

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



Waldoboro Pound • NTH photo

*When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us."*

—Helen Keller  
contributed by Esther Cope

**September**

Sunday	September 1		Food Pantry Day
		following Mtg	* Picnic at home of Carmen Lavertu, Thomaston
Fri./Sun.	Sept. 6-8		* Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting Fall Gathering at China Camp
Sunday	September 8	8:30 a.m.	* Book Discussion Group
Tuesday	September 10	4:00 p.m.	Peace & Social Concerns
Wednesday	September 11	4:00 p.m.	Ministry & Counsel committee meeting
Thursday	September 12	11 a.m. - 2 p.m.	AFSC work meeting
Saturday	September 14	9:00 a.m.–noon	* Meeting Yard Sale for Ramallah Friends Schools
Friday	September 20	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Potluck Supper Meeting for Business
Sunday	September 22	8:30 a.m.	Book Discussion Group
Saturday	September 28	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	FCMPP meeting in Waterville
~Advance Notice~			
Saturday	October 5	10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Workshop on multicultural racism organized by Orono Friends Meeting, held in Orono
Wednesday	October 30	11 a.m. - 2 p.m.	AFSC work meeting
Saturday	November 9		AFSC conference: Alternatives to Militarism for Maine's Youth

\* 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 first building on the right, 2/10 mile from the corner

Back Issues of the Newsletter, along with other Meeting Information, are available at:  
[www.lincoln.midcoast.com/~moonlite/q-pages.htm](http://www.lincoln.midcoast.com/~moonlite/q-pages.htm)

# *The Entirely Unofficial* **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 7th month of 2002

based on draft minutes by Rob Patterson

Clerk Carmen Lavertu opened the meeting after a brief silence. There were 9 people present. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved with minor corrections.

## **Ministry & Counsel**

Pete Haviland reported for the committee. A clearness committee including Earnie Foust, Pete Haviland and Karen Cadbury met with Alice Lacy concerning her request for membership in the Meeting. The committee heartily endorsed Alice's request and the business meeting approved her membership. Pete Haviland will write a letter to Alice so informing her.

## **Peace and Social Concerns**

Carmen reported for the committee. Jim Matlack from AFSC will be at Meeting on August 4th to give a talk at the rise of meeting about the Palestinian issue. It was queried as to whether we want press coverage for this event. After some discussion it was agreed that Earnie Foust and Paul Diamond will discuss this with Jim and do as he wishes.

## **Landscaping**

The committee needs help from the Meeting community in dealing with the chore of weeding gardens and driveway areas. It was suggested and agreed to that we promote a group effort on Sunday, July 28th in the space between Meeting for Worship and the memorial service for Natalie's mother. This will be announced after meeting on the 21st and 28th.

## **Meeting Committee**

The new ceiling fans have been installed in the Meeting room. A higher quality phone/answering system has been installed in the library.

## **Old Business**

With regard to the effort to extend a welcome to our new neighbors, The Church of Latter Day Saints, it was

Query #8

## **Care of Children**

Do children receive the loving care of your Meeting? Does the Meeting nurture their religious life and give them an understanding of the principles and practices of Friends? Are you an example to your children in your faithfulness to the ideals you profess? Do you promote your children's moral and spiritual development by loving oversight of their education, recreation, and social activities? Do you listen to children, recognizing that the Spirit may lead them along paths you have not foreseen? Do you assist them to assume their rightful responsibilities in the home, the Meeting, and the community?

decided that we will make a decision on the form and substance of this overture at the September business meeting and schedule to accomplish it in October. There was more discussion of a fundraiser for the Ramallah School. Everyone agreed that it would be a worthwhile project and could instill energy in our membership while assisting the school in its rebuilding. Deb Haviland suggested that the Thomaston Library did very well recently with a garage sale fundraising event. Deb will work on organizing such an event with the help of Claire Darrow and Jean Crawford.

## **New Business**

The Worthy Needs Committee (not an official name!) for the fiscal year 2002/2003 met to prepare a list of recommended recipients for our charitable giving. The total amount being disbursed will be \$1600.00. Jean Crawford reported for the committee with a very clear and concise three-page report describing the committee's criteria for giving, the nature of each entity chosen, and the amount recommended. There was some discussion about the relative affluence of some of the entities and the possible need to make small adjustments to reflect this. The final report will be submitted to the September business meeting for approval.

