



Tending the garden . . .

Annual Meeting: Clerk's Message, by Michael Fuson

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting's Annual Meeting in Bluffton, Ohio, this June was once again an important time for fellowship, spiritual renewal, and growth for our Yearly Meeting. The theme for the meeting was "The Ground of Our Being: Listening to Earth and Spirit." Some brief highlights follow:

153 persons registered for the meeting, which I believe is a record attendance. The formation of new worship groups in Circleville, Ohio, and Tustin, Michigan, was noted.

Opportunities for Bible study, worship sharing, and corporate worship deepened the spiritual life of the gathering.

Kim Carlyle's plenary lecture, "Activism for the Earth, from the Spirit," challenged us to see living in harmony with the earth as a spiritual practice and to take seriously the traditional Quaker testimony of living out our beliefs in our daily lives. A summary of his talk is given [in the] *Annual Records* [and on p. 12 of this newsletter].

Matt Hogan (Athens) and Becka Sommer (Broadmead) will represent us at the World Gathering of Young Friends this August in Lancaster, England.

Ten years of service by Connie Bimber (Oberlin) as Treasurer and

five years of service by Eric Starbuck (Pittsburgh) as *Bulletin* editor were celebrated as they passed on these labors of love.

The Yearly Meeting increased the suggested contribution per adult member from the Monthly Meetings to the Yearly Meeting to \$34 (from \$31). This increase is primarily to meet increased travel costs and costs for Young Friends' programs.

The Earthcare Committee was converted from a temporary Committee of Concern to a standing committee of the Yearly Meeting. The Committee of Concern will continue its work for the coming year until Nominating Committee brings forward a new roster of members at Annual Meeting in 2006.

The Ministry & Nurture Committee presented the following queries for the Monthly Meetings' consideration: "In what ways has the Living Presence awakened my faith and turned me around? As a Meeting, how do we support each other in being faithful?" Ministry & Nurture also presented helpful guidelines for State of the Meeting reports (see minute YM05-29).

The Yearly Meeting joined in unity with the FCNL resolution on a "Sensible Transition to an Enduring Peace" (see YM05-27).

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Annual Meeting: Clerk's Message, continued

Paul Tinkerhess & Son, of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting, delighted and inspired people of all ages with their program of music Saturday evening. (The ice cream was good, too.)

As ever, the Annual Meeting was brought to closure with the presentation of epistles, both from the various groups in our Youth & Children program and by the Yearly Meeting as a whole, followed by corporate worship.

During the Annual Meeting, much of my energy as Presiding Clerk is focused on the conduct of business in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. At the end of the Annual Meeting, many of you were kind enough to express appreciation for this effort. While I appreciate the support, I want to direct Friends' attention to the importance of business being well seasoned before being brought before the Yearly Meeting as a whole in business meeting. To the extent that the conduct of business in our Yearly Meeting has improved in recent years, I think it largely due to better seasoning of business in the committees of the Yearly Meeting. Increased time for committees to meet on the Thursday beginning the Annual Meeting and an increased focus on having written reports ready before business meetings have both been positive in their impact. Finding ways for committees to be more active throughout the year, rather than focusing their work at Representative

Meeting and the Annual Meeting, can make continued progress in this direction. Some committees do this through the use of e-mail. Others have found that conference calls are easy and effective. I urge all committees to consider and make use of these opportunities to move forward the business of the Yearly Meeting.

The Yearly Meeting did encounter business over which it was unable to come to unity during this past Annual Meeting. While additional seasoning may have helped, to some extent the difficulties reflected differences in what individual Friends see as the appropriate ways for Friends, individually and corporately, to live out their testimonies in the wider world. For example, the Peace Committee brought forward a minute asking the Yearly Meeting to endorse a study of the death penalty in Ohio that, while it spoke to Friends' concerns about equality and integrity, did not express Quakers' outright opposition to the death penalty. The Yearly Meeting could not reach unity on this minute, with some Friends strongly led that the minute was true to our testimonies and that pragmatic participation in the political process made this the appropriate expression at this time, and other Friends equally strongly led that outright opposition to the death penalty must be a central feature of any Quaker testimony in this area. This kind of tension has been with Friends since our earliest days. I offer no solution to it, but call on all Friends to hold each other in the Light and to seek guidance from that Spirit that unifies us and lifts us up.

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*The following pages present a condensed version of business that transpired at the 2005 Annual Meeting. The **Highlights of Minutes** (pp. 3-4) cover business not addressed in reports from LEYM committees and Friends' organizations as well as actions taken by the Meeting related to these reports. **Abridged Reports** appear on pp. 4-9. For complete minutes and reports, descriptions of the workshops, and abundant other useful information about the Yearly Meeting, see the Annual Records 2005.*

Many thanks to Leslie Walden and Eric Starbuck, whose photographs from the Annual Meeting appear throughout these pages. Thanks, too, to Jane Pollock for last-minute instruction in MS Publisher.

Editor

Annual Meeting: Highlights of the Minutes

YM05 - 1. **The 42nd Session of LEYM**, on the theme “The Ground of Our Being: Listening to Earth and Spirit,” was held at Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio, on June 16-19, 2005. The gathering was attended by 153 persons, including 9 visiting Friends. During opening worship we heard the reading of the Epistle from Australia Yearly Meeting, 2005, which expressed awareness of their relations to the Aboriginal people of Western Australia and the need to respond to the devastation by the Tsunami to other peoples in the Indian Ocean region.

YM05 - 4. We mourned the **deaths** of Isabel Bliss and Pegg Stilwell. Other lives of people active in our monthly meetings were also remembered in our worship.

YM05 - 5-6. We approved the names of Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh), Lila Cornell (Pittsburgh) and Kri Anderson (Ann Arbor) to serve on the **Naming Committee**, and the names of Assistant Clerk Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead), Nancy Nagler (Pine River) and Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor) to serve on the Epistle Committee.

YM05 - 8. The Clerk reminded those reporting to the meeting to submit their reports in writing, and reminded all of us to conduct our business in worship, allowing space for guidance of the Spirit and allowing the Clerk to guide the flow of matters before the meeting.

YM05 - 15. **High School Youth Program Committee**. We approved language to add to our *LEYM Policies & Procedures* manual that describes the composition and responsibilities of the Committee [see *Annual Records 2005*, p. 25]. We ask the Committee to write a position description for the High School Youth Program Coordinator and bring it to our annual sessions next year for approval and eventual inclusion in *LEYM Policies & Procedures*.

YM05 - 16. The **Epistle from Philadelphia YM** was read. The theme was “We are one in the Spirit: Celebrating 50 years of Reunification” of the Yearly Meeting (Orthodox with Hicksite).

YM05 - 17. **Bookstore**. We expressed gratitude to Valerie Groszmann (Kalamazoo) for making this resource a continuing vital part of our annual sessions.

YM05 - 21. **Treasurer’s Report**. [See *Annual Records 2005*, pp. 48-53.] Connie Bimber (Oberlin) noted that this is the earliest that meetings have completed their annual donations to their Yearly Meeting. We minuted our deep appreciation to Connie for the skillful and diligent service she has given to the care of its finances over the past ten years.

YM05-22. **Finance & Budget Committee**. We noted that the publications expenditures may be over budget next year because of the bi-annual publications schedule of the LEYM Directory. We approved the budget as presented and also approved the transfer of \$1,000 from the General Fund to the World Gathering of Young Friends line item, noting the increased support for our Quaker youth this budget represents.

YM05 -23. **Publications Committee**. We minuted our appreciation to departing committee members Leonora Cayard (Pittsburgh), who had the vision to initiate the publication of an *LEYM Annual Records* booklet, and Eric Starbuck (Pittsburgh) who has edited our *LEYM Bulletin* for the past five years.

