

The first year of the program cost \$24,000. This is well below the budgeted amount of \$37,700. This is due primarily to running the program with two interns for the first half of the year and then three for the latter half. Additionally, we did not use the contingency funds for medical expenses. The 2010–2011 budget has been adjusted to reflect actual costs of the first year while anticipating a full staffing of four interns. The total cost of the program for 2010–2011 is estimated at \$40,000. (See attached). We have added money for travel and conference fees for Yearly Meeting functions and other Quaker gatherings since participation in these activities was valuable to the interns and to the YFIR program. The interns attended a number of these events this year by using a combination of work study and money from their Pickett Fund grants.

The YFIR committee will seek grants to cover the costs of the second year of the pilot study. The grants received to date and those we will be applying to are for program development. Following the completion of the pilot-study phase of YFIR, support to continue the program will need to come from other sources.

### **The Role of Yearly Meeting YFIR Committee**

The Young Friends in Residence Committee was created under the care of the Nurture Section of the Yearly Meeting to provide oversight for the program. The committee provides support and networking for the project sites; locates and solicits sources of funding; and receives applications and interviews and selects interns. The committee continues to attract members from across the Yearly Meeting. Young adult Friends and high school–age Friends are drawn to this work of making the committee composition multigenerational. These younger Friends represent the YFIR Committee on various coordinating committees at the Yearly Meeting level, helping to further integrate the Yearly Meeting.

During our summer evaluation meeting, the YFIR Committee identified a number of questions we hope to address in this coming year to improve the support and oversight we offer the YFIR program.

- Is there a way to make the first few months of startup less difficult for the interns, particularly in a new location?
- How do we make clearer lines of communication for interns and others looking for guidance in the program? (Definitions of program supplies for example, expected time in-site etc.)
- Elders (recruiting, training, when things aren't working). How involved in this should we be?
- Recruitment and hiring. How well do we handle this? How can we improve?
- Benefits package (are we treating our interns fairly?)

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation of the program is an ongoing process. This program is quite organic. It is flexible and responsive, adapting to meet the needs of those involved. This is a great strength of the program. It also makes formal evaluation challenging. The variety of beans to count is staggering. Better to plant them and see what unfolds. That said, the YFIR committee has begun and

will continue throughout the coming year to prepare a written evaluation of the pilot study. The areas we will be looking at are outlined below.

- Is the program addressing the stated goals?
- Finances: Is the budget realistic? Sustainable? How well does money move? How well is it accounted for?
- Should this be an ongoing program? Do we expand it in NYYM? Do we expand beyond NYYM? What gap does it fill within the YM?
- Role of the YFIR committee: How can we better support the program?
- Length of term and compensation for interns
- Identifying who benefits from this program: very complex program in that it works on a number of different levels and benefits a wide range of constituents.
- Perry City specifics
- Do they want to continue as hosts?
- Does the current housing situation work?
- What kind of additional support do they need?
- The role of YFIR in relation to the other new Young Adult Friend initiatives and other youth activities in the YM.

### Summary

Our early experiences with YFIR speak to the power of this program for strengthening monthly meetings and the yearly meeting as a whole. This is an across-the-yearly-meeting program. The interns come from Butternuts Quarter, Northeastern Regional Meeting, and Purchase Quarter. Youth who have participated in the retreats have come from Butternuts Quarter, Farmington-Scipio region, Northeastern Regional Meeting, and Nine Partners Quarter. The young adults have been active at the local, regional, and yearly meeting levels as well as attending Friends General Conference and a gathering of young adult Friends in Wichita. Applicants have expressed a desire to be more fully involved in the Quaker community at all levels and have reflected on how this work fits into their own spiritual journeys. All of us who have been involved have felt the power of love moving through this work at all levels. This is a program brimming with connections across ages, regions and theologies. We hope that as a faith community we will be able to continue to support it.

*Chris DeRoller and Amy Obermayer  
coclerks, YFIR Committee*

## NEW YORK YEARLY MEETING

### Spring Sessions

April 1–3, 2011

Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie, New York

Saturday, April 2, 2011 10:00 a.m.

*Heather M. Cook, Clerk  
Jeffrey Hitchcock, Assistant Clerk  
Elaine Learnard, Recording Clerk  
Robin Alpern, Reading Clerk*

2011-04-01. Out of the silence, the reading clerk read a letter from a Friend from Mito Monthly Meeting in Japan, who, in the face of the catastrophes they are now experiencing, reflected on faith and rebuilding. The letter, with a preamble, is appended.

2011-04-02. New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM) Clerk Heather M. Cook (Chatham-Summit) spoke about the trauma in Kenya that Getry Agizah of Friends Church Peace Teams shared about at last night's presentation, and that is echoed in Mitsuo's letter. She prayed that the seed within us may burst open and that we may be conduits for healing across the globe, in our communities and in our own hearts. The Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Asia and West Pacific Section meeting began yesterday; we hold them in our hearts and hold in prayer as well those Friends who cannot be with us. She introduced those at the clerks' table.

2011-04-03. The reading clerk called the roll, asking Friends to rise by regional meeting. All regions were represented.

2011-04-04. Friends were welcomed by the clerk of Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting, the host region. Mary Foster Cadbury (Bulls Head-Oswego) told us that in a new awakening Nine Partners is now meeting at one of their five constituent meetings in a Quarterly Meeting for Worship.

2011-04-05. Peter Baily (Poughkeepsie), head of Oakwood Friends School, welcomed Friends, gave some information on the school (26 faculty babies!) and Quaker education and expressed thanks for Friends' care of the school. He sees Friends schools providing an education based in Quaker values to many non-Quakers around the country.

2011-04-06. The Clerk reviewed the proposed order of wor-

ship for the morning, noting that we will see what unfolds. She reviewed changes to the consent agenda, which will be considered tomorrow.

2011-04-07. Coclerk of the Nominating Committee Jill McLellan (Central Finger Lakes) brought the nomination of Jeffrey Hitchcock (Rahway & Plainfield) for service as assistant clerk of the Yearly Meeting through Summer Sessions of 2011. Friends approved and Jeff joined the clerks' table. Friends heard the first reading of the nomination of John Edminster (Fifteenth Street) as a representative to the Friends United Meeting Triennial in 2011, which Friends will consider tomorrow.

2011-04-08. For the Stamford-Greenwich Care Committee, Deborah Wood (Purchase) spoke about the establishment in the late 1940s and the laying down in 2010 of Stamford-Greenwich Meeting by Purchase Quarter. The report gave many of the highlights of the meeting's history and its members, and of its decline; the report is appended.

2011-04-09. For the NYYM Trustees, Paula McClure (Montclair) reported on the transfer and current use of the property and assets of Stamford-Greenwich Meeting, including the plans to sell the property. The Trustees have not at this time placed restrictions on future uses of the property and the Yearly Meeting will be informed of the progress of the sale. The report urges all regional meetings to be alert to the needs of struggling meetings, and to let the clerk and the general secretary know of their concerns. The report is appended. From the floor, Friends had questions about how the proceeds from the sale would be handled and whether the building might be razed by a purchaser. It was clarified that the Trustees will consider the plans of a particular offer before deciding whether to accept it, but that the specifics of the listing have not yet been determined. Friends are encouraged to speak with the Trustees about any concerns they may have.

2011-04-10. Friend approved the minutes to this point.

2011-04-11. Friends heard read:

...we call upon all that we hold most sacred, the presence and power of the Great Spirit of love and truth which flows through all the Universe to be with us, to teach us, and show us the Way.

—Andrew Harvey, *The Essential Mystics*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1996, 5.

2011-04-12. Clerk of General Services Coordinating Committee Jeffrey Aaron (New Brunswick) introduced the work of that section and brought for a first presentation the Yearly Meeting *Handbook* page for the General Secretary Supervisory Committee. Friends are invited to bring questions and comments to the clerk of General Services or of the General Secretary Supervisory Committee, listed in the NYYM *Yearbook*.

2011-04-13. For the Personnel Committee, Susan Bingham (Montclair) reported that two members of Personnel Committee, the clerk of the Young Adult Concerns Committee, and the general secretary interviewed three well-qualified candidates for the new position of Young Adult Friends field secretary. She warmly introduced the candidate they were clear to appoint, Gabrielle (Gabi) Savory Bailey (Chatham-Summit). Gabi greeted Friends, saying that it is with an open and grateful heart that she takes this next step through the next door. She invited Friends to enter into a conversation, getting to know one another, discerning our gifts and those of others, testing leadings, building and using networks of support and connection. She asked to be held in the Light, as there is much to do; the Spirit is already moving in her work and she does not do it alone; she invites us all to join her in this work. Her contact information is available at [nyym.org](http://nyym.org) She can be reached in many ways.

2011-04-14. Treasurer Susan Bingham presented the treasurer's report. As of December 31, 2010, NYYM was \$37,500 in the red, despite serious efforts by committees, appointees, and staff to curtail expenditures. When all covenant donations designated for 2010 had been received by mid-March, the Yearly Meeting was unexpectedly about \$18,000 in the black. After using approximately \$8,000 to cover deferred expenses, the treasurer, in consultation with one of the assistant treasurers, Yearly Meeting staff, and the clerk of General Services, applied \$10,000 to the Contingency Fund, so that the books for 2010 could be closed.

2011-04-15. For the Financial Services Committee, Peter Phillips (Cornwall) gave a PowerPoint presentation to summarize the interlinked information on the effects of late-arriving donations for 2010, a \$1,907 increase in 2011 covenant donations, and the funding of the tiers that was part of the approved 2011 budget. Financial Services developed three recommendations

for the Meeting's consideration to use 2010 revenue for those stated priorities. Peter noted that NYYM's "vision is clear and dynamic."

Friends approved the following recommendations brought by Financial Services:

- that the extra funds from 2010 be used to support programming;
- that the \$10,000 being held in a Contingency Fund be used to fund the activities of the 2011 budget's Tier I in its entirety; and
- that the increased covenant donations in the amount of \$1,907 be put proportionally toward the 2011 budget's Tier II projects.

2011-04-16. Clerk of the Nurture Coordinating Committee Cheshire Frager (Flushing) read a statement explaining the minute of support from Nurture for continuing the Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) Program. Friends approved the following minute:

Reviews of the Young Friends in Residence program indicate that it is fulfilling its mission in expected and unexpected ways. In order to sustain the momentum and continue to strengthen this developing program, the Nurture Coordinating Committee requests that the Young Friends in Residence program become an ongoing program of the New York Yearly Meeting. The program will receive annual financial support from the Yearly Meeting to the extent possible.

2011-04-17. Clerk of the Steering Committee for the Meetings for Discernment Janet Hough (Chappaqua) gave a report of the history and experience of the Meetings for Discernment to date, in anticipation of bringing to Summer Sessions recommendations for an ongoing body, including a description of its form and its relationship with monthly meetings and with the Yearly Meeting structure. Although the original charge for the Meetings for Discernment included hearing minutes of concern from monthly meetings, the steering committee is clear that this function has not been effective. A written report is appended. Friends spoke from the floor of the crucial importance of the extended worship as part of the Meetings for Discernment, of the value of monthly meetings having these opportunities for connection and communication, and of the opportunity for concerns to be lifted up.

2011-04-18. The Clerk indicated that the remaining minutes from this morning's session will be considered at the beginning of tomorrow morning's session.

2011-04-19. The meeting ended in open worship.

Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie, NY  
Sunday, April 3, 2011, 8:30 a.m.

*Heather M. Cook, Clerk*  
*Jeffrey Hitchcock, Assistant Clerk*  
*Karen Reixach, Recording Clerk*  
*Karen Snare, Reading Clerk*

2011-04-20. Friends settled into worship.

2011-04-21. Clerk Heather M. Cook welcomed Friends and introduced the individuals at the clerks' table.

2011-04-22. Karen Snare (Bullshead-Oswego), reading clerk, read excerpts from the Epistle from Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns' Midwinter Gathering 2011:

We came together once again to witness to the power of radical love and radical inclusion to transform and sustain us spiritually—and to discern how we are called to deepen our commitment to that call....

As we shared our truths with one another in worship, Spirit revealed to and through us how wholeness, community, love, and integrity are intimately intertwined with each other....

We ask for the prayers of all Friends everywhere as we do our work, and we ask you, as way opens, to support us and join with us in our struggle. We offer you our unfolding witness and testimony to the power of radical love and inclusion in this community and an invitation to join in this experience at gatherings in the future.

2011-04-23. Elaine Learnard, recording clerk for Saturday session, presented the minutes for the latter part of that session. Friends approved the remaining minutes from Saturday's session.

2011-04-24. The following passage from George Fox was read:

Keep your mind on what first convinced you, that power of God which first awakened you, and get up and live in it!

You will then be kept honest and sincere in your minds, and your hearts will be open, naked before God and before one another, stripped of everything that is contrary to them.

—Rex Ambler. *Truth of the Heart: An Anthology of George Fox 1624-1691*. London: Quaker Books, 2001, 83.

2011-04-25. The Clerk presented the consent agenda for consideration. This agenda was circulated by electronic and postal mail in the week before this session, and hard copies have been available for review at the registration table. Friends approved Minutes 26–29 in accord with the consent agenda.

2011-04-26. Friends accepted the request for release from service:

Ministry Coordinating Committee (at large), 2013: John Perry (Bulls Head-Oswego).

2011-04-27. Friends approved the modification of the Preface statement of the Yearly Meeting *Handbook* to designate General Services Coordinating Committee as also responsible for those portions of the *Handbook* which currently are not under the care of any entity, and which are in need of review and updating.

2011-04-28. Friends approved an addition to the *Handbook* General Services section, “Committee Guidelines/Guidelines for Committee Members,” of an entire section articulating our practice for co-opting.

### Co-opting Practice

Co-opting is a process for noting Friends who serve on NYYM committees whose appointment is outside of the usual guidelines for committee service.

- An individual who is appointed to a committee as a full member through the usual nominating process but who is not a member of a monthly meeting. These individuals understand and accept Friends practice for conducting business in worship.
- Appointment of someone who has served on a committee for the maximum time allowed, and agrees to serve for another year to respond to a particular need of the committee.

These names would be listed in the *Yearbook* with the appropriate class and with the designation “co-opted.”

Ideally, all committee openings would be filled and approved at Summer Sessions, and no one would resign before serving his or her full term. This not being the case, a committee may invite individuals to serve with the committee although they have not been through the normal nominating process, and

are therefore not designated as “members.” Yearly meeting service is encouraged for all who have the commitment, time, and energy to serve.

The committee clerk, in consultation with committee members, may ask individuals to serve who have not come forward by Summer Sessions, but who might have been nominated if the name had been known earlier. The committee may invite an individual with a particular skill that the committee needs for a specific task or to work for a limited period of time.

Anyone serving in this manner may not serve as committee clerk, and should not expect to participate fully in the decisions of the committee.

The committee may request that these Friends be nominated for approval at the next Yearly Meeting Session. Individuals approved at Spring or Fall Sessions would be assigned to a class as if they had been appointed the previous summer.

2011-04-29. Friends approved changing the name of the General Secretary Supervisory Committee to Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary.

2011-04-30. Friends approved the nomination of John Edminster as a NYYM representative to the Friends United Meeting 2011 Triennial.

2011-04-31. Friends directed the Clerk to endorse a travel minute from Buffalo Monthly Meeting, endorsed by Farmington-Scipio Region, for Newton Garver, who for many years has been carrying a concern for the Bolivia Quaker Education Fund.

2011-04-32. Clerk of the Liaison Committee Charge Group Frederick Dettmer (Purchase) read the report of the group since NYYM Summer Sessions in fulfilling its charge “to propose a process to guide the Yearly Meeting in discerning who we are, how we are led, and how we support the work of those leadings and needs.” (NYYM Minute 2009-11-36) The Group has expanded to include Marissa Badgley (Poughkeepsie), Christine (Spee) Braun (Old Chatham), Steven Davison (Yardley MM/PhYM), and F. Peter Phillips as well as the original members Jeffrey Aaron, Heather M. Cook, Fred Dettmer, Cheshire Frager, Julia Giordano (Bulls Head-Oswego), and Christopher Sammond (Bulls Head-Oswego, sojourning at Poplar Ridge). Fred also explained the origin of the effort and research on other priority processes of Friends’

organizations. The report offered eight recommendations for Friends' consideration. Some Friends had reservations about a goal of "setting priorities" and the complexity of the proposed process. Others expressed tenderness and gratitude for the work of the Group, while others expressed disquiet about the pragmatic tone of the document. Friends embraced the intent to discern how God is working in our Yearly Meeting, based in broad involvement in the process for prayer, listening and faithfulness. After several Friends spoke about the work of the Charge Group, and another Friend put the proposal in perspective, Friends were clear to approve the recommendations of the Charge Group (Minutes 33-40), with one Friend standing aside. The ad hoc Priorities Working Group will be constituted to start the process laid out in the report. Friends are invited to get under the weight of this concern.

2011-04-33. New York Yearly Meeting is clear that we need to discern accurately and corporately how the Spirit is at work among us and where it is leading us as a Society of Friends in the immediate future. We will need also to discern which facets of this work are primary, which are secondary or even tertiary, and which may need to be laid down, at least for a while. All in the Yearly Meeting will be invited to participate in this task of listening and discerning where we are led. The product of this discernment process, presented as a Statement of Leadings and Priorities, will become—upon approval—the priorities of New York Yearly Meeting as a community for the ensuing four to six years. This approved Statement should serve to focus the energy and resources of the Yearly Meeting, without limiting opportunity for emerging leadings to flourish. It will be utilized in preparing budgets, staff work plans, and other services and initiatives of the Yearly Meeting and its committees and constituent parts.

2011-04-34. An ad hoc Priorities Working Group will be formed to guide this process of developing a Statement of Leadings and Priorities that reflects the leadings and needs arising from our meetings and individual Friends. (Throughout these Minutes, the term "regional meeting" is meant to include regional, quarterly and half-yearly meetings, and the term "monthly meeting" includes monthly meetings, executive and preparative meetings, and worship groups.) The following persons will be asked to participate on the Working

Group: the Yearly Meeting clerk, assistant clerk and general secretary, the clerk or a named representative of Financial Services Committee, Young Adult Friends, each coordinating committee, and each regional meeting. Friends who are serving due to their role on one of the above committees may also serve as the representative for their respective region, if that is the will of their region. The Working Group's first meeting will be convened by the clerk of the Yearly Meeting, and at that first meeting the Working Group will name its clerk. At-large members may be named by the Working Group during the course of its work.

2011-04-35. The Working Group is charged with responsibility (a) to gather the sense of the monthly and regional meetings and of individual Friends as to how the Spirit is at work among us and where it is leading us as a society of Friends in the immediate future; (b) to distill those insights and discern from them a proposed Statement of Leadings and Priorities that is both prophetic and workable; (c) to reflect these insights and priorities back to our constituent regions to ensure that the Working Group has discerned accurately; (d) to report its findings to the Yearly Meeting Body and to lead the process for considering and approving the Statement of Leadings and Priorities; and (e) to design a process to assess the implementation of these priorities.

2011-04-36. In its undertaking of this work, the Working Group may initiate discernment sessions, visits and consultations with monthly and regional meetings, and may also utilize existing structures and programs -- including, but not limited to, State of Society reports, NYYM Sessions, Meeting for Discernment, and worship sharing queries at sessions of NYYM -- in order to discern how we might name broad goals for prioritization. The Working Group may also communicate with regional and monthly meetings and Friends, initiate gatherings (such as retreats at Powell House), and employ any other techniques it finds will be helpful in developing a full and clear sense of our leadings for the immediate future work of New York Yearly Meeting.

2011-04-37. Once such clarity on leadings and priorities for our work together has been reached, the Working Group will send a written report to all our regions. After consultation with the regional meetings and any changes in the proposed Statement

of Leadings and Priorities that result, the Working Group will forward the proposed Statement of Leadings and Priorities to the next Yearly Meeting session for its consideration.

2011-04-38. Upon adoption by the Yearly Meeting Body, the Statement of Leadings and Priorities will be used to inform our planning and work as a body. Yearly Meeting committees and coordinating committees will use these Priorities in planning their services and initiatives. Staff will use these Priorities to develop a work plan. Financial Services Committee will use them in preparing budgets. The Trustees will be asked to consider them in allocating trust funds, within the limits of trust instruments.

2011-04-39. The Yearly Meeting acknowledges that the Spirit determines the progress of faithful work. The Working Group should bring reports to each session of New York Yearly Meeting until it completes its work. The Working Group will be laid down upon the approval of a Statement of Leadings and Priorities by the Yearly Meeting and the approval of an ongoing assessment process designed to encourage us to remain faithful to our leadings.

2011-04-40. For the 2011 budget year, the four coordinating committee clerks will allocate funds from their current section budget lines to support this Working Group. For the 2012 budget year, Financial Services Committee, in consultation with the clerk of Yearly Meeting, the clerk of the Working Group, and the general secretary, will include a line in the 2012 budget for this work to continue.

2011-04-41. The minutes of the meeting to this point were read and approved.

2011-04-42. Clerk of Witness Coordinating Committee, Frederick Dettmer, reminded Friends that the Sharing Fund supports the witness work of Friends in NYYM, both directly through the work of NYYM committees and working groups and through assistance to the witness of Friends through their Monthly Meetings in the form of Witness Activities Grants. He conveyed gratitude for the contributions.

Fred recalled that the Sharing Fund has received significant bequests and other generous special contributions which have permitted the establishment of a Sharing Fund Endowment. This year, the Sharing Fund will begin to draw on the

Endowment to supplement the annual donations. As a result, Witness Coordinating Committee has set its overall 2011 Sharing Fund goal at \$71,755, and its goal for contributions from Friends at \$50,000. This is a reduction from the contributions goal of \$60,000 in 2010 and 2009 in recognition that actual contributions have not achieved that goal.

2011-04-43. NYYM representative to the Friends United Meeting (FUM) 2011 Triennial and the General Board, John Edminster, reported on continuing work to explore a relationship with Chwele Yearly Meeting in northwest Kenya. At Fall Sessions 2010, the Yearly Meeting heard a report from two representatives to FUM who had received an invitation from Friends at Chwele Yearly Meeting to consider that we be partner yearly meetings. The minute of the FUM Representatives' report (NYYM 2010-11-39) and the report itself can be found in the NYYM *Yearbook* and on the Web site. Background material on Chwele Yearly Meeting and a letter to Chwele Yearly Meeting from the Clerk and the General Secretary were circulated by postal and electronic mail to Friends who registered for Spring Sessions, and hard copies have been available in our meeting space.

The Representatives are clear that they want to explore what it means to partner with Chwele Yearly Meeting and asked that the Clerk and General Secretary write to our brothers and sisters in Chwele YM. That letter was sent and contained the following paragraph:

“At this point, we are clear to explore how we might walk together, to offer, as Paul says, ‘mutual encouragement’ to each other in our efforts to be faithful, despite the vast distance that separates us geographically. We see several opportunities coming up where we might be able to get to know each other better, without undue expense. We hope these opportunities would enable us to join in prayer and discernment as to what the relationship of partner yearly meetings might mean to each of us, and how God is calling us to be in relationship.”

John asked for the meeting's blessing on this exploration. Friends received the report.

2011-04-44. Clerk of Sessions Committee John Cooley (Central Finger Lakes) offered a statistical report on Spring Sessions:

Total attendance: 129

Youth and infant: 7

26 stayed in Oakwood Friends School dormitories  
23 stayed in the homes of 11 local Friends

The Registrar for Spring Sessions reports that one problem in finding Friends hospitality in their area, with no public transit, is finding enough Friends to drive to Friends' homes.

