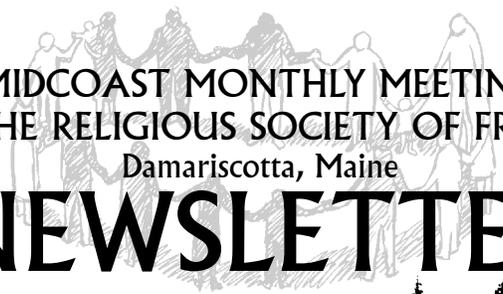


MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Damariscotta, Maine
NEWSLETTER



*“Silent” and “listen” are spelled
with the same letters.*

—contributed by Claire Darrow



September

Sunday	Sept. 4		Food Pantry Day
			* Worship and potluck at St. John home at Morse Mountain
Thursday	Sept. 8	7-8:30 p.m.	Lincoln County Peace and Justice Coalition
Fri. - Sun.	Sept. 9 - 11		* Fall Gathering, Friends Camp, South China
Monday	Sept. 12	6-8:30 p.m.	Ongoing study group on non-violent communication
Tuesday	Sept. 13	6-8 p.m.	AFSC Maine Committee on Youth and Alternatives to the Military
Friday	Sept. 16	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Potluck Supper Monthly Meeting for Worship for Business
Sunday	Sept. 18	12 noon	* Solar for the Faithful workshop
Monday	Sept. 19		Call for October newsletter items
Sunday	Sept. 25	rise of worship	Informal meeting for peace and social concerns sharing and networking
Monday	Sept. 26	6-8:30 p.m.	Ongoing study group on non-violent communication

* 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

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

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

Visit www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

The Entirely Unofficial **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 7th month of 2005

based on draft minutes by Rob Patterson

Ministry & Counsel

Deb Haviland reported. A memorial minute for Marian Dwyer is being prepared and will be ready for approval of monthly meeting soon. A number of people are providing input for the minute.

The clerk of the committee would like the clerk of meeting to inform her of all illnesses, deaths and other matters pertaining to meeting members so that the committee is fully advised and can better carry out its duties with respect to pastoral care of meeting members. A discussion ensued about privacy issues and whether a particular person wants to have that information disseminated. It was agreed that, when possible, the person involved or a family member will be consulted before information is disseminated within the meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Paul Diamond gave a recap of the fiscal year which ended May 31st, 2005. We spent \$13,708 during the year and had a surplus of \$1642 at the end of the year. About \$900 of the surplus was due to under-spending by the Ministry & Counsel and Peace & Social Concerns committees. On July 14th we formally loaned \$10,000 to the Giving Winds Fund, created to assist in funding home construction and enterprise among the Indian population on the Wabanaki Reservations. We have already received \$14,500 in pledges for the current fiscal year. Our goal is \$17,500 so this is very promising. A large, unexpected, one-time contribution helped buoy this figure.

Meeting for Worship and Picnic at Morse Mountain in Phippsburg Sunday, Sept. 4

Gather at the meetinghouse at 9 a.m. to form car pools, arriving at Morse Mountain around 9:45. Food: potluck with beverages provided. Refer to July/August newsletter or Carmen Lavertu (354-9556) for more information.

Query #5

Outreach

Do you welcome inquirers and visitors to your Meeting? Do you seek to share and to interpret the faith of Friends and to cooperate with others in spreading the Christian message? Are you patterns, examples; do your lives preach among all sorts of people, and to them? Do you walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one?

Old Business

We are looking for a NEYM Ministry & Counsel representative from the meeting. Louisa Gray will be an "at-large" member but may not be able to make all five meetings. Deb Haviland offered to take this on.

Nominating Committee meets this Sunday to discuss gifts and leadings and then will meet again jointly with Ministry & Counsel to discuss again ways of eliciting people's skills and leadings. The quarter is having meetings on this same issue.

Barbara Foust reported for Hospitality that sign-ups for providing refreshments after meeting are hard to come by in the summer months. It was mentioned that food and drink are always available in the kitchen so that, if need be, something can always be provided.

New Business

A friend asked for some funding for several Fall Quarterly Meeting workshops. Treasurer Paul Diamond suggested that such requests could come directly to Ministry & Counsel or to him directly in lieu of a Peace & Social Concerns committee, as there are adequate unused funds in both these coffers.

