

9th Month

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

September 2009



Thanks to Jim Payne for photo of *Kristin!*

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

-- *Exodus 20:8 [NKJ]*

The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

-- *Mark 2:27 [NKJ]*

A great benefit of Sabbath keeping is that we learn to let God take care of us—not by becoming passive and lazy, but in the freedom of giving up our feeble attempts to be God in our own lives.

-- *Marva J. Dawn, Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*

### September

Sunday	Sept. 6	10 a.m. 11 a.m.	Regular Meeting for Worship Meeting for Worship, Small Pt., Morse Mountain <i>[Ed. note: Please see article in July-August newsletter.]</i> Potluck
		Rise of Meeting	
Fri.-Sun.	Sept. 11-13		*Vassalboro Qtr Fall Gathering, Friends Camp, China, ME
Sunday	September 13	8:30 a.m.	*Book Discussion Group
Saturday	September 19	2 p.m.	*Memorial for Henry Beerits
Sunday	September 20	11:15-noon 12:10-1:15 p.m.	*"How Can We Keep Our Meeting Vital?" Lead by Gifts & Leadings Monthly Meeting for Business
Sunday	September 27	8:30 a.m.	*Book Discussion Group

### October

Fri.-Sun.	October 2-4		*Creating a Culture of Peace Workshop
Tuesday	October 6	6:30-8 p.m.	*Opening Session of "Menu for Future" (continues at the same time the following three Tuesday evenings)

\*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 Rd., Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m.  
 Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Rd.  
 (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north—Miles Home Health Care building on the corner).  
 The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, .2 mile from the corner.

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**Moving? Changing your e-mail address?** *Don't forget to let us know. Please remember that when you receive the newsletter by e-mail, you save the Meeting money and you lighten our workload. To receive the newsletter by e-mail, kindly send a request to Diane Kirkman at [diane\\_kirkman@hotmail.com](mailto:diane_kirkman@hotmail.com). Thanks!*

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For newsletters, important links, & a current calendar, visit our website: [www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org](http://www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org).

## Highlights Monthly Meeting for Business—July 19, 2009

**Meetinghouse & Grounds** – Regarding memorial stones, Friends approved: All members have the opportunity to have a memorial stone on the meeting grounds, and requests from others will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Ad Hoc Committee for Memorial Stones was requested to recommend an appropriate process for requests from nonmembers and how we might include members who passed away previously. A Friend suggested the meeting create a pamphlet explaining our memorial-stone policy. Regarding the new swing set, for greater safety in the area, it was suggested 3 to 4 inches of mulch be laid down. Rachel McGinness will research possibilities for a plaque in appreciation of donor Charlotte Ritter.

**Ministry & Counsel** – The committee feels a strong need to fill out its membership and is taking steps to effect this. It plans a new Quakerism 101 series in the fall. It is working to strengthen the greeting process.

**Religious Education** – The committee has decided it is unable to offer regular First Day School during the summer. However, if children arrive at meeting, Friends may volunteer care.

The **next meeting for business will take place Sunday, September 20**, at the rise of meeting for worship. All are welcome. Please bring a bag lunch. The entire pending minutes of the July session are available at the Meeting website [www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org](http://www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org) and on the bulletin board at the meetinghouse.

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### *QUERIES*

**STEWARDSHIP**--Do you revere all life and the splendor of God's continuing creation? Do you try to protect the natural environment and its creatures against abuse and harmful exploitation? Do you regard your possessions as given to you in trust, and do you part with them freely to meet the needs of others? Are you frugal in your personal life and committed to the just distribution of the world's resources?

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**Creating a Culture of Peace**, a weekend workshop sponsored by AVP-Maine (Alternatives to Violence Project), will be offered at the meetinghouse the weekend of October 2-4, 2009 (Friday, 7-9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, 12:30-5 p.m.).

AVP offers experiential workshops that empower people to lead nonviolent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community building, cooperation, creative conflict resolution, and trust. Founded by Quakers and inmates at Greenhaven Prison in New York and based on the belief that everyone has an inborn power for peace, AVP workshops draw participants and trainers from all religions, races, and walks of life. AVP helps us explore the power we all have to change hostility and destructiveness into cooperation, community, and justice.

Enjoy a hands-on, activity-based experience where you'll connect deeply with others, laugh, share, and listen while learning ways to reduce conflict in your world, your classroom, your family, or your workplace. **TAKE NO NOTES**--come prepared to discover new ways of approaching disagreement.

Linda Coté-Small will be joined by Glenn Plyler of Wiscasset to facilitate this workshop.

**QUESTIONS and to REGISTER:** Please call 207-563-6712. For more information about AVP, visit [www.AVPUSA.org](http://www.AVPUSA.org).

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### **MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR HENRY BEERITS**

Henry Beerits, a beloved member of our meeting, died peacefully on July 27, 2009, at Cove's Edge Nursing Facility in Damariscotta. He was 97 years old and a vital part of the Meeting since the late '70s, when he and Janet moved to Sheepscot. He will be remembered for his wisdom and his caring for both the Meeting and the larger community. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, September 19, at 2 p.m., at the meetinghouse with a reception afterwards in the social room. Contributions of finger food are welcomed. Please get in touch with Anne Spencer (443-3275) if you are able to help.

**ADVICES: Stewardship:** Friends are advised to consider our possessions as God's gifts, entrusted to us for responsible use. Let us free our time and our abilities to be able to follow the leadings of the Spirit. Let us cherish the beauty and variety of the world. Friends are urged to speak out boldly against the destruction of the world's resources and the difficulties that destruction prepares for the future generations. Let us guard against waste and resist our extravagant consumption, which contributes to inequities and impoverishment of life in our own and other societies. Let us show a loving consideration for all God's creatures. Let kindness know no limits.