A small group of friends including the Havilands, Jean Crawford and Glenn Dwyer will hold a worship meeting with Chouteau Chapin at her apartment at Hill House in Bath on Sunday, July 21st. The idea of having some friends join Chouteau at her residence was enthusiastically received by Chouteau when proposed. There will be other opportunities for Meeting members to join Chouteau in the future.

## **Other**

Concern was raised by a member about a sense of low energy generally within the Meeting. This is reflected in low levels of volunteerism for the mundane tasks of keeping the Meeting going (cleaning, workdays, etc.). Those in attendance agreed we should look at this and explore ways to energize our Meeting community. The Ramallah School garage sale benefit was cited as a project that might be useful to instill enthusiasm. More discussion of this issue is in order.

\* \* \* \* \*

**The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Friday, September 20, at 7:00 p.m. following a potluck supper at 6:00 p.m. ALL WELCOME.**

"All I can do is let this day come to me in peace.  
All I can do is take the step before me now."

—Hugh Prather  
*Contributed by Esther Cope*

## Fall Gathering

The annual Fall Gathering of the Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting will be held at Friends Camp, South China, on September 6, 7, and 8. The theme of the weekend event is "Finding Our Foundation: Living in the Light in an Ocean of Darkness." According to the descriptive flier available in the meetinghouse, "there will be a variety of workshops, intergenerational sharing and fun, nourishing worship." A modest fee is charged for adults; children and teens under 18 may attend free of charge. Registration begins at 4 pm on Friday and the event concludes with general cleanup at 2 pm on Sunday. All are urged to attend for at least part of the weekend. Find a yellow flier on the meetinghouse credenza, which gives complete details.



## Book Group to Begin New Selection

The Reading Group, which meets twice a month on the second and fourth Sundays at 8:30 before Meeting for Worship, will begin a new book on September 8. It is **The Varnished Truth: Truth Telling and Deceiving in Ordinary Life** by David Nyberg. (*The Newsletter* seems to have had a difficult time getting the title of this book correct in the past, having gotten it wrong more than once. Our multiple apologies to the author! This time it has been copied straight out of [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), so hopefully it is correct! ED)

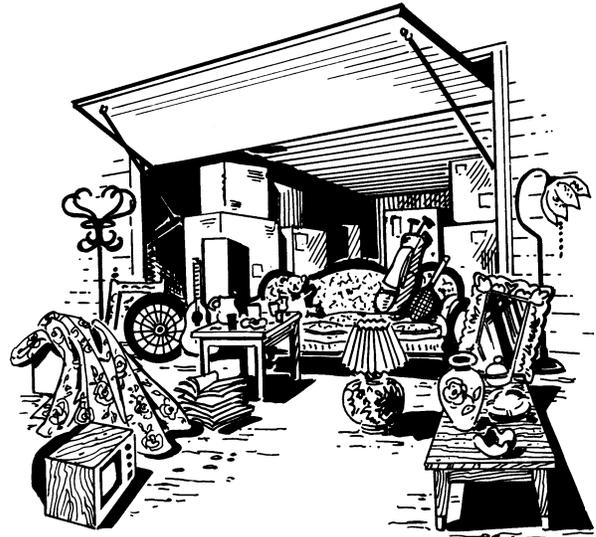
Friends are encouraged to join what promises to be a lively discussion of this new selection. Contact Paulding Phelps (633-6636, <[pauldingp@aol.com](mailto:pauldingp@aol.com)>) with any questions regarding the book group.

### Picnic! Sunday, September 1

at Carmen Lavertu's home,  
43 Beechwood St., Thomaston  
354-9556

Directions to Carmen's: Traveling north, take a left at the light in Thomaston village. That is Beechwood Street. #43 is about the 10th house on the right.

Bring food; beverages will be provided. Bring a lawn chair if you have a folding one. There are some benches and a few chairs, but not enough for everyone.



## Yard Sale to Aid Ramallah Friends Schools

by Claire Darrow

In May at a meeting of New England Yearly Meeting's Permanent Board, we were told of the damage done to the Ramallah Friends Schools by Israeli shelling. The schools stand in the same block as Arafat's headquarters and thus were in the line of fire. The damage is repairable, but at a considerable cost. Friends were encouraged to help by funding some of the repairs.

Midcoast Friends passed the hat at the May Meeting for Business, and over \$100 was collected then. A bit more came in after that.

