



A Larger Life in the Spirit

Clerk's Message, by Merry Stanford

"The ground of our work lies in our waiting on and listening for the Spirit. Let the loving spirit of a loving God call us and lead us." – Britain Yearly Meeting, *Quaker Faith & Practice* (1995), 29.02

"Live up to the light thou hast, and more will be granted thee." – Caroline Fox, 1841

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting is listening to the Spirit, and giving voice to leadings that have been developing among us for the last several years. As with many Friends' groups, LEYM has been sustained for over 40 years by the faithful service of a number of Friends who feel a special leading to care for the Yearly Meeting. We now feel Spirit leading us into a new phase of our life together. We find ourselves reaching toward something that calls us to a larger life in the Spirit.

Currently we are led to make a special effort to embrace those Friends who may have some interest in the Yearly Meeting, but who have, as of yet, been unable to form a connection with us. As a result, many changes are afoot. We are exploring, with Bluffton University, possibilities for changing the date of the Annual Sessions to occur later in the summer. This would allow school-aged children in Ann Arbor and Pittsburgh, who are still in school in mid-June, to attend with their families. We are sending special invitations to all of the children of our monthly meetings, many of

whom have limited contact with other Quaker children, to come to Yearly Meeting in June to enjoy other young Friends. In March, Representative Meeting also approved a substantial scholarship program for first-time attenders which, with the ongoing scholarship program for Friends unable to afford the costs of attending, will mean that no one who wants to attend this summer will be unable to do so for financial reasons. So, whether you are young or old, interested in coming with your partner and/or children or coming alone, consider applying for a scholarship if you are a first-time attender or unable to meet the costs of attending.

Another sign of increasing Light among us is the leading to expand or renew efforts to provide spiritual nurture to Friends in our monthly meetings. We are seeking a coordinator for a renewed High School Youth Program, so that high school-aged Friends may develop important supportive relationships with other young Friends throughout the year. An ad hoc committee has begun the work of developing a set of queries to help guide discernment of Spirit's movement among us. The Spiritual Formation Program, designed to help small groups of Friends in monthly meetings nurture the Spirit among them, continues after more than a decade of inspirational retreats and ongoing spiritual growth in the monthly meeting.

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Clerk's Message, *continued*

We are doing our best to live up to the Light that has been given us, and we find the Light increasing. Those of us who regularly attend the Annual Sessions invite those of you who do not: come and experience the value of the wider Quaker family that is called Lake Erie Yearly Meeting. Please explore the articles in this issue to learn more about the theme, *Reflecting Light: Seeing Ourselves in the Other*, this year's program, and the important work done by our committees. Feel free to join us for part or all of the sessions. As we strive to be faithful to our leadings as a family of Friends, we look forward to the ongoing increase of the Light among us. Perhaps, this summer, you will add your Light to ours. In the meantime, many blessings!

Merry Stanford, Clerk

LEYM Database

Mathilda Navias maintains the LEYM Database. LEYM committees and officers who want to communicate with meetings can get a mailing list or email addresses from her. Please send changes of contact information (especially for meetings and worship groups, LEYM officers, and committee members) to Mathilda at galaxy@woh.rr.com.

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Annual Meeting

Reflecting Light: Seeing Ourselves in the Other June 11-14, 2009 at Bluffton University

The next several pages focus on our Annual Meeting, covering the plenary address and new scholarships for first-time attenders (below), attractions and Adult Young Friends, (p. 3), workshops (p. 4), earth-friendly transportation and a walk through the Nature Preserve (p. 5), the schedule (pp. 6-7), a testimonial to the community of children (p. 8), and registration (insert).

Plenary Address

Our plenary speaker Friday night, Max Carter, will engage us in thinking about “the other” and peacemaking through his talk: “Peacemaking Lessons from Quaker Work in the Midwest and the Middle East.” His experience in the Middle East spans some 35 years, beginning with alternative service work at the Ramallah Friends Schools when he was a Conscientious Objector during the Vietnam War. He will compare our modern efforts at fostering peace with those of Quakers in Ohio 200 years ago working with native inhabitants, including the Shawnee of Wapakoneta (located 30 miles from Bluffton). Max is a member of New Garden Friends Meeting in Greensboro, North Carolina (FUM), and Director of the Friends Center at Guilford College.

Scholarships for First-Time Attenders

Never attended LEYM's Annual Meeting before? A bit nervous about trying it out? The Yearly Meeting would like all of you to consider attending the Annual Meeting and has therefore approved a scholarship program for first-time attenders. The Yearly Meeting will grant a scholarship for one third of the registration, room, and meal fees for all first-time attenders. Attenders are encouraged to ask their monthly meetings for a scholarship to cover another one third of the costs. Our desire is that no one stay home from the Annual Meeting because of the cost. Mark on the registration form that you are a first-time attender and deduct the amount of your scholarship on the “less scholarship” line. Contact the registrar, Vanessa Fuson (fusonv@denison.edu or 740 587-4756) for more details about this new scholarship program.

Help Increase the Number of First-Time Attenders at Annual Meeting in 2009!

If you are reading this *Bulletin*, you probably know all about LEYM's Annual Meeting in June. But how about the other members and attenders of your Meeting? This year LEYM is offering scholarship assistance of up to one third of the costs for first-time attenders at Annual Meeting. Please help us spread the word by telling one or two or three people in your Meeting why you come to Annual Meeting and inviting them to try it this year. Perhaps your reasons are among these:

1. You can meet interesting and diverse Friends from across the region, and have a chance for deep conversations with them.
2. You can learn about many different Quaker organizations from their information tables.
3. Your children can enjoy a fun and Spirit-filled program.
4. You can join in the sense of the meeting as we conduct the business of our Yearly Meeting.
5. You can get up with the sun and attend early morning Bible study. You can stay up with the stars and discuss deep matters with old and new friends or watch a movie relating to earthcare.
6. You can soak up an inspirational plenary message.
7. You can join small intergenerational worship sharing groups.
8. You can browse and purchase books from a rich display.
9. You can spend unscheduled time on your own, walking in a nearby nature preserve, singing, socializing, or enjoying the relaxed atmosphere in Bluffton.
10. You can spend a few days away from your regular routine and enjoy Quaker fellowship and worship.

Adult Young Friends

Reconnecting, Having Fun, and Growing

This summer the AYF group hopes to grow and meet the needs of LEYM young adult Friends. Last year we brainstormed ideas and direction for the AYF program. At this Annual Meeting we hope to reconnect and continue to have many laughs while also becoming more integrated into the adult program, challenging ourselves, and growing as a community.

Come join us as we explore the theme of "Reflecting Light: Seeing Ourselves in the Other," June 11-14. You can also get connected through Facebook: join our group, LEYM AYF. For additional information, ideas, concerns, or a hamburger and fries, contact Bekah Sommer: LaCubeta@hotmail.com.

Talent Show on Saturday Night!

Love to sing, dance, tell jokes? Know how to juggle, yodel, or do tricks with a yo-yo? Whatever your talents, the LEYM Talent Show is for you! Performers will entertain on Saturday evening, June 13. Sign up by completing the form below and mail it with your Yearly Meeting registration form, or email dandojanet@yahoo.com (please put "Talent Show" on the subject line).

Name(s)

Description of your act

Email or phone number

Workshops at Yearly Meeting

Five workshops will be presented on Saturday afternoon (June 13) from 3:30 to 5:15.

This brief overview will help you choose which one you want to attend.

Dueling Narratives: Navigating the Differing Stories in the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict and Looking for a Just Peace

Led by Max Carter

Max Carter, our Plenary speaker, will give a first-hand account of Quaker and other peace work in Israel and Palestine. He lived in Ramallah performing alternative service as a Conscientious Objector during the Vietnam War, and with his wife, Jane Carter, now leads work-study trips to the region on a regular basis.