Fifteen of our attenders registered and/or paid at the Session. Late registration is a chronic problem for our hosts, and Friends are reminded to be considerate.

2011-04-45. Clerk of Sessions Committee reported on 2011 Summer Sessions. The theme is "Peace with Earth: Transforming our Communities" and the plenary speaker will be Anne Mitchell, former clerk of Canadian Yearly Meeting and current general secretary of Quaker Earthcare Witness. Fall Sessions 2011 will be held at a private school near Albany, with overnight accommodations available at Powell House.

2011-04-46. Clerk of Sessions Committee reported that the Affordability and Alternate Site Working Group was laid down at the February 2011 meeting of Sessions Committee. The working group investigated a number of possible sites for Summer Sessions without finding realistic prospects. Sessions Committee has a list of criteria of what is needed in a Summer Sessions site. Individuals are encouraged to give Sessions Committee the specific name of a venue (not a general category like "private colleges") that they believe might be a possibility. If someone wants to do the research themselves, Sessions can share the criteria and its experience with best ways of getting answers from a venue. Contact the clerk of Sessions Committee.

2011-04-47. At Fall Sessions 2010 the *Handbook* page for the Youth Committee had its first reading. Friends heard and approved the Youth Committee page for inclusion in the Yearly Meeting *Handbook* with one minor change from the floor. One Friend stood aside.

2011-04-48. The minutes were read and approved.

2011-04-49. The meeting ended its business at 11:45 a.m. to reconvene at Silver Bay, NY, for Summer Sessions, July 17–23. Friends continued in open worship with prayer and vocal ministry.

## Attachments

### Letter from Mito Monthly Meeting

The tragic events in Japan have affected the lives of Japanese Friends. The meetinghouse for Mito Monthly Meeting and the Shoyuu Kindergarten (translated as Little Friends' Kindergarten) were heavily damaged by the earthquake and declared off-limits by the Fire Department due to the loss of structural integrity. Mito is located about 80 miles northeast of Tokyo, on the coast, and about 80 miles south of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Three of the remaining four meetinghouses in Japan (Tokyo, Tsuchiura and Shimozuma) were also damaged. Osaka Meeting was the only one to escape any physical damage.

Friends established a presence in Japan in 1886. Mitsuo Otsu, a 78-year-old Friend from Mito Monthly Meeting, fondly remembers Edith Sharpless, a missionary from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting who lived in Japan from 1910 to 1943. Edith founded the Shoyuu Kindergarten in Mito and devoted many years of her life to young children. Hiromi Niwa Doherty, an attender at Purchase Meeting, has been in recent e-mail contact with Mitsuo Otsu and other Japanese Friends, who treasure the teaching legacy of devoted Quaker missionaries from the US, England, and Canada. Hiromi translated the following message from Mitsuo:

The earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis—the catastrophe that we face today reminds me of the terror and devastation of World War II. We are grateful for Friends from all over the world for sending us messages of support.

Mito Meetinghouse was burned down by air raids, only to leave parts of the brick walls as remains. Later, using those bricks that withstood the fire, the Meetinghouse was rebuilt. Now, again, it is severely damaged by the tremendous power of the earthquake.

However, God does not give us trials that we cannot persevere. With the trials, he will also provide us the way of escape. (1 Corinthians 10:13—"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide you with the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.") We will not stop even if we are plagued from all four corners, we will not lose hope even at the bottom of the disappointment. We

will not be destroyed even when devastated. (2 Corinthians 2:8,9—"So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything.") With our faith, we will rebuild, once again, with the bricks—of the same red color as the bricks of the Seoul Meetinghouse in Korea and the Jordans Meetinghouse in England that suffered the fire. We will live our faith as led in James 2:14-17 ("What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does nor have works, is dead.").

*Mitsuo Otsu  
Mito Monthly Meeting*

### **A Brief History of Stamford-Greenwich Friends Meeting**

Stamford Greenwich Friends Meeting was founded by John LeRoy DeForest in 1948. Jack, as he was commonly known, came from a family of Huguenots who had settled in the Long Ridge Village section of Stamford in the 1600s. Raised as a Congregationalist, John became interested in Quakers after becoming a pacifist. Jack talked to a number of friends about the possibility of a Quaker meeting, and in 1948 a small group gathered in Jack's garden on Rock Rimmon Road in Stamford. Over the next few years the meeting grew in numbers. The worship group became a preparative meeting under Purchase Meeting in 1949, and a monthly meeting within Purchase Quarterly Meeting in 1953. DeForest kept a diary from the earliest days of the meeting until his death. It gives in great detail his perspective on everything that happened including interesting insights into the interpersonal relationships in the meeting. A copy of the diary is at the Swarthmore Historical Library.

The then Stamford Preparative Meeting purchased the property at 572 Roxbury Road on January 19th, 1951. The purchase was made with the help of a loan from the School Fund of the Purchase Executive meeting, which was subsequently repaid. The building at 572 has a long and fascinating history. A church was originally built on a triangle of land adjacent to

the present site, probably around 1835. The meeting house was moved to the present location when the church was disbanded. The building was leased by the City of Stamford and served as a one-room schoolhouse until June 24, 1949. Reverting to the Baptists who no longer needed the building, it was purchased by Friends. The meeting continued to flourish, growing to more than 100 members. The large meeting room was added to the building in 1956–1957, and the inclusion of a fireplace was apparently the cause of many discussions among Friends. This extension was made with the help of a loan from New York Yearly Meeting, which was subsequently repaid.

From 1952 until 1968 the meeting, in cooperation with AFSC, hosted High School Conferences on important topics each summer. Students came from nearby states, and the events brought both attention and members to the meeting. During both the Korean and Vietnam wars, the meeting operated a draft-counseling center serving both the Greenwich and Stamford communities.

Over the years the meeting had many weighty Friends as members. Among them were Bert Bigelow and his wife Sylvia, who were active in nuclear disarmament and civil rights causes. In 1955, the Bigelows along with other Friends in the NYC area, housed two of the 25 Hiroshima Maidens, young women who had been badly disfigured by the atom bomb explosions who were brought to the States and received medical treatment in New York. Bert was also the captain of the *Golden Rule*, which he attempted to sail into a nuclear testing area in the pacific in 1958.

During the late 90s the meeting began to lose members as many retired and moved away, no fewer than six couples moving at the same time to the same retirement community in New Hampshire. The First Day school gradually completely disappeared and no new people joined the meeting.

In November of 2003, the clerk of the meeting, Bill Dick, wrote to New York Yearly Meeting to report the dwindling numbers and the difficulty of sustaining the meeting with only eight or nine people living nearby and attending meeting. In 2004, the meeting acted on some of the ideas they got from other small meetings and from a workshop on Advancement. Carol Holmes, one of the traveling Friends of NYYM, began visiting for worship regularly, as did some Friends from neighboring meetings and a few from the yearly meeting. But the core of active local members continued to decline in numbers

and in health. After a business meeting in October 2005, Bill Dick informed the yearly meeting that they were ready to lay the meeting down.

Over the next five years, the last members of Stamford-Greenwich meeting worked carefully through the process of deciding how, whether, and when to sell the property and lay down the meeting. Support from Friends in the quarter was mixed. Regrettably, no one gave regular help with finances or property maintenance. However, members of Purchase Quarter Ministry & Counsel were able to offer some spiritual support and pastoral care. PQ M&C helped Stamford-Greenwich Friends to hold meeting for worship on Sunday afternoons once a month. This was done to enable Friends from other meetings in the quarter to participate, while still remaining active in their home meetings. The numbers were small; generally two or three visitors joined with three or four from Stamford-Greenwich, yet the worship was consistently sweet, deep, and nurturing.

Esmé Ingledew, Bill Dick's wife and the meeting's treasurer and recorder, carried the responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the building in the final years. In the fall of 2007, with Bill's health in serious decline, Esmé wrote to all the members to explain the dire condition of the meeting, and began to gather the documents necessary to sell the property.

In February 2008, at Purchase Quarterly Meeting, Stamford-Greenwich Meeting was declared inactive. A care committee was formed by Purchase Quarterly Meeting to support the ongoing process of discernment about the future of the meeting. On the committee were Deb Wood and Peter Close, members of Purchase Meeting; Janet Hough, Chappaqua Meeting; and Carol Holmes, Brooklyn Meeting.

In November 2009, a memorial service for Bill Dick was held in the Stamford-Greenwich meetinghouse, under the care of the Purchase Quarter Ministry & Counsel. With the glorious voices of Serendipity Chorale, this beautiful memorial service for Bill, the meeting's final clerk, was also the final meeting for worship to take place in the meetinghouse.

For years, Esmé and the care committee felt the property to be a heavy burden. Stamford-Greenwich and Purchase Quarter Friends believed that the meeting should sell the property before the meeting was laid down. It came as a relief when it was suggested that it would not be necessary—that, in fact, it might not be in good order for a meeting of one active member

to make a decision to sell a meetinghouse.

In the fall of 2010, the care committee sent a letter to all remaining members of Stamford-Greenwich Meeting asking where their membership should be transferred prior to laying down the meeting. The transfers were accomplished and reported to the NYYM office. The meeting was finally laid down by the Quarter at their meeting on November 7, 2010. This action was reported to NYYM at Fall Sessions 2010.

Upon the meeting's being laid down, ownership of the meeting's property and its assets transferred to New York Yearly Meeting. The care and maintenance of the property, payment of all bills, and decisions about its future use and/or sale became the responsibility of the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting.

### **Trustees' Report to Spring Sessions on Stamford-Greenwich Meetinghouse**

First, we want to thank Esme Ingledew of Stamford-Greenwich Monthly Meeting and Brian Doherty, attorney and member of Purchase Monthly Meeting, for all their help in negotiating the transfer of property, bank accounts, and insurance from Stamford-Greenwich to the Trustees of New York Yearly Meeting. This has been an orderly and time-consuming process for them and has been extraordinarily helpful as the Trustees assume ownership of this property and its assets.

The property is now insured by the same carrier, Guide One, which holds the NYYM policies. Brian wants you all to know that he visits and inspects the property regularly. Currently the building is rented to two groups: the Fellowship of Jewish Learning which has been using the Meetinghouse regularly for the past 25 years and is currently paying all the utility bills in lieu of rent, and the Grace Church, which had also used the building previously and asked again to use the facilities as of January 1, and agreed to pay a monthly rental of \$833.33 or \$10,000 per year. Both groups are aware that the Trustees are considering a sale of the property and thus the arrangements are month-to-month rather than a long-term lease agreement. It is our understanding that the cost of maintaining the building, exclusive of any repairs, is in the neighborhood of \$10,000–\$15,000 per year.

An appraisal done in November 2010 valued the property at

\$500,000 and the Trustees, at a meeting held at the Stamford-Greenwich Meetinghouse on March 22, agreed to place the property for sale with a local real estate agent with no restrictions on the proposed use for the property. If and when a buyer is found for the property and terms of sale are negotiated—such as whether we would take back a mortgage or sell it outright – the Trustees have the responsibility for making judgments as to the use of the money received; the money would not become part of the general revenue towards the operating budget of the Yearly Meeting.

A trust account in the name of John DeForest held by Stamford-Greenwich Monthly Meeting was transferred to the care of the Trustees, as were balances in the checking account, a Certificate of Deposit, and another Money Market account and it is from these funds that the Trustees have been paying for insurance, legal fees, and the appraisal. The principal of the trust fund is \$21,270.02 and this money will be used to purchase shares in the Unit Plan of the NYYM Trustees; there has been no decision made as to the use of the dividends (there will be no dividends available until October 15, 2011). The balance in the Stamford-Greenwich account is currently \$24,856.87.

We expect the property to be put on the market by May and will keep the Yearly Meeting informed about the progress of that marketing.

Finally, let me address an ongoing concern of the Trustees for the need, as per instructions in *Faith and Practice*, to care for the health and vitality of Monthly Meetings and their properties and assets. We strongly urge Regional/Quarterly/Half-Yearly Meetings to be acutely aware of and supportive of any struggling Monthly Meetings in their care and to report Meetings in difficulty to the Clerk and the General Secretary of NYYM. Trustees stand ready to provide assistance as needed to regional meetings concerning the proper disposition of the physical and financial assets of Monthly Meetings that are in the process of being discontinued.

### **Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee Report to Spring Sessions 2011**

**History:** The Meetings for Discernment were established in 2007 as a new body with three charges: to help strengthen connections between monthly meetings and the Yearly Meet-

ing; to support individual leadings; and to help discern emerging directions within the Yearly Meeting. It was envisioned that monthly meetings would appoint one or two seasoned Friends to serve on this body, which would gather for extended worship two or more times each year, for at least a full day. A steering committee was created to do the necessary work of planning for, and reporting on, each session. The Transition Working Group Advanced Report set out that the Meetings for Discernment would:

- Serve as a two-way conduit, weaving together the work of Friends at every level, from the monthly meeting through the Yearly Meeting
- Serve as a body to listen to what is rising at the monthly meeting level, and communicate rising issues throughout the Yearly Meeting body
- Connect the body of the Yearly Meeting through prayerful discernment
- Inform Friends working at the Yearly Meeting level how best to serve all Friends on issues that have arisen, recommending right action
- Work with issues that transcend the scope of any individual monthly meeting or Yearly Meeting section, allowing significant blocks of time to the Friends gathered so that they can labor in God's time for discernment
- Bring firm recommendations (not minutes) to appropriate Yearly Meeting committees, back to monthly meetings, or to quarterly/regional/half yearly meetings.

[from 2007–2008 *Yearbook*: Transition Working Group Advanced Report, pp 53–56 & Minute 2007-07-38]

The steering committee finds that the Meetings for Discernment are fulfilling many of the functions set by these charges. The Meetings have been embraced by a substantial part of the yearly meeting; they continue to grow and evolve; and we believe that they should be continued beyond July 2011. We are not seeking approval now. We intend to bring recommendations to Summer Sessions for an ongoing body, including a description of its form and its relationship with monthly meetings and with the yearly meeting structure.

**Extended worship at least twice a year weaving together the work of Friends:** Meetings for Discernment have been held twice each year since 2008, once in the winter at a meetinghouse able to accommodate 100 or more attend-

ees and once during a day at Summer Sessions. The winter meetings have been held in different regions: at Rochester, Poughkeepsie, Purchase, and Plainfield. Each drew together local Friends as well as Friends from afar; Friends who are active on yearly meeting committees as well as Friends who do not generally participate in yearly meeting functions.

**Connecting through prayerful discernment:** The Meetings for Discernment call for longer and more disciplined attention to our *corporate* condition than we are used to in open waiting worship. They call for deeper listening and more careful Spirit-led discernment before speaking than we practice in worship sharing. We find this has made a difference to our worship, to our committee work and to our business sessions – at our home meetings, our regional meetings and the yearly meeting.

**Building a Web of connections between meetings:** The Meetings for Discernment have provided opportunities for Friends to hear what other monthly meetings and worship groups are doing, to bear the burdens of those that are struggling and to learn from those who are growing. Regular attendees have gained a sense of the life of individual meetings: we have experienced the joy of hearing from meetings that had faced great challenges, then hearing that those challenges had been met, and that past requests for prayer had been answered. During lunch breaks and after, we have seen Friends seek each other out to learn more from one another. We have heard of Meetings who were inspired to try out or modify processes that they learned about in Meetings for Discernment, and of other Meetings intending to reach out more to their neighbors. Such connections are powerful. Meetings realize that they are not alone, that their challenges have been encountered and overcome by others, and that there is a broader community which can support them in the life of their meeting. This is what being an extended community is all about.

**Strengthening connections between monthly meetings & the yearly meeting:** After the first Meetings for Discernment, the steering committee was able to lift up concerns, but not to make recommendations. Although clear naming of a concern is an important step in discernment, the expectation that these meetings would bring greater integration of the concerns in local meetings with the work of Yearly Meeting

committees was not quickly realized. As members of the steering committee have gained experience of the Meetings for Discernment, we have been able to find queries that are alive to those who attend and that connect to the work of the Yearly Meeting. After the Meeting at Plainfield, the steering committee was able to make some clear recommendations to yearly meeting committees for the first time.

**Supporting individual leadings:** So far, the leadings that have been nurtured most are those of eldering and vocal ministry. We have been blessed by Friends answering the call to hold the meeting in prayer. Through their practice at Meeting for Discernment, these Friends are recovering the essence of what it means to serve as an elder and are coming together to support one another in the development of these rediscovered spiritual gifts. Friends with gifts in vocal ministry have reported that they have found the Meeting for Discernment has deepened and strengthened their ministry to the benefit of the meetings in which they participate.

**Discerning emerging directions within the Yearly Meeting:** This is something we expect to be more purposeful about in the future. We believe that through the intentional practice of deep, corporate listening at Meetings for Discernment we are becoming better able to discern the presence, the movement, and the call of God, Spirit, Light in our hearts, in the lives of our monthly & regional meetings, in our yearly meeting as a whole, and in the wider world.

**Minutes of concern:** Although it was suggested in Minute 2007-07-38 that the Meetings for Discernment should consider minutes from monthly and regional meetings that reflect their concerns, this has not worked out. The Meetings for Discernment are not a decisionmaking body, and the steering committee recommends that minutes of concern from monthly meetings are best addressed elsewhere.

*Janet Hough, clerk  
Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee*

**2011 OPERATING BUDGET**  
as amended Spring Sessions 4/2/11

<b>General Services</b>	<b>2011 budget</b>	<b>2010 budget</b>
Committee expenses :		
Audit	3,050	3,050
General expense & travel	2,200	2,200
NYYM officers' expenses	2,750	2,750
<b>Total section expenses</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>
Committee expenses:		
Communications Committee	23,500	23,500
Nominating Committee	350	350
Records Committee—donation	2,500	2,500
Sessions Committee	10,000	9,800
<b>Total committee expenses</b>	<b>36,350</b>	<b>36,150</b>
Office operations:		
Administrative expenses	13,600	13,600
Computer consultation	700	700
Office equipment	1,000	1,000
Insurance	4,950	4,800
Rent & utilities at 15th St., incl elec.	30,386	29,300
Office staff travel	8,000	8,000
<b>Total office operations expenses</b>	<b>58,636</b>	<b>57,400</b>
Personnel expenses:		
Hourly staff compensation	24,450	23,400
Staff employee salaries	173,390	173,390
Salary and wage-related expenses	45,325	45,025
Staff development	1,200	1,200
Volunteer support	400	500
<b>Total personnel expenses</b>	<b>244,765</b>	<b>243,515</b>
Sessions attendance work grants and scholarships	3,795	
Bookkeeping services	31,200	31,200
<b>Total General Services</b>	<b>382,746</b>	<b>376,265</b>
<b>Ministry</b>	<b>2011 budget</b>	<b>2010 budget</b>
Committee and task group expenses:		
Advancement	0	3,000
Conflict Transformation Committee	700	700
Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee	250	250
Section expense & travel	500	700

Spiritual Nurture Working Group	1,600	100
Task Group on Racism	875	875
Worship at YM Sessions	100	0
<b>Total committee expenses</b>	<b>4,025</b>	<b>5,625</b>
Program expenses:		
Bible study leader Summer Sessions	500	500
Provision, Meeting Visitation	0	100
Pastors Conference	1,250	1,250
<b>Total program expenses</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,850</b>
<b>Total Ministry</b>	<b>5,775</b>	<b>7,475</b>
<b>Nurture</b>	<b>2011 budget</b>	<b>2010 budget</b>
Committee expenses:		
Committee on Aging Concerns	250	250
FWCC Committee of NYYM	0	100
Junior Yearly Meeting	21,100	21,100
Young Adult Concerns	800	800
Young Friends in Residence	200	200
Youth Committee	200	200
<b>Total committee expenses</b>	<b>22,550</b>	<b>22,650</b>
YM appointee expenses:		
FGC Central Committee—reps to board	700	600
FUM—reps to board	3,500	3,500
Provision, FUM reps to Triennial	500	500
Provision, FWCC regional hosting expenses	150	0
Provision, FWCC—Section of the Americas meetings	1,435	1,000
Provision, FWCC World Gathering (Triennial/Quadrennial)	900	650
<b>Total YM appointees expenses</b>	<b>6,085</b>	<b>6,250</b>
Allocations & donations		
Friends LGBTQ Concerns	150	150
Friends General Conference (FGC)	6,106	6,800
Friends Council on Education	150	150
Friends United Meeting (FUM)	6,106	6,800
FUM—Third World attendance to Triennial	500	500
FUM Triennial—Third World Board reps	150	150
Friends World Comm. for Consultation	3,105	3,400

FWCC Section of the Americas—		
Third World reps	150	150
Oakwood Friends School	8,500	9,500
Powell House	65,795	65,000
<b>Total allocations &amp; donations</b>	<b>89,600</b>	<b>92,600</b>
Section expense & travel	2,450	2,000
NYYM Resource Library	300	300
<b>Total Nurture</b>	<b>123,197</b>	<b>123,800</b>

<b>Witness</b>	<b>2011 budget</b>	<b>2010 budget</b>
Committee expenses		
Barrington Dunbar	0	200
Black Concerns	200	200
COPW	100	125
Indian Affairs	700	350
Peace Concerns coordinator	250	50
Prisons	200	200
World Ministries	0	75
Witness CC section expense	750	535
<b>Total committee expenses</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>1,735</b>

YM appointee expenses		
AFSC—9 representatives		
FCNL—6 representatives		
Friends Peace Teams—2 representatives	370	
National Campaign for Peace Tax Fund		
N.Y.S. Council of Churches		
Quaker Earthcare Witness		
William Penn House representative	150	
<b>Total YM appointees' expenses</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>1,150</b>

Donations		
American Friends Service Committee	150	
Alternatives to Violence Project	150	
Bolivian Quaker Education Fund	150	250
Friends Committee on National Legislation	150	
Friends Peace Teams	150	250
National Campaign for Peace Tax Fund	150	250
National Religious Campaign		
against Torture	150	125
Quaker Earthcare Witness	150	150
Right Sharing of World Resources	150	0
Rural and Migrant Ministries	150	1,000
William Penn House	150	250

N.J. Council of Churches	150	150
N.Y. Council of Churches	150	150
<b>Total donations</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>2,425</b>
Sharing Fund Campaign expense	2,300	2,300
<b>Total Witness</b>	<b>7,900</b>	<b>7,610</b>

#### EXPENSES CONSOLIDATION

	<b>2011 budget</b>	<b>2010 budget</b>
General Services	382,746	376,265
Ministry	5,775	7,475
Nurture	123,197	123,800
Witness	7,900	7,610
Meeting for Discernment	600	1,000
Contingency	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>520,218</b>	<b>516,150</b>

#### REVENUES

Income from endowment	12,000	18,000
Other revenue	23,313	20,490
Registration fees	23,600	23,600
<b>Income Subtotal</b>	<b>58,913</b>	<b>62,090</b>

#### COVENANT DONATIONS

All Friends	59,800	59,700
Butternuts	6,475	5,600
Farmington-Scipio	66,354	67,200
Long Island	48,745	49,500
New York	71,300	68,500
Nine Partners	36,573	35,100
Northeastern	30,361	27,000
Purchase	89,790	96,250
Shrewsbury & Plainfield	50,000	49,500
Additional received 4/2/11	1,907	
<b>Covenant subtotal</b>	<b>461,305</b>	<b>458,350</b>
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>520,218</b>	<b>520,440</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>520,218</b>	<b>516,150</b>
<b>Expected surplus/deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,290</b>

## MEETINGS FOR DISCERNMENT

NYYM Friends gathered twice last year in Meetings for Discernment. The steering committee has maintained a practice of inviting a dozen or more Friends to serve in the role of elders for each session of the Meetings for Discernment, having found that when Friends come with the intention of holding the meeting in prayer and in the Light, it helps to gather the body into a deeper place of listening. We also ask two Friends to take notes on the messages shared at each session. The steering committee uses these notes in preparing reports, which are sent to appointees from monthly meetings, to clerks of meetings and worship groups, and to the four coordinating committees.

