



MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Damariscotta, Maine
NEWSLETTER

Sooner or later, profound change will come to this nation tired of war, tired of seeing its wealth squandered, while the basic needs of families are not met. These needs are not hard to describe. Some are very practical, some are requirements of the soul: health care, work, living wages, a sense of dignity, a feeling of being at one with our fellow human beings on this Earth.

The people of this country have their own mandate.

—Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*,
is a columnist for *The Progressive*. © 2004 *The Progressive*
contributed by Gretchen Hull

January

Sunday	January 2		Food Pantry Day—please bring items for the basket in the meetinghouse
Sunday	January 9	rise of worship	* Joint committee meeting: Religious Education and Ministry & Counsel
		1:30–3:00 p.m.	* Book Discussion
Thursday	January 13	4:00 p.m.	* People-to-People reorganizational meeting, Baptist Church, Damariscotta
		7:00 p.m.	* Lincoln County Peace & Justice Group organizational meeting
Sunday	January 16	rise of worship	Monthly Meeting for Business. Bring bag lunch
Monday	January 17	or asap thereafter	Call for February newsletter items
Sunday	January 23	rise of meeting	* Visioning Discussion. All please come.
~ Advance Notice ~			
Saturday	February 5	all day	Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting, hosted by Winthrop & Pondtown. Details and location TBA

* Look inside for more information regarding these items

~ **Calendar events are held at the meetinghouse, unless otherwise noted** ~

Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at the meetinghouse, 77 Belvedere Road, Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m. Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Road (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north. The Miles Home Health Care building is on the corner.) The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, 2/10 mile from the corner

Back Issues of the Newsletter and Meeting Information are available at: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

Friendly Reminders

Moving or changing your E-mail address? Don't forget to notify the newsletter of your changes. Electronic subscriptions via E-mail are environmentally friendly and cost the Meeting nothing. To receive your newsletter via the Web, E-mail a request to Nancy Terrell Hall at moonlite@lincoln.midcoast.com

Visit www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

The Entirely Unofficial MONTHLY MEETING NOTES, 12th month of 2004

based on draft minutes by Rob Patterson, Recording Clerk

Co-Clerk Ernie Foust opened the meeting with the reading of a poem from **The Best of Friends**, a collection of Quaker writings. A brief silence was observed. Eighteen Friends were present. Minutes of the November meeting were read and approved with corrections.

Nominating Committee

Pete Haviland reported for the committee. Though the report is deemed final, Pete pointed out that there are still a number of unresolved matters including the need for a Recording Clerk and the absence of volunteers to take on the clerkship of virtually every committee. Even getting volunteers to convene the first meeting of each committee in the new year has been daunting and largely unsuccessful.

The membership of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee remains fairly unchanged from prior years. A discussion of why this committee is so challenged in attracting members to serve ensued. Representing the committee, Holly Baldwin asked what the Meeting wants from them. Though the usual staffing is around eight or nine people, most meetings have four, rarely more than six, in attendance. One Friend said that without Peace and Social Concerns, she feels the Meeting would hardly be a Meeting. She would like to understand why people are not vying for spots on the committee. Is this a reflection of apathy or a sense that we are too overwhelmed with crisis in the world that we feel we can't make a difference? Another Friend felt that we are too few and too old, and that we need to engage the energies of new, younger people. However, it was pointed out though that we have a demonstrable history of going right to new attenders with the thought of Peace & Social Concerns work. It was

recommended and agreed that we ask Jonathan Vogel-Bourne of New England Yearly Meeting if he would lead a discussion of this problem with the Meeting community.

Another key committee which has trouble getting fully staffed and which has no convener or Clerk for the new year is Religious Education. Clearly, we have a generic problem with the acceptance of leadership positions. It was suggested that the committee meet jointly with the clerk or with Ministry & Counsel to discuss its organization. It was noted that the committee's function is somewhat ambiguous, as one never knows from week to week how many, if any, children will be in attendance. One Friend suggested that we all need to have our "rabbits in the hat" that we can pull out to serve the needs of the First Day School on short notice. It was decided that a meeting would convene on January 9th right after the rise of Meeting to discuss Religious Education. The committee members, together with the members of Ministry & Counsel, plus the parents of all school-aged children will be contacted by phone about this meeting.