What's Up with Earthcare in our Meetings? A Panel, Sharing, & Brainstorming Workshop

Led by Phil Clampitt

What is your Meeting doing to promote Earthcare and sustainability? To get educated on the issues? Has the bioregional concept explored in last year's Earthcare workshop taken hold in any way in your Meeting? Is Earthcare an active spiritual issue of concern to your Meeting? Panelists from several of our Meetings will address the above questions (including both successes and obstacles they have experienced), with sharing and brainstorming by all in attendance to follow. Please join us.

Discernment

Led by Jerry Knutson

The focus of the workshop will be to aid participants in making Spirit-led decisions and discerning the will of the Spirit. Participants are encouraged to bring specific questions that they are considering. This is the final workshop in a three-year series, but it assumes no knowledge of the previous workshops. This session will focus on implementing guidance, practicing spiritual disciplines, and understanding clearness committees. Jerry Knutson has been studying, writing about, and giving workshops on discernment since 1999. He has studied discernment in courses at Earlham School of Religion (where he is currently working on a Master of Divinity degree), Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and Pendle Hill. He has been "released" from Pittsburgh Monthly Meeting in order to prepare his writing on discernment for publication.

A Friend's Experience Assisting with the Olive Harvest in Israel/Palestine

Led by Catherine Deyo

Catherine Deyo (Grand Rapids Friends Meeting) recently returned from the Bethlehem District of the West Bank, where she participated in the annual olive harvest. This was her second trip to Israel/Palestine, where she witnessed the effects of the occupation and met a diverse array of Palestinians and Israelis working for peace. She is excited to share the stories of the people she met and the insights she developed while there.

Meeting for Healing

Led by Richard Lee

A quick overview of this worship tradition among Friends will be provided, along with written material on the history of Meeting for Worship for Healing and a brief "How to do it" handout. The majority of time will be spent in an actual Meeting for Worship for Healing in the manner of Friends. Friends are encouraged to carry on a dialogue with those familiar with this worship throughout the Yearly Meeting sessions. Richard Lee (Red Cedar Friends Meeting) has been leading workshops on Meetings for Worship for Healing at Yearly Meeting for many years.

Earthcare and Transportation to LEYM

Do You Need a Ride? Can You Offer a Ride?

An important function of the LEYM Earthcare Committee is to help us reflect upon our lifestyles, consider how they might be more earth-friendly, and encourage and help one another to reorder our priorities and practices as needed.

Some members and attenders of our local meetings may wish to attend Yearly Meeting (or other Friends' gatherings) but need help with transportation. Others may have room for additional passengers. Given this situation, we recommend carpooling to the greatest extent possible. This encourages sociability and a spirit of community while also saving energy.

We propose the following measures to organize carpooling for 2009 Yearly Meeting:

- ◆ Travel coordination will begin at the level of the local meetings. The Earthcare Committee Contact – or other designated individual – of each meeting will match those needing rides with those who can offer them.
- ◆ The Earthcare Committee Contacts will forward to Al Connor the names of any individuals still needing or offering rides after these coordination efforts are completed. This information should be provided to him by May 21.
- ◆ Those who are unable to arrange for needed transportation/additional passengers through local meetings should contact Al directly. Any questions regarding this process can also be directed to him. He can be reached at 734 769-1592 or alconnor1019@provide.net.

A Fun and Spiritual Activity on Thursday Afternoon!

Field Trip to the Bluffton University Natural Area Preserve

Thursday, June 11, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

This intergenerational field trip, sponsored by the Earthcare Committee for the purpose of enhancing body, mind, and spirit in community with nature during the first afternoon of Yearly Meeting, will depart from the Registration area in Marbeck Center shortly after 2:00 p.m. All interested Friends who have the endurance to walk a couple of miles are invited.

Earthcare Committee Meeting

Thursday, June 11, 4:00 p.m.

The Earthcare Committee will meet in a far corner of the dining room on Thursday at 4:00 (after the field trip to the Natural Area Preserve). The agenda includes planning Earthcare displays, the workshop (see previous page), and other Yearly Meeting activities. Anyone interested is welcome to join them.

Local Earthcare Groups: Panelists Needed

As of this writing (March 20, 2009) the Yearly Meeting Earthcare Committee is looking for representatives from monthly meetings to participate in a panel presentation at the Earthcare Workshop on Saturday, June 13, 3:30 - 5:15 (see previous page). The workshop will feature panelists describing the successes and challenges faced by local Earthcare groups. If you are interested in being on the panel, please contact Phil Clampitt (248 373-2065, ptclampitt@yahoo.com).

Preliminary Schedule: Lake Erie Yearly Meeting June 11-14, 2009

Reflecting Light: Seeing Ourselves in the Other

* Childcare available during this meeting/event

From	To	Thursday, June 11
12:00 noon	12:30 pm	Lunch line open for LEYM
1:00 pm	3:00 pm	Executive Committee Meeting
2:00 pm	3:30 pm	Field Trip to Bluffton University Natural Area Preserve
3:30 pm	5:30 pm	Committee Meetings; check board in registration area for locations. Those not on committees may sit in.
5:30 pm	6:30 pm	Dinner line open for LEYM
6:30 pm	7:30 pm	Committee Meetings as needed. Newcomer Enrichment Meeting. Singing.
7:30 pm	9:00 pm	Meeting For Worship With Attention to Business – Opening Session *
Friday, June 12		
6:30 am	7:30 am	Bible Study on Yearly Meeting Theme with Sue Axtell. Other groups who wish to meet, please post a description and location in registration area.
7:45 am	8:15 am	Breakfast line open for LEYM
8:45 am	9:30 am	Worship Sharing for those who have registered for it *
9:40 am	10:15 am	Newcomer Enrichment Meeting *
9:40 am	10:45 am	Committee Meetings – check location in registration area *
11:00 am	12:30 pm	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business *
12:30 pm	1:00 pm	Lunch line open for LEYM
1:30 pm	3:00 pm	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business *
3:15 pm	4:00 pm	Meeting for Worship *
4:15 pm	5:30 pm	Spiritual Practice – Time for study, conversation, or your own Yearly Meeting project * (Children’s Program ends 5:15) Optional Spiritual Practice – Nature Walk groups who wish to meet, please post a description in the registration area.
5:30 pm	6:00 pm	Dinner line open for LEYM
6:30 pm	7:00 pm	Spiritual Practice – Time for study, conversation, singing, or other projects
7:15 pm	8:45 pm	Plenary Speaker – Max Carter, <i>On Meeting with the Other: Peacemaking Lessons from Quaker Work in the Midwest and the Middle East</i> *
9:00 pm	9:45 pm	Activity planned by Adult Young Friends
Saturday, June 13		
6:30 am	7:30 am	Bible Study on Yearly Meeting theme with Sue Axtell. Other groups who wish to meet, please post in the registration area a description and location.
7:45 am	8:15 am	Breakfast line open for LEYM
8:45 am	9:30 am	Worship Sharing *
9:45 am	11:45 am	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business *
12 noon	12:30 pm	Lunch line open for LEYM

Preliminary Schedule: Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

From	To	Saturday, June 13 <i>continued</i>
12:30 pm	12:50 pm	Singing
1:00 pm	3:00 pm	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business *
3:30 pm	5:15 pm	<i>Workshops – check board in registration area for locations. *</i> <i>Dueling Narratives: Navigating the Differing Stories in the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict and Looking for a Just Peace</i> (Max Carter) <i>What’s Up with Earthcare in our Meetings?</i> (Panel led by Phil Clampitt) <i>Discernment</i> (Jerry Knutson) <i>Assisting with the Olive Harvest in Israel/Palestine</i> (Catherine Deyo) <i>Meeting for Healing</i> (Richard Lee)
5:30 pm	6:00 pm	Dinner line open for LEYM
6:00 pm	7:00 pm	Spiritual Practice – Time for study, conversation, singing, or your own Yearly Meeting project
7:00 pm	9:00 pm	Talent Show, with Watermelon Social at 8:00 pm
From To Sunday, June 14		
6:30 am	7:30 am	Bible Study on the Yearly Meeting Theme with Sue Axtell. Others wishing to meet, please post in the registration area a description and location.
7:45 am	8:15 am	Breakfast line open for LEYM
8:45 am	9:30 am	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business *
9:30 am	10:30 am	Epistles and Sharing by the Children’s Program *
10:30 am	11:30 am	Meeting for Worship *
12:00 noon	12:30 pm	Lunch line open for LEYM

* Childcare available during this meeting/event

Of Special Note:

- ◆ Anyone wishing to Worship Share on Friday and Saturday mornings should mark the “Worship Grp” column on the registration form; child care will be available for younger children.
- ◆ Teens are cordially invited to attend Worship Sharing with the adults.
- ◆ Newcomers, please attend one of the Enrichment Meetings designed to welcome you and answer any questions you may have: Thursday 6:30 pm or Friday 9:40 am.
- ◆ There will be 12-step program meetings during the weekend. Check in the registration area for times and locations.
- ◆ The Earthcare room will be open throughout the weekend for study and involvement.
- ◆ Self-directed hikes around campus and town will be available throughout the weekend.
- ◆ Mini-gatherings at eating times are available. There will be sessions for several Quaker organizations scheduled; schedule your own in the registration area.
- ◆ There will be singing in the fireplace room during spiritual practice times and after lunches and dinners.