The July 2010 Meeting for Discernment was held on Tuesday during summer sessions. In the morning, over 120 Friends were invited to respond—from the perspective of their meetings or worship groups—to the query *What has your meeting or worship group learned through your experience of resisting change or embracing change?* Four Friends replied with stories that those present found particularly moving and meaningful. Notes from these four were included in the report. In the afternoon, the Meeting gathered again in worship holding the query *How are we as a yearly meeting being called to change?* Messages showing a range of perspectives were offered by individuals. In the evening, 35 friends gathered to reflect on the day and on previous Meetings for Discernment. These Friends spoke of their experiences, their joys, and their concerns.

At the winter Meeting for Discernment, held at the Plainfield Meetinghouse, Friends met for a day-long meeting for worship with attention to Spirit-led action being undertaken by our meetings and worship groups, using the query *What concrete things have you been doing to help realize that which God is calling forth?* Despite adverse weather that kept many from coming, close to 70 Friends were present for all or part of the day. Part of the hope in establishing the Meetings for Discernment was that Friends engaged in the work of the Yearly Meeting committees could hear concerns and needs coming directly from monthly meetings and worship groups, and that the committees could then consider how to respond to what they heard. From the messages at the Meeting for Discernment at Plainfield, the Steering Committee was able to discern several common threads that we framed as recommendations

from the Meeting for Discernment to NYYM committees. In April, at Spring Sessions, the Steering Committee reported on the ways the Meetings for Discernment are meeting the charges set in 2007, and our intention to bring a recommendation to Summer Sessions that the Meetings for Discernment be made an ongoing body. In the minutes of Spring Sessions on the NYYM Web site, a link to the full report is embedded in minute 2011-04-17. Paper copies are available from the yearly meeting office.

*Janet Hough, clerk,  
Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee*

## Ministry Coordinating Committee

Ministry Coordinating Committee (MCC) provides support and care to our constituent committees and task groups: Advancement; Committee on Conflict Transformation; Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice*; Committee on Sufferings; Worship at YM Sessions; State of the Society; Ministry and Pastoral Care; and the task groups on Ending Racism in New York Yearly Meeting and Spiritual Nurture.

MCC supports the work of the committees under our care, but they do the actual work of providing pastoral care and spiritual nurture to the monthly, regional/quarterly meetings of the Yearly Meeting. The details of their work can be found in their reports. Issues that have arisen in MCC meetings have been about recording gifts of ministry, the meaning of ministry, advancement and renewal, racism, and prophetic witness. We've made room in our meetings to hear from the quarters and regions. We've heard from members who are helping to support struggling meetings.

In addition to the meetings at Summer sessions MCC met three times this year. We met at Fall sessions, at Powell House for Coordinating Committee weekend, and at Spring Sessions. Our committees and task groups send representatives to our meetings. In addition we have representatives from the regions and quarters and several at-large members.

*Regina Baird Haag, coclerk*

## STATE OF THE SOCIETY REPORT 2010

### Summary of Monthly Meeting Reports

In early 2011, the constituent meetings and gatherings of New York Yearly Meeting wrote to describe the vitality of their faith communities during 2010. Their writing was guided by these queries:

Meetings are living bodies and thus experience cycles of growth and dormancy. What new growth do you greet in your meeting? What losses do you mourn?

Many meetings struggle with issues of the world such as racism, class inequality, and discrimination by sexual orientation. With what issues does your meeting struggle? How does your meeting labor with difficult issues?

Friends reported vitality and even excitement across the Yearly Meeting. A theme emerges in the State of the Meeting reports: that meetings are vital when they make hard decisions together. This was true in meetings deciding to invest in new or improved physical space. It was also true in meetings working through difficult conflict within their communities. In both situations, the meeting body was required to discern something new together—to put aside old expectations and seek new uses of Quaker process—which means, to rely more purely on the strength and guidance of the Light.

As always, some meetings worry about losing members and some rejoice in new members. We continue to worry about homogeneity and age—we value greater diversity and wish for energetic youth. A few meetings and worship groups have been laid down. Some meetings suffered the death of elder members who had been anchors in their communities. Other meetings reported gains in membership that made up for their losses, and still others reported that their lists of members, attenders, and even First Day school classes were growing.

Throughout the Yearly Meeting, extraordinary individuals followed leadings that took them into innovative community projects, heroic acts of caring, or witness that led to prison. These individuals were nurtured by their meetings, which were nurtured in turn by the energy of each individual. State of the Meeting reports cite these accomplishments—and they are many. Friends across the Yearly Meeting witnessed against racism, torture, bullying, war, immigration policies, and environmental assaults such as hydrofracking.

But it is what a meeting does as a whole that seems to give

it experiential vitality. As a whole, meetings mourn the loss of members and attenders who were central to meeting life. As a whole, meetings face crises such as domestic violence in a meeting family, unexpected loss of meeting space, or the death of a beloved teenager. And it is as a whole that meetings celebrate weddings, new members, intergenerational worship, and the opening of a new room for worship.

When a meeting as a whole has to make a hard decision, spiritual and personal struggle can result. The decision to spend money on new meeting space, particularly during a time when money is not in abundance, impels meetings to reconsider their goals and their strength. An urgent crisis such as domestic violence in a meeting family tests members' ability to act together in an effective and humane way. Decisions about spiritual values and social concerns take a more variable path. For example, some meetings reached consensus on same-gender marriage only after years of discussion; other meetings seemed to achieve it without much friction at all.

When Friends disagree and yet must decide on a specific action, we have many resources for struggle. It is wonderful to read of meetings deploying one resource after another until a given crisis is resolved. Quaker practice gives us the tools of clearness committees, study groups, threshing sessions, and the guidance of the meeting's Ministry and Counsel. We turn to neighboring meetings for help, or meetings far away who face a similar situation, or we seek the counsel of yearly meeting elders. The Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries and the Alternatives to Violence Project also offer guidance. When a meeting is divided, our faith advises us to practice patience and waiting, setting aside the problem until the Spirit has done its work. As one meeting writes, "We work to deepen our will to listen and wait; we yearn for the guidance of Spirit; we pray for the power to follow our leadings."

With initial struggle but eventual celebration, Meetings have built new spaces, repaired and improved older ones, and increased their accessibility. Some meetings find themselves in neighborhoods that have different demographics than most of the meeting's members. Recognizing this as a challenge and an opportunity, meetings have held open discussion groups, public forums, and film series to form stronger relationships with their surrounding communities. Meetings have made statements of conscience about local issues, always with the goal of increasing peace and social justice.

The decision to spend money together has shed new light on the abiding issue of economic class. However homogeneous we may appear to be, NYYM members inhabit many different financial situations. For some meetings, class differences arose uncomfortably in the process of raising money and servicing debt. Speaking out loud about these issues was not only practical but eventually healing. Other meetings became aware that some of their members were in acute financial need and that meeting funds could be directed to people within the meeting as meaningfully as to charities outside it.

Several meetings identified money and the issue of class as an overriding concern that unites many other social issues. New York Yearly Meeting, along with most of North America, is outside the world's majority of Quakers, who are primarily people of color who survive on little money. This difference is an opportunity for growth and new understanding of how we are called to treat each other. Within the Yearly Meeting, the prison meetings are closest to the issue of class simply because imprisonment forces each person into a single low class. Although the prison meetings are tiny and under constant stress, they also appear to be among some of the most vital, most exciting meetings in the Yearly Meeting community.

Money is not our only unequal resource—personal time is another. Many meetings reported a decline in energy and involvement in committees, particularly outside of a core group of elders. Several meetings began looking at their committee structure to simplify decisionmaking and reduce everyone's expense of time. One meeting has been experimenting with the structure of business meeting itself, trying out a "round table" approach in which each person is asked what they bring to the meeting. This has led to a closer and stronger community. They also changed their Nominations Committee to a "Gifts and Leadings" committee that is more focused on identifying people's gifts instead of "guilting" them into service. Finally, they scheduled one Sunday with a series of meetings based on committees' work and open to all. Much work was accomplished, and new ideas and energy flowed forth.

Several meetings spoke of a yearning to be called, to be unified as they were at some point in the past "in a single project which was experienced as Spirit-led." Our struggles to discern and decide are part of listening for that call. We are not quiet for the sake of quiet itself, but to better hear that of God within. George Fox urged us not just to take care of each other, but to

"stand and live in the same power and Spirit that the prophets and apostles were in." We cherish our monthly meetings, which provide us with comfort and community, but it may be discomfort that moves us to seek wider justice, greater environmental health, and a larger people to be gathered.

One meeting wrote: "As is true of all living bodies, our membership waxes and wanes, and the collective energy of individuals grows and lies dormant, always, it seems, to grow again like the new shoot emerging each year from the bulb. But the spiritual center of our meeting—the 'divine'—is constant."

### **Spiritual Nurture Working Group**

In 2010, the Spiritual Nurture Working Group focused on the task of discerning the needs for spiritual growth, support, and accountability within New York Yearly Meeting and to respond with opportunities for spiritual formation, nurture, and connection. The "Feeding the Fire: Nurturing Our Relationship With God" retreat series offered at Powell House was designed to attend to these needs in New York Yearly Meeting. The four retreats offered this year included "Faithfulness" led by Deborah Saunders, "Living a Life of Prayer" led by Mary Kay Glazer, "Different Ways In" led by Vonn New, and "Becoming a Body: The Individual and Community" led by Jennie Isbell.

One theme of these retreats related to deepening our own faithfulness in our daily activities and our relationships with our monthly meetings. The retreat on "Faithfulness" focused on our own responses to listening to nudges and leadings in our lives. In small groups we told our stories that reflected our journeys. Deborah gave us examples of faithfulness that stretched the way we saw faithfulness in our lives. The "Living a Life of Prayer" retreat provided a time of strengthening our current prayer practices and learning new practices to enhance our spiritual lives as we returned into the daily of our lives. As well as prayer as spoken words, we explored the prayer of creating, writing, and moving. In "Different Ways In," we learned paths to deep worship through movement, making and listening to music, as well as silent worship. We reached deep places inside ourselves that enriched our presence in our daily life. In "Becoming a Body: The Individual and Community," Jennie Isbell led us in a rich exploration of spiritual language so that those in the diverse body could hear each other as they shared deeply. We looked at our own faithfulness and our relation-

ship to our monthly meetings. The series began with a more individual focus on deepening our spiritual life. The focus then shifted to integrating our journey with that of our monthly meetings.

Whether they attended one or more of the Feeding the Fire retreats, those who came found deep opportunities for spiritual growth, spiritual nurture, and connection with F(f)riends who are interested in deepening their spiritual journey.

At the annual retreat, members of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group have an opportunity to share their experiences as serving as spiritual nurturers, to hold one another in prayer and deep worship. Refreshed-in-the-Spirit participants are better able to serve their monthly meetings, quarterly/regional meetings, and the Yearly Meeting.

Meetings of the Spiritual Nurture Working Group are open to all who share a common concern for the work of spiritual nurture and formation. We try to meet at least twice a year and as the work requires. At least one meeting a year is a retreat to renew ourselves and plan for our work. We next meet at Summer Sessions. Friends interested in the work are invited to contact coclerks Lu Harper or Anne Pomeroy for more information.

*Lu Harper and Anne Pomeroy, coclerks*

### **Task Group on Racism in NYYM**

The Task Group on Racism met twice as a full committee between Summer Sessions and this report in April and is scheduled to meet again in June.

We continued to spend time at each of our meetings listening to each other's experiences of racism. This work has strengthened our ability to talk about difficult issues and work together more effectively. We are working toward being a model for the Yearly Meeting as we continue with this work.

We presented a workshop at summer sessions and sponsored the Meeting for Worship for Racial Healing again this year.

We continue to be challenged to find ways to keep this issue in front of Friends so that it does not get lost in the many other concerns that call us. Racism is a difficult issue, and it is easy to look the other way when it is not staring us in the face. Our task is to remind Friends that it is staring us in the face

if we open our eyes. To help keep this in front of Friends we submitted the following query on racism to Ministry Coordinating Committee (MCC) for the State of the Society reports, but it was not chosen. "Racial equality is vital to our growth as people and as Friends. How is your Meeting increasing its openness to racial diversity?"

We also looked into ways to promote the work that the Yearly Meeting has already done in this area by bringing attention to the Minute on Racism that was approved in the summer of 2009 (minute 2009-07-44). We are still working on how we might manifest this, but our latest idea is to laminate it as a bookmark.

We have been looking at books and other materials on diversity that are appropriate for young Friends, with the hope of involving them in this work also. It is not clear how we are called to move forward in this area or how we can be the most helpful to Friends who are working with youth. We are continuing to explore this work together and welcome suggestions from others including young Friends.

At Summer Sessions in 2010, we submitted to MCC an Apology to Afro-Descendants for Quaker involvement in slavery. This challenged those present, and some of their responses were difficult for us to hear. The responses made it clear that we still have work to do. We labored with ways to get our message across in a way that Friends find comfortable, and we submitted a revised report to MCC at Spring Sessions. The Task Group is working on MCC's final suggested changes and will bring them to Summer Sessions for approval.

The Apology came to us from the European American Quakers Working to End Racism (EAQWER) group who had drafted it several years earlier and printed it in *Spark* in January 2008, so Friends may have seen it in its original form.

We were happy to welcome Florence McAllister to the committee this year and were sorry to lose Ilene Wagner, who moved to California. We also missed Margaret Mulindi, who was in Kenya most of the year.

*Irma Guthrie, clerk*

### **Advancement Committee**

The Advancement Committee, actively seeking to discern a direction for the future, has shown new life, both in the number of Friends drawn to it and in the sense of purpose they

bring with them. Over the last year we have met at each Yearly Meeting Session. Several of our former financial responsibilities have lately been passed on to General Services, leaving the committee freer to focus its attention on outreach to the world, while still maintaining the “inreach” efforts that have dominated the committee’s work in recent years.

At Spring Sessions we focused on several questions, among them How do we, and how might we better, support the ministries found among our members? We are also feeling a pressing concern to make the YM Advancement Committee’s activities more relevant to our monthly and regional meetings: What can we do to support the advancement work that is already being done in your meeting or in other meetings? What resources do we have that could be shared with meetings? What can we each do to expand the YM Advancement Committee membership to the number of Friends necessary to best accomplish our mission?

We are optimistic about the growth of the committee into a cooperative group of committed individuals of diverse perspectives and talents. At Summer Sessions we hope to build upon the good threshing work we did at Spring Sessions, incorporating the most promising ideas aired there into an advancement program for the coming year, made vivid to the entire committee, whose progress we can monitor and report on, so that the fruits of our diligence might be felt in every meeting.

It is the intent of the committee to do the labor necessary to fulfill its principal charges:

- Disseminate widely an awareness of the faith, practice, and testimonies of Friends
- Reach out to seekers
- Knit Friends and Friends meetings more closely together
- Encourage outreach and growth in existing meetings

This year we provided seed money for the Bedford Stuyvesant Worship Group.

Friends led to our work are encouraged to proactively reach out to the Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee to test possible service. All Friends are encouraged to spend time at the Advancement table at Yearly Meeting Sessions to get a sense of the advancement work and materials of many of our constituent meetings. We encourage all Friends attending Summer Sessions to attend the Advancement Committee meeting there.

*Don Badgley, clerk*

## **Committee on Conflict Transformation**

The Committee on Conflict Transformation had the opportunity to be of service to several bodies in the Yearly Meeting during the past year, including monthly meetings, worship groups, individuals, and the Yearly Meeting itself. The brochure that had been planned was designed, printed, and sent to the clerk of each monthly and quarterly meeting and worship group. The changes to the Web site were also effected.

At Summer Sessions 2010, the Committee offered an interest group on the nature of spiritually led conflict identification and resolution.

The Committee met four times during the year and felt nourished by the Spirit on each occasion. It hopes to continue to improve the frequency and quality of its contributions to the spiritual life of the Yearly Meeting and its constituent meetings.

*Peter Phillips, clerk*

## **Epistle Committee**

This past year we prepared the outgoing Epistle from New York Yearly Meeting to Friends everywhere.

The task of the Committee is to prepare the outgoing Epistle. The work is done during Summer Sessions, beginning on the third day and focusing on the fourth and fifth days, when the Epistle is prepared, presented, and approved. Those on the Committee should enjoy the process of corporate composition and have gifts for discerning the state of the meeting and putting it into a few well-seasoned words. Patience and humility are also required, but the joy and spiritual intensity of the work, and the satisfaction of accomplishment, are ample rewards.

*Roger Dreisbach-Williams*

## **Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to sustain and support ministry and counseling in worship groups and preparative, monthly, and regional meetings to be instruments of God’s love and care to one another and to their members, attenders, visitors, and communities throughout the Yearly Meeting. Our charge

is to assist these bodies and the YM's pastors so that they can better provide ministry and pastoral care. The work of this committee is under the care of Ministry Coordinating Committee.

Our work has been to facilitate the committee's continued emergence as an active and effective committee. The rotation off the committee of our former clerk, with her long history of working with ministry and counsel in the YM and in her local meeting, left us adrift. A very busy group of individuals, we had difficulty finding common meeting times. We resisted giving in to meeting by conference call until we lost the involvement of a couple of members. We are working with coclerks, as no Friend was clear to take the position alone.

Of note this year:

- We have begun to learn how we might support pastors, designating each member to be in touch with one or two pastors, to visit their meetings and listen to what they would like to share with us of their satisfactions and concerns about their work.
- Traveling Friends—In the last year or so few of these Friends have been traveling. A representative of our committee should plan to meet with the Traveling Friends Advisory Group soon to see how we may address this change.
- The YM prayer list is being ably managed and continues to be appreciated.
- A policy and procedures for the Stevens Fund, which provides ongoing financial support for "superannuated" pastors the YM were proposed by this committee and approved by the Ministry Coordinating Committee.
- Attendance at the spring gathering of NY and NEYM Pastors by the coclerks and one minister on this committee offered a renewed commitment to our work.

The work of this committee has a significant role to play within the YM to nurture lives in the Spirit and the growth of loving community in all parts of the YM by supporting ministry, and encouraging it to thrive wherever it is.

We are in need of new members, leaders committed to this ministry, preferably Friends who have experience with such work at both local and YM levels and who are available for the task.

*Buffy Curtis and Anne Wright, coclerks*

### **Committee to Revise *Faith and Practice***

The Committee met at Summer Sessions in 2010 with an expanded roster of members. We received the records and suggestions from the outgoing clerk, Boyce Bengé. We assembled a list of possible tasks before us and chose to work first on drafting a proposed advice and query on earthcare. We have met at both Fall and Spring Sessions (where two more members joined us) and have exchanged numerous e-mails to achieve a draft, which we circulated early in the spring to monthly meetings and to the Earthcare Working Group, with a request that they consider our proposal and offer us feedback. We have thus far received replies from 17 meetings and several individuals with many suggestions, all of which will be considered. They ranged from substantive (include mention of diet in the documents) to critiques of language and usage. We plan an all-day working session in June to finalize the versions that we will be presenting to Summer Sessions for a first reading.

The committee is aware of many items that will need our consideration in future, including, among many others, updating language and descriptions of our practice that may no longer be timely (references to "Representative Meeting," for example), discerning when the use of electronic communications is appropriate, and looking at matters of membership. We will be working on these and others as time allows.

We are aware that *Faith and Practice* tells newcomers and people from outside of Friends who we are and what we do. It also renews and refreshes the understanding of many longtime Friends. We feel, therefore, an obligation to promote the use of this document among Friends, reminding all in New York Yearly Meeting of the riches it contains.

*Joan Oltman, clerk*

### **State of the Society Committee**

*No report submitted.*

### **Committee on Sufferings**

The Sufferings Committee met at Yearly Meeting Summer Sessions 2010 and in phone consultation considering the request of a Friend whose circumstances met the guidelines of giving financial assistance to those in need who are suffering because

of Friends' testimonies. Our response was affirmative.

The charge of the Committee is to provide assistance to those who are suffering because of Friends testimonies. This charge traces its history back to the earliest Friends.

Requests for assistance should be made by letter or e-mail to the Yearly Meeting office. The request should include the following:

- What is the related Friend's testimony?
- What is the total financial burden?
  - How much is covered by the applicant?
  - How much by other sources?
  - Requested amount from the Committee?
- Name of supporting Quaker body: monthly meeting, quarterly meeting, Yearly Meeting

The Yearly Meeting office will contact the committee clerk or other committee members who will respond directly with the applicant. The committee will continue to meet as the need arises.

*Annie Geiger, Clerk*

### **Traveling Friends Advisory Group**

The Traveling Friends Advisory Group (TFAG) has not met this year, but Travelers continue to visit meetings as they are able or in response to a request from a meeting or worship group or as a continuing presence at a meeting they have been visiting regularly.

In January, some of the Travelers were able to meet in Rochester for a weekend initiated by TFAG and organized by Friends General Conference Traveling Ministries program (FGC TMP). Although the focus of TMP is different from that of our Travelers, the needs for coming together face-to-face and for exploring the basis of the ministry are very much the same. Friends who were able to participate found it helpful.

Christopher Sammond interviewed each of the Friends who travel in NYYM, inviting them to share their view of the ministry and their needs for support. Following the Rochester weekend, I sent out queries to the Travelers, and received a few responses.

Visits by our Travelers to meetings continue to be well received and help to put a "face" on the Yearly Meeting. One of two meetings that had depended upon Traveling Friends for

pulpit supply last year has since found a pastor.

Plans for the near future include a conference call and possible face-to-face meeting on Sunday morning, July 16, at Silver Bay. We will consider the names of Friends whom we feel would add life to the program, and look for ways to more concretely support those who have already made the commitment.

*Deborah Wood, clerk*

### **Committee on Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions**

At Fall (Flushing) and Spring (Oakwood) Sessions, the Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions committee helped the Quarterly Meeting host committees by inviting additional Friends who have the spiritual gift of eldering. These Friends from the wider yearly meeting body were asked to join local Friends sitting on the facing chairs as well as sitting in the body during meeting for worship and meeting for worship with attention to business. They prayerfully grounded and held the body in the Light, being radiators of God's Love.

At Silver Bay 2010, the Worship at Yearly Meeting Sessions Committee helped oversee the many Summer Sessions activities under the care of the Ministry Coordinating Committee. At meeting for worship and meetings for worship with attention to business, the committee invited and coordinated Friends sitting on the facing chairs as elders. These Friends provided a prayerful presence and helped remind us that we are connected to the Divine Center. The committee helped coordinate and lent support to the additional worship opportunities at Silver Bay, including worship-sharing groups, the Healing Center, hymn singing in the Chapel, meetings for worship at the Boathouse, as well as meetings for worship for Racial Healing, worship with Friends in the Spirit of Christ, and worship with Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns. The committee contacted the Bible study leader and provided support those four nights. The committee also identified two Friends to bring the message for Silver Bay's Monday and Tuesday vespers services in the Chapel.

The committee is currently working with JYM and Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee for the community worship opportunities at Summer Sessions 2011.

*Ann Davidson, clerk*

## GENERAL SERVICES SECTION

### General Services Coordinating Committee

The coordinating committees exist in large part to assist the committees under their charge and to review their work, in particular prior to any presentation to gathered Friends at our sessions. Details of the working of the committees follow in their individual reports. General Services Coordinating Committee (GSCC) met four times, as it normally does, twice at Summer Sessions, once at Fall Sessions, and once at the revived Coordinating Committee weekend in January at Powell House.