Deb Haviland will convene Ministry & Counsel in January, and Pete Haviland will convene Meeting-house and Grounds, the new committee combining the former Meetinghouse, Maintenance, and Landscape committees.

It was suggested that no committee functions well without a clerk. Even if the clerk only convenes the meeting and prepares an agenda, it serves to help the committee in its functioning. Jean Crawford has generously agreed to serve as clerk of the Meeting with the understanding that Barb Foust, Carmen Lavertu, and the clerk (to be named) of Ministry & Counsel will serve as her assistants.

Ministry & Counsel Committee

Jean Crawford reported that the nametag experiment is winding down, and the committee recommends that we discontinue the use of nametags. They feel that people are being welcomed and that the tags are an unnecessary distraction. The Meeting accepted the recommendation of the committee.

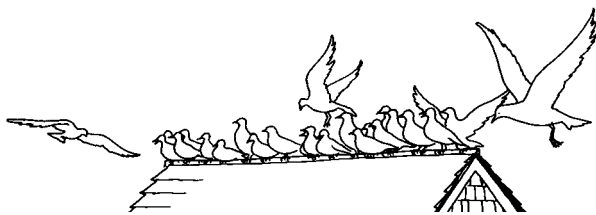
Peace & Social Concerns Committee

Holly Baldwin reported for the committee. The People-to-People project is in jeopardy. They have been asked to leave their current location. A possible new location in South Waldoboro was offered. It needs considerable work. Holly will check it out.

The new Lincoln County Peace & Justice Group will have an organizational meeting at the meetinghouse on January 13th at 7 p.m.

An unfunded mandate from the state legislature requires that all schools teach the history and culture

continued on next page



Query #10

Vocations

Do you respect the value of all useful work, whether paid or unpaid, whether physical or intellectual, whether performed in the home or in the larger community? Does your daily work use means and serve goals which are consistent with the teachings of Jesus? Are you honest and trustworthy in all business transactions, prompt and just in payment of debts? By counsel and example, do you encourage young people to enter vocations which will serve society?

Monthly Meeting Notescont'd fr. p. 2

of the Wabanakis in each grade. A new edition of the book about the Wabanakis has recently come out under the aegis of the American Friends Service Committee. It was decided that Meeting would order five copies. There are 64 schools in the various communities represented by members and attenders, and P&SC wants to establish a calling list so that we contact all the schools and offer them a copy of the book. It was suggested that Worthy Needs would be a suitable source of some funding for this project.

Gretchen Hull suggested that we consider offering the meetinghouse as a sanctuary for young people refusing to serve in Iraq. She indicated that resistance to the war is growing within the military, and such a service may soon be needed. In addition to seeing if the Meeting community is in favor of such a use for the meetinghouse, the legal issues involved would need to be researched. No immediate action was taken.

The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Sunday, January 16, at 11:30 a.m., bag lunch. All welcome.



Query on the Military

by Gretchen Hull

Three of us gathering after meeting found our concerns focused on the war and our soldiers, and wrote the following query for the consideration of the Meeting. We look forward to discussing with the Meeting whether it is led to come to the aid of those conflicted by their military service.

A peace sanctuary right here? The meeting has been searching for a project to gather us together for some time. Here's an idea. Why don't we open the meetinghouse as a sanctuary for people who in their conscience are questioning their participation in the military? The tide is turning, and there are increasing numbers of soldiers who are speaking out. Friends, let us support them publicly by using the meetinghouse as a witness to their voices.