Linda Cote-Small meets with a group practicing non-violent communication twice monthly in the meetinghouse and asked if this group could use the space rent free. A discussion ensued about the newest guidelines for use of the meetinghouse which are coming out with the new handbook. Ernie Foust said he attended a meeting and it is a wonderful undertaking and well worth our supporting in such a manner. Four meeting members attend these meetings, which range in size from four to ten participants. There was a sense that the meeting would not expect to charge such small groups, well represented by our membership and participating in activities which we would endorse as a meeting. The guidelines should attempt to clarify this.

Carmen was asked to comment on the July 14th day-long activities at the Indian Island project in Old Town at which we presented our \$10,000 loan to the Four Directions Development Corporation. [See her article elsewhere in this newsletter.]

The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Friday, September 16, 7 p.m., following a potluck supper at 6 p.m. All welcome.



Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little

—Edmund Burke

Solar Power for Maine Congregations

by Andy Burt

Does solar energy have a place in your congregation's commitment to environmental stewardship? Representatives from the Maine Energy Investment Corporation will offer answers to this question in a Solar for the Faithful workshop on Sunday, September 18, noon to 3:00 p.m., at Midcoast Friends meetinghouse. The meetinghouse has had a walk-through audit in preparation for the workshop. Trained solar technicians and energy experts will present the workshop using our meetinghouse as a case study. We will get real-number assessments of the cost-benefit ratio to install photovoltaics and/or solar hot water and how it might be done. Other churches in the area have been invited to attend.

Prior to the workshop, we will serve a fingerfoods buffet (local foods emphasis) for our own members and guests attending the workshop. That will begin at 11:30 and continue until noon when the workshop begins.

For more information or to volunteer to bring some finger food, contact Andy Burt at 882-6848 or adburt@gwi.net.



World Communion Day

Sunday, October 2, is World Communion Day and the Maine Council of Churches is proposing a special communion in which all the elements for the sacraments will be produced by Maine farmers. This is part of the council's Food and Faith/Soul Food project, which aims to reconnect people with the spiritual roots of food and to their farmer-neighbors.

While Friends do not practice communion in the same way that other Christian churches do, Midcoast Meeting will participate in our own way by sharing grape juice produced in Lincolnville and bread made from Aroostook County wheat during social time following Meeting for Worship. Andy Burt is providing the special refreshments for the occasion.

Another part of the council's local foods initiative is to encourage Maine households to spend at least \$10 of their weekly food budget on Maine-produced products. According to Russell Libby, executive director of Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, if every Maine household does this, we could fully support Maine's farm families. More information about this will be available later this fall.

Fall Gathering, a Family Weekend September 9, 10 & 11, 2005 Friends Camp, South China

Fall Gathering is the high point of our Quarterly year, eagerly anticipated as the opportunity for our scattered fellowship to be together and share our lives as Friends.

The theme this year is "Circles of Life": Do we live in conscious awareness that we are part of a great Circle of Life? How do we take our place in right relationship to the rest of creation? On Saturday morning at 10 am, our keynote speaker, Ruah Swenneerfelt, will lead us in the topic: Widening the Circle: Redefining "Who is my neighbor?" There will be two sessions of workshops on Saturday afternoon, including one led by Linda Cote-Small: "Exploring Our Everyday Contributions to the Earth Charter." As always, there are many special activities planned for children and teens as well. Please register by Sept. 1 in order to allow for meal planning and to minimize waste. Tom Bulger, 77 Weld Rd., Wilton, ME 04294, maoriora@hotmail.com



Tenth Anniversary of the Meetinghouse

Midcoast will be celebrating the tenth anniversary of the opening of our meetinghouse this fall. Ideas are being sought for how we should mark this anniversary. Why not attend this month's Meeting for Worship for Business and put in your ideas? Or contact clerk Jean Crawford with your thoughts, 236-4176.

September 9-11: "Beyond NO! Gandhi's Constructive Campaign and War Tax Resistance."

Annual New England Gathering of War Tax Resisters and Supporters. For those interested in exploring war tax resistance or already refusing to pay some or all of your federal income and phone taxes. Pioneer Valley Cohousing, Amherst, MA. \$45 fee includes meals and basic housing or camping. FMI: Kip Moeller, 309 W. Hawley Rd., Charlemont, MA 01339, 413-339-8778 or email: kipmoe@gmail.com.

Gifts and Leadings

by Carmen Lavertu

At this time of year in the life of the Meeting, the Nominating Committee is activated to work on allocating the responsibilities of leading and maintaining the Meeting in the coming year. Things will be rather different this year:

Since Fall Gathering a year ago, many Friends have been involved in examining the committee system that for so long has served the Society of Friends at all levels of organization. Problems have been discerned in most meetings, as we have experienced them in Midcoast: too many tasks with too few volunteers, the difficulties of setting meetings that everyone can attend, the reluctance of members to take on leadership positions, etc.