During Fall Sessions 2010, Friends approved laying down the General Secretary Task Group and establishing a new regular Yearly Meeting committee in its place: the General Secretary Supervisory Committee, under GSCC. At Spring Sessions 2011, Friends agreed to rename the committee Supervisory Committee for the General Secretary (SCGC).

At Fall Sessions 2010, Friends approved the establishment of a half-time position entitled Young Adult Field Secretary, to address the specific needs of our young adults, whose lives are more mobile and changing than those of more settled adults. The position was filled by Gabrielle Savory Bailey, a member of Chatham-Summit Monthly Meeting, who started in April 2011.

The Office Study Task Group continues to labor on the possibility and desirability of relocating the Yearly Meeting offices out of New York City. The multiple interlocking variables make the analysis complex. We hope to have a report ready for Friends to consider in the near future.

Major efforts have been made to keep expenses down within the section, which has by far the largest budget of the four sections, in that it covers personnel expenses, salary, benefits, taxes, rent, insurance, office expenses, printing, bookkeeping, and Sessions expenses, as well as committee expenses. The budget for the section for 2011 is essentially flat relative to 2010, although some expenses beyond our control are increasing, including rent, utilities, and insurance.

The Committee labored with Nominating Committee to draft a set of definitions to clarify the use of co-opting and of nominations that have been made but are pending approval, and other related concerns that have never been formally ad-

ressed and defined. A specific definition of co-opting was presented and approved by Friends at Spring Sessions 2010 for insertion in the *YM Handbook*.

A major effort is underway by the Committee to update the Yearly Meeting's *Handbook* and make it more easily accessible on the new Web site and downloadable page by page. This effort will require the cooperation of all Yearly Meeting committees. Discussions are also underway to develop a practice for retention and accessibility of all committee minutes.

The Committee is also responsible for many small policy and procedural details that arise from time to time. Fortunately, Committee members are dedicated and thoughtful, and work continues to progress in a Spirit-led and timely fashion.

*Jeffrey Aaron, clerk*

### Audit Committee

The committee met in September 2010 with the NYYM auditor, Robert Lee, to review his report on the financial accounts of the Meeting. After careful examination the Committee approved the Consolidated Financial Statements for 2009. The Committee expects to do a final review of the 2009 Trustees' accounts and the NYYM financial accounts for 2010 in the spring of 2011. Ed Doty agreed to be clerk. Lisa Gasstrom agreed to continue to serve as liaison with General Services Coordinating Committee. The Committee decided to engage the present auditor for 2011, noting that a routine review of the auditor agreement should be done in 2012.

*Edward Doty, clerk*

### Communications Committee

After much work in the previous years on the New York Yearly Meeting Web site, Communications began to discuss ways to enhance it. Suggestions from various Friends have helped us begin the task of fine-tuning the Web site so it can be more valuable to Friends and seekers. We are particularly seeking to expand our coverage of young Friends (however defined) and to incorporate multimedia items where appropriate.

*Spark* continued with thematic issues, which continue to be well received. We welcome suggestions for future themes. The Around Our Yearly Meeting feature has posed a problem for

us: an embarrassment of riches. We want to include as much as we can of the many activities Friends around the Yearly Meeting are participating in, and are exploring ways to expand our coverage of monthly meeting events.

Under the careful guidance of Jack Cuffari, the Committee engaged in an extensive examination of what the communication needs of the Yearly Meeting are and strategies for achieving those goals. The Committee is also beginning to undertake the task of pulling together the disparate pieces of the Yearly Meeting *Handbook* and make them available on the Web site. We continue to discuss ways to reach out to young(er) Friends and encourage their participation in Quaker life, including the use of social media, such as Facebook. We encourage young(er) Friends to assist the committee in this work, either by formally joining the committee, or by offering assistance as way opens. Discussions on the ability of the Yearly Meeting to effectively publicize Friends' positions on a variety of issues have continued but reached no definitive action. We have also been discussing ways to improve the workflow of various communication activities in order to save both time and money. These continue to be complex discussions.

As always, the Committee would like to hear from other Friends about how some of these projects might be improved. Suggestions should be sent to Adam Segal-Isaacson.

*Adam Segal-Isaacson, clerk*

## **Financial Services Committee**

Financial Services Committee continues the focus to:

- Help monthly meetings make informed covenant donation decisions and to share their priorities for NYYM
- Frame the NYYM budget based on realistic covenant donations and priorities articulated by constituent meetings

Financial Services Committee tried a new way of approaching the budget process this year. Financial Services shared a projected "bare bones" budget and then additional line items, prioritized into three tiers, which would be funded if sufficient income could be expected. Some found this new process helpful.

Financial Services Committee again hosted the annual Budget Saturday, to seek clarity on a final proposed budget for 2011. Much of the time was spent in discernment about the

priorities around various aspects of NYYM ministry and how to prioritize the work financially.

This year, as in years past, the Committee had some difficulty in knowing what income to budget and, therefore, how much NYYM can plan to spend on its ministries. It is difficult to determine what covenant donation income to budget because meetings and worship groups have many different budget years. Many of the local and regional budget cycles do not fit well with being able to inform Financial Services Committee what donations are being covenanted in time to fit with NYYM's Sessions dates and budget approval process. Financial Services Committee continues to examine how the budgeting process might be changed to address this difficulty.

At Fall Sessions Financial Services proposed a budget that had a level of funding that was the Committee's best sense of anticipated income but also proposed some additional prioritized items that could be funded if NYYM was informed of increases in covenant donations. A 2011 budget was approved at Fall Sessions and some adjustments to income and expenses were made at Spring Sessions.

*Sandra Beer, clerk*

## **Committee on Expenditure of the H.H. Mosher Fund**

In 2010, at our annual sessions at Silver Bay, we distributed \$3800.36 in books. This included \$3476.08 for gifts to 71 monthly meetings, worship groups, prison worship groups, and Friends institutions (mostly schools). We gave gift books to 16 individuals (staff, recorded ministers, presenters at NYYM, and first-time visitors at our Yearly Meeting from other yearly meetings).

Please visit the Book Table, just inside the front door to the lobby at Silver Bay, to replenish your monthly meeting's library shelves with up to \$50 worth of free books again this year. If your meeting is not sending a representative to YM summer sessions, please ask a neighboring meeting that is planning on sending a Friend, to select books totaling \$50 for your meeting as well. Everyone is invited to sign up for an hour or two to help us sell and distribute the books.

*Cathy Thomas, for the committee*

## General Secretary's Report

The multifaceted nature of my work continues to require me to keep a lot of irons in the fire at the same time. I continue to balance visiting meetings, giving supervision to the Yearly Meeting office, supporting different committees as they support the life of the wider Yearly Meeting, representing us in the wider body of Friends, and working where I can to help release the gifts of the Friends in this Yearly Meeting. I am not by nature a multitasker, so attending to such a broad range of duties is at times a stretch for me. I feel blessed in that I enjoy most of the work that I do and continue to see great value in it.

I made a concerted effort this past year to give greater attention to visiting meetings, and was able to put more time and effort into this area than in the past few years. Visiting Friends in their meetings remains my favorite part of this work. Since the writing of my last Advance Report, I made nineteen visits to monthly and regional meetings, worship groups, and prison preparative meetings. It is deeply satisfying to witness and work with Friends on the deepening of their spiritual lives and their worship, and to hear about the Life in their meetings. Such visitation allows me to more accurately convey a sense of the condition of Friends in this Yearly Meeting to the committees that serve them and gives me the privilege of witnessing and supporting God's work in individuals who are opening to greater depth of spiritual experience and expression.

In most of these visits I provided some sort of program, ranging from an hour or so at some of our prison worship groups to an entire weekend with Brooklyn Monthly Meeting. I have also felt blessed when I visit a meeting without any previously agreed-upon program and without agenda.

I spent a significant amount of time this past year working to provide better institutional support for our young adult Friends. I worked extensively with young adult Friends and with the Personnel Committee on the new Young Adult Friends field secretary position, helping them to finalize the job description, writing the grant application, and most recently, providing supervision and support. It has been a real pleasure to work with for our newest staff person, Gabi Savory Bailey, the Young Adult Friends field secretary. She has hit the ground running, and I foresee her making a considerable contribution to our community as a whole, and especially to those 18–35 years of age.

The field of communications is changing faster than most of us, myself certainly, can keep up with it. Recognizing that our current patterns of communication are not reaching our younger members, and that much could be improved in how we serve the Yearly Meeting in communication in general, I initiated our rethinking the parameters of the communication director's position. The Communications Committee has since done great work in looking not only at that position, but at the totality of communication within the Yearly Meeting, and what part they expect staff to play in that work. As a result of this exploration, I expect to see significant changes in how we communicate internally and with the wider world.

I spent two weeks this summer in Kenya, first at the United Society of Friends Women International/Quaker Men's Triennials near Mombasa, then visiting four different Kenyan yearly meetings in Western Province, and then at the combined African–North American General Board meetings of FUM in Mabanga. This time gave me the opportunity to make new connections and to deepen existing ones with Friends from across East Africa. The board meetings were particularly important, as we were looking at how to restructure FUM so that it could both remain a viable organization and at the same time better serve its constituent Friends. The board meetings were helpful in moving another step in that direction.

In addition to my work representing us to other FUM–affiliated yearly meetings, North American and African, I once again attended the Superintendents and Secretaries retreat this past year in Iowa. We focused on how to bring healing to the rifts between the various branches of Friends, and did some powerful work together on forgiveness and reconciliation.

I have continued to support the Spiritual Nurture Working Group in their work, which has mostly been focused on the "Feeding the Fire" series of retreats. I had the pleasure of facilitating the sixth in the series, "Trusting in the Slow Work of God," which was a gift and a blessing for me.

In the course of the year I also helped in the planning and facilitation of the two Nightingales singing weekends, the two NYYM/NEYM Pastors Retreats, the FGC/NYYM–sponsored retreat for Friends traveling in the ministry, and the second annual East Coast Christ-Centered Friends gathering. In a Nightingales weekend, Friends from across the Yearly Meeting gather for a weekend of singing, fellowship, and worship,

creating bonds of community stretching across many of our disparate regions. Singing together draws us together as few other activities can. The January retreat supported by FGC and our Traveling Friends Advisory Group was designed to nurture those Friends traveling in the ministry within and beyond this yearly meeting. The pastors' gatherings are the primary way that the Yearly Meeting is currently supporting our six pastoral meetings. With NEYM, we have been working on how our two yearly meetings can offer better structural support for our pastoral meetings and how those meetings can better share their gifts with their respective yearly meetings. The Christ-Centered Friends Gatherings have drawn Friends from New York, New England, Philadelphia, and Ohio Yearly Meetings, thus far. They have helped our Christ-centered Friends to know that they have a home here, have created a community that supports them, and have been instrumental in the formation of two new worship groups.

Another sizable part of my time this past year was devoted to aiding the work of committees that support our common life together. In addition to those already mentioned, I participated in the work of the Meetings for Discernment Steering Committee, which plans and supports the two Meetings for Discernment each year, and the Liaison Charge Group, which has worked on laying out a plan by which we might have the priorities of the work of the Yearly Meeting better connected to the leadings of our monthly meetings. I also spent time supporting the work of the Advancement Committee, which is committed to our having a more visible presence in the communities where we worship, and the Financial Services Committee, which seeks to match our leadings with our resources, informing grassroots Friends of the work going on at a Yearly Meeting level and informing our committee structure as to what resources are available to support that work.

I believe that each of us is called to help create the Beloved Community. The part each of us does is infinitesimal, and the work is vast. If I focus only on the work of one year, and look at all that needs to be done, it is easy for me to feel overwhelmed. Yet as I look over the span of years, I can see that we have come a very long way in our small part of this work. It is a consummate blessing to be a part of this work, for which I am very grateful.

*Christopher Sammond*

## **Nominating Committee**

The New York Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee is composed of Friends appointed by their regions to serve the yearly meeting. Regions are allotted representatives according to membership numbers in that region. The work of Nominating is done at Fall, Spring, and Summer Sessions of New York Yearly Meeting, with conference calls and lots of e-mails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings in between. It is ongoing work, but the busy time is spring and early summer. A joy we sometimes experience is noticing someone's gifts and matching those with the right committee or position. Another joy is meeting new people from other meetings and regions. A third joy is learning about various committees and their work.

We have been seeing more participation of young adult Friends and youth in the business of the Yearly Meeting, which feels wonderful. However, naming young Friends to committees can be a challenge due to their commitments of time, work, school, young families, and lack of finances.

A concern is that one region is not represented and many are underrepresented. This increases the work load for the committee members, and we can feel overwhelmed trying to fill vacancies on numerous committees and positions. Committee members from regional meetings are able to seek out and name gifts of local Friends. Without adequate representation from the regions, such gifts may remain unnoticed.

Lack of finances is an ongoing issue with Yearly Meeting service because the cost of attending the meetings, particularly Summer Sessions, can be prohibitive. Some assistance is available from the Equalization Fund and from the funds allotted to each committee, and many committees use conference calls and e-mail to do some of their work.

This year, Nominating Committee revised its *Handbook* page, and it has been added to the *Handbook*. Nominating Committee also created a document on co-opting as a way of adding people to committees between Yearly Meeting sessions, and this too was approved. We also approved the procedure for Friends requesting release from service.

We encourage Friends to approach Nominating Committee members with questions about committee service to the Yearly Meeting.

*Jill McLellan & Deborah Wood, coclerks*

## Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is aware of the hard work of our staff members and their good spirit in doing the work of the Yearly Meeting. Paul Busby, Walter Naegle, Christopher Sammond, and Helen Garay Toppins continue to be the main body of the staff and have been with us for years.

We review staff evaluations and it is still clear that the staff has more work than they can do in a regular work week. They are helped by people who come in and volunteer. We are grateful for that.

We strive to keep our costs down. The salaries have not been raised and the communications director is now working 70% of a regular week's work.

Last year at Summer Sessions we brought to the body a proposal for a half-time staff position that would support young adult Friends in the yearly meeting. This proposal was approved enthusiastically by the body.

Soon after that we started getting the word about the new position to all meetings, and we put announcements of this position in Quaker magazines and contacted several other yearly meetings. We had three applicants, who were all from New York Yearly Meeting. They all had good credentials for this job. Christopher, two members of Personnel Committee, and the clerk of Young Adult Concerns Committee interviewed all three. We have selected Gabrielle Savory Bailey to be the Young Adult field secretary. She started her work with us in April 2011. We look forward to the results of this new initiative.

For a number of years we have not had the full complement of six members on our committee. We are grateful to have a full committee now.

*Heloise Rathbone, clerk*

## Yearly Meeting Staff

*Paul Busby, communications director*

Service to the Yearly Meeting continues to be a blessing.

I am now working 3½ days a week. This presents a challenge in accomplishing all that I have to do. Although this is frustrating, I am still glad to be of service to the NYYM community.

I continue to be responsible for NYYM publications.

- Since the November issue of 2005, each issue of *Spark* has been devoted to a theme that speaks to the life of Friends and meetings. The themes for 2010 were Death and Dying, Quaker Potluck (articles on various themes), Membership, Friends and Humor, and Friends and Celebration. Producing these special issues provides a great sense of accomplishment. Each issue has a volunteer coordinator who solicits articles and compiles them; then I edit them. Topics for 2011 are Getting Down to Business, Sexuality and Spirituality, Envisioning the Future of Quakerism, Young(er) Friends, Earthcare, and Quaker Writers.
- I have continued maintaining the Web site and expanding it, making it increasingly useful for Friends, meetings, and seekers. I have been able to assist monthly meetings, regional meetings, and worship groups with their own Web sites, hosted on the Yearly Meeting site. Friends, seekers, and others come to the site at an ever-increasing rate—some days the site receives more than 1,100 visits from all over the world. The majority of the calls we receive from seekers come from those who first encountered us on the Web and are hungry for more. The Web address is [www.nyym.org](http://www.nyym.org), and all Friends are encouraged to visit the site and offer suggestions.
- *InfoShare* is now in its tenth year of publication. *InfoShare*, too, has been expanding. (*InfoShare* is published on the NYYM Web site, but we send paper copies to those who request them, and we e-mail copies to monthly meeting newsletter editors.) *InfoShare* provides a quick, convenient, and informative resource for meetings and committees to share their news and for individuals to stay informed about current NYYM events and concerns. Once again, I urge newsletter editors, Yearly Meeting committee clerks, and others to send me their information for inclusion in *InfoShare* and the Web site's Events section. Let your Light shine!
- I am also the editor of the *Advance Reports* and the *Yearbook*. I coordinate the distribution of e-mails of a general NYYM or Friends nature to the global e-mail list or to monthly meeting contacts and newsletter editors. If you are not on the NYYM global e-mail list, please join by e-mailing me at [paul@nyym.org](mailto:paul@nyym.org). The list is not shared with others.

I also answer the phones and respond to many e-mails each day. Sometimes I respond to inquiries by postal mail. I appre-

ciate the opportunity to be a resource for Friends and seekers. It is gratifying to be able to contribute to the Yearly Meeting in these ways, and I look forward to continuing service to Friends.

*Walter Naegle, administrative associate*

I maintain the NYYM database in both paper and electronic form. The database consists of members of NYYM, members and former members of our Prison Worship Groups, administrative offices of other Yearly Meetings (both domestic and international), organizations associated with the work of Friends, and individuals and groups who have asked to be included in our mailings. This foundation is the basis for compiling registration lists for the various Yearly Meeting sessions (Spring, Summer, Fall), Meetings for Discernment, Nightingales weekends, and other events. The mailing lists for *Spark* and the Sharing Fund appeals are also generated from this information, as well as the global e-mail list for those interested in NYYM news and events.

Using the database, I work closely with monthly meeting recorders who notify us about new members, births, transfers, and deaths and who provide the statistics about their meeting that appear in each NYYM *Yearbook*. Twice a year each recorder receives a printout of their meeting's members, which they compare with their records for accuracy.

I work with Helen Garay Toppins on NYYM finances, processing payment vouchers, reviewing bank statements, preparing bank deposits and sending out acknowledgements for contributions to the Sharing and Equalization Funds. I send Treasurer's reports via e-mail to monthly meeting and quarterly/regional treasurers.

I assist in collecting photographs and illustrations for use in *Spark* and *InfoShare* and work on both the Alphabetical and Committee sections of the *Yearbook*.

Everyday tasks include answering the telephone, reviewing/responding to e-mail, opening mail, ordering office supplies, and shipping out copies of *Faith and Practice* and NYYM *Yearbooks*.

*Helen Garay Toppins, associate secretary*

This year I prepared my staff report differently. I carried my preparation around my shoulders like a cloak. I wore it as I went about my daily busyness. In the office, at home, at meet-

ing for worship. I wanted my staff report to be more than a litany of my duties, tasks, and responsibilities, which can be found in two decades of reports in print and online. But this year I wanted to challenge myself to go deeper. Intentional listening to the inner self. I asked myself, Why am I doing what I do? What motivates me and keeps me keeping on? What rose up gave me much to ponder.

My major challenge in life, on and off the job, is living my life according to the Quaker testimonies that I hold most dear. Community, Equality, Integrity, and Peace. It ain't easy. During my days of reflection gearing up for this report an inner voice kept reminding me that Quaker staff has to be especially aware of these testimonies on the job. Like I said, it ain't easy.

Another challenge is separating all the parts of me at work. I bring Helen the person, the Quaker, the associate secretary, the Morningsider, the coclerk of Prisons and Black Concerns. When I organize HarlemQuake, or the Bedford Stuyvesant Worship Group, or the group visit to Sing Sing Prison Worship Group. What part is associate secretary? Morningsider? Committee clerk? This requires ongoing conversations with my boss and consultation with my staff support person to help keep things sorted out.

I already knew it, but my reflective time brought it front and center—what I love more than anything is advancement and outreach. Coleading (as a trainee) my first Quaker Quest at Woolman Hill; planning and executing HarlemQuake; guest teaching for a meeting's First Day school were the Quaker highlights of my year.

I also came to realize that another aspect of my job that I really enjoy is supporting committee work. To me committee work is the engine that makes everything go. I want to be more effective in how I, as associate secretary, support committees in the coming year.

Recently, I was reviewing my Summer Sessions/Silver Bay to-do list and I had a flashback. When I first started working for New York Yearly Meeting, I used a typewriter that I took to Silver Bay each summer. It was so big and heavy that I couldn't carry it by myself and I always needed help. My 2011 to-do list said "take flash drive."

I embrace the changes but I am also appreciating the steadfast rock upon which I stand as I approach my service to Friends. Community, Equality, Integrity, and Peace. Like I said—it ain't easy.

## Records Committee

*No report submitted.*

## Sessions Committee

Sessions Committee has continued our pattern of one-day meetings in early fall and midwinter at Oakwood School, an economical and convenient location for most members. Evaluation and planning (including review of policies) occupies those meetings. We have had young adult and high school representation at several meetings. This year the Coordinating Committee weekend was a helpful occasion for developing the Summer Sessions theme. We meet regularly during Summer Sessions and for brief lunchtime meetings during Fall and Spring Sessions.

Guidelines for vendors and fundraising at Summer Sessions are being reviewed, and we concur with the recommendation of Young Adult Concerns Committee that all activities at Fun(d) Fair, Tagless Tag Sale, and Café Night are to benefit only the Sharing Fund and Powell House, with no proceeds retained by vendors. Further work is needed on how to facilitate and limit other vendor and fundraising activities during the week.

We are expecting to work with the Youth Committee to update and refine the Yearly Meeting's policies on child safety.

We have laid down the Affordability and Alternate Site Working Group, which had investigated a number of possible new sites for Summer Sessions without finding realistic prospects. Our search was not as extensive as we had first envisioned it, and we invite anyone to give us the specific name of a venue (not a general category like "private colleges") that the individual believes might be hopeful. We have a list of criteria to help compare with what we have at Silver Bay and what we need in a Summer Sessions site. If someone wants to do the research themselves, we can share the criteria and our experience with best ways of getting answers from a venue, or committee members can do the research.

The Equalization Fund has helped Friends attend Fall and Spring Sessions, and will be available again this summer. The entire value of "complimentary stay" rooms at Silver Bay is transferred from individuals or budget lines to the Equalization Fund, to augment the direct contributions and Advancement

Committee fund sources. Over the past year the Equalization Fund provided help at each Sessions as follows: \$13,279 for Summer 2010, \$213 for Fall 2010, and \$184 for Spring 2011. So far in 2011, individuals and meetings have contributed \$1,324.

Our Sessions Committee operating budget is \$10,000 in 2011.