“It’s about the Kids”

Testimonial to the Community of Children at Yearly Meeting

We went to LEYM ten years ago with four daughters because some of our Friends recommended it and our Meeting is financially supportive. We have returned every year since because our girls would have driven us crazy otherwise. Before we left the first year, they had already easily talked us into coming the following year. As the years have gone by, Yearly Meeting continues to be a place where they connect with others who, as one of them says, “speak our language.” So often being part of the world is difficult for them because they see it like Quakers. This is great, but they are different than many other students at their school. At Yearly Meeting they get to be with others who understand this difference in seeing the world. Whether it is talked about or not, the children sense this from the beginning. They have felt an immediate comfort and acceptance that they cannot find at school or in other groups. Although this understanding and comfort is present at our Friends Meeting, there are relatively few kids. So being part of 25-30 kids is a powerful experience for them. My daughters have said that they go to see friends that they only get to

see once or twice a year. They like the feeling of independence, as they get older.

As a parent, I have enjoyed not only seeing my daughters enjoy friends close to their own age but also the interaction most evenings with older and younger youth. They form a wonderful caring community. The older kids often invite the younger one to play games with them and have fond memories of when they were so young at Yearly Meeting.

I have been so taken with this part of Yearly Meeting that I have returned year after year to volunteer working with the youth. As a professional teacher, I can tell you that most classrooms take weeks or more to come close to having a trusting community that these children seem to bring with them from the moment they see a friendly face on campus. I no longer work with my own children (it has been a while since they want Mom close by). But I see that same confidence and trust in our community at LEYM that my own daughters have experienced. I highly recommend coming and experiencing this tremendous Quaker community with your children.

Carla Pratt-Harrington

LEYM Spiritual Formation Program

The LEYM Spiritual Formation Program combines individual small group and large group activities to help participants deepen their spiritual life. Every year there is a kick-off (or renewal) retreat in the fall. This is followed up with small groups meeting throughout the year, and daily individual activities. In the spring, the large group gets together for a retreat that looks back on the year.

The fall retreat for 2009-10 will be led by Michael Birkel on September 25-27 at the Weber Retreat Center in Adrian, Michigan. For additional details and registration information, visit the LEYM website (leym.quaker.org) or contact Ellen Barnes at ellenbarnes1@wideopenwest.com or 248 528-1321. Scholarships are available.

Spiritual Formation Program - Testimonial

It is hard to describe the full impact that the Spiritual Formation Program has had on my life. It has provided me both knowledge and support for my spiritual journey. Just the list of different daily spiritual practices in the fall handbook has been helpful in opening me and others at my monthly meeting to a wider range of possibilities of interacting with the Divine. It has given me a place to talk about my spiritual journey with others who are similarly exploring. For me, it has been like a spiritual greenhouse – a safe environment that has encouraged and enabled growth.

Ellen Barnes

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

SEEKING HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting (LEYM) seeks a High School Youth Program Coordinator. In order to nurture the spiritual life of high school youth throughout LEYM, the Yearly Meeting seeks to provide a series of four weekend youth retreats a year, independent of Annual Meeting. The Program Coordinator plans, coordinates, and evaluates these retreats, with the support of the High School Youth Program Committee. The scheduling of retreats is flexible.

The Coordinator serves as a contractual worker of LEYM with a flat fee of \$1100 per retreat. LEYM provides an additional \$500 per year towards the expenses of the retreats, with the other expenses to be provided by registration fees and fund raising.

Qualities desired in a High School Youth Program Coordinator include:

- Experience with and enthusiasm for working with high school aged youth
- Commitment to Quaker values
- Ability to provide leadership and motivation
- Organizational and money management skills
- Ability to communicate with high school aged youth, parents, and the broader YM community
- Ability to work collaboratively with the High School Youth Program Committee.

Please reply to Shirley Bechill, LEYM Assistant Clerk, regarding your interest by June 1, 2009 at bechill@alma.edu. Please describe experiences that you believe will allow you to perform these duties, and include two references with contact information.

The responsibilities of the Coordinator as defined by the *LEYM Policies and Procedures* are:

- (1) In consultation with the High School Youth Program Committee, plan, coordinate, and evaluate four (4) youth retreats per year, independent of the Annual Meeting, that are scattered geographically throughout the Yearly Meeting in order to maximize participation of youth throughout the region.
 - (a) The retreats are to be both fun and spiritually nourishing for the youth.
 - (b) The retreats are an opportunity for youth to develop leadership skills by fully participating in the identification of themes, workshops, and workshop presenters.
 - (c) The retreats should seek to utilize individuals throughout the Yearly Meeting who can offer Quaker-related workshops on various topics of religious education.
 - (d) One of these four retreats has historically been “The Quake that Rocked the Midwest,” held over Martin Luther King weekend at the Evanston, IL Meeting House in partnership with other Midwestern yearly meetings.
- (2) Build and maintain relationships with other youth workers within LEYM, other yearly meetings, and FGC.
- (3) Maintain an updated database of eligible youth for the High School Youth Program.
- (4) Send eligible LEYM youth timely information about upcoming LEYM and national Quaker youth opportunities and events.
- (5) Make information about all events available to the LEYM webmaster on a timely basis.
- (6) Submit all bills and receipts to the Yearly Meeting Treasurer in a timely manner. Submit a complete financial report annually.

Nominating Committee Notes: Opportunities to Serve LEYM

Thanks to the many Friends who have responded positively to your Nominating Committee's offers for service to the LEYM. There are still a number of opportunities for service left, to begin (if approved) at the rise of Yearly Meeting on June 14. They are:

Officers

Assistant Recording Clerk (to begin on 11 June with this Annual Session)*

Committees

Advancement & Outreach – 1 person

High School Youth Program Committee – 1-3 people

Ministry & Nurture – 1 person

Program – 1 person

Publications & Archives – 1 person, possibly to co-clerk the committee

Youth & Children's Program for summer 2010

Representatives to:

American Friends Service Committee

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Friends World Committee for Consultation

Friends General Conference

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns

Visitors to:

Evangelical Friends International, Eastern Region

Ohio Valley YM

Want to see what's involved? Look in the LEYM *Policies and Procedures* or the LEYM website. YM service selection forms and job description sheets will be available at registration at the Annual Sessions in June as well, but don't wait until then. Contact one of us to discuss how you might best serve. This is where the YM action is.

From your Nominating Committee: Fred Feitler (Kent), Nancy James (Pittsburgh), Mathilda Navias (Broadmead), Phil Balderston (Wooster), Star Mary Castro (Athens), Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor, clerk, tftaylor@tds.net)

*The Clerks have asked that we find an Assistant Recording Clerk to help with the minute taking at the table.