We have gathered several times to consider the problems and to hear about some new ideas on organization at Quarterly meetings, and we heard Sally and Jerry Wood's report on their experience at a Woolman Hill workshop on the subject. After a joint meeting of Ministry & Counsel and Nominating Committee, it was decided to initiate some changes in the procedure.

First, the nominations process will be called "Gifts and Leadings." The name suggests a grassroots approach. Friends will be asked to participate in personal and group listening and dialogue activities to discern how each member is led to support the Meeting and to think of other ways to structure committees (or no committees) for a more lively Meeting and effortless participation.

The goal is to have the process of discernment outlined at Meeting for Business in September. In the meantime, each of us should ask ourselves, and listen deeply, for a leading about our unique and enthusiastic way to serve.

Don't wait for a phone call offering you one or another committee assignment, but do expect to be asked to participate in a process that we hope will help each person identify his or her gifts and decide how to apply them to the life of the Meeting.

(The 2005 Nominating Committee members have become the Gifts and Leadings coordinators. They are Jean Crawford, Claire Darrow, Paul Diamond, Barbara Foust, Peter Haviland, and Carmen Lavertu.



A Personal Query

by Betsy Terrell

Can I learn to be truly free of attempting to export any agenda of my own onto others? Well meaning as I may be, can I be sure that I really know what another person needs or wants? Could I learn to be able to love with the same unconditional quality as the sun or the rain?

Ending Hunger

by Carmen Lavertu

We all are concerned about hunger in so many countries in the world, including our own, and wish we and our government would do more to address this solvable problem. We can do more by joining with other churches and religious organizations in Bread for the World Midcoast Maine. The faith-based national Bread for the World is an advocacy group that needs our help. It works mainly with organized letter-writing campaigns, urging Congress to designate foreign aid funds for eliminating the causes of disease and hunger. The Midcoast chapter has invited us to join them in this effort. All it would take is for one or more Friends to arrange for an introductory program and, if the Meeting approved, designate a willing member to take responsibility for arranging the letter-writing campaigns once or twice a year.

The information is posted on the Peace & Social Concerns board, or you can ask Carmen.



A Visit to Indian Islandcont'd fr. back cover

level of financial literacy and business skills among tribal members

- attract capital to Indian Country.

The corporation's offices are located in Orono, and the director is Susan Hammond (whose mother was born and lived on Indian Island).

A folder of the materials that were give us has been placed in the Peace and Social Concerns bookcase.

The Advices

The power of God is not used to compel us to Truth; therefore, let us renounce for ourselves the power of any person over any other and, compelling no one, let us seek to lead others to Truth through love. Let us teach by being ourselves teachable.

Friends are advised to witness to the power of Truth and justice and to foster growth of the divine community at home and abroad. While remaining faithful to our Quaker insights, and ready to share them with others, let us seek to understand the contributions made by the people of God everywhere. Whenever possible, let us seek to enter into prayer and work with the wider community of faith.

Consumerism, Part 4: Living Lightly on the Earth

by Betsy Terrell

In light of the fact that Fall Gathering this month has as its theme Circles of Life and the keynote topic is "Redefining who is my neighbor," I thought I would focus this month on some broader issues which relate to this.

In the May issue of *Friends Journal*, Gray Cox, a member of Acadia Meeting, points out that it will not be possible for everyone on earth to consume at the level that European and American cultures now do. "One convergent set of estimates suggests that the Earth's ability to function as our home can only be sustained if the typical person consumes about one-half of what the average person in the United States uses up now on an annual basis." He offers a radical solution: that we individually and as families can do our part in this equation by making a 5-year commitment to reduce our consumption by 10% a year, each year, resulting in a net reduction of 50% after 5 years. He suggests, "We can take the remainder of our income and spend it either on direct aid to those in need, on political efforts to change the world, or on investments in natural and community capital that will restore the Earth currently being destroyed." Quite a challenge, but if we DON'T reduce our consumption, how will those in the developing world even get to the level of basic necessity?