YM05 - 27. **Peace Committee**. The Committee has brought to us the FCNL Iraq STEP Resolution (see *Annual Records 2005*), asking that LEYM give its endorsement, holding all involved people in our prayers. We approved the resolution and asked that copies be sent appropriately.

We ask that the Peace Committee revisit its proposed text for a resolution concerning the creation of a Capital Case Commission regarding the Ohio death penalty to report back to us at a future session.

YM05 - 28. **Earthcare Committee of Concern**. This committee of concern has worked creatively for the past three years. In light of the depth of our ongoing and growing concern about care of the earth, we heed the call and agree that a new, standing Earthcare Committee should now be formed. We ask the Nominating Committee to include membership for this committee in its slate at our Annual Meeting in 2006. During the intervening year, we ask the committee of concern to continue this work on our behalf.

We approved language for the Earthcare Committee to be printed in the *LEYM Policies & Procedures* manual [see *Annual Records 2005*, pp. 37-38].

We were not in unity on the wording of a fifth responsibility that was in the draft, and so it was held back for further consideration at Representative Meeting in March 2006. It reads:

(5) To educate and persuade local, state, and federal governments and corporations in the region to adopt legislation, policies, and actions enabling earth regeneration and preventing further ecological degradation.

YM05 - 32. **World Gathering of Young Friends**. The Clerk informed us that Matt Hogan (Athens) and Bekah Sommer (Broadmead) will represent our YM at the gathering this summer in Lancaster, England.

(Continued on next page)

Highlights of Minutes, continued

YM05 - 33. **Representative Meeting 2006** will be hosted by Pittsburgh Meeting on Friday and Saturday, March 3-4, 2006.

YM05 - 35. **Approval of Signatures.** Erika Smith, Treasurer, Connie Bimber, Assistant Treasurer, and Michael Fuson, Clerk, are authorized to sign checks, open and close certificates of deposit, and execute other financial transactions on behalf of LEYM.

YM05 - 39. **Peace Committee.** Further to Minute YM05 - 27, David Lore has proposed a revised minute on the death penalty to send to the Ohio State Legislature. We were not in unity on this matter and returned the minute to the Peace Committee, which is at liberty to release it on its own behalf.

YM05 - 40. **Young Friends' Epistles.** We have been witness to living epistles from various groups of Young Friends [see pp. 10-11 of this *Bulletin*].

YM05 - 41. **Naming Committee.** Rosemary Coffey reported that the following Friends have agreed to have their names brought forward to serve on the Nominating Committee: Abbey Pratt-Harrington (Athens – 2-year term), Nancy Nagler (Pine River – 3-year term), Olwen Pritchard (Broadmead – 3-year term). These names were approved.

YM05 - 42. **Nominating Committee.** Dolores Avner and Connie Green reported on the results of their work. We approved the slate they presented with thanks to the Committee [see *Annual Records 2005*, pp. 44-47] .

YM05 - 43. **Epistle.** We listened to the reading of the YM Epistle and thanked the Epistle Committee for capturing the spirit and substance of our time together [see p. 10.] Our meeting closed in deeply quiet worship.



Bible Study: Susan Jeffers and Carla Pratt-Harrington

Annual Meeting: Abridged Reports

American Friends Service Committee Max Heirich (Ann Arbor)

Positive new developments: The Eyes Wide Open memorial to the human costs of the Iraq War, developed in the Great Lakes Region, continues to have high impact across the country. Last summer's Together in Faith Conference in Ypsilanti, Michigan, attracted many participants from LGBT and allied communities across the country. At a national level, the Board's Simplicity Committee has strongly affirmed the principle of joint governance between Regions and the National Board; its report was accepted in principle and referred to the Board's Executive Committee for implementation. This might be an appropriate time for LEYM to express its appreciation for the Committee's recommendations and its hope that the spirit of the report will be fully implemented.

Ann Arbor Meeting invited Paul Lacey, clerk of the Board, and members of Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting to a Threshing Session in July 2004, in which there was frank discussion of problems that had concerned us, and a commitment by the Great Lakes Region director and the clerk of the GLR Executive Committee's program committee to advocate strongly for both of Ann Arbor's AFSC programs.

The potential national crisis over staff conscientious resistance to allowing criminal background checks has been avoided, though some programs dropped their youth component and others shifted supervisory duties.

Other problems continue. AFSC is being sued by three Chicago staff of its former African American Community Empowerment Program for wrongful termination. This has put "on hold" activities of a committee set up to review the process involved in that decision.

The Ann Arbor LGBT Issues program has begun dialogue with the Region about possible devolvement, to let the program not only continue but grow.

At the June 2005 meeting of the National Board, the chief financial officer and the Finance Committee will propose a new Unified Budget procedure. We should watch these developments to see how they enable a national focus and protect the principle of joint governance in setting priorities for regional program development.

Annual Meeting: Abridged Reports, continued

Friends World Committee for Consultation

Zig Dermer (Pittsburgh)

Through the work of the FWCC, Friends of all traditions learn about each other's worship and witness. A regional meeting was held at Friends School in Detroit last autumn; an October 2005 meeting will be hosted at Barnesville by Ohio YM (Conservative) [see p. 18].

The FWCC Section of the Americas Annual Meeting was held in Tempe, Arizona, in April. The next Section meeting will be hosted by Guatemalan Friends in Chiquimula on the third weekend in March 2006. In 2007, the next Triennial Meeting will be hosted by Ireland YM. LEYM will support the travel of two Friends appointed to represent us there. FWCC is instituting a capital campaign, hoping to build an endowment.

Olney Friends School Representative

Nancy Taylor (Ann Arbor)

Olney began the 2004-05 year with 67 students, including 23 from 13 other countries. All graduating seniors were accepted into 4-year colleges.

Olney completed its \$2 million capital campaign (ably led by Katharine Jacobsen) in three years instead of five, and exceeded the \$200,000 Annual Fund Campaign in 2004. Olney is purchasing Top Campus from Ohio Yearly Meeting – the 65 acres on which the school buildings stand, plus the hockey and soccer fields and lake. Olney was featured in the spring issue of *Teaching Tolerance* in an article titled, "Body, Mind and Spirit."

There remains great financial need, as most students receive scholarship aid and income from tuition does not cover costs. The buildings are in need of repair and updating. Recruitment of students remains a challenge, and we're looking for two or three new Board members.

Friends General Conference Representatives

Kri Anderson (Ann Arbor) on behalf of herself, Valerie Groszmann and Star Mary Castro

FGC continues to seek the will of God in its service to the monthly and yearly meetings under its care. The spirit is alive and busy!

At Central Committee sessions this fall, we heard the following statement:

Our experience has been that spiritual gifts are not distributed with regard to sexual orientation or gender identity. Our experience has been that our Gatherings and Central Committee work have been immeasurably enriched over the years by the full participation and Spirit-guided leadership of gay, lesbian, bisexual,

transgender, and queer Friends. We will never go back to silencing those voices or suppressing those gifts. Our experience confirms that we are all equal before God, as God made us, and we feel blessed to be engaged in the work of FGC together.

We alert Friends to two upcoming books: *Wrestling with our Faith Tradition*, by Lloyd Lee Wilson, and *Living with a Concern for the Ministry* (tentative title), by Brian Drayton.

Kri Anderson serves as FGC's representative to the planning committee for YouthQuake, a triennial gathering of youth aged 14-20 from across the theological spectrum of Quakerism. A number of LEYM youth have participated in past YouthQuakes, and we are encouraged to consider expanding our financial support for that opportunity.

Within FGC there is growing energy about Youth Ministry, and opportunities for connections among young Friends of similar ages. Perhaps more powerful and unexpected was a parallel and less met need for the building of a true intergenerational community. We were challenged to respond to the following query: "Can we really find that of God, based in mutual respect and reciprocal nurturance, between all of us, regardless of age?" We feel deeply led to expand our work in this area, while continuing work through the Committee for Ministry on Racism, and Traveling Ministry. As FGC grows its programming, the need for financial support grows as well.