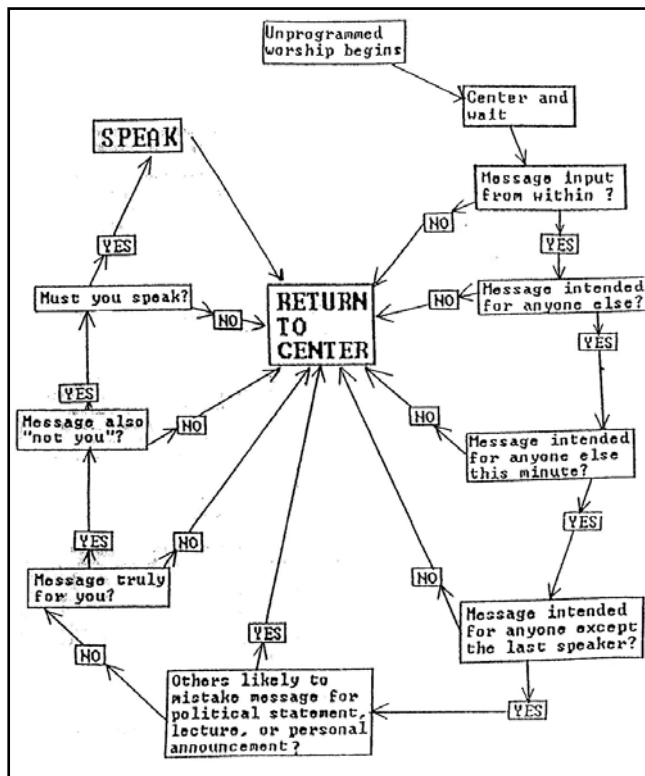
Anna Needham, Andy Burt, Gretchen Hull

Peace & Justice Action Group Forming

by Gretchen Hull

An Organizing Meeting for a new Peace & Justice Action Group for the Lincoln County area will be held on Thursday, January 13, 2005, at 7 p.m., at the meetinghouse. All are invited to come and share ideas on the directions that this committee might take in the coming months to support individual and group initiatives in peace and social justice.

Peace & Justice Group meetings are held in Portland, Brunswick, Rockland, Belfast, Blue Hill, Waterville, Bangor, Orono, but so far, none in the southern midcoast region! We would like explore how we might support each other in new directions and ongoing projects in our own area while networking with similar groups statewide. For more information, please call 563-5416 or 563-1049. We hope to see you on January 13.



This graphic was intended to accompany the article on Unprogrammed Meeting for Worship in last month's newsletter. Space limitations dictated its exclusion from that issue, but we are including it here as a recap of the article.

The Advices

In our relations with others in our daily work, let us manifest the spirit of justice and understanding and thus give a living witness to the Truth. While trying to make provision for ourselves and our families, let us not be anxious, but in quietness of spirit trust in the goodness of God. When we suffer from unemployment, let us seek the support and encouragement of our Meetings. When we have a choice of employment, let us think first of the service that we may render. Let us be ready to limit our engagements, to withdraw for a time, or even to retire from a business that we may be free for new service as God appoints it.

Visioning

Notes from the First Meeting—11/14/04

By William Spock

These notes summarize the discussion at the first Visioning meeting, following up from the Planning Meeting held on 3/9/03, but restarting the discussion under the guidance of the M&C Committee, Jean Crawford, clerk. There were two questions to be considered:

A. If you were looking down from above on Midcoast Meeting, what would you see now?

B. Ten years from now, what would you like to observe?

The 27 in attendance were given the questions and then split into two groups to foster communication, with Bill Spock facilitating one group and Jean Crawford, the other. Claire Darrow and Sally Wood assisted as recorders. After 50 minutes the two groups came back together, and these major points were made in answer to the questions. The notes are a consolidation and do not represent the order of the comments. They are very much open to correction.

A. WHAT DO YOU SEE NOW?

- Outside – a simple building with casually landscaped grounds. By its contrast with asphalt, the dirt drive emphasizes the plain aspect. The atmosphere is quiet, calm, and often empty.
- Inside – a welcoming and supportive group with a strong sense of community responsibility that provides a warm and caring place to gather. Silence is respected. A balance between the spiritual and non-spiritual exists, keeps everyone involved, and gives aid to various individual ministries. It is a closely knit group, drawn inward, but with bridges to the outside through its members.
- Membership - is elderly and geographically dispersed, converging on Sunday, but with few children or younger members in attendance

B. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN TEN YEARS?