It was suggested that we hold a fundraiser to add to the funds in hand. That idea has grown into a plan for a yard sale to be held at the meetinghouse on September 14th, 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The coordinating committee for the sale consists of Deb Haviland, Jean Crawford, Nancy Booth, and Claire Darrow. There is much work to do in preparation, and we hope many people will come forward with good things to sell and willing hands to help during the week before the day of the sale. It will feel good to work together again on an important project, as we did when raising the meetinghouse. We can accomplish so much when we all work together!

Friends wishing to learn more about the Ramallah Friends Schools can visit their very interesting site on the Web at [www.fum.org/worldmissions/ramallah.htm](http://www.fum.org/worldmissions/ramallah.htm)

### Friendly Reminders

Moving or changing your email 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](mailto:moonlite@lincoln.midcoast.com)

# New England Yearly Meeting

by Claire Darrow

Yearly Meeting this year was as good as ever. (I know I sound like a broken record, but it's true.) We gathered at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, for five days of fellowship, prayer, careful, Quakerly deliberation, and fun. It was a return for me, because the first Yearly Meeting I attended, back in the '70s, was held there.

Our work was to hear many reports of our Yearly Meeting's health and activities over the past year, to hear and write epistles to other Yearly Meetings all over the world, and to consider some of the minutes forwarded to the Session from Monthly and Quarterly Meetings. I'll speak of two of them.

We first heard a minute from Northwest Quarter, addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, expressing the intention to bring Quaker values to the participants of both sides, seeking peaceful solutions where possible. We saw a film made in June by one of our members who went to Ramallah and interviewed the headmaster and some students from the schools there, which were in the eye of the storm, so to speak. One hopeful piece of information was that there are many, many people on both sides who deeply wish to end the conflict and get on with their lives. We never hear their voices in our press—only those of the combatant governments. The headmaster spoke of "when" peace is restored, not "if." And he had kept the schools running, even on days of shelling, for, he said, the students were in as much danger elsewhere in Ramallah as they were in the schools, and it was important for the schools to continue as usual. That was one way to make a statement that there were more important things to do than shoot at each other.

## The Advices

Care of the children of the Meeting should be the responsibility of every Friend. Let us share with our children a sense of adventure, of wonder, and of trust and let them know that, in facing the mysteries of life, they are surrounded by love. Both parents and Meetings need to guard against letting other commitments deprive children of the time and attention they need.

Friends are advised to seek for children the full development of God's gifts, which is true education. All Friends are cautioned against harshness of tone and manner when offering counsel or reproof. To the child, even a seeming harshness may check the beginnings of repentance or growth, and a lack of sympathy may cause harm where only good was intended. Let us nurture a spirit of common concern, thereby giving children a sense of belonging to a larger community.

As you may imagine, there were many differing responses from the floor of Sessions. One Friend, a wise and caring man, spoke of the anti-Semitism in some Quaker organizations, biasing opinion to be pro-Palestinian. The messages ranged back and forth, until the clerk said that there had been time scheduled in the agenda to come back to this issue when it had had a chance to season in our minds and hearts.

When that time came, two days later, there still were many hands up of people waiting to speak.

It was clear overall that there was general agreement on the issue, but sometimes Quakers see themselves as editors and can take a lot of time on the floor. The clerk stood in prayer for a while, and then called on each raised hand, asking if the person needed to stand in the way of accepting the minute, or would be able to stand aside. There was silence on the floor as each agreed that it would be possible to stand aside or agree. The minute passed, and I was again impressed by the solidarity felt in the room as we completed this difficult task.

Toward the end of Sessions the clerk mentioned that we had still to deal with "the elephant in the living room." This referred to the imminent attack against Iraq currently being planned by our government. Friends simply did not have the time to come up with a minute, though there was plenty of energy there to discuss it. We agreed to remand this work to the Permanent Board, which does the work of the Yearly Meeting between Sessions. At the Permanent Board meeting held right after Sessions ended, we set up an emergency plan to be able to meet on short notice, should the need arise, and come up with some sort of response. It is very important that our voices for peace be heard in this unsettled time.

The weather was terribly hot, and I was glad to have brought a fan, so as to be able to sleep at night. I saw old Friends and made new ones, went to interesting workshops and committee meetings, walked about the lovely campus in the early morning and enjoyed myself thoroughly. It's a rich experience for all.

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## **An Open Letter . . . . .continued fr. back cover**

Damariscotta are struggling with this and are aware of the global effect of U.S. policies. All Americans know that after September 11th, isolationism is not an option. But the alternative, to be centre stage in global affairs, is a place of terrifying responsibility and vulnerability. My loving thoughts are with you. "We are all members one of another."