Two of your representatives have been active in the Yearly Meeting Visitors program, visiting North Carolina YM–Conservative, Northern YM, and North Pacific YM sessions last year, and planning to attend New York YM later this year.

Next summer's Gathering will be held in Tacoma, Washington.

Advancement & Outreach Committee

Mathilda Navias (Broadmead)

We have approved a new packet of five pamphlets for newcomers, to distribute to every meeting and worship group in LEYM.

Since Representative Meeting, members of A&O have visited Albion WG, Birmingham MM, and Mid-Ohio Valley MM; additional visits are planned.

We decided that our committee can take responsibility for the content of LEYM's web site. Technical aspects of the site will remain the responsibility of the web master under the guidance of the Publications Committee.

Annual Meeting: Abridged Reports, continued

We remind Friends to check their meeting's listing in the QuakerFinder.com web site.

We have put outreach materials in the display area.

Arrangements & Site Committee

Judy Greenberg (Broadmead)

Pre-registration went well this year; 145 people pre-registered. We had the usual challenge of finding enough rooms for all our meetings in Marbeck Center.

The new catering company the University has employed has been disappointing. We'll expect the food to be better next year. We're aware of the difficulties with the dorms and are trying to address these.

The dates being held for us next year are June 15-18.

Program Committee Margy Liske (Kent)

The Program Committee conferred several times via conference calls. Reflecting our query, we chose as theme for this gathering "The Ground of our Being: Listening to Earth and Spirit." We researched potential plenary speakers, and selected Kim Carlyle; Susan Carlyle also kindly agreed to present a workshop.

At Representative Meeting we planned the schedule for June, tallied potential expenses, and confirmed four of the five workshop topics and leaders. With the Iraq war (or the second American war?) we found our fifth topic: Draft Counseling. We continued working on the program details, ever grateful for the endless patience and good will of the Arrangements & Site Committee.

Finance & Budget Committee

Linda Mills (Kalamazoo).

At Representative Meeting we were asked to review the history of support for the ongoing High School Youth Program. The Committee recommends an increase of \$500 to the High School Youth Program budget for programming, and a raise of \$400 for the High School Youth Coordinator.

The Committee was asked to consider funding for YouthQuake. An increase of \$1,500 in the Youth Activity Fund would allow for scholarships to that Quaker event as well as other activities.

The Spiritual Formation line item is increased by \$100 to cover scholarships to the new Spiritual Formation group forming in the Pittsburgh area.

Anticipating a request from Ministry & Nurture, we recommend a new line item for M&N of \$200. We also

recommend decreases in the Publications & Archives Committee budget. With the recommended changes to the budget, the per-adult member fair share will be \$34 for 2005-2006 (up from \$31).

We approved moving \$1,000 from the General Fund surplus to the World Gathering of Young Friends line item, thereby allowing about \$1,500 per representative.

The Committee is in the process of arranging for a two-year review of the books. We welcome Erika Smith as the new Treasurer as of July 1, 2005; Connie Bimber will remain on the Committee for another year to ease the transition.

Publications & Archives Committee

Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh)

1. This committee does not have a full complement of members. We need a web master, an archivist, an editor for the *Annual Records 2006* and beyond, and/or a new Clerk.

2. We thank all who have sent in State of the Meeting and statistical reports. We also print obituaries of members who have died since last June, and a Clerk's Report if it comes in on time.

3. The Committee needs the names of Monthly Meeting newsletter editors, so that we can send them materials and remind them to send copies of their newsletters to Jeff Cooper, who is now producing the *LEYM Bulletin*.

4. In early fall we'll be asking you for your most recent meeting directories. The new *LEYM Directory* should be in your hands by this time next year.

5. Having heard no objections recently, we plan to continue printing 250 copies of the *Bulletin* three times a year and 125 copies of the *Annual Records*.

6. Finally we plan to scan our guidelines regarding what Monthly Meeting material is considered archival into a computer and will e-mail copies to Meeting archivists for their information.

Youth & Children Committee

Conleth Crotser (Cleveland)

Thirty-three children and youth registered this year, ranging in age from two months to 18 years. The age groups we expected were somewhat different; in particular, we have five children under the age of three. The ten group leaders shifted their expectations and assignments with great success. We thank the family that volunteered to create this year's tee shirts, and the several folks who volunteered to drive to the lake and help keep everyone happy and safe.

Annual Meeting: Abridged Reports, continued

We also appreciate help from the Arrangements & Site Committee and a Y&C leader who lives in Bluffton.

The Y&C participants are, numerically, a small part of the overall Annual Meeting, but Annual Meeting is a big part of the lives of the Y&C. Please keep the Y&C participants (adults and young ones alike) in mind whenever you plan the YM program.



Conleth Crotser, reporting with help from son Japiri

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Ruth Fraser (Pacific YM), West Coast staff of FCNL

The newly rebuilt “green” building on Capitol Hill will soon be ready for FCNL staff and guests.

Quaker bodies are encouraged to support “Iraq – a STEP Resolution” (Sensible Transition to an Enduring Peace) as a way forward in Iraq.

The FCNL Internship program continues to enable college graduates to do real hands-on work with staff on Capitol Hill. We are encouraged to recommend candidates for this opportunity.

It was noted separately that Ann Arbor Young Friends recently participated in a trip to Washington for a Youth Lobby Day organized by FCNL. It was a marvelous educational experience for them.

Peace Committee David Lore (Granville)

The Peace Committee has discussed a number of areas where our yearly and monthly meetings could help influence events. It’s heartening to hear about the good work of our member monthly meetings and individual Friends.

Our committee considered and endorsed FCNL’s STEP resolution on withdrawal from Iraq, and we recommend LEYM approve this document as well. The resolution calls on Congress to declare that “it is the policy of the United States to withdraw all U.S. military troops and bases from Iraq.”

A recent Associated Press study found inequalities – largely racial ones – in use of the death penalty in Ohio. We ask LEYM to approve a minute calling on the Ohio governor and legislature to act on legislation to create a Capital Case Commission to investigate such problems.

We also decided to pass along information to monthly meetings on two interesting campaigns. Carolyn Diem (Ann Arbor) shared that her meeting (and other religious institutions) are urging those concerned about the Israeli-Palestinian situation to divest Fidelity mutual funds buying Israeli bonds or to work as shareholders for divestiture by the bond funds. In Ohio, a non-partisan campaign of progressive organizations is seeking to qualify three election reform issues for this November’s ballot.

Finally, Nate Riley (Birmingham) told us of his meeting’s work to educate young people and their parents of their rights in dealing with ever more aggressive military recruiters. Meetings are encouraged to develop such programs; Nate Riley and Betty Ford (Grand Rapids) are available to help.

Earthcare Committee of Concern

Al Connor (Ann Arbor)

The Earthcare Committee met in April at Greenfire Eco-village. It was the sense of those at the meeting that the Committee has two major goals: 1) To nurture the wholeness and integrity of the two major bioregions of LEYM (the Great Lakes Basin and the Ohio River Basin); 2) To work at local, state and federal levels of government toward sustainable policies that defer to the people affected.

Two leadings were articulated: 1) Regeneration of the Earth is necessary for social justice and peace on Earth to exist. We each need to consider our lifestyle and how we might change it to live in harmony with the nature of our bioregions. 2) To take action derived from our spiritual discernment, to educate and persuade local, state and federal governments, local and regional planning agencies and corporate executives to adopt legislation, policies and actions that enable Earth regeneration and prevent further ecological, economic and socio-cultural degradation.

Annual Meeting: Abridged Reports, continued

To activate those leadings and progress toward those goals, members from our monthly meetings need to pursue their diverse leadings individually and corporately.