Minutes of LEYM Representative Meeting

March 7, 2009 Hosted by Cleveland Friends Meeting

Morning Session

RM09 - 1 Friends gathered at the appointed time. Out of the opening worship, our Assistant Clerk, Shirley Bechill (Pine River), read the epistle from German Yearly Meeting. Our German Friends were inspired by a large gathering and reflected on the growth of their commitment to peace out of the harshness of the Second World War. They are discovering that peacemaking and service can lead to spiritual growth in love, joy, and integrity, and the importance of their intergenerational connectedness.

RM09 - 2 Our Clerk, Merry Stanford (Red Cedar), welcomed Friends with the Spirit still present. She introduced Joyce Callahan, Clerk of our host meeting, Cleveland, who gave logistical details for the day. Marty Grundy shared a brief history of the Cleveland meetinghouse.

Afternoon Session

RM09 - 3 The session opened with our Presiding Clerk reading from Australia Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice, *This We Can Say*, sharing how, with Spirit-led faith, we can carry out our concerns and leadings with the support of our Meeting communities. The Clerk asked that we seek recognition before speaking, remain open to change, and trust in the guidance of the Spirit.

RM09 - 4 The calling of the roll of Friends from constituent meetings and groups gave the following count:

Akron	3	Kalamazoo	3
Ann Arbor	4	Kent	4
Athens	2	Mid-Ohio Valley	0
Birmingham	4	Monongalia	0
Broadmead	8	North Columbus	3
Cleveland	5	Oberlin	2
Delaware	0	Pine River	3
Detroit	0	Pittsburgh	3
Grand Rapids	1	Red Cedar	1
Granville	3	Wooster	3
Holland	0		
Worship Group	1 (Erie)		
Total attendance:	53		

RM09 - 5 David Zarembka, Coordinator of the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) of the Friends Peace Teams, shared his work with the African Great Lakes Initiative, which is presently involved with five programs.

Alternatives to Violence, with 150 workshops in Kenya arising out of the recent violence in that country.

HROC, Personal and group trauma healing.

A medical clinic in Burundi dealing mainly with HIV-positive women.

Work camps involving the building of clinics, schools, and houses and other service work.

Speaking tours, with a goal of informing Friends in the United States of peacemaking work in Africa.

Friends involvement in some of this work in Africa has been slow in developing. David encouraged all our monthly meetings to support this important work.

RM09 - 6 Affirmation of Executive Committee Actions: The Presiding Clerk reported on the following actions of the Executive Committee. Friends affirmed the following actions and decisions taken by the Executive Committee since the rise of our last Annual Session:

a. The Presiding Clerk, Treasurer, and Finance Committee clerk were made signatories to the Yearly Meetings bank accounts.

b. The following nominations to fill committee vacancies:

- John Savage (North Columbus) to Advancement & Outreach

- Su Penn (Red Cedar) to Youth & Children Committee as assistant clerk

- Mary Takahashi (Pine River) Early Elementary Assistant

- Jessica Fox (Athens) Fall Retreat clerk

- Carla Pratt-Harrington (Athens) Fall Retreat assistant clerk

RM09 - 7 Clerical Worker for Consultation of Clerks: After our Assistant and Presiding Clerks interviewed two strong candidates, the Executive Committee recommended that the Yearly Meeting contract with Jo Steigerwald (Cleveland) to serve as a clerical worker for the Consultation for Monthly Meeting Clerks to be held in November for a fee of

2009 Representative Meeting Minutes, *continued*

\$1100. Jo brings a diverse set of skills, energy and vision to this task. Friends approved this appointment.

RM09 - 8 Revisions of Policies and Procedures:

Based on a recent review of the Yearly Meeting's *Policies and Procedures*, the Executive Committee recommended the formation of an ad hoc committee to revise our *Policies and Procedures*. Friends approved the creation of such a committee with appointments to be made by the Presiding Clerk.

RM09 -9 Our Presiding Clerk has invited **Friends to hold LEYM in the Light** on an ongoing basis. The following are doing so: Connie Bimber (Oberlin), Nora Armijo (Detroit/Ann Arbor), Betty Ford (Grand Rapids), Connie McPeak Green (Cleveland), Marty Grundy (Cleveland), Max Heirich (Ann Arbor), Nancy James (Pittsburgh), Jerry Knutson (Pittsburgh), Richard Lee (Red Cedar), Margy Liske (Kent), Steve Morehouse (Ann Arbor), Mathilda Navias (Broadmead), and Peter Wood, clerk (Red Cedar). Others are welcomed to do so and if interested should contact Peter Wood.

RM09 -10 Monthly Meeting representatives to LEYM will begin to receive all copies of email correspondence from the Yearly Meeting to the monthly meetings. Yearly Meeting committee clerks will cc the representatives on all email correspondence to the monthly meetings.

RM09 - 11 Publications & Archives Committee: Jeff Cooper (Ann Arbor) presented a written report which included two proposals:

a. Changing deadlines for submissions of documents to be included in the *Annual Records* from 6/30 to no later than four weeks after the rise of Yearly Meeting and changing the publication date of the *Annual Records* from July to no later than ten weeks after the rise of Yearly Meeting. We approved this change.

b. Amending the Yearly Meeting's Privacy Policy to reflect the following:

1) The full names of adult friends (those 18 and over) may appear in the version of the *Bulletin* posted on the Web. The names of children and youth (under age 18) may not appear there.

2) Photos of Friends of all ages may appear in the version of the *Bulletin* posted on the Web,

with one exception: photos depicting one child or youth (under age 18) alone may not appear there.

Our *Bulletin* editor has informally adopted this policy for the past few years. Initial seasoning brought comments (including the use of waivers and releases) that the Committee will take into consideration. A final proposal will be brought to Annual Meeting.

RM09 - 12 Star Mary Castro (Athens) will co-clerk the **2010 FGC Gathering in Bowling Green, Ohio**. She encouraged Yearly Meeting Friends to attend and become involved with the gathering and welcomed Friends to attend a planning meeting on 4/24-25/08 at a location to be determined. [*See p. 19. - Ed.*]

RM09 - 13 Earthcare Committee: Phil Clampitt, (Birmingham) submitted a written report. The Committee intends to bring the following proposals to Annual Meeting:

a. A minute for the Yearly Meeting's endorsement of the Earth Charter [*see p. 18*].

b. To amend our *Policies and Procedures* to allow contributions to other Friends national organizations (besides Friends General Conference) as approved by the Yearly Meeting.

c. That the Yearly Meeting include in its budget an annual financial contribution for Quaker Earthcare Witness.

Friends shared comments and concerns about these proposals for the Committee to consider. These included a suggestion that the wording of the Charter and relevant information be shared with monthly meetings and that Finance Committee be consulted about changing policies on the Yearly Meeting's benevolent giving.

RM09 - 14 Arrangement & Site Committee:

Olwen Pritchard (Broadmead) reported that the third and last weekends in July are available for our Annual Meeting, which will better accommodate families from Ann Arbor and Pittsburgh. Friends agreed to direct Arrangement & Site to reserve the weekend of 7/29 thru 8/1/2010 for our Annual Meeting at Bluffton, provided a weekend in late July is available on an ongoing basis. This decision will be reported at Annual Sessions.

2009 Representative Meeting Minutes, *continued*

RM09 - 15 Our **Treasurer**, Eric Starbuck (Pittsburgh), presented a written Treasurer's report for the period 7/1/08 - 2/28/09 [see pp. 15-16]. A concern shared regarding the reporting of in-kind contributions will be addressed by the Finance Committee.

RM09 - 16 Finance Committee: Sally Weaver Sommer (Broadmead) submitted a written report. At the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Committee has developed a proposal for a scholarship fund beginning in 2009 for a third of the total cost of Annual Meeting for first-time attenders. Monthly meetings are encouraged to also help defray the cost of attendance at Annual Meeting. Friends united with this proposal, with details to be resolved by the Finance Committee.

RM09 - 17 FWCC Lower Great Lakes Gathering: FWCC representative Mike Hinshaw (Wooster), reported that it is Lake Erie Yearly Meeting's turn to host the FWCC Lower Great Lakes Regional Gathering this fall. This event usually is held around the end of September. A host site and theme are needed. Friends are encouraged to attend the gathering and to share this need with their monthly meetings and advise one of our FWCC representatives (Raelyn Joyce, Kalamazoo; Jana Norlin, Grand Rapids; Rosemary Coffey, Pittsburgh; and Mike Hinshaw) of any interest. [Since then, Ann Arbor Meeting's offer to host this gathering on October 30-31 has been accepted. - Ed.]