*John Cooley, clerk*

## TREASURER'S ACCOUNTS Statement of Operations 1/1/10 to 12/31/10

	2010 Budget	2010 Actual
<b>Disbursements and transfers:</b>		
<b>General Services</b>		
<i>Section expense</i>		
General expense & travel	2,200	21.50
NYYM officer's expense	2,750	1,929.53
Audit	<u>3,050</u>	<u>3,075.00</u>
Total section expense	8,000	5,026.03
<i>Committees</i>		
Communications	23,500	21,987.35
<i>Handbook</i>		—
Other		—
<i>Spark</i>		14,989.35
<i>Web site/Yearbook/Adv Reports</i>		6,998.00
Nominating	350	300.23
Records committee		
Contribution—Friends Historical Library	2,500	2,500.00
Sessions committee	9,800	8,375.74
Fall/Spring Sessions		3,681.52
Summer sessions		4,694.22
Other		—
Total committee expense	36,150	33,163.32
<i>Office expense</i>		
Office operations		
Administrative expenses	13,600	10,346.93
Insurance	4,800	4,763.68
Rent & utilities 15th St.	29,300	30,370.00

Office staff travel	8,000	9,658.59
Computer consultation	700	500.00
Office equipment	1,000	1,072.20
Personnel		
Staff employee salaries	173,390	172,785.60
Hourly staff compensation	23,400	23,194.50
Salary and wage related expenses	45,025	45,334.06
Staff development	1,200	551.98
Volunteer support	500	212.37
Bookkeeping service	31,200	31,200.00
Total office expense	332,115	329,989.91
Total General Services	376,265	368,179.26
<b>Ministry</b>		
Section expense	700	300.00
Programs		
Advancement committee	3,000	1,425.00
Bible study leader Summer Sessions	500	500.00
Conflict Transformation	700	362.06
Ministry & Pastoral Care	250	20.25
Pastor's Conference	1,250	900.00
Provision for meeting visitation	100	100.00
Spiritual Nurture Working Group	100	190.00
Task Group on Racism	875	297.65
Total program expense	6,775	3,794.96
Total Ministry	7,475	4,094.96
<b>Nurture</b>		
Section expense	2,000	300.00
NYYM Resource Library	300	493.27
Total section expense	2,300	793.27
Committees		
FWCC Committee	100	—
Junior Yearly Meeting	21,100	21,375.46
Planning		3,690.39
Silver Bay		17,685.07
Young Adult Concerns	800	800.00
Young Friends in Residence	200	400.00
Youth Committee	200	—
Committee on Aging Concerns	250	—

Total committee expense	22,650	22,575.46
<i>NYYM appointee expense</i>		
FGC Central Committee	600.00	773.12
Quaker Earthcare Witness	—	—
FUM Board Representatives	3,500	4,472.96
Provision for FUM Triennial Sessions	500	500.00
FWCC Section Meetings	1,000	1,000.00
Provision for FWCC World Gathering	650	650.00
Provision for FWCC Regional Hosting	—	—
Total NYYM appointee expense	6,250	7,396.08
<i>Allocations and donations</i>		
Friends Council on Education	150	150.00
Friends General Conference	6,800	6,800.00
Friends LGBTQ Concerns	150	150.00
Friends United Meeting	6,800	6,800.00
FUM—Triennial Sessions 3rd World rep	500	500.00
FUM 3rd World Board reps	150	150.00
Friends World Committee	3,400	3,400.00
FWCC Section of the Americas	150	150.00
New Jersey Council of Churches (*)	—	150
NYS Council of Churches (*)	—	150
Oakwood School	9,500	9,500.00
Powell House	65,000	65,000.00
Quaker Earthcare Witness	150	150.00
Total allocations and donations	92,750	93,050.00
Total Nurture	123,950	123,814.81
<b>Witness</b>		
Section/comm./app'tee/program expense	5,160	2,185.28
Sharing Fund Campaign Expense	2,300	2,297.52
Total Witness	7,460	4,482.80
<b>Meeting for Discernment</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>240.50</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>14,000.00</b>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>516,150.00</b>	<b>514,812.33</b>
<i>(*) moved to Witness Coordinating Committee 04/08/08</i>		

**Receipts**

Meetings		
All Friends Regional	59,700	56,400.00
Butternuts Quarterly	5,600	6,410.00
Farmington Regional	67,200	62,952.00
Long Island Quarterly	49,500	50,970.00
New York Quarterly	68,500	70,812.50
Nine Partners Quarterly	35,100	37,153.00
Northeastern Regional	27,000	30,434.00
Purchase Quarterly	96,250	90,130.00
Shrewsbury & Plainfield HY	49,500	49,234.00
Total meeting income	<u>458,350</u>	<u>454,495.50</u>
Other sources		
Registration fees	23,600	19,891.60
Trustees	18,000	17,467.92
All other	<u>20,490</u>	<u>23,296.09</u>
Total other sources	<u>62,090</u>	<u>60,655.61</u>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>520,440</b>	<b>515,151.11</b>
<b>Year 2010 opening balance</b>		204,219.18
<b>+ Receipts</b>		515,151.11
<b>- Disbursements</b>		514,812.33
<b>Closing balance</b>		<u>204,557.96</u>
<b>NET CHANGE</b>		<u>338.78</u>

**FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)**

	Balance as of 1/1/10	Sharing Fund Campaign Income	Other Income	Dist. Closing Balance 12/31/10
<b>Sharing Fund</b>				
AVP Donation	-	3,480.68	-	54.00
Barrington Dunbar	5,668.85	10,412.10	1,278.70	8,309.65
Friends for Black Concerns	2,452.34	3,380.68	-	2,960.24
Indian Affairs Committee	2,420.57	4,940.90	5,344.70	3,666.17
Peace Concerns Committee	4,361.94	2,300.43	50.00	5,012.37
Prisons Committee	3,365.51	3,800.75	-	3,196.20
Right Sharing	-	2,590.52	-	(398.85)
Witness Activities	6,002.94	3,934.23	1,649.56	594.24
World Ministries	16,463.99	2,568.26	21,625.53	9,747.78
Cons. Object to paying for war	4,622.53	1,780.30	-	6,402.83
MMNA Working Group	1,921.21	740.15	-	2,661.36
Torture Awareness Working Group	490.22	(490.00)	-	0.22
NYM Named Representatives	2,281.31	(1,223.77)	-	1,057.54
<b>Total Sharing Fund</b>	<b>50,051.41</b>	<b>38,215.23</b>	<b>29,948.49</b>	<b>74,951.38</b>
				<b>43,263.75</b>

Total Sharing Fund Income Less Trustee Income	41,265.75
2010 Sharing Fund Goal	60,000.00
Percentage of Goal	68.8%

**FUNDS REPORT (unaudited)—cont.**

	Balance as of 1/1/10	Transfers from Oper. Budget	Other Income	Dist. Closing Balance 12/31/10
<b>Other funds</b>				
Advancement—Lafayette	6,946.33	-	3,683.74	1,385.37
Advancement—Leach	1,595.00	-	3,130.00	3,170.00
Advancement—Women	239.36	-	756.20	762.31
Equalization Fund	-	-	4,854.34	3,957.00
Aging Concerns	9,069.85	-	39,969.81	41,927.33
Aging Resources Web site	(1,020.60)	-	10,121.08	9,283.03
Faith & Practice fund	2,192.62	-	830.26	442.34
Sufferings Fund	4,700.00	-	-	2,507.32
FWCC World Gathering	2,300.00	-	-	(1,085.00)
Gospel Order Packets	286.69	(286.69)	-	-
FUM Triennial NYYM attendance	623.59	-	-	(500.00)
FUM Kenya Board Meeting	1,000.00	-	325.00	1,325.00
Records preservation	1,341.72	-	-	9.49
FWCC Regional hosting	1,710.00	-	-	-
Meeting visitation	10,911.25	-	-	-
Youth/Young Adults	7,015.00	-	-	2,075.34
YAC-CYF	813.91	-	15,925.00	553.18
Mosher Fund	6,362.85	-	1,226.00	411.09
YFIR Fund	25,460.95	-	7,731.01	7,314.87
Fall/Spring Sessions	-	-	14,523.60	22,271.91
<b>Total other funds</b>	<u>81,548.52</u>	<u>(286.69)</u>	<u>116,605.23</u>	<u>109,339.77</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>131,599.93</u>	<u>37,928.54</u>	<u>146,553.72</u>	<u>184,291.15</u>

**Trustees, Lindley Murray Fund**

The Lindley Murray Fund was established in 1836, with its income to be used to promote the education of blacks and Indians, to distribute books “tending to promote piety and virtue and the truth of Christianity,” and to “assist and relieve the poor in any description and in any manner that may be judged proper.” Since 1915 the Yearly Meeting also administers the fund of the New York Female Association ([www.swarthmore.edu/library/friends/ead/4095nyfe.xml](http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/friends/ead/4095nyfe.xml)), which was established in 1798 to aid the sick poor; it also opened schools for poor children. Seven and one-half per cent of the total annual income is to be forwarded to the NYFA.

The Lindley Murray’s 2010 income of \$35,806 was awarded as follows:

AFCS—Community Violence Project	4,000
Alternatives to Violence	2,000
Amerinda	2,000
(empowers Native Americans through the arts)	
Ann Schillinger (clothes for released prisoners)	600
Creative Response to Conflict	2,500
FCNL	2,500
Friends General Conference	1,500
<i>Friends Journal</i>	3,000
Indian Affairs Committee (NYYM)	1,500
Long Island Council of Churches	1,500
Oakwood School	4,270
Powell House	2,750
Redemption Center	2,000
Westbury Friends School	1,000
Youth Service Opportunities Project	2,000
New York Female Association (own 7.5% of the fund)	2,686
<b>TOTAL AWARDED</b>	<b>35,806</b>

The Lindley Murray Fund Trustees are requesting that when applying for funds next year you clearly state:

- how the current year’s award was used (if awarded)
- how the new request fits the Lindley Murray Mission Statement

*Todd Tilton, clerk*

## Trustees, New York Yearly Meeting

The value of the investment portfolio held by the NYYM Trustees with the Friends Fiduciary Corporation was \$5,509,785.69 as of 12-31-10. Of the 87,909.651 shares in the Unit Plan at that time, 57,999.642 shares were held on behalf of New York Yearly Meeting and the rest were held as Funds under Management: 11,195.469 shares owned by various monthly and regional meetings, 11,513.530 shares for the Lindley Murray Fund, and 7,201.01 for the Sharing Fund Endowment. The net asset value of each share can be rounded to \$60.42. The dividend rate paid to each share is computed using a 36-month average; in 2010, the rate was \$3.11 and for 2011 the rate is \$2.72. Note that the 36 months used to compute the 2011 rate included some significantly “down” months in the years from 2008 through 2010. The Trustees approved not deducting from the dividend rate the usual administrative fee of ¼ of one percent for each of those years in order to distribute more money to the beneficiaries of the trusts.

In 2010 the Trustees approved the following requests for donations: \$1,000 to the Equalization Fund of New York Yearly Meeting and \$3,000 for the support of Westbury Friends School. Both of these donations were made from the Florence Stevens Fund.

The Trustees, on behalf of New York Yearly Meeting, continue to own the Monkton, VT, and the Yorktown Heights, NY, meetinghouses. These buildings had been owned by meetings that were laid down several years ago and are currently being used by other religious organizations. We are continuing our ongoing efforts to settle the titles of these buildings with the groups currently using them. In November 2010, the Stamford-Greenwich Meeting was laid down by Purchase Quarter. At this time two different religious groups are renting the building and the Trustees are planning to sell the property. Trustees would again like to remind regional/quarterly/half-yearly meetings to attend to the overall health of their constituent monthly meetings and to alert the clerk and general secretary of New York Yearly Meeting of any meetings that could use additional support and assistance.

*Todd Tilton, clerk, NYYM trustees*

## *NYYM Trustees Financial Report Distribution of Funds for Year 2010*

These dividends from certain trust funds are distributed regularly twice yearly to those beneficiaries who have been previously determined by the trust donors and/or by action of the Yearly Meeting.

Oakwood scholarship	\$25,202.77
Oakwood administrative	48,577.61
H.H. Mosher	4,100.31
Powell House	12,211.70
Advancement Committee	3,599.51
Nine Partners Quarterly Meeting	1,871.52
World Ministries	21,603.27
New York Yearly Meeting	12,467.90
Friends Foundation for the Aging	5,295.96
Manasquan Monthly Meeting	2,608.86
Indian Affairs Committee	3,424.68
Friends Historical Library	7,152.69
<b>Funds under management</b>	
Scarsdale Monthly Meeting	1,156.84
New Brunswick Monthly Meeting	1,178.01
Montclair Monthly Meeting	24,593.95
Farmington-Scipio Region	2,052.84
Cornwall Monthly Meeting	4,452.57
Buffalo Monthly Meeting	<u>2,203.76</u>
TOTAL	\$183,754.75

### NYYM Retained Income Funds—2010 Summary

The income from these funds is held until a request is received that meets with the purposes of the fund as designated by the donor and/or the Yearly Meeting. Some of these funds are released at the request of specific committees or regions of the Yearly Meeting and others are released at the discretion of the Yearly Meeting Trustees.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Bal 1-1-10</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Bal 12-31-10</b>
Haines	3,649.35	1,729.76	0.00	5,379.11
Sutton	973.74	345.20	0.00	1,318.94
Monkton	14,769.92	1,865.72	683.50	15,952.14
Yorktown-Underhill	3,111.60	1,079.04	2,750.00	1,440.64
Stevens	11,854.94	6,599.16	5,250.00	13,204.10
Beers	793.72	279.84	0.00	1,073.56
Smith	1,941.80	684.20	0.00	2,626.00
Morris Cemetery	15,674.92	638.24	0.00	16,313.16
Lockport	2,279.86	875.00	2,257.32	897.54
Brinkerhoff	1,032.70	758.84	981.13	810.41
York	9,948.06	10,471.36	11,600.00	8,819.42
Sufferings	6,594.24	1,022.32	0.00	7,616.56
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72,624.85</b>	<b>26,348.68</b>	<b>23,521.95</b>	<b>75,451.58</b>
<b>Funds under management</b>				
Lindley Murray	37,227.78	35,807.08	37,228.00	35,806.86
<b>Non-regularly distributed fund under management</b>				
Sharing Fund endowment	0.00	16,116.38	0.00	16,116.38
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General	3,031.32	626.00	0.00	3,657.32
Florence Stevens	6,247.98	6,233.92	4,000.00	8,481.90
Trustees administrative	33,810.51	0.00	6,739.99	27,070.52

## NURTURE SECTION

### Nurture Coordinating Committee

The committees that make up the Nurture section include the representatives to larger Quaker bodies, such as Friends United Meeting (FUM), Friends General Conference (FGC), and Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC), and the “cradle to grave” sector: Committee on Aging Concerns, Oakwood Board, Junior Yearly Meeting, Young Adult Concerns, Young Friends in Residence, and Youth Committee, as well as Powell House and Epistle.

Some milestones for individual committees have occurred.

Powell House is marking its 50th anniversary. For half a century our conference and retreat center has nurtured the spiritual life of NYYM Friends individually and corporately, as meetings, committees, and ultimately, as a yearly meeting. As it has provided a spiritual home, behind the scenes there has almost always been a struggle to maintain a sound fiscal foundation, as well as sometimes difficult staff transitions, unplanned events (there goes the boiler; where’s that leak coming from?), and other challenges. Reaching 50 is an accomplishment; reaching it while remaining faithful to the mission to be a spiritual home to our Yearly Meeting is truly worth celebrating. So as the Powell House Committee embarks on a strategic planning process, everyone is invited to celebrate the half-century mark August 25–28, 2011, at Powell House.

The Young Friends in Residence (YFIR) is no longer an experiment. At Spring Sessions 2011 the body approved its status as an ongoing program of the New York Yearly Meeting. YFIR will receive annual financial support from the Yearly Meeting to the extent possible. The young adult Friends who have served as interns have testified to the impact this service has had on them, especially on their understanding of what it is to be a Quaker. The goal of fostering the next generation of Quaker leadership is clearly being met. In addition, Perry City Monthly Meeting (PCMM) Friends have been eloquent on the powerful impact hosting the program has had on their spiritual condition. Their local oversight is just part of it. One intern was led to address PCMM Friends’ spiritual development by offering Quakerism 101 and monthly Bible study at Beloved Community House, where the interns live. The meeting and the region embrace the program. Those who attend youth

weekends are also experiencing profound spiritual formation. The innovation and effectiveness of YFIR is proof of our Yearly Meeting's vitality.

FUM representatives brought to Nurture Coordinating Committee another innovative and deeply exciting prospect in exploring the possibility of forming a spiritual partnership with Chwele Yearly Meeting in northwest Kenya. This is an important relationship to them as they seek mentoring and connecting to Quaker history, and for us, as we may learn from Chwele Friends an exuberance of faith, activism, and profound sense of community. All are clear that the partnership is not to be financial. An ongoing exploration of NYYM "walking with" Chwele YM was approved at Spring Sessions, and a committee of FUM and FWCC representatives will be appointed by Nurture Coordinating Committee to proceed as way opens.

FWCC put much of its energy this year into Salt and Light gatherings, preparative to the 2012 World Conference of Friends in Kenya. The full theme is "Being Salt and Light: Friends Living the Kingdom of God in a Broken World." The cost of attending the conference in Kenya can be daunting for first-world Friends; for those from the third world it is prohibitive. The FWCC representatives' committee is asking that NYYM Friends donate frequent flyer miles to assist delegates from Central and South America (and possibly Asia) to travel to the 2012 World Conference. Here is an eminently practical way to help fellow Quakers.

Oakwood Friends School has continued with stability and energy to provide an education that is both moral and academic, seeking to ensure support to the many families who qualify for need-based financial aid in order to afford an Oakwood education. It has also sought to ensure that students can respond in a constructive way, informed by Quaker values, to the many crises and disasters occurring around the globe, through discussion and clubs, direct service, including trips to New Orleans and Nicaragua, and weekly meeting for worship, that grounds all else.

With the *Handbook* page for Youth Committee approved, the committee has moved forward on its goal of all YM sessions' offering youth-oriented programs, including informing the Sessions Committee that they will assist host committees in the planning and facilitating of programmed youth events during Fall and Spring Sessions. The committee also seeks to fill the gap left by the absence of a YM First Day School com-

mittee, exploring the use of the NYYM Web site and other Internet resources such as Facebook and Twitter to share information with monthly meeting First Day School committees and teachers. Communication is also the focus in creating an e-mail list for young Friends and their families.

The ARCH (Aging Resources Consultation and Help) program, overseen by the Committee on Aging Concerns, has been prospering, expanding its reach through the training and development of around 40 Visitors, in addition to the two staff coordinators, Anita Paul and Barbara Spring, to increase the number of Friends who can be helped in dealing with late life and end-of-life issues. Responding to NYYM's aging membership, they have consulted with numerous individuals and families, as well as meetings, traveling around the Yearly Meeting. The reach has extended beyond NYYM, as they work with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting on a Web site. And in sharing the pamphlet *Telling Our Stories* with all meetings (including prison meetings) with suggestions on how to use it to preserve the stories of the seniors in our meetings, they have moved beyond those directly under impact of aging in their families or themselves, to embracing the whole meeting community. Thus ARCH lifts up the spiritual aspects of aging and the spirituality of another kind of elder amongst us.

The Nurture Section encompasses both committees that look at those in our families at different life stages—youth, student, young adult, elder—and the broader organizations that help to make up the extended family of Friends.

*Cheshire Frager, clerk*

### **Committee on Aging Concerns**

This year has been a year of growth for the Committee on Aging Concerns (CAC) and Aging Resources Consultation and Help (ARCH). In July 2010 we reported that, as they continued with their work of leading informative workshops in local meetings, the ARCH coordinators had begun the work of providing Friends from around the Yearly Meeting with information and skills to enhance their care of aging individuals in their meetings. Friends who have received this training have been termed ARCH Visitors.

The first Visitor Training weekend was held at Oakwood Friends School in early June 2010, with 11 Friends in attendance. Two additional Visitor Training sessions were provid-

ed, one in September at a Baptist conference center in the Finger Lakes region and the next in March 2011 at a YMCA Conference Center in Sandyston, NJ. Two committee members, Deb Dickinson and Norma Ellis, who had attended an eldering workshop in May 2010, accompanied the groups in worshipful support during the sessions. We were joined at Oakwood by Tricia Coscia from Philadelphia YM, who presented the Web site [www.quakeragingresources.org](http://www.quakeragingresources.org), a joint effort of NYYM ARCH and PYM, and by a NYYM Friend who shared her experience of vigiling with individuals who are dying.

The training workshops were informative, enriching, joyful, and worshipful. We observed that many of the Friends who felt called to do this work already had experience and skills in the work, and included many Friends who are not regularly seen at NYYM sessions.

The work of the committee is challenged by the geographical distance that separates our bodies, requiring an effort to meet physically. We met for a joint retreat (coordinators and committee members) in September, again at our F(f)riendly site Oakwood School, for spiritual nurture and planning. We met at both Fall and Spring Sessions and began the practice of meeting by telephone conference call in the intervening months. Such calls present an added level of attention and presence as we are not able to see each other's faces. Good order is a challenge, as clerks are unable to see that a Friend is wishing to speak. We each need to state our name as we speak, since it is difficult to recognize the individual by voice alone.

Barbara Spring and Anita Paul (coordinators) continue to present workshops in local meetings and attended an informative conference on Medicare Fraud presented by the New York State AARP. They also met with a housing official in the NYS Capital District about senior housing, in New York State and around the world. Anita also attended a two-day conference on senior housing.

We look forward to the blessings and challenges of the coming year.

*Norma Ellis, coclerk*

### **Friends General Conference representatives**

New York Yearly Meeting appoints 14 representatives to the Central Committee of FGC. (Central Committee is the governing body of FGC, and has no connection to the annual Gath-

ering that many Friends speak of as "FGC".) The number of representatives is set by FGC—each constituent Yearly Meeting has two representatives for each 500 members. Representatives serve in a variety of committee/service opportunities, from helping to make the Gathering run smoothly, assisting with Traveling Ministries programs, and working on diversity, inclusion, historical, and educational ideas, and programs to serve the wider world of FGC Friends and neighbors. This work is done throughout the year and throughout the country with the Annual Meeting of Central Committee happening for four days each fall.

We have noticed that it is getting more and more difficult to find 14 Friends to serve in this capacity, partly because the Yearly Meeting, like so many being stressed in these times, is unable to provide sufficient financial support. (The amount budgeted for this purpose in 2011 is just enough for room and board for two representatives at the four-day meeting.) Friends also seem to be too full and busy with personal daily, home, and Yearly Meeting work to stretch themselves much more. Despite that, many of our current NYYM representatives are clerks and coclerks of committees, including service as the clerk of Central Committee for more than one term. The work done by all brings strength and spiritual growth to both FGC and the Friends they serve.

Like many nonprofits in these times, FGC has received fewer donations and has put a lot of energy into considering ways to reorganize so as to avoid a financial crisis. The committee structure has been changed, and there has been a lot of brainstorming about possible ways to get work done with fewer face-to-face meetings, without losing the corporate discernment so vital to Friends' business process. We hope that the reorganization will result in a more flexible and nimble organization. Some projects are being laid down, and new opportunities are being seized.

Bruce Birchard, who has been general secretary since 1992, retired in mid-July, and Barry Crossno has taken over as the new general secretary. Barry brings considerable experience with both nonprofits and small businesses, and we're sure FGC will be in good hands. (Read more about him at [www.fgcquaker.org](http://www.fgcquaker.org).)

*Buffy Curtis, representatives clerk;  
Karen Snare, co-opted member*

## Friends United Meeting representatives

New York Yearly Meeting's representatives to Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board for the 2008–2011 triennium are Beatrice Beguin, Steven Ross, and Christopher Sammond. Ann Davidson and Regina Baird Haag are alternates, and Carol Holmes continues to serve the General Board as recording clerk by appointment of FUM.

FUM has adopted a statement of purpose:

Friends United Meeting commits itself to energize and equip Friends through the power of the Holy Spirit to gather people into fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord.

Since NYYM's 2010 Summer Sessions, the FUM North American General Board has met in Richmond, IN, in October 2010 and February 2011. A combined session of the North America and Africa General Boards on July 9–11, 2010, was held at Mabanga Agricultural Training Center in Kenya and attended by Christopher Sammond and Ann Davidson. Reports of projects in Kenya were presented. The General Board Re-structure Committee presented its task to develop proposals to allow FUM to:

- more effectively live out our statement of purpose
- develop an organization model that is sustainable (staff, structure, facilities, finances)
- increase involvement and ownership of yearly meetings in the work of FUM
- improve communications.