A wider and more diverse membership is needed to increase the Committee's spiritual depth and broaden its environmental, economic and socio-cultural base and to reach out to neighboring faith communities.

The Committee, with Judy Greenberg's editorship, has compiled a small Earthcare booklet that includes our goals, leadings and concerns. Its purpose is to share with monthly meetings basic concepts and points that are important to us. We hope each monthly meeting will take one and make copies for its members.

Ministry & Nurture Committee

Merry Stanford (Red Cedar)

1. Queries and Advices: At Representative Meeting, exploring the possibility of developing an LEYM *Faith & Practice*, the Executive Committee asked M&N to consider focusing its annual query on the theme of "Faith & Practice." The Committee felt clear to recommend queries focused on an active faith and living practice:

In what ways has the Living Presence awakened my faith and turned me around?

As a Meeting, how do we support each other in being faithful?

2. 2004-2005 Spiritual Formation Program: The goal of this eight-year-old program is to assist individuals and meetings in deepening and enlivening their experience of the Spirit. The theme for 2004-2005 was "Discerning Gifts of the Spirit." Evaluation of the yearlong program revealed how the program has supported the spiritual growth of Friends.

3. 2005-2006 Spiritual Formation Program: This year there will be two sites: a Michigan program at the Leaven Center, and a new program at Pittsburgh MM.

4. Consultation of Monthly Meetings on Ministry & Nurture. The Committee will sponsor an LEYM Consultation of the M&N committees of the MMs in April 2006. Two representatives from each MM's will be invited. A line item of \$200 has been requested to help support the Consultation.

5. State of the Meeting Reports: Because these reports are a primary avenue of communication regarding the spiritual life of the MMs, we propose some suggested guidelines for their preparation (see *Annual Records 2005*). Reports will continue to be sent to the Clerk of Publications and to the Clerk of M&N.

6. Visitation: Members of M&N conducted visitations to worship groups and meetings. With the Advancement & Outreach Committee, we encourage all Friends of the YM to consider visiting other meetings and worship groups, especially small and isolated ones, for the deepened relationship in the Spirit that such visitation provides.

7. Role of M&N: We remind Friends that one of our roles is to consult with local M&N committees on their request. Any meetings facing issues related to spiritual or pastoral concerns are invited to contact the Clerk of LEYM M&N. We also remind Friends that each MM is asked to name a representative to the M&N Committee who can attend Representative and Yearly sessions.



Merry Stanford, Ministry & Nurture

High School Youth Program

Carolyn LeJuste (Red Cedar), Clerk of the Committee, reported, using notes from Kri Anderson, program coordinator:

There have been three LEYM-sponsored retreats since our last Yearly Meeting:

The Summer Rafting Trip in West Virginia was a wild success. Six students and two adults shared old stories and created new.

As in the past, the Winter Retreat, "The 3rd Annual Quake that Rocked the Midwest," was held, over Martin Luther King weekend, in Evanston, Illinois. This event, organized through LEYM, invites high school youth from four Great Lakes Yearly Meetings. This year, there were 44 people in attendance, including 9 from LEYM.

Annual Meeting: Abridged Reports, continued

The Spring Retreat was held in East Lansing, under the care of Red Cedar Monthly Meeting, with great help from Carolyn LeJuste and the Nolan/Baker family, who hosted the event in their home. We had 10 youth and 2 adults.

Way has not opened for the Russia Trip at this time. Thanks to all the Friends who have offered their support – we may need you still!

The High School Youth Committee Clerk, Carolyn Le-Juste, met with Kri Anderson to plan the work of the committee during the upcoming year. We ask all LEYM MMs who are interested in supporting this program to indicate their interest and willingness to host one seasonal high school retreat this year; talk to Carolyn or Kri. The Committee will continue to discern ways to strengthen this program.



Friends School in Detroit:

Dwight Wilson (Ann Arbor), Head of School.

With very few Quakers in Detroit, FSD has the large task of bringing Quaker values to the city. The School has recently been reaccredited by ISACS (Independent Schools Association) with the comment that, although the program is strong, the School needs to improve and expand its physical plant. The School needs our prayers, Friends to serve on the Board, and contributions to both the regular budget and the Capital Campaign.

Nominating Committee Dolores Avner (Pittsburgh) and Connie Green (Cleveland) reported.

See the full slate of officers, committee members, and representative in Annual Records 2005, pp. 44-47.



*Kim Carlyle,
Plenary Speaker*



*High School Group
(far left)*

*Dwight Wilson,
Friends School
in Detroit (near left)*

Bill Bliss at Plenary



Annual Meeting: Epistles

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

June 19, 2005

To Friends Everywhere:

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of Friends met June 16-19, 2005 to consider "The Ground of Our Being: Listening to Earth and Spirit." One hundred and fifty-three friends gathered at the tree blessed campus of Bluffton University in Bluffton, Ohio, to share and explore ways of attending to earth and spirit. We did this through participation in business sessions, worship sharing groups, workshops, Bible study, discussions over meals, the children's program, and music.

Plenary speaker, Kim Carlyle, of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, spoke on activism for the earth from the Spirit. He made it clear that living in harmony with the earth is a spiritual practice and our goal is to forge peace *with* the earth as well as peace *on* earth. Our connection with the earth should be, and occasionally is, healing, soothing and divine. We were challenged by Kim to look to our own relationship with the earth and take steps to cherish it, such as limiting pollution and abuse of our natural resources. Kim asserted that "our earth is in crisis; it is a spiritual crisis." He issued a Friendly challenge to reduce our personal fossil fuel use by 70% within the next seven years. We felt moved by Kim's presentation and challenged to examine our own lives and actions. The following day, after thoughtful and prayerful exploration, we approved the transition of the Earthcare Committee of Concern into a standing committee of the Yearly Meeting.

As has become our tradition, friends gathered each day for early morning Bible study. Susan Jeffers helped us focus on our spiritual relationship with the earth. Saturday afternoon workshops helped us explore practical applications of our simplicity testimony and gave us lessons on caring for creation from Noah. Some friends gathered for a meeting for healing; others discussed the draft and draft counseling; and others explored how we can increase outreach through our monthly meetings.

The theme of Listening to Earth and Spirit was set to rousing music performed by singer and banjo player, Paul Tinkerhess, and his cello/bass-playing son, Eric. Never did Earth Care sound so melodious.

Over the last few years, the pace and spirit of our meeting for worship with attention to business have lent a growing atmosphere of thoughtfulness and prayer to our sessions. The possibility of a greater awareness of God's presence in our deliberation has been fostered by our closer attention to Quaker practices such as pausing while the recording clerk writes the minute (giving us time to ponder and reflect before reading and approving it) and requesting periods of silence when we are getting distracted or confused. We leave you with the challenge we have set for ourselves: to reflect upon our lifestyles, consider how they might be more earth-friendly, and encourage and help one another reorder our priorities and practices as needed.

Signed on behalf of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting,

Michael Fuson, Clerk

From the Early Elementary Group

- We read *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* and then made a pine forest with crows.
- We made a leaf collection and pinecones, berries, dandelions, and rocks.
- We made a craft holder from a can.
- We made gifts for Easter Bunny and Santa from old cans, paper, and tape.
- We found dandelions and discovered that the name comes from the French "dent de lion," meaning lion's tooth, because of the leaves.
- Swimming was fun — there were fish — we tried to catch them — we did not get any!
- We went on a scavenger hunt. At the market we bought homemade cookies and local strawberries. I love the sprinklers ... the good chocolate ... the double bass.

Signed: Olwen Pritchard and Tim Damon (teachers), Eric Dierauer, Ali Fisher, Nora Armijo, Serenity Crowley, Evan Heritage, Dyani Armijo (and decorated with leaves; paper flowers, birds, and fruit; and other tenderly assembled illustrative materials).