RM09 - 18 Program Committee: Clémence Mer-shon (Erie) presented a written report providing programming details for this year's Annual Meeting. The theme is "Reflecting Light: Seeing Ourselves in the Other" and our plenary speaker will be Max Carter of North Carolina Yearly Meeting.

RM09 - 19 Advancement & Outreach Committee: Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh) submitted a written report for the Committee outlining its extensive work. A new worship group has formed in Sandusky, Ohio under the care of Cleveland Monthly Meeting.

RM09 - 20 High School Youth Program Committee: Michael Fuson (Granville) submitted a written report detailing the Committee's current efforts to recruit a High School Youth Program Coordinator.

RM09 - 21 The formation of an **Ad Hoc Committee on Queries** was approved at our 2008 Annual Sessions. Our Presiding Clerk has appointed Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor), Raelyn Joyce (Kalamazoo), Jo Posti (Pittsburgh), Ellen Barnes (Birmingham), and David Snyder (Oberlin) to such a committee, charged with developing a set of queries for the Yearly Meeting. Thomas Taylor will serve as clerk; he outlined the objectives and procedure for the Committee as follows:

- a. Proceed at a measured pace to allow all Friends to participate.
- b. Collect and review sets of queries used by our constituent meetings and groups, those developed in our annual process of considering queries over the past decades, those of other yearly meetings, and those suggested by Friends.
- c. Discern the shape of the set of Yearly Meeting queries we wish to develop, including purpose, use, number, topics, etc.
- d. Winnow or sort through the suggested queries and see what rises to the top; draft and edit.
- e. Present a first draft to the Yearly Meeting for perhaps a year's trial, asking Friends for suggestions both as to substance and editing.
- f. Produce a final draft based on those suggestions and further discernment and guidance.

The Committee encourages Friends to begin preparation by starting a LEYM Queries file and thinking about items a-c above and the use of the query process in our meetings before Annual Sessions in June.

RM09 - 22 Nominating Committee: Thomas Taylor (Ann Arbor) reported.

- a. Janet Smith (Broadmead) has been nominated for Advancement & Outreach, Steve Morehouse (Ann Arbor) for Arrangement & Site, Mary Igoe Meyers (Broadmead) for Peace, and Janet Dando (Akron) for Program. Friends approved these nominations.
- b. Thomas also confirmed that the High School Youth Program Committee is a priority for the Yearly Meeting and needs special attention with new leadership and committee members. For Annual Sessions the Committee is consulting with the Program Committee, the Youth & Children Committee, and the Clerks regarding a threshing session to consider the committee structure of the Youth & Children Committee.

2009 Representative Meeting Minutes, *continued*

RM09 - 23 Peace Committee: David Lore (Granville) submitted a written report. The Committee is developing information to distribute to monthly meetings regarding the Gaza crisis and banning the use of cluster bombs. The Committee also will be reminding Friends to maintain a long focal length in addressing problems of peace and justice.

RM09 - 24 Youth & Children Committee (Nancy Nagler, Pine River) reported that all youth leader slots for Annual Sessions are filled except for one high school assistant. The Committee is extending a personal invitation to each child in the Yearly Meeting to attend Annual Meeting.

RM09 - 25 Ministry & Nurture: Ellen Barnes (Birmingham) presented a written report mentioning the Spiritual Formation fall retreat and the upcoming spring retreat to be held on 4/25 in Kalamazoo. The report included a Spirit-led summary of monthly meeting responses to the Yearly Meeting Query [see p. 17].

RM09 - 26 Naming Committee: Friends approved Rosemary Coffey (Pittsburgh) and Verne Bechill (Pine River) to serve on the Naming Committee.

RM09 - 27 Friends approved the following **minute of appreciation for Cleveland Friends Meeting:**

Lake Erie Representative Meeting expresses its enthusiastic appreciation to Friends of Cleveland Monthly Meeting for hosting us so graciously. We were nurtured bodily and spiritually by lovingly prepared meals, warm overnight hospitality, and a welcoming Friendly space for our work for the Yearly Meeting.

All written reports referred to in these minutes are ... available at <http://leym.quaker.org>, and will be appended in *Annual Records 2009*.

Merry Stanford, Clerk
Joseph Mills, Recording Clerk

News from Committee Reports

Most of the news in Committee reports to Representative Meeting is reflected in the minutes or appears in other articles in this Bulletin. A few noteworthy items, however, are not reported elsewhere, and a selective list of these may be found below. My apologies to committees whose important announcements are neglected. – Ed.

Advancement & Outreach Committee is planning visits to monthly meetings whose members seldom attend Annual Meeting.

Although a workshop on Quaker Quest was announced in the winter *Bulletin, A&O*, in conjunction with **Program Committee**, asked the Quaker Quest organizers whether it was possible to delay sending two Friends from 2009 to 2010, when we would plan to have outreach as part of our theme and possibly featured in the plenary. The QQ organizers have since agreed to do so.

Earthcare Committee endorsed showing late evening films relating to Earthcare during Yearly Meeting.

Finance Committee asks that committees submit their requests for changes in the budget to the clerk of Finance (Sally Weaver Sommer) *before* the Annual Session in June.

The youth activity fund has money available for youth programming. Youth should be encouraged to request funds.

The scholarship fund for ministry has not yet been used. People interested in attending retreats, workshops, or classes should be encouraged to send proposals to the Ministry & Nurture committee.

Publications & Archives Committee hopes to have the new *LEYM Directory* ready to distribute at the beginning of Annual Meeting (June 11).

Jeff Cooper will edit *Annual Records 2009*; the deadline for submitting materials is July 12.

Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Treasurer's Report

February 28, 2009

Fund	Opening Balance	Income	Expenses	Current Balance
General Fund	\$6,708.63	\$15,081.00	\$23,627.21	\$(1,837.58)
Annual Meeting	18,126.07	20.00	12,989.24	5,156.83
Triennial Travel	1,706.45	1,240.00	-	2,946.45
Youth Activity Fund	5,465.26	3,592.41	1,212.49	7,845.18
Spiritual Formation	3,625.25	2,510.00	1,804.81	4,330.44
High School Program	5,796.61	6,492.00	1,877.11	10,411.50
Consultation	18.55	2,400.00	-	2,418.55
Granville Friends Youth Fund	<u>6,010.60</u>	<u>172.41</u>	<u>172.41</u>	<u>6,010.60</u>
Totals	\$47,457.42	\$31,507.82	\$41,683.27	\$37,281.97

Account	Opening Balance	Income	Debits	Current Balance
Shorebank CD - 4003424 - 3/6/2010	\$2,292.20	52.41	-	\$2,344.61
Shorebank CD - 4003416 - 9/3/2009	\$2,368.44	59.32	-	\$2,427.76
Shorebank CD - 686108009 - 11/17/2011 - GFYF	\$6,010.60	172.41	172.41	\$6,010.60
Lorain National Bank - checking	<u>\$36,786.18</u>	<u>15,081.00</u>	<u>28,378.72</u>	<u>\$23,488.46</u>
Totals	\$47,457.42	\$15,365.14	\$28,551.13	\$34,271.43

General Fund - Income

Meeting	Contribution
Akron	-
Ann Arbor	-
Athens	-
Birmingham	\$682.00
Broadmead	\$1,000.00
Cleveland	-
Delaware	-
Detroit	\$300.00
Grand Rapids	\$871.00
Granville	\$850.00
Holland	-
Kalamazoo	\$1,780.00
Kent	\$629.00
Mid-Ohio Valley	\$180.00
Monongalia	\$490.00
North Columbus	\$800.00
Oberlin	\$780.00
Pine River	\$592.00
Pittsburgh	\$5,587.00
Red Cedar	-
Wooster	\$540.00
Misc.	-
Sales & Fees	-
Interest	-
Totals	<u>\$15,081.00</u>