Features of FUM's identity are:

- gathered as Christians
- gathered as Quakers
- gathered as Orthodox Friends

Ideas for a new vision for FUM include

- bring FUM projects closer to local churches/meetings by partnering yearly meetings with projects
- move partner projects toward greater local autonomy
- continue a "Great People to be Gathered" campaign of outreach and evangelism
- develop a sustainable program and budget in Richmond and Africa Ministries Office
- reestablish and develop North American Ministries.

The 2011 FUM Triennial is scheduled for July 27–31, 2011, at Wilmington College, Wilmington, OH. The theme will be

"Transforming Lives." Romans 12:2: "Do not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will."

At the February 2011 GB meeting, Colin Saxton was confirmed as the new general secretary of FUM. He will compete his term as general superintendent of Northwest Yearly Meeting and begin at FUM in January 2012.

*Beatrice Beguin, clerk of FUM representatives*

## Friends World Committee for Consultation

This year's Section of the Americas annual meeting was abbreviated, held in Philadelphia with no attendance from Latin America, in order to allow FWCC staff to concentrate on local Salt and Light events during the year. One of these gatherings, which are designed to raise Friends' awareness of FWCC and are based on the theme of next year's World Conference of Friends in Kenya, followed immediately upon the annual meeting. The Section office supplies the speakers, who have been from El Salvador, Ireland, and Britain Yearly Meetings, as well as North Carolina, Northwest, and Baltimore Yearly Meetings. At the Philadelphia gathering they were David and Linda Kusse-Wolfe, Friends pastors from Wichita, who spoke about "holy hospitality," which makes a space for the Spirit to move. The richest hospitality is with the person most unlike ourselves.

A global change cluster was held at Purchase Meeting in January. Participants considered this query: "Is there a spiritually grounded response [to global change] that Friends may craft to say to the world, and that can serve as preparation for action?" One of the many responses was "Changes make me lean more heavily on God." FWCC's goal is to distill reports from clusters (via conference call) into a document that will be presented to the World Conference.

Four delegates will represent New York Yearly Meeting at the World Conference, whose theme is "Being Salt and Light: Friends living the kingdom of God in a broken world." Fund-raising will be necessary to help the delegates get to Kenya and pay the tiered registration fee (\$900 for Friends from the US). They will report back to the Yearly Meeting. We would also like to find a way to assist the attendance of Latin American delegates.

*Judith Inskip, clerk*

## Junior Yearly Meeting Committee

Junior Yearly Meeting is the branch of Yearly Meeting that comprises young people under the age of 18. It has traditionally been focused on the activities organized for youth at Summer Sessions at Silver Bay, and this remains its major focus. The teen clerks appointed at Summer Sessions are active throughout the year, however, and participate in planning for youth activities at Spring and Fall Sessions.

The Junior Yearly Meeting Committee is responsible for planning the program for young people at Summer Sessions. It appoints the two or three coordinators for the sessions, who in turn recruit 25 to 30 adult volunteers to facilitate the sessions. The youths in each age group were motivated and showed great interest in their activities.

By all accounts, the JYM program in 2010 was a positive experience for everyone who participated. In addition, many activities scheduled in the afternoon and evening were well attended by JYM youth and they participated brilliantly in both Café Night and in the presentations of their epistles to the Yearly Meeting community at the end of the week.

Each morning, our 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-graders attended worship sharing with adults. The teens who participated in the men's worship sharing reported that it was especially rewarding for them. Each age group attended community worship at noon in the auditorium. The last day of community worship continued to be a very powerful experience for many of us with the youth singing as they walked in. As the transition into community worship at the end of each morning has worked very well, we look forward to our youth bringing even more energy to our Quaker community.

Our JYM Committee meetings at Silver Bay were well attended with both adults and youth clerks participating. During the year our committee met at Fall Sessions and Spring Sessions and both meetings were also well-attended with our youth clerks making their contributions. As with last year, our committee agreed to once again send our teen clerks and teen clerk advisers to participate in Arthur Larrabee's clerking workshop in February at Powell House. The workshop went well as all five high school clerks and both their teen clerk advisers were able to attend. We look forward to the continuation of their practice of gathering for their own meeting for worship with a concern for business each day as they return from

worship sharing in the morning. We will also enjoy having them join us for our June Planning Weekend at Powell House, where they will share with us their ideas for the program that they want to have at Summer Sessions. As always, we intend to provide the best program we can for our children and will continue to build the Friendly community during our week at Silver Bay.

*Peter Close, clerk, & Mary Eagleson, assistant clerk*

## Oakwood Friends School

Oakwood Friends School has enjoyed a year of optimism and energy, stable student enrollment, strong academic programs, and meaningful community worship against a backdrop of a challenging economy and unsettling natural and human crises. Faculty and students continue to work together to strike a balance among conceptual study, experiential learning, creative expression, physical skills and athletics, engaged service, and reflective worship, all within the context of Quaker principles.

Our primary institutional challenge in this era of economic uncertainty continues to be finding ways to support our many families who qualify for need-based financial aid in order to afford an Oakwood education. As with nearly all independent and Quaker schools, the real cost of educating each child exceeds our tuition rate, and in order to maintain the economically diverse student body that we all desire, we must find creative ways to support our families. Loan- and grant-making organizations continue to reduce or eliminate their programs, thereby creating additional challenges for schools like Oakwood. Despite these obstacles, we remain committed to providing an educational setting based on Quaker values to an economically diverse group of students and families—both Quaker and non-Quaker.

In the past year, we have seen earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and the ongoing effects of the Gulf oil spill. War, strife, disease, and famine continue in many spots around the globe. As we submit this report, we have just seen Osama bin Laden killed, and sections of the southeastern portion of the United States have been devastated by storms and flooding. Many lives have been lost. Our students are touched by these events in ways that are seen and unseen, spoken and silent. Our meetings for worship have reflected these events,

and a spiritual energy is expanding in response.

Two concrete responses to tragedy and injustice have continued to have ripple effects across the Oakwood community and beyond. This year, the school sponsored our seventh trip to New Orleans to help with ongoing post-Katrina rebuilding efforts. Students and faculty also participated in our tenth “fair labor” trip (again to Nicaragua this year) under the auspices of Oakwood’s No Sweat Club and the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition. The No Sweat Club actively continues its mission of educating our community about fair labor practices and the effects of global trade on under-resourced populations. Oakwood’s ongoing Model United Nations activities continue to provide engaging geopolitical simulations that enlarge the worldview of our students.

As it has for years, Oakwood provides an important form of Quaker outreach to students and faculty of other faith traditions or no faith tradition at all. During the school year, nearly 200 students and adults gather weekly on campus for meeting for worship. The majority of those gathered are not Friends; yet they are learning about, and participating in, Quaker worship, and they are grappling with and enacting Quaker testimonies beyond the meeting room itself. Worship with teenagers can be particularly compelling: vocal messages tend to be unfiltered and straight from the heart. We are reminded often that there is a compelling spiritual energy within the Oakwood community.

All of you who support Oakwood Friends School participate in our school’s endeavors, however far you may be from the campus. None of the school’s work could be done without those who have helped to sustain and nurture this institution over the years. Alumni, members of the Board of Managers, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, friends of the school, and Friends in New York Yearly Meeting and beyond—all work together to make this school an exceptional place for young people to learn and to form the values that will guide them on the varied paths of their lives.

*Peter F. Baily, head of school*

*William F. Bogle Jr., ’76, president, Board of Managers*

## **Elsie K. Powell House Inc.**

As Powell House moves through its 50th Anniversary year, following a period of painful upheaval and deep discernment, it is both celebrating its vital accomplishments and seeking to address significant challenges in the next phase of its life. In its first 50 years, Powell House has been a source of spiritual transformation, community, and solace for thousands of individuals. Young and old, Friends and friends experience Powell House as a spiritual home. Over the course of the past year, staff and committee have come to face the reality that Powell House’s current operations are not sustainable, and together are seeking to discern a new path forward for the next 50 years. Although the strategic-planning process and the celebration process are very different activities, Powell House staff and committee believe that they will provide many opportunities to engage with New York Yearly Meeting in Spirit-led celebration, discernment, and growth.

The Powell House 50th Anniversary Celebration will take place at Powell House August 25–28, 2011. Everyone is invited! Register now for all—or part—of the party. The extended weekend will include a concert, contra dancing, swimming, Frisbee, a cabaret, and a Saturday Fair for Powell House guests and the Old Chatham, Albany, and Columbia County community. A new *Powell House Cook’s Book* containing the favorite recipes of our recent cooks (with a few from Evelyn Dane) should be ready in time for sale at Summer Sessions.

The question of how to celebrate Powell House’s 50th Anniversary led the Powell House Committee to deep discernment. With ongoing operating deficits, painful staff transitions, and inconsistent individual committee member engagement to be dealt with, the Committee believed that planning the celebration was not an appropriate use of its or staff efforts. With much gratitude, the Powell House staff and committee accepted the offer of Melanie-Claire Mallison to step in. Her leadership and her efforts in planning this event and in helping to prepare the cookbook have been invaluable. We are looking forward to a wonderful weekend in celebration of the Powell House history and spirit.

While celebration planning and cookbook preparation were going forward, Powell House Committee and staff embarked on a strategic-planning process, aimed at ensuring Powell House’s sustainability for the coming 50 years. In executive

session in January 2011, the committee named a joint committee and staff task group composed of Mike Clark, Ann Davidson, Chris DeRoller, Bob Elmendorf, Mary Harpster, Mark Hewitt, Carol Holmes, Elizabeth Powers, Arlene Reduto, a youth representative, and Angi York Crane (elder) to take on this work. The major elements of this work include:

- Outlining what is needed to sustain Powell House financially and what trends could have an impact on sustainability
- Understanding what New York Yearly Meeting needs from Powell House
- Identifying programs (either existing or new) required to meet these needs and identifying how far these activities will go to supporting Powell House's financial requirements and
- Identifying alternative resources (fund-raising, rentals, other) to meet any potential gap

The strategic-planning task group has met on weekly conference calls and in a weekend meeting at Powell House in March. To date, it has launched a survey designed to inform the committee of the needs of Friends in New York Yearly Meeting and how Powell House is currently used. Committee members are also conducting face-to-face interviews to gather supplemental information.

At an interest group and a working lunch during the week at Silver Bay, we will begin to share what we found in the survey and in our interviews. We will brainstorm with you about different ways of meeting the needs identified by the survey. We anticipate proposing new directions at the fall Powell House Committee meeting.

This energy going into finding ways to sustain Powell House now and into the future is not limited to the strategic-planning task group. A few examples:

- The fiscal subcommittee has streamlined the chart of accounts, standardized monthly reports, and clarified endowment restrictions.
- The personnel subcommittee, having worked through staff transitions that have been painful for staff, committee members, and the NYYM community, is changing the communication avenue between staff and the committee, is updating the personnel policy manual, and is reviewing the staff-evaluation process. The personnel subcommittee now meets monthly via conference calls.

- The nominating subcommittee is exploring best practices for moving forward with the needs of our committee structure. Through discernment, it has been led to leave subcommittee positions unfilled until an individual emerged (either through nurturing or recruiting) whose gifts matched the needs of the open position.
- The long-range sustainability subcommittee's vision of planning and what sustainability could look like for Powell House put words to hopes and concerns that had not been clearly stated before. Its members' exuberance reflect back to us the love that is evident for the ministry and the place of Powell House.

We are experiencing a new level of group engagement as a committee. As committee and subcommittee engagement has grown, we are increasingly supporting each other with laughter and love through different difficult personal challenges. We are especially holding Friend Andy Heimer in the Light as he battles ALS.

Although times are challenging, support and gifts of all kinds continue to appear. The committee and staff have also achieved a new level of collaboration. We are grateful for the energy and talents of new staff members and how they appeared when needed or time was ripe. We are also grateful for how Friends spring to assist Powell House with emergency funds, reflecting the place PoHo holds in NYYM's heart.

Our faith is that all of this work will furnish clear leading for how to continue Powell House's mission of enhancing the practice of Friends and creating a vibrant community, enabling transformation by the Spirit, and that it will truly celebrate Powell House's 50th anniversary and light the way into the next 50 years.

*Angela York Crane, clerk, Powell House Committee*

### **Young Adult Concerns Committee**

This year has been full of depth, challenge, and activity! We have continued to regularly plan and host wonderfully well-attended thought-provoking conferences, and another is in the works for this upcoming summer. Our members have been few and dispersed across states and countries but have stepped up and continued to breathe passion and life into our committee work. Our Web site, Facebook page, and e-mail list

are thriving, and we have found ourselves acting as conduits, being in a fantastic position to distribute news and opportunities through our ever-growing network. We are continuously thrilled to include more Young Adult Friends in our community and are looking forward to gathering more members at Summer Sessions in July.

*Natalie Braun, clerk*

### **Young Friends in Residence Committee**

Lob a pebble into the pond. Watch the ripples move out, concentric circles gently lifting as they pass. And so each of us affects the other. The Young Friends In Residence program (YFIR) is almost two years old, and both the program and the interns have been changing the meeting communities. It may be subtle; yet if we take time to notice—we are different.

After several years of discernment, preparation, and communications with monthly meetings and young adult Friends, the YFIR pilot program was launched in September 2009. The program is a joint collaboration between Perry City Monthly Meeting, which serves as host, and New York Yearly Meeting, which serves as the sponsoring organization. YFIR is designed to strengthen and revitalize the Religious Society of Friends by addressing three areas critical to the continued, or restored, health of our meetings: keeping adolescents and their families involved in the meeting; providing concrete and substantive opportunities to develop the leadership gifts of members and attenders, particularly among young adult Friends; and deepening the spiritual life and practices of individuals and the meeting.

Three to four young adult Friends live in intentional spiritual community for one or preferably two years. Living in intentional community allows for spiritual formation, naming and nurturing of gifts, and lifting up ministry in a space in which it can blossom and grow. The young adult Friends participate fully in the life of the local monthly meeting, regional or quarterly meeting, Yearly Meeting, and the wider Quaker world. They also provide outreach to the local community.

During a Leadership In-Service training in January 2011, the interns were able to capture the essence of their work:

**We aim to live with joy and deep caring and share both that joy and that caring with the world.**

The shared ministry that we have found ourselves called

to and involved in is creating stable, long-term, accepting and affirming spaces, loving places where the deep need to belong is met. These are places to nurture one another, celebrate deep connection, and explore spiritual and life issues with peers and mentors. They are places to live in the Spirit and experience Quaker spirituality (seeing that of God in one's self and others, holding each other in the light, corporate worship, listening deeply, living with integrity and simplicity).

There are currently three interns, Franklin Crump, Anna Obermayer, and Helen Staab, living in residence at the Beloved Community House in Newfield, NY, ten miles from both Perry City Monthly Meeting and Ithaca Monthly Meeting. All three will be leaving the program in August, and at the time of this writing, we are seeking three or four new interns.

To date, the interns have held 16 retreats. 14 were middle school retreats and two were for high school-aged youth. Many of the youth participants came from around the state and from within and outside of Quaker circles. The interns' outreach and inreach work has included: AVP workshops at Auburn prison; weekly discussions on Quaker faith and practice; monthly Bible studies; and developing curriculum and leading First Day school for middle school and older youth. They are participating on Perry City's Ministry and Council Committee and Peace and Social Action Committee. They have worked with youth at NYYM Sessions and Farmington-Scipio's Spring Gathering. They report monthly on their work to a Logistics and Support committee. For the personal spiritual nurture that grounds their work, the interns communicate with their appointed elders, attend programs at Powell House and Pendle Hill, and read Quaker blogs. Much growth has occurred in their participation in cross-branch young adult Friends' gatherings and national Quaker gatherings such as Friends General Conference. They all speak of the importance of their spirited, deep conversations with one another on long car rides and around the table.

This year (2010–2011), the program was financially supported by the Thomas H. and Mary Williams Shoemaker Fund, the Bob Bacon Memorial Fund, Farmington-Scipio Regional Meeting, and donations from monthly meetings, individual Friends, and others including parents of youth attenders. NYYM approved YFIR as an ongoing program of the Yearly Meeting at Spring Sessions 2011. Ithaca Monthly Meeting is

handling payment and record-keeping for local expenses. Perry City Monthly Meeting has been wonderful in hosting the program, providing a house at cost to the interns and giving them encouragement, oversight, and friendship. Perry City Friends' and the interns' willingness to be faithful and to take a chance at something new and difficult has been such a blessing to the YFIR program.

The ripples from YFIR are extending throughout the Yearly Meeting and beyond. Much good work is happening. To keep the waters moving, the committee is actively seeking a new round of interns and members for the committee. We are looking for Friends excited about this work to help identify more long-term funding sources for the program and to visit monthly meetings to spread the word about YFIR. For more information you can contact the committee at [yfirwg@gmail.com](mailto:yfirwg@gmail.com) or the interns at [yfirinterns@gmail.com](mailto:yfirinterns@gmail.com).

*Chris DeRoller and Amy Willauer-Obermayer, coclerks*

## **Youth Committee**

We have enjoyed several opportunities to worship and work together during this year. Our youth members brought clear messages and deepened our discernment. They have enriched our committee. Our labors have included; refining the Youth Committee page for the NYYM *Handbook* and facilitating a successful program for youth ages 6–18 during Fall Sessions 2010. As part of the programming we offered a service project and the opportunity to attend plenary sessions and committee meetings followed by relevant discussions.

We are looking forward to the time when youth-oriented programs are available at all Yearly Meeting sessions. Toward that end we have approved a minute informing the Sessions Committee that we will assist host committees in the planning and facilitating of programmed youth events during the Fall and Spring Sessions of NYYM. We will be available, upon request, to work with JYM to further deepen the programming at Summer Sessions.

A task group is looking at ways we can disseminate information to First Day School committees, and Young Friends, in NYYM through the use of the NYYM Web site and other Internet resources such as Facebook and Twitter. We hope to develop an e-mail contact list to communicate directly to

young Friends and their families about projects and events of interest. We want to encourage our youth to participate in the business and discernment of the Yearly Meeting

In the future we see this committee working in concert with monthly and regional meetings to create more opportunities for youth gatherings. Suggestions for service opportunities are being considered. Perhaps members of the committee will visit monthly and regional meetings to learn about needs and interests of their young Friends.

There are many opportunities before us, and the Youth Committee looks forward to working with Junior Yearly Meeting, Powell House, Young Friends in Residence, and other Yearly Meeting committees to share successes and discuss concerns. We hope to broaden the availability of NYYM programs to more of our young members.

*Kathleen Lawson, clerk*

## **WITNESS SECTION**

### **Witness Coordinating Committee**

Friends express God's gifts in our witness. We celebrate God's unbounded love for all creation in our service to our community and our Earth. We know that "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all [persons]." 1 Corinthians 12:4–7 (NIV).

The Advance Reports below from the committees under the care of Witness Coordinating Committee (WCC) relate many ways in which Friends in New York Yearly Meeting are engaging our world with God's generous gifts and the power of the Spirit. In 2010, Witness Coordinating Committee brought some of this engagement to the Yearly Meeting Body in reports and proposed minutes.

At 2009 Fall Sessions, the Yearly Meeting Body, at the suggestion of Witness Coordinating Committee, approved becoming a cosponsor of the Truth Commission on Conscience in War, which was being formed to investigate and issue a report on rights of conscience among persons in the military. Frederick Dettmer (Purchase Meeting), Ernestine Buscemi (Morn-

ingside Meeting), and Naomi Paz Greenberg (Flushing Meeting) were named as NYYM representatives and participated in the Truth Commission's public hearing held at Riverside Church in New York City on March 21 and 22, 2010. Together with other participating Friends from around the nation, they gave voice to our Testimony of Peace, rights of conscience, and Friends' unceasing work to end warfare in all forms. The proceedings were described to the Body at Spring Sessions 2010 (minute 2010-4-37), and a report on the public hearing was published in the April 2010 *InfoShare*.

At Summer Sessions, WCC and Indian Affairs Committee presented information on the so-called Doctrine of Discovery, by which indigenous Peoples had been deprived of their rights and land, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. A minute endorsing the UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples and repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery was offered for a first reading. The minute provides:

We seek to live in a just peace with our fellow human beings, both as individuals and as peoples.

We call on the United States Senate to ratify the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of 2007, so that it becomes the law of the land in the United States of America.

We repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, which originated in the 15th century from Papal bulls and European royal charters issued at that time. We cannot accept that the Doctrine of Discovery was ever a true authority for forced takings of persons and land. It is false for the United States to assert the Doctrine of Discovery to compel a jurisdiction over indigenous peoples or their land.

We honor the inalienable rights that sustain the existence of indigenous peoples. Indigenous people have rights to their homeland, water, spiritual practices, language, cultural practices, and to self-government. Indigenous peoples have the right to make decisions and conduct international relations on their own behalf.

The Yearly Meeting Body approved receiving the minute from Indian Affairs Committee and Witness Coordinating Committee, and directed Indian Affairs Committee to share the minute with the monthly meetings and worship groups, together with explanatory and educational materials, and to travel among the meetings to explore with Friends the opportunities and challenges offered by the minute (minute 2010-

7-37). In faithfulness to the Body's direction, Indian Affairs Committee has undertaken substantial efforts to distribute information about the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Doctrine of Discovery and has met with meetings and Friends to share this concern.

At Fall Sessions, Prisons Committee related to the Body how its work was expanding to include (1) outreach to prison worship group members who are in the hospital and (2) the provision of referral assistance for those coming home from prison. Friends approved this new work for Prisons Committee and a revision to the Committee's *Handbook* page to encompass this expansion in its mission (minute 2010-11-28).

During 2010, WCC completed its work in establishing the Sharing Fund Endowment. While Friends' and Meetings' contributions to the Sharing Fund will continue to be the primary means by which we support the witness activities of the Yearly Meeting and its constituent monthly meetings, the Sharing Fund Endowment will assist in providing financial support to our witness and will facilitate our ability to respond to emerging leadings.

During the year, Witness Coordinating Committee also presented reports to the Body on NYYM Friends' witness work. Nadine Hoover (Alfred Meeting), Sarah Rozard (Alfred Meeting), and Autumn Star offered reflections on their work with the Indonesian Initiative of Friends Peace Teams and the relationship of this work to our witness of conscience. Greta Mickyey (Central Finger Lakes Meeting), the NYYM Peace Concerns coordinator, reported on the trip to Sakartvelo (the Republic of Georgia) that she and Shirley Way (Central Finger Lakes Meeting), coordinator of AVP/NY, took during May and June 2010 to continue building relationships with Friends there and to reestablish AVP in Georgia. They facilitated five full AVP workshops, including a training for 12 facilitators, and offered abbreviated workshops for 10- to 13-year-olds and 14- to 18-year-olds at an orphanage in the village of Tskneti near Tbilisi. And Margaret Lechner (Purchase Meeting) reported on her work with the Peacebuilding en las Américas program of Friends Peace Teams in offering AVP workshops in Honduras and El Salvador.

Finally, Witness Coordinating Committee again sponsored and organized a Committee Fair at Summer Sessions. The Fair gives Friends an opportunity to learn more about the work of the committees and other groups throughout NYYM.

During the 12 months of 2010, the Sharing Fund received donations totaling \$41,265, 69% of the goal of \$60,000. Witness committees disbursed over \$74,950 of Sharing Funds (including funds from other sources and carryover from the prior year), and reduced the year-to-year carryover balance by almost \$7,000. The Sharing Fund goal for 2011 was set at \$50,000 to better reflect the experience of contributions received over the past few years.