- Outside – attractive and well-kept grounds, with plantings easily cared for. There are signs of significantly increased activity, made possible by a larger meetinghouse or a separate small building or by sharing space in nearby facilities. The expanded facilities were driven by the requirements of the increased activities. Community gardens or even a

greenhouse provide evidence of use by the broader community. On special occasions visitors can be seen gathering on the lawn, sometimes using tents for overflow events, such as a gathering of Kenyan Friends.

- Inside – an active center provides the community with a strong sense of Quakerly values based on faith and personal spiritual growth, not specific beliefs. Just as important are witnessing for peace, encouraging a sustainable environment aimed toward self sufficiency, and solving social concerns on a worldwide basis, with special emphasis on the less fortunate. The warm and welcoming environment has been maintained, but new Meeting activity has helped to project a broader and less isolated image of who we are.
- Outreach - activities are not confined to individual ministries, but the Meeting as a whole is engaged in intergenerational projects with energy and excitement. These often involve bridges to and cooperation with other groups. Sponsorship of an immigrant family, or other similarly large commitment, is an example of the service that may be provided by the Meeting. In situations of potential conflict, the ability of members to be good listeners has helped to resolve differences.
- Children – have become much more of a focus for support and education. The facilities provide space for summer or after-school activities, not designed for common athletic or competitive games so much as for more thoughtful art or creative projects, together with learning that includes concepts like help for the less fortunate and the value of service. Understanding the ideals of Friends, not conversion to the Meeting, is an objective, although that might be a useful byproduct.
- Staffing – because the membership is larger, volunteers are available for all the necessary work. Paid staff may be used, when needed, but operations have also become more efficient and effective, so that new members will not have concerns about their expected time commitment. Wanting to help, rather than being required to help, has become the culture. Regular meetings focused on critical decisions have helped to maintain sound operations.

No proposal came out of the Visioning session. Another session has been scheduled for Sunday, January 23, at the rise of worship. All are urged to attend.

Book Discussion, Jan. 9th, 1:30

Discussion of *The Unconquerable World*
by Jonathan Schell. All are welcome!

Ruth Stanton Kaltenbach

July 14, 1915 - January 2, 2004

Ruth Kaltenbach, a beloved member of Midcoast Meeting, died on January 2, 2004, in Reading, Massachusetts. Ruth was born into a Quaker family on July 14, 1915, at Westtown, Pennsylvania. Her father, Elwood Dean Stanton, and her mother, Esther Sidney Fawcett, were from Quaker families who had come to this country in the 1600s. She was the middle of five children and was very close to her family her entire life. She loved the campus of Westtown School, where she was brought up and where her father was business manager. After attending school there from first grade through high school, Ruth attended the University of Pennsylvania and graduated with Honors in Mathematics in the first class of the College of Liberal Arts for Women at the University.

In 1941 Ruth married John Kaltenbach. They lived for nine years in Chester County, Pennsylvania, farming and raising their family. She bore eight children between 1942 and 1959. The years between 1950 and 1963 were spent in Guilford, Connecticut, and in Rindge, New Hampshire, where they helped start The Meeting School. At a time when disabled children were seldom seen or even mentioned, Ruth and John included their son Andrew in all family activities. During these years, Ruth taught herself to weave. She continued to find contentment and an outlet for her creativity in this skill throughout her life.

In 1963 Ruth and John moved back to Pennsylvania, where they had a plant nursery and a shop which sold beautiful handmade and useful things. It was the right time for her to pursue her love of gardening and horticulture. In 1983, when Ruth was 69 years old and John began to have health problems, they retired to Maine, where they bought an old farm house in Cushing and became connected with Midcoast Meeting. John died in 1984. Following his death, Ruth focused her energy on the Coastal Workshop, an agency in Camden that works with retarded adults. She served on the board, was secretary, and helped in all their activities.

Ruth's ten years with Midcoast Meeting occurred during a period of growth and change, and she was a devoted member. She transferred her membership to Midcoast in 1984. With her Quaker background, Ruth knew the importance of participation in all aspects of the Meeting. She not only attended Meeting very regularly, but also was faithful to business meetings and other Meeting affairs. During those years she served at various times as Recorder, Recording Clerk, and served on Ministry & Counsel and Hospitality Committees.