General Fund - Expenses

(* = transfers to other funds)	Budget	Actual	Percent
Travel	\$6,500.00	\$3,179.23	49%
Office	\$300.00	\$19.99	7%
Publications	\$3,400.00	\$2,487.99	73%
Advancement	\$880.00	-	0%
Ministry & Nurture*	\$200.00	\$200.00	100%
Clerk's Fund	\$500.00	\$500.00	100%
FGC	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00	100%
FGC - Special Program	\$500.00	\$500.00	100%
Records Project	\$100.00	\$100.00	100%
FWCC Travel *	\$1,240.00	\$1,240.00	100%
Youth Activity Fund *	\$2,700.00	\$2,700.00	100%
High School Youth Fund *	\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00	100%
Spiritual Formation *	\$600.00	\$600.00	100%
Friends School in Detroit	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	100%
Olney Friends School	\$600.00	\$600.00	100%
Granville Youth Fund*	-	-	-
Consultation Fund*	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00	100%
Scholarship Fund for Ministry*	<u>\$1,000.00</u>	<u>\$1,000.00</u>	<u>100%</u>
Totals	\$29,020.00	\$23,627.21	81%

(Treasurer's Report continued on the next page)

Treasurer's Report *continued*

FWCC Triennial Travel Fund

Balance	\$1,706.45
Expenses	-
Income - transfer	\$1,240.00
Balance	\$2,946.45

Granville Friends Youth Fund

Balance	\$6,010.60
Interest income	\$172.41
Transfer to Youth Activity Fund	\$172.41
Transfer from General Fund	-
Balance	\$6,010.60

Youth Activity Fund

Balance	\$5,465.26
Transfer from General Fund	\$2,700.00
Tuition - Youth Retreat	\$720.00
Interest from Granville Fund	\$172.41
Sale of T-shirts	-
Total Income	\$3,592.41

Expenses - Grants	-
Expense - Youth Retreat	\$1,212.49
Total Expenses	\$1,212.49
Balance	\$7,845.18

High School Youth Program

Income	
Opening Balance	\$1,496.61
Transfer - General Fund	\$5,400.00
Clerk's Fund	-
Retreats	\$1,092.00
Grants - Youth Activity Fund	-
Total Income	\$6,492.00

Expenses

Program Expenses	-
Stipend	\$1,100.00
Retreats	\$777.11
Total Expenses	1,877.11
Balance	\$6,111.50

Spiritual Formation Group

Balance	\$3,625.25
Transfer from General Fund	\$600.00
Income from Retreats	\$1,910.00
Total Income	\$2,510.00
Expenses	\$1,804.81
Balance	\$4,330.44

Consultation

Balance	\$18.55
Income	-
Transfer from Gen. Fund	\$2,400.00
Participants	-
Total Income	\$2,418.55
Expenses	-
Balance	\$2,418.55

Annual Meeting 2008

Income	
Housing and commuter fees	\$6,063.00
Meals	\$6,358.30
Registration fees	\$4,343.00
Donations	\$199.30
Lost Keys	\$20.00
Total	\$16,983.60

Expenses

Housing and commuter fees	\$6,097.50
Meals	\$6,654.70
Honoraria	\$2,473.05
Scholarships	\$187.74
Watermelon	\$58.50
Copies	\$65.10
Lost keys	\$100.00
Total	\$15,636.59

Surplus

\$1,347.01

Annual Meeting Fund 2008

Balance 6/28/08	\$18,126.07
Income-lost card	\$20.00

Expenses

Bluffton	\$12,975.80
Copies	\$13.44

Balance 7/31/08

\$5,156.83

In-Kind Contributions

\$293.79

Donations

FGC	\$4,500.00
FGC - Nurturing Quakerism - Final Payment	\$500.00
Friends Hist Library, Swarthmore - Archiving	\$100.00
Friends School in Detroit	\$2,500.00
Olney Friends School	\$600.00
TOTAL	\$8,200.00

Scholarship Fund for Ministry

Opening Balance	-
Transfer from General Fund	\$1,000.00
Scholarships	-
Balance	\$1,000.00

Travel

Budget	\$6,500.00
Expense	\$3,179.23
Total	\$3,320.77

Publications

Budget	\$3,400.00
Expense	\$2,487.99
Total	\$912.01

Committee on Ministry & Nurture

Consolidated Response to Annual LEYM Query

The Query:

Are we open to the Other?

What keeps me/us from connecting with those who are different from me/us?

What fears cloud my/our vision of the Light in all beings?

How can I listen with my heart, willing to be vulnerable?

How are we teaching our children that God's love includes all?

Below is a consolidation of the responses to this query from 12 meetings and worship groups.

To be unconditionally open requires a rare maturity of spirit. It takes courage to approach the “Other” with the possibility that one’s own position may change. How one attains this level of vulnerability remains a mystery but is central to finding the Light in all beings. We classify, group, or stereotype people to make sense of the world. But this can lead to a multitude of fears: fear of rejection or ridicule, fear of the unknown, fear of being judged wrong, fear of being hurt. Misinterpretation of others and lack of trust also separate us.

The differences that could be in the “Other” are limitless, but could include race, social or economic status, gender, tastes, lifestyle, values, religion, and politics. We most often focus on others’ behavior rather than on their being. We sometimes focus on these differences rather than our similarities.

We need to accept with humility that others do not have to think like us to also be children of the Divine. We need to find the courage to engage with people who think very differently from us, and this engagement needs to sometimes include listening to them without trying to change or convert them. It is a challenge for many liberal Friends to find ways to meaningfully connect with politically or socially conservative individuals or groups.

Sometimes it is easier to see that of God in others than in ourselves. Perhaps we need to learn to have more love and compassion for ourselves, and this will enable us to do the same for others. Some of us find that it seems easier to love and forgive those who are at a distance.

A couple of meetings suggested that we can improve how we explain ourselves as Quakers to people who express interest, including visitors to our meetings. Quaker Quest is one potential tool for this endeavor.

Teaching our children is another challenge. The example that we set for them is very important. We are blind to our own prejudices, and children learn what they observe. “It is not so much what they are taught, but what they have caught.”

How do we demonstrate that God’s love includes all? Part of it is in the neighborhoods that we live in – are they integrated or segregated? Another part is in how we treat friends and strangers: Do we make eye contact, smile at them, recognize them as human beings? In our conversations with and around children, how do we refer to other groups or people?

One way to bridge perceived differences is to cultivate openness and the ability to listen with our hearts. Here, faithfulness to the Light is about how you behave – the charity you show to others.

The Earth Charter

Friends on LEYM's **Earthcare Committee** will be asking the Yearly Meeting to consider endorsing the international Earth Charter this year. This is a wonderful document that has been put together over a decade by an incredible, inclusive process involving thousands of people and hundreds of organizations representing all regions of the world. In 1987, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development issued a call for creation of a new charter that would set forth fundamental principles for sustainable ways of living. An Earth Charter Commission was formed in 1997 to oversee the project. The drafting of the charter that this commission produced is said to be "the most open and participatory consultation process ever conducted in connection with an international document."

The Earthcare Committee will have sample copies of the Earth Charter available for study by those who attend Yearly Meeting this year. Better yet, Friends are encouraged to study it for themselves (the full text of the Charter can be read at www.earthcharter.org) in advance of Yearly Meeting and work to discern whether we are called upon to endorse this document. The international Earth Charter Initiative has as its goals to promote the Earth Charter, to support the educational use of the Earth Charter, and to seek endorsement of the Earth Charter by the United Nations. (For more information, please go to www.earthcharter.org.)

Epistle To Friends Everywhere From the Friends Committee on National Legislation March 2009

Behold, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
Isaiah 43:19

Dear Friends,

In 2008 the Friends Committee on National Legislation celebrated 65 years of faith, hope, action, influence, and change. From its beginnings with just two staff members and a one-room office, FCNL grew to become a leader in lobbying for peace and justice in Washington, DC. A few early Friends reached deep into their pockets to support FCNL when its future was uncertain and money was short. Over the decades, financial, practical, and prayerful support from Quaker monthly meetings, yearly meetings, and tens of thousands of people of many faiths has sustained our work.