*Frederick Dettmer, clerk*

*Witness Activities Fund Grants in 2010:*

Support of three young Friends for their work with the Indonesia Initiative of Friends Peace Teams (Friends Peace Teams)	4,350
Support for Friend's work with Peacebuilding en las Américas program of Friends Peace Teams (Purchase MM)	1,000
Peace Camp interns support (Albany MM)	1,000
Peace and Justice Film Series (Old Chatham MM)	150
Travel to Republic of Georgia and assistance of Friends there with Alternatives to Violence Workshops (Peace Concerns Coordinator)	4,000
Support for work with the Redemption Center in Brooklyn, NY (Housatonic MM)	500

**Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Inc**

For AVP/NY, 2010 was a year of expansion in some communities and pulling back in others and the addition of two prison programs. We now have active programs in 18 prisons. Landing Strip, our support group for people released, continues to meet twice monthly in Manhattan.

**Our Community Programs**

Through the support of the New York Area Council, we held a basic workshop, led by four formerly incarcerated men, at the Fortune Society, the leading reentry agency in New York City. We are continuing to grow our relationship with the Fortune Society.

We began two initiatives in the Bronx. We are working with local churches to bring a series of workshops for adults and young adults. Second, by invitation from the Martin Luther King Jr. Health Center, we are offering workshops to employees with the ultimate goal of having a self-sustaining program at the Center. We held mini-workshops for each group in 2010.

In Rochester, we held a mini, and have since held a Basic workshop at the Church of the Ascension Episcopal. Two of the facilitators had been recently released from Groveland prison. The church would like to grow its prison ministry and may become a home for a Rochester Landing Strip.

Compared with 2009, 2010 saw fewer community workshops in Buffalo, Alfred, and Elmira, sometimes due to too few participants but more often due to lack of availability of coordinators. One of those coordinators, Nadine Hoover, wrote the *Trauma Healing Advanced Workshop Manual*. It can be ordered at <http://consciencestudio.com/OSC/> or from Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

In total, 16 community workshops and 21 mini-workshops were conducted in NY State.

**Our School Programs**

Our programs offering minis to 5th, 6th, and 7th graders and full workshops (one each of the Basic, Advanced and Training for Facilitators) to 8th–12th graders in Walton Central Schools and one full workshop to 10th–12th graders from Delhi and Andes Schools continued. Our after-school program in Poughkeepsie offered just one workshop in 2010 due to the coordinator's illness.

101 youth participated in full workshops, approximately 420 in mini-workshops; 26 were trained to be apprentice facilitators, and 27 served on-team.

**Our Prison Programs**

Our prison programs remain strong for the most part in the 16 prisons we were in last year, and in 2010 we began offering monthly workshops at two more prisons: Cayuga and Butler, both medium-security men's prisons. The number of workshops offered in prisons and the number of participants are up slightly from 2009.

The men at Green Haven developed a new special-topic workshop focusing on ending violence against women. Participants for this pilot workshop were solely inside and out-

side facilitators. Other new special-topic workshops focused on roadblocks and green lights to reentry, and self-awareness in relationships. We held two AVP anger-management workshops and seven AVP parenting workshops in prisons.

### **Our Work Outside of NYS**

Nadine Hoover continued her 20-something-year-long venture of growing AVP in Indonesia, now as part of Friends Peace Teams' Indonesia Initiative and with the support of New York Yearly Meeting. In 2010 Sarah Mandolang Rozard, Autumn Star, and, from AVP/New Zealand, Peter Watson joined in the work in Indonesia—this time facilitating workshops that focus on parents and teachers of young children.

Nadine visited three AVP communities in New Zealand, bringing greetings from AVP/NY.

Greta Mickey and Shirley Way served on-team in several workshops with Maia Gonjilashvili, in the Republic of Georgia, under the care of New York Yearly Meeting.

Margaret Lechner worked with Friends Peace Teams' Peacebuilding en las Américas, facilitating workshops in El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala. Margaret also served on-team in New Jersey.

Lilian Vega, a facilitator from Guatemala, spoke of the AVP work in her country to five gatherings in NYS.

Workshop numbers for 2010:

- 170 workshops (133 prisons, 16 community, 21 mini)
- 1,786 certificates of completion

*Judy Meikle, clerk*

### *Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc. (AVP-NY), Financial Report, 2010*

Income	
Public support	
Contributions—individual	15,765.60
Contributions for Landing Strip	350.00
Contributions for scholarship	245.00
Contributions—churches/meetings	1,750.00
Area councils	500.00
NY Yearly Meeting	4,418.79
Farmington-Scipio RM grant	<u>1,500.00</u>
Total public support	24,529.39
Program service revenue	
Manual sales	1,738.73
Annual meeting fees	2,367.50
Retreat	450.00
Sales of t-shirts & merchandise	<u>145.00</u>
Total program service revenue	4,701.23
Other revenue	
Dividends & interest-securities	1,426.33
Misc. revenue (insurance for fire damage)	<u>2,500.00</u>
Total revenue	33,156.95
Expense	
Program services	
Certificates & TP cards	450.00
Farmington-Scipio Award to Central NY AVP	860.00
Annual meeting expenses	3,355.42
Landing Strip	2,150.65
Manuals	0.00
Newsletter	2,711.55
Volunteer expenses & travel	0.00
Workshop expenses	13.27
Fundraising expense	907.22
Promotional materials	185.29
Retreats	<u>448.48</u>
Total program services	11,081.88
Management & general expenses	
Payroll expenses	11,442.57
Payroll taxes	1,285.47
Payroll service fees	895.55

Health insurance	6,283.41
Accounting fees	500.00
Supplies	199.58
Telephone & telecommunications	2,432.65
Web site	326.26
Printing & copying	88.51
Postage	779.65
Bank service charges	48.62
Rent	500.00
Utilities	369.75
Travel & meetings expenses (staff)	168.45
Insurance—liability	634.98
Insurance—Worker’s Comp	282.00
N.Y.S. disability insurance	180.00
Filing fees—N.Y. State	60.00
Equipment purchases	89.98
Fire-related expenses	2,500.00
Total management & general expenses	<u>29,067.43</u>
Total expenses	<u>40,149.31</u>
Net (to be taken from investments)	<u>-6,992.36</u>

## American Friends Service Committee

### Representatives to National Corporation

*No report submitted.*

### Middle Atlantic Region

*No report submitted.*

### New York Metropolitan Regional Office

This last year, May 2010 to May 2011, the New York Office of the American Friends Service Committee (NYMRO) has continued its focus on Immigrants’ Rights, gun violence in general along with the effects of gun violence on youth, and the Healing Justice Program. An important objective of NYMRO’s work has been developing partnerships and coalitions with other organizations working on the same objectives in all of these areas.

In Newark, the Immigrant Rights Program is taking a leading role on two key issues. There has been an expansion of im-

migrant detention, which is closely linked to the financial gains of cities and counties, and private prisons. The AFSC’s leadership of a broad coalition helped to gain media attention to the issues posed by this expansion. In addition, the AFSC has become the primary organization for information and community action opposing the Secure Communities Program in New Jersey, which is one of 11 states that does not participate in this federal program. The Program has also provided rights training and legal recourse to individuals in a New Jersey federal detention center and New Jersey county jails.

Given more prominence by the shooting of Gabrielle Giffords, the Violence Prevention/Gun Violence program has worked on both national and local levels. New constituents have sought information about the availability of guns. A teach-in for 30 activists prepared to lobby for sensible gun laws responded to some of this need. The AFSC’s national voice and visibility have increased through membership on the Faiths United against Gun Violence to rally national support for gun policies that reduce death and injury. Locally the office continues to work with New York City teenagers to reflect on the causes and impact of gun violence on their communities. Over the summer they will be working on a mural at 150th Street and Amsterdam Avenue that will reflect their thoughts and feelings on this topic. Next year this program will be folded into the Healing Justice Program.

Steadfast exposure of the US practice of human rights violations, particularly through isolation units in US prisons and the use of other devices of torture, continues to bring to the Healing Justice Program an enormous array of organizations and individuals seeking information and technical assistance. Committed to convey firsthand accounts of those most affected, an updated draft of the AFSC’s *Torture in US Prisons* was readied for review, and funds were secured for a reprint of *The Survivors Manual*, which is much in demand by those who are in solitary confinement and those who work with the incarcerated. The AFSC produced three short films on reentry and had an opening screening in New Jersey with many groups in attendance. *Concrete, Steel, Paint*, a film depicting the creation of a mural created through the joint efforts of men inside prison and victims of violence, highlights the different perspectives of communities broken by violence. The AFSC and others jointly sponsored the showing.

The Healing Justice Program has a new staff member, Lewis

Webb Jr. He has completed seed work for a fall 2011 juvenile justice project with private and public schools. In addition, in cooperation with Riverside Church Prison Ministry, Morning-side Meeting, the NYYM Prisons Committee, and the National Office of the AFSC, Lewis has been planning an event with Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in an Age of Colorblindness*, to begin a Campaign to End the New Jim Crow.

The work of the NY Metropolitan Regional Office of the AFSC combines advocacy for those who are underserved and education of the wider public of issues that are often incompletely covered.

*Elizabeth Enloe, regional director, NYMRO*

### **Barrington Dunbar Fund for Black Development**

The Barrington Dunbar Fund is undergoing some soul searching. After serving as clerk for many years, Marvea Thompson rotated off the committee. Her service will be missed. Robert Martin, our new clerk, has brought a recommendation that the committee spend some time in self-examination. The committee has been receptive to his request. Over the upcoming months we plan to review our mandate, history, and giving guidelines.

We are charged with assisting grassroots organizations that nurture and support Black and Latino communities. In previous years, the committee has used the funds contributed to provide seed money to maintain or expand community-development projects aimed at helping preschool children, youth, and the aged who are victimized by the adverse conditions of poverty and racism in their communities; to provide legal aid, rehabilitation of those formerly incarcerated, and bail bond projects; to provide job training; and many other projects of a like nature. If your meeting is involved with projects in the Black and Latino community, please apply for funds from our committee.

We carry a special concern in supporting Black and Latino disadvantaged students attending Quaker schools. To this end we have given funds to the following Quaker schools: Brooklyn Friends, Friends Seminary, Oakwood Friends, and Westbury Friends.

We have also assisted with summer camp scholarships for

children of migrant farmworkers. Our criminal justice-related grants have included monies to the Campaign to End the New Jim Crow, and the NuLeadership policy group.

*Helen Garay Toppins, for the Barrington Dunbar Fund*

### **Friends Committee for Black Concerns**

There is no question that the highlight of our year was Harlem-Quake. This was a first for us—a public event in Harlem, NY, sponsored by the Black Concerns Committee.

We chose Women's History Month to honor contributions of Black women. We visited the Lynette Yiadom-Boakye exhibit "Any Number of Preoccupations" at The Studio Museum in Harlem, and we toured the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, on Malcolm X Boulevard.

We celebrated and acknowledged "18th-Century African American Women in the Quaker Orbit" at the Countee Cullen Branch Library. Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye, coauthors of *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice*, were the presenters. They focused on Black women committed to ending injustices.

The event was the brainchild of our June 2010 Powell House weekend, "Toward an Inclusive Community." Vanessa and Donna urged us to examine how we could nurture an inclusive community, and we decided that we wanted to go public. The event also incorporated the Black Concerns Committee's purposes and objectives as approved by NYYM as we seek to:

- broaden and deepen communication among all ethnic groups
- develop among Friends a keener awareness of the violence of racism
- increase awareness among Friends of the history and contributions of Blacks and other ethnic groups both within and outside the Religious Society of Friends

We continue to encourage monthly meetings to use the *Fit for Freedom Study Guide*, published by Friends General Conference's Committee for Ministry on Racism. It is filled with quotes, queries, and suggested activities. The guide can be used in meetings or reading groups, or individually. There are also children's activities that can be used for First Day school. You may order the books by visiting [www.fitforfreedom.org](http://www.fitforfreedom.org) or

contacting Quaker Books of FGC, 1216 Arch St. #2B, Philadelphia PA 19107; 800-966-4556.

This year the Black Concerns Committee sponsored a NYC Friends of Color Gathering. In 2012 we look forward to facilitating the Northeast Gathering of Friends of Color. Our support for the Bedford Stuyvesant Worship Group continues. The worship group now meets at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration. We continue to explore race and ethnicity in the criminal-justice system. We urge everyone to read *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. Loaner copies are available from the committee. If any of our activities speak to your condition please contact a committee member.

I began this report by emphasizing how precious our committee's public event was. I would like to encourage every committee in the Witness Section to host a public event on topics that carry forth our testimonies

*Helen Garay Toppins, coclerk*

### **Bolivian Quaker Education Fund**

The Bolivian Quaker Education Fund (BQEF) might have started this year with a grand celebration of its first decade of service, but instead the organization quietly raised the number of scholarships available to Bolivian young people to 40 per year. It is almost with surprise that we realize BQEF has been building programs and solidifying itself as an institution for 10 years, such that now six Bolivian staff members and Vickey Kaiser, our US coordinator, administer and implement activities in five major programmatic areas.

The first of these, and BQEF's initial reason for having been created, is the scholarship program. These scholarships for study at the university level have opened doors into professional-level jobs for over 70 young Bolivian Quakers since 2003, when the first group of scholarship recipients graduated. We have found the demand among young Bolivian Friends for this assistance to be high and hope to raise enough funds to allow for provision of even more scholarships.

A second major programmatic area is the "Internado," which is a residence for high school students in the area of Sorata. Because their home communities are often several hours' walk from the high school, the Internado provides a place where

high school students can live and study during the week without spending several hours per day hiking to and from their homes.

BQEF has provided the organizational and logistical support in the third area of sponsoring AVP workshops. This past year various of the trained Bolivian facilitators have begun to implement AVP workshops in one of the main prisons of La Paz. This is exciting not only because this is an experience of AVP's roots from the perspective of another culture, but also because this is a sign of local Bolivian facilitators' owning the process and taking AVP to where they see the need. Other workshops have included members of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that work with abused women and street kids. It is hoped that Bolivian AVPers can attend the International AVP Gathering in Guatemala in October.

A priority programmatic area that did not accomplish what we had hoped involved sending Bolivian teachers to North American Friends schools as we have done in the past. Though no Bolivians traveled north this year, we find this sort of exchange to be of tremendous value through having North American Quakers meet Bolivian Friends directly, through the enrichment to both schools and visiting teachers, and through the broadened experience that these Friends take back to share in Bolivia. Plans have been established to identify both US Quaker Schools and Bolivian candidates for these visits over a year in advance, to allow for arrangements with the schools and for visas to be made in a timely manner.

BQEF continues to facilitate the integration of North American (and British) visitors and volunteers into the lives of Bolivian families, into the work of teaching English to individuals and at Bolivian Friends schools, and into the various BQEF projects. This work is both rewarding and fun as a major BQEF goal of building North-South relationships is strengthened.

Administratively BQEF has undertaken a mini-campaign to promote the organization, to raise funds to strengthen program initiatives, and to provide enhanced administrative resources to manage these. We are also working to establish a reserve fund to allow for better management during the ups and downs of funding cycles.

We look forward to BQEF's second decade and encourage all to consider the rewarding experience of meeting and learning about Friends from the southern hemisphere.

*Jens Braun, NYYM Representative*

## **Committee on Conscientious Objection to Paying for War**

*No report submitted.*

## **Earthcare Working Group**

The last evening of Summer Sessions 2010 a group of us interested in fostering a concern for Earthcare in NYYM gathered for dinner to discuss how we could continue our dialogue. We decided we wanted to keep in touch with each other throughout the year and meet again in 2011. We were able to use a Google group that was created in 2007 but had fallen into disuse. The former manager of the group transferred the management of the group and we began to invite new members to join the dialogue by posting. We had our first conference call in October and began to think about proposing Earthcare as a theme for Summer Sessions 2011. There was much enthusiasm among the Working Group as we contemplated this possibility, and many ideas came forth.

In the meantime it became apparent that we needed to focus some of our energy on opposing hydraulic fracturing in New York State as this posed a real threat to safe drinking water. We have continued to act on this concern through letter writing, phone calls to legislators, signing petitions, making public comments, and attending demonstrations in Albany.

Fred Doneit, an active member of our Earthcare Working Group, agreed to become coclerk in early December. We have worked together on proposals for the Earthcare theme for Summer Sessions, attended Witness Coordinating Committee meeting to present the proposal, then presented the proposal to Sessions Committee, where it was adopted. We have kept in touch with members of the Earthcare Working Group through conference calls, continuing to get their feedback. We look forward to sharing our work on the Earthcare theme at Summer Sessions in July.

The Google group means of communication keeps us informed about what each person is involved in and enables us to share information about articles, action alerts, books, movies, and upcoming programs related to Earthcare. Others who wish to keep informed about Earthcare matters are invited to join the group by contacting the group manager, Patricia Chernoff, [patriciachernoff@verizon.net](mailto:patriciachernoff@verizon.net).

*Patricia Chernoff and Fred Doneit, coclerks*

## **Friends Committee on National Legislation representatives**

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), the oldest and largest registered religious lobby in Washington, is a nonpartisan Quaker lobby in the public interest. FCNL works with a nationwide network of tens of thousands of people from every state in the US to advocate for social and economic justice, peace, and protection of the environment.

More than 200 Quakers from around the country gathered in Washington, DC, in early November 2010, to set priorities for the 112th Congress and appoint the next executive secretary of FCNL.

The FCNL Annual Meeting is the annual gathering of its General Committee, made up of Quakers appointed by 26 yearly meetings and several dozen individual Friends chosen because they are particularly active on lobby issues. NYYM appoints four representatives to FCNL, whose principal responsibility is to attend the annual meeting in Washington and help make decisions about FCNL's goals and operations. Other interested Friends, who are not appointed representatives but may be on various FCNL committees, attend as well. NYYM's current representatives are Ernestine Buscemi, Jonathan Collett, Fred Dettmer, and William Seltzer.

The recent election of a much more conservative Congress weighed heavily on Friends, but as usual, FCNL staff identified areas where progress on priorities seems very possible. For the first time in decades, members of Congress are seriously considering cuts to the military budget. The new START treaty seems within reach, and following the annual meeting, some 100 people stayed in Washington to lobby for START. FCNL helped build the bipartisan list of cosponsors for a resolution calling on the US government to help prevent genocides and mass atrocities, which the Senate approved in mid-December 2010. An FCNL workshop on peaceful prevention of deadly conflict was held at the 2010 NYYM Summer Sessions.

Always a high point of the annual conference, the seven interns described the personal journeys that led them to work at FCNL and some details of their involvement in issues such as immigration, nuclear disarmament, and peaceful prevention of deadly conflict. With a reduction in FCNL's regular staff over the past two years due to budget constraints, interns have assumed an even more important role in the daily lobbying

and office work of FCNL.

Following consultation with 270 Quaker meetings and churches around the country, the Policy Committee led the discernment toward a final set of priorities for FCNL in the next two years. Through worship sharing, workshops, and meetings for worship with attention to business, Friends at the annual meeting came to unity on the focus of FCNL's work in the upcoming Congress. The priorities flesh out the broad Policy Statement most recently approved in 2003:

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war  
We seek a society with equality and justice for all  
We seek a community where every person's potential  
may be fulfilled  
We seek an earth restored.

"The General Committee deeply appreciates the 20 years of visionary leadership by Joe Volk," reads the first line of the minute approved at Annual Meeting. In his plenary address, Joe thanked Friends for the opportunity he had to help build this organization but cautioned that we cannot be satisfied with where FCNL is today. "In a country of 300 million people, we cannot be satisfied with 60,000 community-based lobbyists and 10,000 donors." FCNL could double these numbers in the next three years.

FCNL's General Committee appointed Diane Randall to become its fourth executive secretary since its beginning in 1943. She follows E. Raymond Wilson, Edward F. Snyder, and Joe Volk. Diane's first day in the office was March 1, 2011. An active member of Hartford Monthly Meeting (CT), Diane was previously executive director of Partnership for Strong Communities, a Connecticut-based nonprofit organization providing leadership, advocacy, and policy development on solutions to homelessness, affordable housing, and community development. Diane will bring to FCNL the experience, skills, and talents necessary to lead the work of our community into the 21st century.

Much more detail on staff, legislative issues, and areas of work at FCNL are available on the Web page [fcnl.org](http://fcnl.org).

*Jonathan Collett, clerk, NYYM representatives*

## **Friends Peace Teams representatives**

FPT's Mission Statement: Friends Peace Teams is a Spirit-led organization working around the world to develop long-term relationships with communities in conflict to create programs for peacebuilding, healing, and reconciliation. FPT's programs build on extensive Quaker experience combining practical and spiritual aspects of conflict resolution.

What is Friends Peace Teams? An attender at my home meeting recently asked me this question. My explanation went something like this: It is a loose coalition of three major initiatives, each of which is working for peace in the world from the peculiar perspective of Quakers and through the lens of the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). They are held in common by the FPT Council, a group of dedicated Friends and staff who provide a grounding center and a place for the shared business concerns, management, and issues. The FPT council also includes Yearly Meeting representatives.

Each of the three initiatives works with a coordinating committee to help ground the work and the initiative coordinators. The initiatives that currently comprise Friends Peace Teams are: The Indonesia Initiative, Paz en Las Américas (PLA), and the African Great Lakes Initiative. Each initiative works with significant numbers of volunteers.

The Indonesia Initiative's coordinator is Nadine Hoover. Nadine carries a minute of travel from NYYM in support of this work. Along with the work of AVP, this initiative has also pioneered a trauma-healing advanced workshop and is spearheading an initiative to create ceramic water filters to help in providing clean drinking and cooking water to that area of the world.

Paz en Las Americas' coordinator is Val Liveoak. Val is a member of South Central Yearly Meeting. This initiative focuses its work in Central America and, like the other two initiatives, has developed a trauma-healing workshop consistent with the cultures in that part of the world. Margaret Lechner, of Purchase Monthly Meeting, works extensively with this initiative.

The largest of the three initiatives is the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) with David Zarembka as that initiative's coordinator. Along with AVP workshops and the Healing and Reconciling Our Communities (HROC) programs, AGLI has a long-term volunteer focusing on sack gardening, and is explor-

ing helping with election monitoring in Kenya and more.

This is a minuscule taste of this organization. I hope that you will get to know FPT and their work a bit more by visiting [www.friendspeaceteams.org](http://www.friendspeaceteams.org).

*Greta Mickey, NYYM representative to FPT*

## **Indian Affairs Committee**

During this past year, there has been a groundswell of interest, both nationally and worldwide, about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and also the Doctrine of Discovery. What are those documents? you ask. Many of us have certainly heard of the first one, but the second one leaves blank stares on the part of many folks!

Canadian Friends Service Committee's Aboriginal Affairs Committee, Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Indian Affairs Committee, and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Indian Committee have been involved with these issues for some time now. Our clerk had been contacted by letter, e-mail, and phone. After much worship in our committee, we realized that these are complex issues that require more time and prayerful thought before we could see just how we were being led. We were united in feeling that we would move at our own pace in approaching this and not be pressured by the urgings of others. First we needed to understand the historical background surrounding these documents. Just how and why did they come into being? Only then and after a great deal of careful work did we think appropriate wording for any minute might be created.

We held a called meeting at our Indian Affairs Committee (IAC) retreat in May, where the Syracuse Monthly Meeting minute was presented. With extended periods of worship, our own minute grew and took shape, using their minute as a foundation. This was then taken to Witness Coordinating Committee and approved with small typographical changes. At Summer Sessions, we sponsored Joan Cope Savage's two well-attended interest groups on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Doctrine of Discovery.