Annual Meeting: Epistles, continued

From the Upper Elementary Group

“The Ground of Our Being” means “where we came from” and “where we are.” We listened to the Earth in many ways during our time together this week. We visited a farm that helps give us food. We helped the farm and our Friends community. At the farm we pulled weeds and picked onions. The onions were used to make soup to share with our community.

The Earth told us that nature is beautiful and that we can help keep nature beautiful. We walked in the woods and stopped to enjoy the lake. We were amazed by the beauty of a great blue heron. We were sad to find garbage left at the lake. We are proud that we helped the Earth by taking away the garbage we found.

We heard the simple and delicious sounds of the farmers’ market in town. Our group shared fresh strawberries grown by local farmers.

We heard the Earth as we lived and played here on campus. We had fun times playing games like “Capture the Flag” and “Hospital Tag.” We learned about solving problems and cooperation. We made new friends and spent time with old buddies.

We went swimming, built a sand castle, and created stories at the lake.

Yearly Meeting is special to each one of us. Just being here is special.

Signed: Peter Crowley and Angela Suarez (teachers), Nicholas Suarez, Louis Suarez, Spencer Keashly-Warters, Andrew Riley, Amani Crowley, Serenity Crowley, Sam Spry.

From the Middle School Group

Nothing happened Thursday. Friday most of us experienced worship sharing for the first time. Some of us are proud to say we spoke during that time. In class we met some new people and got reacquainted with old friends. We read some Maori, Chinese, and of course the Biblical creation story. With lots of laughter and joy we wrote our own creation story. A chilly 20 minutes in a freezing cold fish-infested lake was quite enough.

Later we joined the adults in the plenary session, which we also discussed in our class group. We all agreed that the quote from Gandhi, about riding on

a train, was the best part. More friends joined us Saturday. We had a track meet at the vacant Bluffton football field. We played on the high jump, the long jump, the football post, the track, and the bleachers. We watched “The Medicine Man,” which some of us enjoyed and others didn’t (Tori, for instance). The ice cream social was cool. We thought the performers did a great job during the musical part.

Signed: Vanessa Fuson and Joe Mills (teachers), Max Fisher, Will Smith, Jody Pratt-Harrington, Meaghan Diffenderfer, Shannon Pratt-Harrington, Brittany Crowley, Tori Pearson, Jessie Cooper, Bradie Connor.

From the High School Group

Dear Friends Everywhere,

This year at LEYM we came with many questions and found some answers. We had in-depth discussions about food, learning about different ways food is produced, processed, consumed and marketed. We noticed the lack of quality in our cafeteria food, so we ventured out to search for fruits and grains in the wilderness of Bluffton.

We explored the inner spirituality of communism by pooling all of our money to purchase a communally-eaten bucket of strawberries, organic bread, jam, and pizza.

Speaking of food, we experienced déjà-vu when we found ourselves again under overcast skies at Twin Lakes. We learned that water is warmer on the top than on the bottom during our discussions about global warming and experienced it at the lake. Later we refined our knowledge of nouns and adjectives by playing “Apples to Apples” and we finally opened the expansion crate.

During our simple-living activities, we discovered how Quaker teens are more distant from cultural norms than other teens, which explains everything.

And now the year is — sniff, sniff, sniff — gone forever. And we can all say we’ve played inside a sewer pipe.

Signed: Clémence Ravaçon-Mershon and Paul Burkholder (teachers), Zack Ford, Micah Sommer, Erin Diffenderfer, Angel Riley, Abbey Pratt-Harrington, Christa Pratt-Harrington, Laurel Fuson, Psyche Castro.

Annual Meeting: Plenary

Activism for the Earth, from the Spirit

By Kim Carlyle, Co-Director of Caring for Creation, Interfaith Partners of Western NC,
and former Clerk of Quaker Earthcare Witness

Kim Carlyle of Swannanoa Valley Friends Meeting (SAYMA) began by assuring LEYM that he was really “bringing out the message that is already here.” His aim was to lead us to an ecological perspective that encompasses the entirety of creation.

Noting that “the American dream has become an ecological nightmare,” Kim stressed that we need not only peace *on* earth but peace *with* earth. “Our earth is in crisis, a spiritual crisis,” he said. “We are called to action.” All the systems of the earth on which we depend are in decline or in transition to unsatisfactory states; pollution and toxicity affect our air, our water, our food. We are in the midst of the fastest mass extinction of species in recorded history and a global climate crisis.

Human activity, in sum, is cooking the planet, killing off other species, and poisoning humankind, which has become spiritually distant from the earth, our home and source of life. Instead of the Spirit, the breath of God, the animating force, we worship the false gods of science and technology. The “environment” is something “out there,” separate from us; “ecology,” in contrast, relates us to the natural world. As Quakers we find this relationship in religious tradition (connecting earth and spirit, caring for creation because it is necessary for our sustenance and our survival), continuing revelation (unfolding truth, love of all God’s manifestations in the natural world), and Friends’ testimonies (peace, simplicity, equality, and integrity).

Our task is to work at prevention – taking away the occasion of war – and set the right goals – more than just the absence of war. While it is true that “War is not the answer,” what is the question? Perhaps it is: How can we eliminate the extreme distress in the global community? What is required is a holistic approach. Should simpler living be an option, or a moral imperative? Noting that John Woolman lived his faith by being mindful of the consequences of his actions, Kim asked how Woolman would travel today, given the high levels of pollution provided by air and private car travel, in contrast to bus and train transport. We all need to contribute to the effort to save the earth: faith, by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead; activism is faith made visible. A sense of earth and spirit should permeate all our activities, in the realization that human interests do not outweigh all others.

Education, Kim continued, must guide our activism, even though, in the world today, there may be a great gulf between actions and their consequences. We must beware “the weapons of mass seduction” used by the advertising industry. Are we aware, for example, of the link between cell phones and war deaths? There is an ore (coltan) mined in the Congo, necessary for the manufacture of cell phones, which has fueled bloody conflicts in seven countries along with massive ecological damage. This is only one of many missed connections that stem from hidden structural violence.

We have two tasks: to transform ourselves and to transform our culture. Mutual reinforcement between the individual and the government are required. We are to be the models for cultural transformation. Think of George Fox, who said, “Be patterns, be examples...,” or Gandhi, who pointed out, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

Can we limit our consumption of energy? Kim suggested we aim for a 70% reduction in seven years through conservation, efficiency, and alternatives. This would be a bottom-up approach to cultural change. Speaking “earth-truth” to power – that is, advocating for political and institutional reform – is the top-down approach. He noted that energy concerns are now part of the legislative priorities of FCNL, which has itself embarked on serious earth-friendly renovations of its building in Washington, DC.

At the same time, the world already shows signs of a changing consciousness. Last year the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to a Kenyan environmentalist whose special interest was in planting trees – clearly, connections are being made. We may well have reached our ecological limits; it is not unthinkable that *Homo sapiens* could become extinct. Activism is an expression of love and understanding of our relationship and responsibilities to the earth. The goal, Kim concluded, is to bring “humans into harmony with our fellow-creatures and all creation,” ultimately to “walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God, the animating spirit of life, in all of the earth.”

Summarized by Rosemary Coffey

A photo of Kim Carlyle delivering the Plenary appears on p. 9.

Committee News

Peace Committee

Since Yearly Meeting in June, there have been major developments in programs to end the Iraq war and advance election reform in Ohio. Two other campaigns brought before Lake Erie Yearly Meeting – divestment of Israeli bonds and an Ohio moratorium on capital punishment – are continuing.

Endorsed at Yearly Meeting was the STEP (Sensible Transition to an Enduring Peace) resolution calling on Congress to declare, "It is the policy of the United States to withdraw all U.S. military troops and bases from Iraq." The resolution is being circulated by Friends Committee on National Legislation.