Here's an interesting vignette from a book called *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World*, by Alan Weisman: In 1966 Bogotá (capital of Colombia) was "a dignified, provincial city," with, to its west, "six hundred square miles of fertile alluvium deposited by the Rio Bogotá and its tributaries, planted in vegetables and dairy pastures. Today, nearly anywhere that this green plateau has not been subsumed by the city, the cultivation of food crops has given way to thousands of plastic-domed greenhouses [in which] ornamental flowers are propagated in chemical troughs, misted repeatedly with pesticides to ensure market perfection, then whisked daily from the nearby metropolitan airport to the United States, Europe, and Japan. The Rio Bogotá, now a chemical dump from which swimmers have been warned away until the year 2015, winds like a venomous snake through villages of flower workers who sometimes go weeks without running water, so deeply has the aquifer been drawn down to slake the demands of export-quality chrysanthemums and roses." Meanwhile, some of the richest soil in Latin America lies buried beneath these chemical greenhouses. This is but one example of how modern "first world" consumption has affected the lives of people in distant parts of the globe as well as the environment where they live.

Right Sharing of World Resources (www.rswr.org) is a Quaker organization founded in 1999. Their mission

statement says, "God calls us to the right sharing of world resources, from the burdens of materialism and poverty into the abundance of God's love, to work for equity through partnership with our sisters and brothers throughout the world." Their projects in India, Africa, and the Philippines, follow principles of "small beginnings (seed money), use of local resources (both natural and human), living off the land, maintaining sustainability, putting back into the land (recycling), building community and support, and especially inter-generational sharing." In addition to encouraging financial donations to these projects, they suggest the following steps we could all take:

- Evaluate your lifestyle: take steps to use fewer resources and to reuse and recycle more of what you do use. Encourage these practices in your meeting and community.
- Pray for Divine guidance in understanding how our focus on the material clouds our vision of God's will for us as individuals, our families, and the Religious Society of Friends; and pray that the extremes of poverty and wealth, which are genuine hindrances to right relationship with God and each other, may be reduced and that God can, therefore, be more present to all of us.

I read recently in John Woolman's journal about the unease he felt at being asked to write a bill of sale for the transfer of ownership of a slave. After some time in prayer, he refused to write the document, witnessing for the fact that he believed holding slaves to be wrong. This was at a time when many Quakers held slaves and slavery was an accepted part of daily life throughout the colonies.

This set me wondering what widely accepted elements of our culture in which I participate in my own daily life are, if closely examined, not consistent with the basic beliefs of Quakers or of Jesus' teachings? In what ways am I blinded by custom to my own inconsistent behaviors, practices that may be against my own deepest values? In what areas could I, like Woolman, decline to participate, and by so doing, give gentle but firm testimony to Truth?

Nonviolent Communication Practice Group

The Nonviolent Communication Practice Group continues to meet on the second and fourth Mondays of each month from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. at the meetinghouse. If you are interested in joining the group or checking it out, please contact Linda Coté-Small at 563-6712.

A Visit to Indian Island

by Carmen Lavertu

On a lovely summer day in July, our Meeting treasurer was invited to go to Indian Island so that Midcoast Meeting's decision to invest in The Giving Winds capital campaign could be acknowledged in a public way. I had never been to Indian Island and welcomed the opportunity to go with Paul. We were there with representatives of mainly Congregational churches in York County, hosted by the director of The Four Directions Development Project, Susan Hammond. We toured the island, visited the main public buildings, and enjoyed a delicious lunch. We were greeted and addressed by Chief James Sappier and entertained by a young women's drumming group. We also met Craig Sanborn, who is director of housing, and Mark Chavaree, attorney for Four Directions. Everyone we met was very enthusiastic for the work they are doing in providing opportunities of home ownership and self-employment in their ancestral community.

The Island

Indian Island is an actual island in the Penobscot River, connected by a bridge to Old Town. It is the home of the Penobscot Nation in Maine. The places we visited were St. Ann Church, "the oldest continuous

site of Catholic worship in New England (the present church building is the third oldest Catholic church in Maine), the community center, the attractive and recently built high school, and a new assisted-living facility.

The Project

The Giving Winds is a project of the Maine Council of Churches to raise \$1 million of investments in the economic development of the Wabanaki communities. Participation can be in the form of grants or loans. These funds will be invested in affordable housing and small businesses and will provide the matching funds needed by the Tribes to receive a federal government grant.

The Corporation

The Four Directions Development Corporation, a combined effort of the four Maine tribes, has a number of goals:

- increase home ownership among tribal members
- improve the quality of housing
- increase Native-owned businesses and raise the

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

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captainbetsy@fastmail.fm • Address changes to: Pat Spock, 729-0826, wspock@gwi.net. 10 Curtis Street, Brunswick, ME 04011