Yearly Meeting Friends approved receiving the minute from Indian Affairs Committee and Witness Coordinating Committee with its explanatory, educational background materials. They also directed the IAC to share the minute with all our

monthly meetings and worship groups, and for committee representatives to travel among meetings to explore with Friends the opportunities and challenges offered by the minute. The minute and all supplementary documents can easily be found on the NYYM Web site under Organization/Committees/Indian Affairs Committee. We encourage you to make use of this material for yourself and your monthly meetings. So far there have been two invitations from monthly meetings to explore these documents. One presentation was given through Butter-nuts Monthly Meeting and one at Ithaca Monthly Meeting.

For years an Indian Affairs Committee retreat had been a dream that had never jelled. In 2010, it came together—with appreciative thanks to Susan Wolf's excellent and tireless planning! We announced it ahead of time as available to all our monthly meetings. It took place on Saturday, May 22, at Kanatsiohareke (Ga na jo ha lay:gay) Mohawk Community ([www.mohawkcommunity.com](http://www.mohawkcommunity.com)) near Fonda, NY. Dating from the 12th century, the Mohawk Valley had been home to the "People of the Flint," or Mohawk, members of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations or Haudenosaunee. Conflicts in the 1700s with Europeans sent them away for centuries. The Mohawk people were finally able to see a clear path to return to the homeland where their ancestors lay to rest, when Kanatsiohareke was founded in 1993.

We unknowingly planned the retreat the same weekend as Farmington-Scipio Regional Gathering, which prevented many folks who wanted to be there from joining us. Some people arrived Friday evening. Others joined us on Saturday just for the day, including several people from surrounding towns. In total there were over 20 people attending. There was time in between events for wonderful meals and strolls around the property or just time to rest quietly. On Saturday before lunch, respected Mohawk Bear Clan elder Tom Porter (who also works taking programs to Native Americans in prisons) spoke informally about his own personal journey from an early age onward as a Mohawk. Questions and answers were shared, and we all learned a great deal. (His talk is available on the Indian Affairs table at all Yearly Meeting Sessions. Please take a copy.) Next, we had an inspiring slide presentation and talk by Jens Braun about his Alternatives to Violence Project work with the indigenous Aymara peoples in South America. The fact that he grew up in Ecuador gave him a unique perspective. One person commented: "Both Tom Porter and Jens Braun

showed me more about who I am and why I do what I'm doing." Another said: "I wish more folks could have taken the time to benefit from this retreat."

This year we received two requests from correctional facilities. One came from the Longhouse Group at Sing Sing and one from the Native Way of Life at Arthur Kill. Both groups asked for educational materials and ceremonial items. Individuals from various monthly meetings generously offered a number of VHS tapes and books about Native Americans, maracas, and even a beautiful horn rattle. These items were divided into three piles at the Retreat, and then taken personally to Sing Sing and Attica Correctional Facilities by Tom Porter, and to Arthur Kill Correctional Facility on Staten Island by Sue Wolf.

2010 was our first year donating to Amerinda, a New York City community-based nonprofit organization offering encouragement and assistance to over 150 Native American artists from multiple disciplines. It now serves Native people from 53 diverse Nations. It was started by a group of Native American artists, who emerged from the civil rights and social justice movements and migrated to NYC. They saw a need to respond to the myths and misinformation in the mainstream media about Native people, their art, and their culture.

We plan to join the recent recipient of the Marjorie Sexton Memorial Native American Scholarship, Shane Francis, at lunch in Syracuse in the spring. Our donation to the Akwesasne Freedom School was used for much-needed teachers' salaries, whereas the year before the school had brought a local artist from the community to teach the children leathermaking and tanning hides. The students then honored all the animals and Mother Earth by having a wild game dinner and dressing up, performing the legends about the animals.

The Akwesasne Task Force on the Environment used our funds for the Maple Syrup Project and the Fruit Tree Project and for fertilizing and spraying the orchard. The focus for these projects is on educating the community on what is involved in maintaining an orchard and how syrup is made. The maple syrup is given away to the area schools, and the community is invited to pick the apples. The American Indian Community House in New York City was able to give intensive private tutoring to one student who had long been preparing for his GED. With our gift, Blossom Garden Friends School in Collins, NY, purchased storybooks to give to the Seneca Nation Day

Care and Head Start programs on the Cattaraugus Reservation.

*Sybil Perry and Ann Schillinger, coclerks*

### **National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund & Peace Tax Foundation**

*No report submitted.*

### **National Religious Campaign against Torture**

*No report submitted.*

### **New Jersey Council of Churches**

*No report submitted.*

### **New York State Council of Churches Chaplaincy**

The New York State Council of Churches Board of Protestant Chaplaincy met in mid-February of 2011 to discuss the issue of the continuing diminishment of the role of chaplain in the New York State Department of Corrections (DOCS). Joining the Board members that day were Cathy Gallagher, coordinator of chaplains for the Catholic Conference of Bishops; Imam Djafé Sebkhauoui, member of Muslim Council of Troy; and Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, executive vice president of the New York Board of Rabbis.

The intention of such a gathering was to create a unified voice to address concerns with the Department of Corrections. There was hope that a meeting with DOCS commissioner of corrections would take place this spring. However, the meeting has not yet taken place as of June 1, 2011, possibly due to the merger of DOCS with the NYS Department of Parole.

The New York State Council of Churches Web site is [www.nyscoc.org/](http://www.nyscoc.org/).

*Alice Houghtaling, NYYM representative  
to Board of Protestant Chaplains.*

## **New York State Council of Churches Collegium**

*No report submitted.*

### **Peace Concerns coordinator**

At Spring Sessions 2008 New York Yearly Meeting's Peace Concerns Committee was laid down. Witness Coordinating Committee had asked me to serve as the coordinator for peace concerns and to assist monthly meetings in networking on peace-concerns work. During the three years that I have served in this position I have been gratified to speak and work with many friends and meetings. My personal definition of peacemaking as "a conscious act of love" has led me to engage in many different ways and levels—from peacemaking within meetings and between individuals to laying the groundwork and implementing larger discussions.

As I look back over these three years I recognize that there is so much more that could have been done and so much more that still needs to be done. It is far too much work for one person with a full time job to undertake and do well. It is times like these that I question our/my priorities. Is coming to a place of Peace in our lives, our communities, our states, countries and the world truly a priority for us? I wonder how much of our time, talent, and treasure we are clear to give to this work? Is the amount that we are willing to give a measure of the priorities in our lives?

The Religious Society of Friends is known for its integrity of speech and for its willingness to speak Truth to power. At 2010 Summer Session I shared my personal hope and dream that all Friends within NYYM might find a way to come together to select and actively work on one or two issues, with each meeting and friend committing to carry their part of the work. I hope that as we move forward we may move into such work together.

*Greta Mickey, NYYM Peace Concerns coordinator*

### **Peace Coordinator Work in Georgia**

In 2008 NYYM first made contact with Friends of the Tbilisi Friends Worship Group in Georgia (yes, the country). Since that time, we have partnered with Friends in Georgia to help provide humanitarian aid to refugee populations created by

the war with Russia in 2008 and to begin the work of bringing conflict-transformation skills to Georgia. I am both humbled and grateful to be carrying this work in the name of New York Yearly Meeting.

For five weeks in May and June of 2010 I traveled to Georgia accompanied by Shirley Way. We planned to work with Maia Gonjilashvili (a Georgian AVP facilitator) to re-birth the Alternatives to Violence Project in Georgia. There was a great deal of work as I found people to translate large portions of the AVP manuals, create mandalas in Georgian, have certificates translated, etc. We hoped that when we left we would leave behind a cadre of trained apprentice facilitators to work with Maia and that workshops would continue after our trip. That goal was realized. 12 apprentice facilitators were trained. Since our departure many have earned their gold certificates, and AVP workshops are continuing in Georgia.

This year I plan to return to Georgia from approximately October 15 through November 5. I plan to again take someone with me who is an AVP facilitator and who will also act in the capacity of elder. As of this writing, that person is not yet known. During this trip to Georgia we will be working with the current facilitators around advanced workshops.

On each trip to Georgia I have spent time with Friends in worship and in serving the meeting as they learn more about Friends' faith and practice. I continue to strengthen the relationship between Friends in Georgia and New York Yearly Meeting.

Friends in Georgia and the AVP facilitators that we work with all express their gratitude for New York Yearly Meeting's help and simply for the fact that we, almost half a world away, care about them. I am deeply moved by their faith and the love they show for their brothers and sisters in America.

*Greta Mickey, NYYM Peace Concerns coordinator*

### **Prisons Committee**

#### **Share how the Spirit is moving in your life!**

There are more than 200 men on New York Yearly Meeting's (NYYM) prison worship group list. The majority have been worshipping with Friends for many years. Some are fortunate enough to be in a prison with an ongoing Quaker worship group. Unfortunately, many have been transferred to prisons where no Quaker worship group exists and are now

isolated from their Quaker network. All over New York State we have clusters of men in prisons who desperately want a worship group. To make this happen we need more outside Friends willing to participate in meeting for worship behind the walls.

Even a one-time visit can be of tremendous importance to incarcerated people. Share how Spirit is moving in your life! Visit someone in prison hospital. Lead a prison Quaker Bible study.

Jolene Festa, coclerk of the Prisons Committee, has helped set up a special traveling group composed of those who have had direct involvement with prison ministry. Some are formerly incarcerated. They want to come and talk to your monthly and quarterly meetings. They want to share the impact prison ministry has had on their lives. They want to come and tell their stories. **Please invite them to your meeting.**

NYYM Quaker prison worship groups are located in Arthur Kill (NY Quarter); Attica, Auburn, and Cayuga (Farmington-Scipio Region); Green Haven (Nine Partners Quarter); Otisville and Sing Sing (Purchase Quarter); and Sullivan and Woodbourne (Butternuts Quarter). More will be established when Friends step forward!

If you would like more information about prison ministry contact us. **The Prisons Committee needs you!**

*Helen Garay Toppins, coclerk*

### **Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR)**

Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR) is a Quaker organization whose purpose is to promote partnership between Quakers in North America and small new grassroots organizations in India and Africa. The goal of this partnership is to enable both (relatively) rich Quakers and very poor women to live flourishing lives. This is done by encouraging the “haves” to examine their lifestyles and to share financially from their wealth with the “have-nots.”

Currently, the means of promoting flourishing lives among very poor women is microcredit. Unlike the commercial microcredit that recently led to scandal in the state of Andhra Pradesh, the model used by RSWR involves the formation of self-help groups by nongovernmental agencies (NGOs). The NGOs apply to RSWR for grants and use the money to establish revolving loan funds among their self-help groups. The mem-

bers of the groups receive loans so that they can start small businesses. It should be emphasized that RSWR gives grants to NGOs, and that the loans taken out by self-help group members are repaid to the self-help groups, not the Quaker donors of the grant money.

It has always been RSWR policy to have the NGOs visited by someone who could inform RSWR about the viability of their proposed projects. In the last few years, this practice has been expanded by hiring field staff in India, Kenya, and Sierra Leone. The field staff's job is to give training and support to the NGOs. In India, the NGOs are visited by the same person who offers the training and support, but in Kenya and Sierra Leone the functions are handled by different people. In the relatively short time these field staff have been working, the quality of the NGOs' work has noticeably improved. Also, especially in India, older and better-established past partners are providing help and training to newer groups, not all of whom receive RSWR grants.

Three essential criteria for the choice of projects are local self-reliance, sustainability, and mutual accountability. Many Friends are aware of the importance of those criteria in our own lives, as we work toward a sustainable world society on a planet with a limited carrying capacity for human life.

How will a sustainable world society look and feel? Starting from the basics, no one will starve. Women, in charge of their own lives, will limit their fertility and be able to educate the children they do have. Young people will find positive ways to be connected to their communities and to earn a living. People who are unable to work will be cared for. Everyone will be tenderly aware of the web of life manifest in the areas where they live and will be mindful not to extract too much from it. Those who have learned, through hardship, to be rich in spirit will minister to those who have been materially blessed but spiritually impoverished, just as those who are materially better off will minister through their financial gifts to those who are physically in need.

How has New York Yearly Meeting been working toward the goal of a sustainable world society in the past year? Many individual Friends have made direct contributions to Right Sharing of World Resources; the total of these contributions was \$3,070. The yearly meeting contributed \$1,033 from the Sharing Fund, and four monthly meetings contributed a total of \$435. (Needless to say, RSWR is only one part of a very

large picture, and NYYM supports many other endeavors toward a sustainable world society as well.) We are grateful to all NYYM Friends who have understood the importance of economic development for the very poorest people, and have chosen to direct their funds there. This is development that preserves the recipients' independence and supports their villages and Friends' churches (in Kenya), rather than forcing them to choose between starvation and migration into slums where, if they are lucky, they will find work for low wages and long hours, in poor conditions.

*Mary Eagleson, NYYM RSWR resource person*

### **Rural and Migrant Ministry**

2011 is a year to celebrate a remarkable covenant! Rural and Migrant Ministry (RMM) is celebrating its 30th anniversary! We could not have done this without being in covenant with the Yearly Meeting. For we have partnered to respond to the needs of the rural poor in New York. We could not have the presence and impact among our brothers and sisters, without you being at our side. On October 15 we will celebrate our anniversary with a special Gala Conference at the Honor's Haven Resort in Ellenville. The day will be filled with workshops, panel discussions, delegation visits to farm camps, worship, and food! We especially hope that you will join us as we celebrate our Covenant with our partners.

2010 was a wonderful year of development and impact for Rural & Migrant Ministry, filled with opportunities, and a few disappointments.

### **Youth Empowerment**

- A new youth economic development program for youth in Sullivan County was initiated, assisting high school students who are creating their own social transformation business.
- Three leadership day programs were offered during the summer for over 60 children.
- The Youth Arts Group (YAG) saw two of its members graduate and move on to college.
- YAG hosted the second annual Art-a-Thon in Middletown, for youth in eastern New York. Members of YAG were also invited to present and lead a workshop at a conference in Lima, Peru, for youth leadership organization in North and South America. YAG also hosted another successful summer

Leadership Academy (thanks to support from the Synod!).

- The 21st annual Overnight Camp welcomed 100 children and a staff of 40 (including 14 who had been former campers). During its history the camp has hosted over 2,000 children.

### **Education**

- RMM opened a new educational center in Lyons, NY, that offers a host of programs, including literacy, citizenship training, and music.
- Through the Workplace Education Center in Monticello, RMM offered programs to help rural workers in Sullivan County improve working conditions.
- Over 20 interns were placed with RMM throughout the school year.
- A series of workshops about welcoming the "foreigner" in our midst were given for congregations.
- RMM cosponsored the annual Black Heritage Dinner (at the New Hurley Reformed Church).
- In collaboration with the Daughters of Sarah, RMM hosted the fifth annual Destiny Rural Women's Conference in Binghamton.

### **Accompaniment Program**

- The dogged continuation of the Justice for Farmworkers Campaign included numerous farmworker advocacy days as we worked to ensure that the voice of farmworkers was present in Albany. A historic vote was finally taken in the New York Senate (the first in Senate history) to remove all legislative exclusions that deny equality to farmworkers. Unfortunately, the bill was defeated by three votes.
- RMM continued its presence statewide in coalitions and actions to ensure that immigrants were treated with dignity and that their rights were respected.
- The Ministry hosted a series of vigils in honor of the anniversary of the signing of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.
- Our presence state-wide in coalitions and actions to ensure that immigrants were treated with dignity and that their rights were respected.
- Hosted a series vigils in honor of the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Human Rights

To find out more about what we are up to, please visit [www.ruralmigrantministry.org](http://www.ruralmigrantministry.org)

*James O'Barr, NYYM representative*

## **Torture Awareness Working Group & National Religious Campaign against Torture**

Torture betrays our faith. Torture denies the divine Light present in every person. It displaces God's Love and call for the peaceable Kingdom with violence, hatred, sadism and tyranny....In the presence of our nation's use of torture, we hearken to Jesus's query: "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?" (Matthew 16:26; Mark 8:36; Luke 9:25 (NIV))

[NYYM Minute on Torture, July 25, 2008, [www.nyym.org/index.php?q=minute\\_on\\_torture](http://www.nyym.org/index.php?q=minute_on_torture)]

At the 2010 Summer Sessions we asked ourselves "How are we practicing peace? Are we choosing love?" (2010 Epistle, [www.nyym.org/index.php?q=node/510](http://www.nyym.org/index.php?q=node/510)) As one example of Friends' practicing peace, we heard the testimony of John Calvi about his leading to work to end torture through the Quaker Initiative to End Torture ([www.quit-torture-now.org](http://www.quit-torture-now.org)). In the words of the Epistle: "We were called to take a moral stand against torture being carried out by our government and others. We were inspired and challenged to take on work that will last for more than a generation and for which Quakers may be uniquely qualified and equipped."

In November 2010, Powell House hosted a weekend retreat facilitated by John Calvi and Chuck Fager on working to end torture. 18 New York Yearly Meeting Friends gathered to share worship, experiences, and plans for heightening our communities' attention to our nation's practice of torture and inhumane treatment of prisoners and detainees.

New York Yearly Meeting continues to be a participating member of the National Religious Campaign against Torture ([www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org)). NRCAT has been working since its formation in 2006 to change United States policy and practice in order to achieve an end to all US-sponsored torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of detainees, and the adoption of US policies and practices that will help end torture by other countries. In 2010, this work included continued efforts to, among other things, build support (1) for a nonpartisan, comprehensive Commission of Inquiry to investigate U.S.-sponsored torture and to recommended safeguards to make sure that torture never happens again, (2) for legislation to assure access by the International Committee of the Red Cross to all persons detained by the United States, and (3) for closing the detention

center at Guantanamo Bay. NRCAT also supported the effort by the Islamic Society of North America to create a coalition of national faith groups working to end anti-Muslim bigotry, and became a member of the resulting Multi-Religious Campaign against Anti-Muslim Bigotry. And in 2010, NRCAT launched its significant new project to end torture in US prisons, including, in particular, the use of long-term isolation. (The complete 2010 Report on NRCAT's work is available at [www.nrcat.org/storage/nrcat/documents/nrcat\\_2010\\_report.pdf](http://www.nrcat.org/storage/nrcat/documents/nrcat_2010_report.pdf).)

*Frederick Dettmer, NYYM representative to NRCAT*

## **William Penn House**

Like gems of lasting value, our Quaker institutions are seen in clear Light when viewed from various angles and perspectives. Such is my experience, having been centrally involved as a staff member and then, some three decades later, returning to William Penn House as a member of the National Consultative Committee.

While I had been an occasional sojourner at our Quaker Center on Capitol Hill during the intervening years, it was while attending the annual meeting of the national advisory committee that I could see in a clear light. How many physical improvements have been made to this lovely five-story townhouse just blocks from the US Capitol Building, coming into compliance with stringent fire and safety codes, at the same time enhancing the character of the building—who would have known the beautiful brick wall behind the cracked plaster of my memory? The front garden, centered on a four-language Peace Pole, signals to visitors and casual passers-by alike that this house is unique, and there is a sense pervading the House that staff, board members, student seminar groups, and Washington Quaker Workcamp participants are together joining William Penn in his admonition to "Let us then try what Love will do." And it was gratifying to see how, under committed and inspired leadership, programs have developed and deepened over the years.

In his 2010 report as director, Byron Sanford cites nearly staggering statistics—an average of 20 overnight seminar participants and casual sojourners every night of the year, with 18 workcamp programs and 358 students in 61 various seminar and tour groups. With an experiential knowledge of the energy required to maintain a ministry of hospitality seven days a

week, 52 weeks a year, I admire and applaud the current community of interns and longer-term staff for a deep commitment to the witness of radical hospitality—creating space for the dialogue that can unfold on the deeper side of conversation.

While subject to the economic impact of groups canceling because of winter storms and the overall tightening of school and family budgets, William Penn House has continued to operate in a fiscally responsible manner. Nearly 80% of the income is program revenue, with donations from Friends and other supporters helping to balance the budget. While personnel costs compose the lion's share of expenses, the ongoing programs at William Penn House provide not only seminar experiences and hospitality to a constant stream of visitors, but also practical training and learning opportunities for the staff, especially the corps of interns and those who are engaged as "gap year" members of the WPH community.

Again this year, Washington Quaker Workcamps will sponsor a two-week workcamp experience on Pine Ridge, SD. Described as "Creating the Peaceable Kingdom," the invitation reminds Friends that "Over 300 years ago, William Penn envisioned the Peaceable Kingdom. It's a work in progress—be a part of the progress!" Present at the birthing of Washington Quaker Workcamps around the WPH conference table nearly 30 years ago, I am awed at this blossoming of "trying what love will do."

Similarly, the vision of a vibrant intern program at William Penn House has grown and deepened to afford a number of younger Friends the opportunity to witness to our Quaker testimonies in daily living, thereby living into a world where peace, simplicity, respect for the earth, and radical hospitality—welcoming the Other—are a closer reality.

Please consider reserving overnight accommodations at William Penn House when you are next on Capitol Hill for Quaker work or family learning. Consider organizing a group of young Friends to experience a WPH seminar. Discern whether joining a Washington Quaker Workcamp, or coming to WPH for a "gap year," is right for you. Please consider joining me in giving financial support to the Quaker work and witness embodied by the location, programs, and staff of William Penn House. Information about these opportunities—and more—is available at [www.williampennhouse.org](http://www.williampennhouse.org) or by calling 202-543-5560. I would welcome contact from Friends at [lyle.jenks@gmail.com](mailto:lyle.jenks@gmail.com).

*Lyle Jenks, NYYM appointee*

## **World Ministries Committee**

The World Ministries Committee (WMC), with funds from bequests and the Sharing Fund, has supported the ministry of NYYM Friends in the wider world since 1889.

The WMC provides a means whereby members and meetings can encourage and support programs of NYYM, FUM, and other Friends' groups.

WMC is a unique committee in that it meets twice a year by teleconference (or more if warranted), usually in May or June and late November. This timetable is based upon when funds become available to the committee.

The WMC clerk receives grant requests by e-mail, which are then disseminated to members of the committee for review prior to the teleconference meeting.

Our main objective is to evaluate whether the application is for ministry, to "spread Quaker love in the wider world." This is a broad mandate, but it is a serious and often complex charge, so each request is first examined to see whether it falls within this mandate and then whether the project can be implemented in a practical manner and, finally, to ensure that the funds will have oversight by a member or members of NYYM to ensure that the funds are used within the parameters of the grant request.

The approved grant requests are also based upon the amount of money available at the time of the committee meeting. In November, WMC approved grants to:

- Schenectady Meeting—for Zimbabwe famine relief
- Right Sharing of World Resources—for a program with poor women in Kamuthi Taluk (in rural India; NYYM contact: Mary Eagleson)
- Youth Service Opportunities Project—for grant renewal for NY Fellows Program (NYYM contact: Ed Doty)
- Ramallah Friends School (Palestine)—New Interfaith Course: \$500 to be used by the school for books and materials; \$200 for mailing materials sent by Friends in the US (coordinated by Hugh Barbour; NYYM contact: Purchase Quarter Peace & Social Concerns Committee)

It is heartening that several NYYM Friends have offered to serve on WMC who are new to the committee. We feel we serve a special purpose, helping to enable those who are in the wider world, giving of their time and their hearts and spreading the Light to those who need our help.

We feel strongly that in this ministry, within our limited means, WMC does make a difference. Mother Teresa once remarked, “It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.”

It is to that end that NYYM Friends are encouraged to apply for grant funds, to help WMC “spread Quaker love in the wider world.”

Requirements for grant funds are posted on the NYYM Web site, and inquiries to the clerk of the committee are always welcome: sweisfeld@juno.com or write: Susan Weisfeld, 11 Perry Place, Bronxville, NY 10708.

*Susan Weisfeld, clerk*

### **Liaison Committee**

*No report submitted.*