In the FCNL community we see signs of hope for changes that many have labored on for decades. In our national political life we see a new openness to listening and learning in a country that has often done neither well. We see new opportunities to bring forward the message that War Is Not the Answer and that peace is possible through peaceful means.

Yet even as these new things spring up, we hear the calls to narrow the range of what can be accomplished. The economic crisis that challenges us as individuals and as a nation may well limit the possibility to realize the changes in our nation and world that so many long for.

In 1943, as today, a war was raging, the economy was in turmoil, and future peace seemed uncertain. That didn't discourage Friends who started FCNL. They saw themselves as living in a historic moment. Decisions the U.S. government made would and did affect millions of people around the world. They saw a role for principled, nonpartisan lobbying on federal legislation.

Today, as at our founding, the centuries-long Quaker commitment to peace, social justice, and an earth restored provides a strong foundation for FCNL's work on behalf of Friends in the nation's capital. We look forward, with the continued support of Friends, to continue our work and witness in Washington.

With appreciation for your faithful partnership,
Joe Volk, Executive Secretary

Friends General Conference

Invitation to Join the 2010 Gathering Committee

March 24, 2009

Dear Merry:

For many Friends, the Friends General Conference (FGC) Annual Gathering is the spiritual highlight of the year. The Gathering offers many opportunities for worship, reflection, fellowship, shared meals, workshops on a wide range of topics of interest to Friends, inspiring and entertaining plenary speakers, and much, much more. We hope to gather as a loving people, seeking through Divine help to experience the Quaker way and to model an alternative way of life for one week. We seek to be gentle and inclusive of those with special needs. We seek to offer an extraordinarily exciting and memorable week to our children and high school Friends.

Needless to say, these goals can be achieved only through the participation of a wide group of committed Friends. Even as many are looking forward to the 2009 Gathering in Blacksburg, Virginia, we need to begin planning for the 2010 Gathering in Bowling Green, Ohio, July 4-10, 2010. **Therefore, the Co-Clerks of the 2010 Annual Gathering invite you to join us in envisioning and planning a challenging, fruitful, inspirational week together as part of the 2010 Gathering Committee.**

The Gathering Committee will meet several times: the first meeting is April 25, 2009 in Athens, Ohio; the second at the 2009 Gathering in Blacksburg, Virginia; the third in the fall of 2009; and then daily (briefly) during the 2010 Gathering itself. The dates for the third meeting have not yet been set. We are cognizant that not everyone on the Committee will be able to attend all the meetings, so please do not let that stop you from volunteering. Also some sub-committees may require additional meetings.

The first Gathering Committee meeting is on April 25, 2009 at the Athens Meeting House near Athens, Ohio. At that time we will hear and start to reflect on the theme for the Gathering. (If you have served on a Gathering Committee before, you will note that this year the committee as a whole will not discern the theme.) We will also form the subcommittees needed to plan the Gathering – see www.fgcquaker.org/gathering/next-year/subcommittees. The meeting will last all day and into the evening (8:30 AM - 9 PM). We are hopeful that the process itself will be a joyful and nurturing experience for the participants.

A handful of you may need to fly to this meeting. We are ready to help you with transportation from and to the Columbus airport IF you arrive in Columbus on Friday by 8 PM and depart Columbus on Sunday after 10 AM (you are encouraged to stay and worship with Athens Friends, 10:00 - 11:00 AM).

This letter is being sent to all meetings and worship groups in Ohio Valley and Lake Erie Yearly Meetings, the Long Range Planning Committee of FGC, and some individual Friends. Please share it widely to help us recruit the 30-40 people needed to plan this Gathering. We hope many will feel led to volunteer for this effort. Please try to discern your gifts. We are confident that you, as well as the rest of the Gathering Committee, will find your participation rewarding.

[Interested Friends can register to join the planning committee at www.fgcquaker.org/gathering/next-year.]

In anticipation,
Co-Clerks, 2010 FGC Gathering,

Star Mary Castro
Athens Meeting, LEYM
starmarycasto@earthlink.net
740-797-4947

Rex Sprouse
Bloomington Meeting, OVYM
rsprouse@indiana.edu
812-272-3332

Reports from LEYM Representatives

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Annual Meeting, October 9-12, 2008

Alan N. Connor (Ann Arbor)

Two concerns were addressed at the 2008 annual meeting of Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW). One was the spiritual groundedness of the organization. The other was the organization's efforts to influence environmental policy and legislation to restore the Earth.

One member has been expressing his concern that QEW has in recent years become an activist organization, trying to influence international, national, and state environmental and economic policies that impinge on climate change and sustainability of the Earth and its societies. He maintained that the organization needs to experience a spiritual awakening to deepen the spiritual connection of organization members, Friends, and the wider Quaker Fellowship to the Earth and natural processes, and that takes contemplation.

Steve Davidson, an invited guest who is a pastor of an Evangelical church in northern New Jersey, criticized QEW for attempting to influence environmental and social justice policy and legislation. We were told that that is God's domain. As Christians we should have faith that God would make all things right and we as a religious organization should implore Friends to have that faith and pray God's will be done.

Mary Coelho, of New England Yearly Meeting, addressed that concern in her talk at the first plenary session. She cited such thinkers and writers as Brian Swimme, Thomas Berry, John Muir, and Albert Einstein. Mary's themes were that the scientific and the spiritual, and spirit and spirit-driven action support each other.

Bill Cahalen, a member of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, spoke on "Deep Listening and Spiritual Practice as Part of a Way of Worship." It results in a deep sense of God's presence in nature. Faith needs the sensual and physical as well as the spiritual. The inward spirit and the outward action enrich each other, Cahalen said.

Angela Manno, of New York Yearly Meeting, spoke of creating a "Vision of a Future World." To move toward a vision, a person or an organization has to know what current reality is. Creative tension between current reality and the vision of the future

is generated from natural movement. The Quaker decision process supports change that is in the service of what people care about.

Consequently, Quaker Earthcare Witness members attending the meeting reaffirmed the mission that was enunciated at the annual meeting at Nevada City, California in 2005 – To increase the depth of our spiritual relationship with the Universe God created for humans and all life forms to inhabit with equity in peace, and to act in faith to enable humans to adopt lifestyles that allow all life forms to live in harmony with the Earth and with one another. Such action includes seeking scientific truths about Nature and disseminating those truths so that policy and law by which we conduct life can be in accordance with God's will.

Two members of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting were delegated to represent Quaker Earthcare Witness to other organizations. Catharine Auden Stevens, of Ann Arbor monthly meeting, will be one of three representatives to the United Nations Non-Government Organization observer work group. Alan Connor, also of Ann Arbor, was reappointed as one of three QEW representatives to the FCNL General Committee to consult with FCNL's environment and energy legislative advocate.

Déjà vu: Honoring a Teacher, 2009

Last spring in this space we congratulated Jim Crowfoot (Ann Arbor) as recipient of the University of Michigan's Golden Apple Award for excellence in teaching. Now we congratulate Brian Edmiston (North Columbus), who recently won the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching at The Ohio State University. Brian was nominated by his graduate students. One of the descriptions in the nomination letters was that he "was a cross between the Dalai Lama and an Irish Mr. Rogers."

Reports from LEYM Representatives

Heeding God's Call: A Gathering on Peace

Bekah Sommer (Broadmead)

This past January, I had the privilege of attending "Heeding God's Call: A Gathering on Peace" as the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting delegate. The gathering was organized by leaders of the three traditional peace churches: Quaker, Mennonite, and Brethren. It was hosted by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, attended by many Christian denominations, and visited by members of the Jewish and Muslim faiths. Each day we met in worship, were encouraged and challenged by different speakers, and met in small groups. The gathering looked at peace on local, national, and global levels. Throughout the week there was a protest at a local gun shop. The week finished with a day of action focused on gun violence, especially in Philadelphia. We met in small groups

at local churches, learned about local organizations against gun violence, and ended with a city-wide march/rally against gun violence. It was inspiring and encouraging to see many people of different backgrounds coming together to work for a common goal. We had wonderful conversations, created friendships, and discovered connections. By the end of the week we were filled with a sense of hope and energy. The hope is that this gathering can inspire future conversation and action among the different peace denominations. A website for the gathering, www.peacegathering2009.org, includes the epistle and reflections, introduces the speakers, and lists the workshops.