On July 20, however, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 291-137 against a "premature withdrawal" of U.S. troops from Iraq and declared that even establishing a specific date for beginning the withdrawal of U.S. troops would "embolden" the anti-U.S. insurgents, reports FCNL.

"The majority in this Congress is not yet prepared to support a U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq," says FCNL Executive Secretary Joe Volk. "But, the good news is that, the Congressional leadership and the White House see public support for the war eroding and that erosion is picking up momentum. They introduced this legislation to try to slow the loss of support for their policy on Iraq."



Three other proposals were brought before Yearly Committee by the Peace Committee for information and action as monthly meetings are led. They are:

1) A proposed minute calling on Ohio Gov. Bob Taft and members of the Ohio Legislature to act on pending legislation to create a 20-member Capital Case Commission to investigate reported inequalities in the use of the death penalty. Since June, there has been no action on

this legislation but work continues on obtaining a moratorium. See www.otse.org and www.afsc.org for details.

2) Information on the campaign to review investments – specifically, Fidelity mutual funds buying Israeli bonds – that might contribute to Middle East unrest. The action had been endorsed by the Presbyterian Church USA and the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church but was rejected in July by the United Church of Christ.

3) Information on the "Reform Ohio Now" campaign which, in June, was seeking to place a slate of election reform amendments on the Nov. 8 ballot. Subsequent to Yearly Meeting, these initiative constitutional amendments withstood two court challenges and were certified as State Issues 2,3,4 and 5. Friends in Ohio are encouraged to learn about these ballot proposals at www.reformohionow.com for details.

David Lore, Clerk, LEYM Peace Committee

Advancement & Outreach

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting's Advancement and Outreach Committee is concerned to support the worship groups within the yearly meeting.

As we have witnessed in our yearly meeting, worship groups can develop spontaneously and grow on their own. However, when worship groups feel it is desirable, it is to be encouraged that monthly meetings support and nurture them. The relationship may come to be minuted by the monthly meeting as "being under their care" if that is mutually agreed or it may remain outside that form in words, if that seems more comfortable. When the meeting informs LEYM that they have taken a group "under their care", it will be so noted in the yearly meeting records. Maintaining relationships between monthly meetings and worship groups can be rewarding both for the supporting meeting and the worship group.

Below is a list of the Worship Groups in LEYM. Friends are encouraged to visit. Call first to confirm the time, place and desirability of the visit.

Worship Groups

Albion Worship Group

Under the Care of Red Cedar Monthly Meeting
Worship Location: Attenders' homes in Albion, Michigan; call for information.

People to contact: Dianne Guenin-Lelle and Mark Lelle,
517-629-8701; marklelle@cablespeed.com

Chelsea Worship Group

Worship: 2nd and 4th Sundays, 10AM (doors open at 9:30)

Worship Location: Michigan Friends Center, Chelsea, Michigan.

Person to contact: Bill Bliss, 734-475-9976; Bliss@ic.net

Circleville Worship Group

Worship Location: 214 S. Court St., Suite 106,

Circleville, Ohio, 740-420-7626

Website: www.circlevillefriendsworshipgroup.org

Person to contact: Brad Cotton, 740-474-1837;

roundtownquaker@hotmail.com

Erie Worship Group

Worship Location: Erie, Pennsylvania

Person to contact: Clemence Mershon, 814-587-3479;

andre14@earthlink.net

Fremont Worship Group

Under the care of Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting

Worship: 2nd and 4th Sundays, 6PM; sometimes 1st and 3rd as well

Worship Location: Attenders' homes in Fremont, Michigan

Person to contact: Sharon Daly, 231-924-5349;

ghhsmd@ncats.net

Gallipolis Area Worship Group (formerly Rio Grande)

Worship location: Gallipolis Episcopal Church, Gallipolis, Ohio

Person to contact: Evelyn Kirkhart; 740-245-9014,

evelynkirkhart@dragonbbs.com

Grand Traverse Worship Group

Worship Location and Time: Friends Meeting House, Oak at 5th St., Traverse City, Michigan, generally at 11:45 AM, Sundays.

Persons to contact: Kathi Mulder, 231-929-3563;

kmulder@msu.edu or Ann Bardens, 231-274-3839;

bardens@comcast.net; website.

Manitou Worship Group

Under the care of Grand Rapids Monthly Meeting

Worship location and timing: Meets in attenders' homes, every Sunday, 10:30 AM for singing, followed by silent worship for an hour.

Persons to contact: Marion Stow, 231-352-5246; Penny

Herd, 231-352-4470; Herdwho@betsievalley.net

Tustin Worship Group

Under the care of Pine River Monthly Meeting

Worship: Wednesdays, 7:00 PM

Worship Location: Attenders' homes near Tustin, Michigan

Website: www.tustinfriends.org

Persons to contact: Mitzi and Don Ruswick, 231-829-3440; druswick@direcway.com

The nature of the worship groups in LEYM varies widely. Three of the worship groups were formed in the past three years: Tustin, Grand Traverse, and Circleville. Most have been in existence for many years. Some of the groups are a considerable distance from each other and from a monthly meeting. There is substantial diversity in needs and composition of the groups, needless to say.

Perhaps it would be useful to know of Pine River Monthly Meeting's experience with neighboring worship groups in Michigan. This small monthly meeting is on the geographical periphery of the Yearly Meeting. There have been, therefore, geographical as well as social and religious reasons to relate to other Quaker groups in the area. Pine River Monthly Meeting or its members have had occasional meetings over the years with the Friends in the Fremont Worship Group, and, just recently, with the Grand Traverse and Tustin Worship Groups. With Fremont, there were several brief annual "retreats" at the home of Phyllis and Robert Painter, from Lakeview, Michigan. (They were active members in Pine River Meeting while in continuing relationship with the Fremont group and lived an intermediate distance from each community.) On one occasion, Pine River members met with Fremont attenders near Fremont itself, about 70 miles away.

Members of Pine River Meeting form the core of the Tustin Worship Group. That Group has attended Pine River First-day Meeting on several occasions. Several of our members have attended there as a group and as individuals. Former attendees of our meeting have moved to the Grand Traverse area and one of them has served as "clerk" of their lively Group. Several Friends from Pine River have attended there on First-Day and on other occasions. We also keep in touch with both Groups with meaningful personal e-mail correspondence. Pine River sends monthly business meeting minutes to the Tustin Group through its members there.

Grand Traverse and Tustin are 115 and 62 miles away, respectively, from Pine River. The contacts with these Groups have been life-giving, stimulating, and joyous to Pine River Monthly Meeting, which wholeheartedly recommends the practice of this kind of relationship to others in the yearly meeting.

Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, which is made up of all the LEYM monthly meetings in Michigan, welcomes worship group attenders to all of its four annual gatherings: business at the Friends School in Detroit in the fall and at the Michigan Friends Center in Chelsea in the spring and the two meetings for worship and socializing, one in Quaker Park in Battle Creek on the first

weekend First Day in August and a mid-winter meeting sponsored by a monthly meeting in February

There are many ways that monthly meetings may develop relationships with worship groups that are fruitful. The most important is for members of the meeting to join the group's worship on a regular basis. Utilizing historic Quaker institutions such as regular visitation, clearness process, and sensitive comprehensive meeting for business practice can bring Friends together in meaningful ways. The giving of hospitality among Friends is a good engine for developing depths of genuine support.

E-mail is a significant opportunity for Friends to continue in touch. It is certainly not as desirable as face-to-face contact, but a great benefit over against no contact at all. Meetings can share business minutes, other concerns, and opportunities electronically in web sites and mail.

For suggestions on additional ways a meeting can nurture a worship group, or for questions about the relationship between a meeting and a worship group, please contact the A&O committee clerk, Mathilda Navias, 147 Hall St., Tiffin, OH 44883, mathilda@lycos.com, (419) 448-0578.