*Jill Page is a friend of Anna Needham and has attended Midcoast Meeting while visiting Anna in Maine.*

# Poetry for Chouteau

Contributed by Jean Crawford:

Recently, during a small worship service with Chouteau Chapin at Hill House in Bath, this poem was read. It is from *Anam Cara* by John O'Donohue. The book has been donated to the Meeting library.

## BEANNACHT

On the day when  
the weight deadens  
on your shoulders  
and you stumble,  
may the clay dance  
to balance you.

And when your eyes  
freeze behind  
the gray window  
and the ghost of loss  
gets in to you,  
may a flock of colors,  
indigo, red, green  
and azure blue  
come to awaken in you  
a meadow of delight.

When the canvas frays  
in the curach of thought  
and a stain of ocean  
blackens beneath you,  
may there come across the waters  
a path of yellow moonlight  
to bring you safely home.

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,  
may the clarity of light be yours,  
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,  
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow  
wind work these words  
of love around you,  
an invisible cloak  
to mind your life.

**Friends United Meeting announces their annual Ambassadors for Christ youth seminar, November 22-26, 2002, to be held in New York City.** About 60 young Friends, 11th grade through sophomores in college, from various Yearly Meetings will gather to explore issues of peace and poverty in practical ways. In addition to sessions, participants will have an opportunity to tour the United Nations, Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty as well as attending a Broadway play, visit museums, and go shopping. A few adult Friends will be needed as chaperones. For more information, call the FUM office, 765-962-7573. Info may also be available at [www.fum.org](http://www.fum.org)

## Book Review

### Fatal Choice: Nuclear Weapons and the Illusion of Missile Defense

by Richard Butler,

Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 2001

Reviewed by Ernie Foust

This book is described by Friends Committee on National Legislation as a must read. Having read it, I understand why FCNL feels it is so important. It contains a detailed history of the attempts to contain the spread of nuclear weapons and the reasons for failure. Butler has been in the middle of this concern for about thirty years, and he knows the complexity of nuclear issues. In spite of the many disappointments he has experienced during negotiations, Butler remains optimistic that nuclear weapons can be eliminated from the arsenals of all nations.

Chapter heads provide an outline of his argument: The Problems of Nuclear Weapons, Arms Control and Security, The Non-Proliferation Treaty, Proliferation Today, Nuclear Defense, Nuclear Security, Plan of Action.

This is a no-nonsense book—devoid of rhetorical flourishes—with a wealth of details that spell out much of the history of these weapons and efforts both to manage them and to acquire them. It is a history of good intentions and of deceit and deception. Butler places the blame for failure where it belongs and makes clear that the United States must accept its share of responsibility.

I am in no position to dispute Butler's view of the facts, but his tenacity in the endeavor to rid the world of the nuclear threat is clear. If he can succeed in persuading the nuclear nations and the nuclear wannabes that they can all win and create a safer world for all of humanity, we will have a happy ending. It may not be a perfect world, but there will be no nuclear winter.

Some readers may feel that it is presumptuous of one man, regardless of his expertise and experience, to lay out a plan to achieve such significant results. But my impression is that his intention is to instill hope in citizens, especially Americans, to the end that our nation will abandon its current obsession with going it alone and will recognize the fatal flaw in basing our own security on a technological fence in the sky and new nuclear weapons.

The book could have had better editing (an occasional word is omitted), and I found far too many sentences beginning with "This..." as a reference to a detailed set of circumstances presented in a preceding paragraph where one feels almost obligated to go back for a review. But these are modest matters considering the importance of his subject. The Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., apparently agrees, for the book is being made available at a lower price for bulk orders to organizations interested in these concerns.

## Recommendations for Charitable Giving in 2002-2003

This is a draft. The committee welcomes feedback and recommendations to this draft report. We plan to submit a final report at the September Meeting for Business. We were allotted \$1600 for this fiscal year.