Report from FGC Executive Committee

Merry Stanford (Red Cedar and LEYM Clerk)

You may be aware that Friends General Conference is in the middle of a campaign, *Stoking the Spiritual Fires of Quakerism*. This campaign has supported the new work of FGC in the areas of youth ministry, ministry on racism, and Quaker Quest, a program devoted to outreach and adult religious education. Recent financial events, however, have affected FGC's ability to meet its campaign goals. If you are in a position to contribute to the campaign, either by making a cash contribution or a deferred gift, please consider doing so. You can find out more on the FGC website at www.fgcquaker.org/development, where you can even make an online contribution. While there, you might want to read the donor profile of our own Fred and Mary Anna Feitler.

Minute on Violence in Gaza

Red Cedar Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, February 2009

Jack Smith, of Red Cedar Friends Peace and Social Justice Committee, writes:

At our February Business Meeting, Red Cedar Friends Meeting in Lansing approved the attached Minute on the Gaza conflict. In addition to our effort to simply express ourselves as Friends on this painful issue and set of events, we have attempted to communicate our clarity to Friends and non-Friends and to those local and those distant (with substantial power over U.S. policy).

We regret the increased violence that has welled up this month in the Gaza strip of Palestine. Hundreds have died, including many civilians; delivery of basic supplies and medical care has been severely restricted; and humanitarian workers have been shot and killed.

The voice we raise in this conflict is the transformative and healing power of non-violence, including successive steps back from the cycle of attack and violent response. As Quakers, we deny the inevitability of violence as a necessary and accepted response to ill-treatment. The desire to strike back in

(Continued on next page)

Quaker Worship in Atlanta, Honduras, and Orlando

Jerry Knutson

A decade ago I was at a Trappist monastery near Atlanta, Georgia. They worshipped about every five hours. While I enjoyed having so many opportunities to worship, I really missed Quaker waiting worship. The constant sitting, standing, singing, finding the right place in the several books was not working for me. I tried sitting in the back of the congregation and doing silent Quaker worship, but I felt I needed to stand and sit to not offend others in the congregation. Finally, I found a small alcove in the back of the sanctuary to “hide” where I could hear the worship, but not be seen by others. This was perfect and I experienced a great worship as I used the words and music like an affirmation to keep my mind from drifting.

In January, I was in Honduras for a two-week intensive course on Contextual Theology offered by Earlham School of Religion. I enjoyed the great enthusiasm that the evangelical Quakers have. This is something that I have not found when worshipping with FGC Friends, although I do see it in the announcements as each person talks about their favorite project. Before breakfast of the last morning at Camp Peniel, I sat down underneath a great pine tree outside as the Evangelical Friends worshipped before breakfast.

Using the practice I'd discovered with the Trappists, I tried to unite the two branches of Friends in myself as I worshipped in silence and let their songs and enthusiasm wash over me. By being outside their worship room, I was able to let go of trying to understand their language (Spanish), and I didn't need to stand and sit. I felt like I was enjoying the best of both branches of Quakers. I watched about six successive flocks (each with about eight big white birds) fly up the valley to my right. When the pastors started singing, I recognized the tune as “I come to the Garden alone, when the dew is still on the roses.” I felt shivers going up my spine! It was a beautiful way to start the day and my best worship experience of the trip.

When I got to the Sunday Worship at Orlando Monthly Meeting, it was the day of the Michener Lecture. Instead of the usual dozen people, five dozen people were present for worship. This was very exciting and I tried to worship in enthusiasm rather than centering down in relaxed open worship. What if the early Friends worshipped with the great enthusiasm that is common in many religious groups? What if the picture “Presence in the Midst” was showing the great excitement of Jesus being in the midst? Every time I felt myself relaxing and getting quiet, I returned to the enthusiasm and excitement around me. However, I was unsuccessful in trying to find God in this excitement. Near the end of the worship time, I remembered George Fox's words, “Be still and cool in thy own mind and spirit from thy own thought...” (from a letter to Lady Claypoole). I felt that my effort to worship with enthusiasm was an excellent experiment, but not a style that speaks to my condition.

Minute on Violence in Gaza, *continued*

self-defense is human, but it does not represent our full human capacity. Retaliation is most often self-defeating, and resistance can take many forms that reduce, if not eliminate, violence. The violent repression of others reduces our own humanity and burdens us with deep emotional and spiritual costs. More productive human responses involve restraint, listening, and recognition of the basic humanity and needs of “the other.” In the physical presence of our opponents and in the healing embrace of silence, new possibilities can emerge, opening the way for tolerance, recognition, and cooperation.

Based on these convictions, Red Cedar Meeting supports all efforts toward a cessation of attacks by both parties; the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance and medical services; and an honest dialogue grounded in the legitimate human rights and security needs of Israelis and Palestinians.

LEYM Change of Address

Name _____
Address _____
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Meeting _____

Please return to:

Jeff Cooper
1506 Arborview Blvd
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Email: cooperdaub@hotmail.com

Thank you!

Bring a Friend to
Annual Meeting,
Bluffton, Ohio
June 11 - 14
(See pages 2-7)

Calendar

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

- ◆ MAY 15 DUE DATE FOR **STATISTICAL REPORTS**
- ◆ MAY 23 **ANNUAL MEETING REGISTRATION DEADLINE**
FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN
- ◆ MAY 31 DUE DATE FOR **STATE OF THE MEETING REPORTS**
- ◆ JUNE 11-14 **ANNUAL MEETING**
BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY, BLUFFTON, OHIO
- ◆ JULY 12 DUE DATE FOR **ANNUAL RECORDS**
- ◆ SEPTEMBER 1 DUE DATE FOR **FALL BULLETIN**
- ◆ SEPTEMBER 25-27 **SPIRITUAL FORMATION RETREAT**
ADRIAN, MICHIGAN
- ◆ NOVEMBER 20-22 **CONSULTATION FOR MONTHLY MEETING CLERKS**, ADRIAN, MICHIGAN

GREEN PASTURES QUARTERLY MEETING

- ◆ MAY 16 **SPRING GATHERING**
MICHIGAN FRIENDS CENTER, NEAR CHELSEA
- ◆ AUGUST 2 **SUMMER GATHERING**
QUAKER PARK, BATTLE CREEK
- ◆ SEPTEMBER 19 **FALL GATHERING**
FRIENDS SCHOOL IN DETROIT

FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE

- ◆ JUNE 27 - JULY 4 **ANNUAL GATHERING**, CAMPUS OF
VIRGINIA TECH, BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA



Marbeck Center – in the calm before Friends descend upon it!

Address Service Requested

LAKE ERIE YEARLY MEETING

Jeff Cooper
1506 Arborview Blvd
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Email: cooperdaub@hotmail.com

Are we ready to trust the spirit
and give up expectations
about outcomes?

Margery Mears Larrabee
Spirit-Led Eldering, 2007

Spring 2009 Bulletin

We're on the Web!

<http://leym.quaker.org>

What I Like about Annual Meeting

(Answers from last year's evaluation forms)

The fellowship. Opportunity to grow spiritually
The people, both old Friends and new and young ones
The relaxed atmosphere
Worship sharing and Bible study
Seeing Friends, business meeting, bookstore
Another marvelous plenary
Sense of peace and easiness throughout Yearly Meeting
The obvious love and caring of all of yearly meeting for its children,
youth, and young adults
Spiritual Friendship
Interacting with Quakers from other Meetings
The leadership is God-centered
I got the feeling I am really at home among Friends
The spirit of grace with the childcare givers
Friendly people
For me it continues to be family reunion time