Letting the Spirit lead us in these relationships in openness and faithful expectation will continue to help grow LEYM's community of faith.

Don Nagler, for the A&O Committee

Hurricane Katrina Grants to Friends Churches, Meetings, and Groups

Rubye Braye of North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) is coordinating the American Friends Service Committee's efforts to award grants of up to \$10,000 to Friends groups who are providing services to evacuees or are engaged in relief and rebuilding services. The work must focus on underserved groups.

The one-page application should address:

Project description: Whom are you helping? What do you intend to do?

Amount of volunteer time committed

Financial support requested

Timeframe: When will the work begin and end?

What other financial help has been secured?

What outcome do you expect?

A letter from the Friends church, meeting, or organization supporting the work should be included. The deadline is the end of October. You can reach Rubye at RBraye@afsc.org or (901) 681-0670 if you have questions.

Just Published: A Sea Novel Centered on Quakers, with a Startlingly Timely Message of Peace

While its plot is set in 19th Century Quaker Philadelphia, *Tunnell's Boys* has marked relevance with the war in Iraq today. Its story takes place before and during the United States' war with Spain in 1898, which historian Thomas Schoonover cites as our nation's first excursion into globalization and empire. On the Pacific front, the US occupation army in Manila became bogged down in battling three years of "postwar" grass-roots insurgency, involving thousands of deaths and numerous atrocities by our soldiers.

Quaker author and peace activist George Lakey writes of *Tunnell's Boys*:

With pro-war hysteria rising around him, a young pacifist man with a history of brawling embodies the yearnings and contradictions of those around him. Like Tony Junker's adventurous protagonist, I found myself challenged anew: when to fight and by what means? When to question cynically my government's posture and when to join my neighbor's true hopes for democracy? How to express my passion and still listen for the inner voice? This book is for anyone who loves peace and finds "integrity" as much a verb as a noun.

Quaker author and historian Margaret Hope Bacon adds:

For one who loves both sailing and the history of Quaker Philadelphia, Tunnell's Boys brings alive a time, a place, and a culture which I have lived in through my imagination. An exciting and absorbing human drama which kept me turning the pages.

Tunnell's Boys is widely available on line and through local bookstores. It is listed by Friends General Council bookstore. Author Tony Junker is a member of Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. More information can be found on his website: www.tonyjunker.com.

Quaker Conference on Torture

Guilford College, Guilford, North Carolina

Friday – Sunday, June 2-4, 2006

Organized by The Quaker Initiative to End Torture (QUIT) and co-sponsored by FWCC, Section of the Americas.

For more information, contact John Calvi at calvij@sover.net, or PO Box 301, Putney, VT 05346. Web site: <http://home.ix.netcom.com/~quit>.

Reports from Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting

Don Nagler, Assistant Clerk

At the **Spring 2005 Gathering** of GPQM, the practice was initiated of having a well-known Friend give a talk in the morning prior to the meeting for business. After a period of silent worship, Paul Lacey, emeritus professor of English at Earlham College, writer of numerous Friends pamphlets, and current clerk of the board of the AFSC, gave a moving and informative talk on "Finding Our Lights." I will summarize his talk.

Using autobiographic illustrations, he explored with us the personal and collective meanings of the process of "being held in the Light": caring deeply about someone's well-being, expressing good-will and love, and sustaining oneself and others in loving. Relevant to his experience of being so held during his recent coronary by-pass operation and recovery, he felt its transforming action. It was another evidence of how, in his own life, finding the Light in Quaker faith and practice has enabled him to develop genuine trust and love of others, himself, and God.

He thought "Light" was a personal and corporate synonym for God, yet ineffable. Each of us has our own personal metaphor for "light" in worship and discernment, a changing entity evolved by our interpretation of experience, that converges on Truth, perhaps deeply, but never subscribes, defines, or proscribes it in any complete sense. He said "Light" within our Quaker faith is used to describe divinity and divine meaning, but as individuals we work out in our lives its meaning and power. Yet as we all have necessarily different metaphors developed from our nature and experience, how are we to love each other and appreciate one another's metaphors and lives?

He returned to the experience of "holding others in the Light" as having four elements: holding the other persons in God; visualizing them as illumined in sunlight; empowering them in hope; waiting in that vision as to what one might be led to do for them in action or prayer.

He expressed the concern that we not be judgmental as to other people's spiritual practice, and pointed out how the light may become more apparent in the example of their lives.

Another source of light can be found in reason and "the convincement of the intellect." The Light also helps us to distinguish darkness. He quoted Ursula LeGuin's statement that "to light a candle is to cast a shadow" in this way. There also is a necessity "to test" and reconcile "the lights" we experience.

Finally, he made reference to Gandhi's favorite hymn, written by John Henry Newman, "Lead, Kindly Light" and the Pendle Hill Pamphlet of Mildred Binns

Young entitled "The Candle, the Lantern, the Daylight" as being inspirational and illustrative of the qualities of discernment, insight, and empowerment in the discovery of light.

We do have to work in darkness, but as we discover the light within ourselves, in others and the world, we form personal integrity and love.

Following lunch, the meeting with attention to business was conducted. There was the usual review of the minutes, reports of finance and the nominating committee, a report from Michigan Friends Center, and an interim report on Friends School in Detroit.

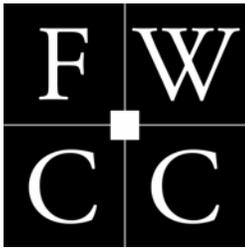
New business included an approval of a new formalization of the appointment of representatives to the Quarterly from the Monthly Meetings. There also were announcements of the GPQM future gatherings in August 2005 in Quaker Park in Battle Creek and the February Mid-winters to be held in Kalamazoo in 2006 and Grand Rapids in 2007.

The **Mid-Winter Meeting** of GPQM was held on February 5th at Michigan Friends Center. It was sponsored by Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting and Birmingham Monthly Meeting. Planning and announcement of the gathering were delayed, but the chief impediment to attendance was a dense ground fog which pretty much obviated travel from any distance. However, attenders did come from Ann Arbor, Birmingham, and Mt. Pleasant, numbering about 38 persons.

After a rich period of silent worship, Ellen Barnes from Birmingham led a discussion on several of the parables from the Gospels. Six small groups were formed and their analyses shared with the larger group in a final session.

The weather, around noontime, cleared to sunshine and warmer temperatures, so that some persons were able to share lunch, served by Ann Arbor Meeting, outside. Following lunch, there was a demonstration of fire-building with a bow-drill and atlatl-throwing by Ted Eyster in the meadow. Those who preferred to stay inside gathered to sing around the piano in the main room.

The mid-winter gathering was much appreciated by all who were able to come. The depth and sharing in the discussion of the parables and what became a bright sunny day were especially valued.



Friends World Committee
for Consultation

SECTION OF THE AMERICAS

Comité Mundial de Consulta
de los Amigos

SECCIÓN DE LAS AMÉRICAS

Press Release from June 2005

FWCC Affirms its Way Forward through 2007

At meetings held last month at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham, UK, the Friends World Committee for Consultation [FWCC] Central Executive Committee made its plans through the next two years until its 22nd Triennial, to be held in Dublin, Ireland, in 2007.

The CEC includes the clerks and executive secretaries of FWCC's four world-wide sections. The CEC meets annually to review the work of the World Office in London, to inform the leaders of progress in the sections, and to guide the preparation for the next triennial.

As mandated in the extensive discussions at its 2004 Triennial in Auckland about priorities and financial concerns, the CEC reviewed the finances over the 14 months since that gathering. Revenues increased, with many Friends responding to the well-publicized need for foundational funding. Friends from the Americas increased their total contributions £5,000 beyond the budget adopted at the Triennial, Friends in Asia-West Pacific £10,000 beyond budget, and Friends in EMES £10,000 beyond budget.