**The criteria we used were** (no organization met all of these criteria):

- previously received contribution from Midcoast Meeting
- is a local or Maine organization
- has Quaker ties &/or clearly reflects Quaker values
- serves youth, elderly, and/or Native Americans
- serves the AIDS crisis, especially AIDS orphans
- emphasizes prevention
- is a well-run organization
- has high financial need
- is not widely known
- is an organization with which we have a personal connection

**Last year we gave a total of \$1350 to:**

- CHIP - \$200
- Coastal Trans - \$150
- Genesis - \$200
- New Hope for Women - \$200
- Homeless Teens - \$200
- Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation - ?
- Landmines Action - \$200
- Doctors Without Borders - \$200

**Committee recommends for 2002-2003:**

- CHIP (Community Housing Improvement Program) - we have a representative on the board of this local organization which was founded by the Ives and to which we've previously given. Committee recommends \$200.
- People to People - a local, all-church organization for needy citizens where we have had a representative on the board in the past and where a Friend, who recommends our support, has served as treasurer. Committee recommends \$100.
- Nurturing Families - a community-based program that teaches parenting skills to families in Knox County, Maine, who are interested in making their home life stronger and more positive. In a 1994 community assessment, parenting and relational problems within families were noted as being "extremely common in Knox County." A significant number of parents interviewed for the survey were cited in the report as "poor role models for their children, giving their children bad examples of...poor judgment in decision making." The Nurturing Families

program provides family members with instructions in interpersonal and inter-social skills to help make their at-home lives more supportive and positive. The program's coordinators teach family members skills by modeling positive parent-child interactions. They offer parents information on infant and child development, the establishment of family rules and discipline, and how to create positive family routines. Since 1997, Nurturing Families has worked with more than 151 families (450 adults and children) from all socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

- The Carpenter's Boatshop - a faith-based organization founded by the Ives that serves youth and the needs of the entire peninsula. Committee recommends \$100.
- Genesis Community Loan Fund/Eldercare Network of Lincoln County - A well-run local organization to which we have given in the past, it was honored last year by the Governor's Annual Affordable Housing Conference for its work with assisted-living housing in a variety of towns, enabling seniors to remain in their hometowns. Committee recommends \$100.
- Wabanaki Mental Health Association - was established six years ago by a group of professionally-trained therapists from the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes. The organization provides counseling for Native people in Maine who live on and off the reservations. The agency's counselors have developed methods of treatment that combine both contemporary and traditional medical practice and that focus on providing cultural and social support, as well as medical and therapeutic treatment. The association offers long-term treatment for children, families, and individual adults. The organization's mission is to support and help Native community members who are suffering with medical, drug- and alcohol-related, and psychological problems, as well as problems related to domestic violence. This organization is helping a group of Maine residents that are critically under-served and whose problems require—in many cases—long-term care. They are an exceedingly worthy group, and, because many of their patients cannot pay even minimal fees, the organization struggles financially from year to year. Committee recommends \$100.
- Seeds of Peace Camp - located on Pleasant Lake in Maine (there is also a conference center for alumni in Jerusalem). Conflict resolution skills are taught to youth from warring nations. It is no longer struggling financially but its goals for the future are worthy. Committee recommends \$300.

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- United Society of Friends Women, Kakamega Yearly Meeting, Kenya - Midcoast Meeting has a personal connection with this Meeting through a Maine Friend who donated seed money and encouraged two representatives to attend the May all-Maine gathering in Vassalboro where they described their project to build housing for AIDS widows and orphans, reaching out to the Samburu people and beyond. Committee recommends \$200.
- Doctors Without Borders - a well-known organization to which we donated last year, they are doing better than many health organizations in combating AIDS with antiretroviral drugs through their clinics in Malawi, Thailand, and Guatemala and working with drug companies to lower their prices in under-developed areas. Committee recommends \$100.
- Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation - Mine Action Program - we have given previously and have a personal connection with its founder, Bobby Muller, who spoke to our Meeting. The mine-removal programs are augmented by projects to help war-torn areas get rehabilitated. Committee recommends \$200.



## Citizen Action

From a letter by Ruth Kahn of Trumansburg, NY,  
to Sally Cartwright (scartwright@acadia.net)

According to recent polls, a majority of Americans believe the United States is going in the wrong direction. In addition to our economic woes and corporate corruption, many of us are concerned about our urge to invade Iraq, our lack of sustained leadership to achieve peace in the Middle East, our refusal to sign the Kyoto Accord, our dangerous nuclear policy, and our lack of full commitment to rebuilding Afghanistan and other nations torn by war, AIDS, flood and famine.

Much of the world sees us as a rogue state upsetting global efforts for peace and causing lasting environmental harm. Our policies increase the risk of terrorist attack, and could well lead to massive warfare.