Ruth had a calm spirit and an integrity that were "of the earth." She never had a harsh word to say about anyone and was philosophical in a simple, direct way.

She witnessed to the Truth. Her comfortable kitchen was central in her life, and her wonderful breads, crackers, desserts, and wholesome foods were always a welcome contribution to any Quaker gathering. Visiting with her in her kitchen was a treat.

When one got to know Ruth, she was a wealth of anecdotes about her family and her life. She had a delightful sense of humor that carried her through her long life. Douglas Steere wrote a pamphlet, "On Being Present Where You Are." Ruth was always "present" until the end of her life, when she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Ruth left Cushing in 1993 to live near Patience, her youngest daughter, in Pennsylvania, and to be within walking distance of her family. In 1998 she was no longer able to live alone and moved to Reading, Massachusetts, where she lived for five years at Daniel's House. This small nursing facility was across the street from the library where her daughter Rachel worked, and Rachel was able to visit Ruth every day.

Ruth had a beautiful smile that lit up her face. She died at the age of 88 years and is survived today by 7 children, 17 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren.

Approved by Monthly Meeting 11/19/04

The Great Dividecont'd from previous page

4. Don't try to convince others of your position. As a wise friend once told me, "truth is different at different levels of consciousness." It's unrealistic to expect someone to care about the environment when they're struggling to put food on the table, or to take a stand for peace when their basic need for safety has not been met.

Each human being is doing the best he or she can based on their level of consciousness. With this universal truth in mind, it becomes clear that the greatest contribution we make to each other (and the world) is a commitment to raise our level of consciousness by investing in our own personal development. When we do, we never have to convince anyone of anything. Instead we inspire others to rise up simply by our own example.

We are all spiritual pioneers capable of greatness, regardless of whether we live in a blue or red state. Staying connected to our innate Divinity gives us our greatest chance to survive and thrive in a complex and challenging world.

To read this newsletter on the net, go to: <http://www.cherylrichardson.com/newsletter/04-week45.html>

The Great Divide

by Cheryl Richardson

From E-mail via Gretchen Hull

Many years ago I heard an interview with Marva Collins, the acclaimed African-American teacher who developed a methodology that turned children labeled “unteachable” into remarkable students whose test scores often doubled or tripled under the guidance of her program. During the interview, Marva was asked why she felt she had been so successful. Her reply was simple: “I hold my students to the greatness I see in them, and when I do, they always rise.”

This week, as I listen to the myriad of reactions about the election results, I find comfort in her words. It reminds me to hold tight to my belief in the inherent greatness of humanity, trusting that as we move through this difficult time, we too shall rise.

As we deal with the aftermath of the elections, I’d like to offer a few suggestions for how to maintain greatness:

1. Allow yourself to grieve. If the election results didn’t turn out the way you hoped, give yourself as much time as you need to grieve your loss. We are so quick to encourage people to “get over” their feelings in our emotionally phobic culture. This suggestion is an insult to caring, sensitive human beings. Allowing yourself time to feel your anger, sadness, frustration,

or fear is an important part of the healing process. When we attempt to shut people down, we only create defensiveness. And, our best behavior never comes from an emotionally reactive place.

2. Regardless of your political position, don’t get pulled in to the derisive conversations that only serve to pit people against each other. When I hear the sarcastic, caustic bantering on the airwaves, I often think to myself: “Gandhi or Jesus would never have communicated in this way.” You are a divine being. Hold yourself to a higher standard when speaking with others.

3. Stay in the game. Don’t become apathetic because you won, and don’t walk away because you lost. Huge numbers of people took interest in this campaign—that’s great news. Make sure your voice continues to be heard. Keep the name, phone number, website, and E-mail address of your political representatives near your computer so you can stay active and informed. You’d be surprised at how few people ever call or E-mail their reps. You can find out who your reps are and the issues that are being debated, by visiting: <http://www.house.gov/> and <http://www.senate.gov/>

continued on page 5

Midcoast Meeting of Friends
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