A new International Finance Committee has been working on better and more transparent financial reporting and financial management issues. Work is moving forward on clarifying the mission and future direction of the organization.

Nonetheless, the committee faced up to the reality that all the funding increases anticipated in the budget adopted at the Triennial are not likely to occur and the 2004 level of giving is not likely to be sustained. The CEC approved budget revisions that tighten the belt of the organization by temporarily eliminating the position of associate secretary through 2007. This decision was anticipated in 2004, with the Triennial directing the CEC to offer contracts to its two full-time staff only through August 2005, with the review of the finances to determine renewals.

This decision to reduce full-time staff was made most reluctantly by the CEC. However, prudent fiscal management necessitated the choice. The revised budget should halt and reverse the depletion of FWCC's general fund.

The Central Executive Committee named Roger Sturge to be its new Treasurer, replacing Gillian Smith, who resigned for personal considerations. Both are members of Britain YM. Roger Sturge was Associate Secretary of FWCC from 1992-1997. He has also served in several posts within Britain YM, including Clerk of Meeting for Sufferings.

Earlier in May, the CEC also approved a new Memorandum of Understanding between FWCC and the American Friends Service Committee concerning the management of the Quaker United Nations Office in New York. FWCC is the holder of general consultative non-governmental organization status at the United Nations on behalf of Friends. This document memorialises the practice of AFSC management in place since the QUNO New York office was set up. Newly-instituted will be the naming of half of the Quaker UN New York Committee from the FWCC sections. For the first time, this committee will have world-wide representation.

The CEC affirmed that the 22nd Triennial will be held at Kings Hospital [school] in Dublin, Ireland, August 11-19, 2007, at the invitation of Ireland YM. The theme will be 'Finding the Prophetic Voice for Our Time,' based upon 1 Corinthians 14:1 [Good News]: *Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.*

This gathering will mark the 70th year of FWCC's founding at the Second World Conference of Friends in 1937.

For further information, contact Nancy Irving, at world@fwcc.quaker.org

2006 Annual Meeting in Chiquimula, Guatemala

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Section of the Americas will take place **March 16-19** in Chiquimula, Guatemala. All are welcome to join us to experience worship, business and fellowship with Friends from across the Americas. All sessions will be conducted bilingually (English/Spanish).

Keynote speakers will be Ramon González Longoria, clerk of Cuba Yearly Meeting, and Duduzile Mtshazo, of Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting, and clerk of Friends World Committee. Join us!

FWCC Lower Great Lakes

Regional Gathering:

Whence Cometh Our Joy?

Barnesville, Ohio, September 30 – October 2

Hosted by Ohio Yearly Meeting (Conservative), the 2005 Lower Great Lakes Regional Gathering brought together members of seven different Yearly Meetings: Canadian, Indiana, Lake Erie, Ohio, Ohio Valley, Western, and Wilmington. We were asked by FWCC Midwest Field Representative Susan Lee Barton to hold Western and Central YMs in the Light, the former that they might find internal unity and the latter that they might unite on the nature of their next mission. Fran Taber spoke to us about the unique contributions of Conservative Friends, now concentrated in Ohio, Iowa, and North Carolina. These Friends may today be the only ones, she suggested, who “hold together paradoxical understandings of the truth,” by focusing on the Inner Light (as do liberal Friends) and, at the same time, finding their historical ground in Jesus (as do evangelical Friends). In Fran’s opinion, both experience and belief are necessary to growth.

David Male, brought up, as he pointed out, by a mother who was a member of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and a father who was a Democrat, came to the Bible as a source of wisdom and inspiration rather late in life. He told us of his spiritual journey and also led us in Bible reading after the manner of Conservative Friends; in this activity, Friends rose as they were led and read a passage from whatever version of the Bible they held in their hands. As with worship sharing, space was allowed between readings and there were no comments from other participants.

Seth Hinshaw, Clerk of Ohio YM, gave a presentation on Quaker architecture through the centuries, showing how different branches of Quakerism have developed different concepts of design appropriate for a church or meeting building. His talk was accompanied by drawings of a wide sample of building arrangements, ranging from the “chapel plan” to neo-classical, suburban, and modern layouts.

The other major highlight of the weekend was the talk by two young women, Leila and Anita Kaul, who represented Ohio YM at the recent World Gathering of Young Friends in Lancaster, England. They spoke of the joy of being with Friends from all over the world, tempered by the sorrow at missing so many young Friends from Africa and Asia, who were unable to obtain visas to enter the United Kingdom. Two Friends from each of the other regions (the Americas, Europe

and the Middle East, Asia and the Western Pacific) are to attend a conference in Kenya in October 2005 “to share the Love and Spirit” experienced at the Gathering. The Kaul sisters noted that most young Friends nowadays have access to the Internet, so they will continue to communicate with other gathering attenders and seek ways to come spiritually closer together over time.

Friends at the Regional Gathering enjoyed getting to know Friends from other Yearly Meetings, besides becoming better acquainted with Ohio Yearly Meeting. Next year Wilmington YM is slated to be the host, thus providing another opportunity for enrichment and mutual discovery.

Rosemary Coffey, Pittsburgh

2006 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage

FWCC announces the **2006 QUAKER YOUTH PILGRIMAGE**, which will take place in the Midwestern United States, July 14-August 10, 2006. The Section of the Americas is seeking 14 young Friends who will be ages 16-18 at the time of the pilgrimage, and two adult facilitators. For more information contact Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, 1506 Race St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, (215)241-7250, QYP@fwccamericas.org. The deadline for applications for adult leaders is December 15, 2005; deadline for pilgrim applicants is January 15, 2006. *A PILGRIMAGE BEGINS A LIFETIME OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH.*

This event enables young Friends ages 16–18 to learn about Quaker history and process, develop a stronger relationship with God and experience the diversity of Friends’ traditions and worship while traveling, living and working together for a month during the summer. Jointly sponsored by the Section of the Americas and the Europe and Middle East Section, the pilgrimage takes place once every two years.

[Rosemary Coffey adds: This year the Pilgrims will begin the trip in Cincinnati, Ohio, but also go on to Indiana and Illinois, visiting sites pertinent to Quaker history and performing a service project with Habitat for Humanity.]

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Jeff Cooper
1506 Arborview Blvd
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Thank you!



Samantha Smith

Calendar

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

- 🌐 DEC. 15, 2005 DUE DATE FOR **WINTER BULLETIN**
- 🌐 MARCH 4, 2006 **REPRESENTATIVE MEETING** IN PITTSBURGH
- 🌐 MARCH 15, 2006 DUE DATE FOR **SPRING BULLETIN**
- 🌐 JUNE 15-18, 2006 **ANNUAL MEETING** IN BLUFFTON

GREEN PASTURES QUARTERLY MEETING

- 🌐 FEB. 22, 2006 **WINTER GATHERING** IN KALAMAZOO

MICHIGAN FRIENDS CENTER

- 🌐 NOVEMBER 5, SATURDAY, 9AM—4PM: **RUFUS JONES: RETHINKING HIS LIFE FOR QUAKERISM, LED BY STEPHEN ANGELL, JR.** TO LEARN MORE, VISIT WWW.MICHIGANFRIENDS CENTER.ORG

OTHER FRIENDS

- MARCH 16-19, 2006 **FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE ON CONSULTATION (FWCC) SECTION OF THE AMERICAS ANNUAL MEETING**, CHIQUIMULA, GAUTEMALA. SEE PAGE 17.



Paul Tinkerhess and son Eric

Address Service Requested



LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

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Ann Arbor, MI 48103
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*Live the questions. Perhaps then,
someday far in the future, you will
gradually...live your way into the answer.
Rainer Maria Rilke*



Fall 2005 Bulletin



Save the dates!
LEYM 2006 Annual Meeting
on the theme of
faith in community
June 15-18