Because democracy depends on its citizens, we should phone our leaders in Washington to say we deplore the present course of errors.

### Here are some important phone numbers:

President Bush 202-456-6213  
Olympia Snowe 202-224-5344  
Susan Collins 202-224-2523  
Tom Allen 202-225-6116  
John Baldacci 202-225-6306

## From George Fox via New England Yearly Meeting

by Carmen Lavertu

What I most want to share from my experiences this year at NEYM is the discovery of the pastoral letters of George Fox. I took the three-day workshop led by a young woman from the Cambridge Meeting, Martha Mangelsdorf. I confess I had brought *The Journal* with me and had no knowledge whatever that there were letters apart from those included in *The Journal*. I learned that there are over four hundred of these; we studied about a dozen, each one a precious thing that instructs and falls deeply in our hearts and moves us. They remind us of Paul's letters, but the language is so "Friendly" and so intimate, I feel they bring us very close to George Fox, into his consciousness of love and understanding, allowing us to sense his deep religious sensibility. This one I have kept with me and read over and over many times since August 5th. I hope it will be a blessing to you as it is for me.

To Friends, to stand still in trouble, and see the strength of the Lord. Friends,

Whatever ye are addicted to, the tempter will come in that thing; and when he can trouble you, then he gets advantage over you, and then ye are gone. Stand still in that which is pure, after ye see yourselves; and then mercy comes in. After thou seest thy thoughts, and the temptations, do not think, but submit; and then power comes. Stand still in that which shows and discovers; and there doth strength immediately come. And stand still in the light, and submit to it, and the other will be hushed and gone; and then content comes. And when temptations and troubles appear, sink down in that which is pure, and all will be hushed, and fly. Your strength is to stand still, after ye see yourselves; whatsoever ye see yourselves addicted to, temptations, corruption, uncleanness, &c. then ye think ye shall never overcome. And earthly reason will tell you, what ye shall lose; hearken not to that, but stand still in the light that shows them to you, and then strength comes from the Lord, and help contrary to your expectation. Then ye grow up in peace, and no trouble shall move you. David fretted himself, when he looked out; but when he was still, no trouble could move him. When your thoughts are out, abroad, the troubles move you. But come to stay your minds upon that spirit which was before the letter; here ye learn to read the scriptures aright. If ye do any thing in your own wills, then ye tempt God; but stand still in that power which brings peace. --G.F. (1652)

# An Open Letter to Midcoast Friends

by Jill Page

July ' 02

Dear Damariscotta,

As an Englishwoman an important activity in visiting Maine is the chance to speak to American Friends. This is particularly important now as I cannot remember a time when the U.S. has been so vilified in our press. American Friends remind me that not all of your citizens agree with the actions of your government. The great wave of sympathy which came as we watched with horror the events of September 11th has been gradually dissipated. An opportunity was lost as we saw the U.S. moving towards militarism. Perhaps, like me, you are astonished and puzzled and even angered by what your country is doing to the rest of the world.

Pulling out of the Kyoto agreement on the environment was the first shock. Then the U.S. left the pact which forbids the development of missile defense systems in order to promote what we call Star Wars. This will give you the power to strike at any country from space. We have a very real fear of another nuclear arms race. In addition, Star Wars changes space from a place of peaceful scientific discovery and exploration into a potential battlefield. The Farm Bill will damage the agricultural endeavours of many developing countries, as the massive tonnage of U.S. grain and beef

drives prices artificially down. Third World debt brings poverty to millions and prevents the ability of many countries to trade and so build their economies. The campaign to reduce this debt has not been backed by the wealth of America.

And yet the Quaker International Working Party on the Israel/Palestine conflict, which recently reported, had more than half of its members from the U.S. I also know from talking with some of you of your anguish. American Friends will never be comfortable with the military might of their country. This power will be viewed by other peoples with a mixture of fear and hatred. (In the days of the "British Empire," we were aware of this and the legacy lingers.) All of this makes the Quaker message of peace and justice more relevant than it has ever been.

But like it or not, that power is in your hands, or in the hands of the politicians in Washington. This means that the world asks, "Why do you cripple our economies, make global warming worse, destroy our agriculture, and bring the philosophy and reality of war closer to us?" Harsh questions, and I cannot help with the answers, but back home in England I can tell my friends that there are Americans who are themselves asking questions. I know that Friends in

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Damariscotta, ME 04543  
PO Box 714, 77 Belvedere Road  
Midcoast Meeting of Friends

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