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### ***VQM FALL GATHERING--September 11-13: What Do We Mean By the Spirit?***

The topic of this year's Fall Gathering was suggested by one the Young Friend members of the Planning Committee. We are excited by the opportunity to come together throughout the weekend and explore what we mean by the Spirit. The weekend starts with a Friday night program in which small groups of all ages will make collages to explore their understanding of the Spirit. The theme will continue through the workshops and worship times on Saturday and Sunday and conclude with small group discussions and reflections as the Spirit leads us.

It is a special time: we gather together in a relaxed setting to catch up with old friends, make new friends, and have fun together. There is a wonderful program for young Friends, and we hope you'll consider joining in for one day or more. For more information, you can find brochures on the credenza or speak to either Carmen Lavertu ([lavertu@prexar.com](mailto:lavertu@prexar.com) / 354-9556) or Deb Haviland ([haviland@midcoast.com](mailto:haviland@midcoast.com) / 354-8714).

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### ***WORSHIP-SHARING ON SEPTEMBER 20***

***"How Can We Keep Our Meeting Vital?"***

On Sunday, September 20, we will ponder this question at a worship-sharing from 11:15 to noon, shortly after the usual Sunday worship.

The Gifts & Leading Committee has been considering how to go about the process of matching individuals to the work that is needed by our meeting. There is a sense that there is more work to be done than there are persons to do the work, so we are asking everyone to give some thought to what is essential to keep the meeting vital. In the worship-sharing format, we will ask this question and sit in silence to see what arises--and share.

Gifts & Leadings will take notes and use the worship information gathered to guide its work for this fall.

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**"Living into Jubilee,"** the theme of the New England Yearly Meeting Annual Sessions continues for two years. Monthly meetings are urged to develop a process of "applied contemplation" in studying the major prophetic teachings and to engage in worship-sharing meetings to seek meaningful interpretations of "Jubilee" (and "Sabbath") in our lives.

While we recognize the personal need we all have to diminish the busyness of our lives, to observe Sabbath, not only in Meeting for Worship, but every day, the larger question of our corporate life is radically challenged by the fundamental Mosaic law of Jubilee. I have sensed a primary concern in our Meeting and other Friends for the earth and all living things. Addressing this concern, I found the Bible hour taught by Eden Grace at Bryant College the most powerful and instructive part of Sessions for me this year. I would like our Meeting to have this focus for our programs and worship-sharing in the coming year. We have already planned book discussions on *Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy*.

To start with the Bible, the readings Eden Grace suggested are Ex. 23:10-12, Lev. 25, and Luke 4:26-30--and that's only a start. (There will be tapes available for all four lessons.) Much preached but little observed, the law of Jubilee given to our Judeo-Christian ancestors seems to me the most relevant biblical idea for the Earth crisis we now face. Let's seek its meaning for our time.

--Carmen Lavertu

## Menu for the Future

*"Food is our common ground, our universal experience."  
--James Beard*

Join us for a four-session course exploring the connection between food and sustainability Tuesdays, October 6, 13, 20, and 27 at 6:30-8 p.m. at the meetinghouse.

### Discussion Course Goals:

- To explore food systems and their impacts on culture, society, and ecological systems.
- To gain insight into agricultural and individual practices that promote personal and ecological well-being.
- To consider your role in creating or supporting sustainable food systems.

The course meets weekly to discuss readings from Northwest Earth Institute's *Menu for the Future* course book. This study guide (about 100 pages long) contains a diverse collection of short essays, articles, and book excerpts organized around weekly themes designed to create lively discussion. Discussion questions and a suggested meeting format are included in each study guide. The format encourages:

- Trust, respect, and a sense of community among group members.
- Participants to seek personal clarity without group consensus.
- The creation of a supportive environment for personal change.
- Evaluation of personal lifestyle choices and subsequent effects on the natural world.

Call 563-6712 with questions or by September 22 to register. Although the course is free, the study guides are necessary and cost \$20. You will receive the guide in advance to prepare for the first class. This course is sponsored by the Peace Center.

## Book Discussion Group in September

by George Waldman

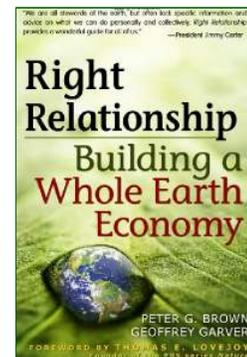
*Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy* addresses the growing incoherence between human economy and the integrity of the earth's ecological and social systems which results in increasing destruction of the natural world and growing, sometimes lethal, tensions between rich and poor.

Authors Peter Brown and Geoffrey Garver pose five basic questions:

- What is an economy for?
- How does it work?
- How big is too big?
- What's fair?
- How can it be governed?

They propose new answers that combine an acute awareness of ecological limits with a fundamental focus on fairness and a concern with the spiritual and material well-being of the human race. They also outline what each of us can do to enable life's commonwealth while respecting the integrity, resilience, and beauty of human and natural communities.

Copies of the book, published by Berret-Koehler, may still be available from Carmen Lavertu ([clavertu@gmail.com](mailto:clavertu@gmail.com)). Discussion sessions for September are scheduled for the second and fourth Sundays at 8:30 a.m. at the meetinghouse. (A suggestion that they be moved to later in the day will be raised at the September business meeting.)



## PACIFISM SEMINAR

This fall I will be conducting two sessions of the "PACIFISM SEMINAR: Is There a Good War?" One starts September 21, and will be held in Waldoboro, on Mondays from 1 to 3 p.m. To register for this session, please visit [www.coastalseniorcollege.org](http://www.coastalseniorcollege.org) or call 800-286-1594. The other session will be at the Hutchinson Center in Belfast on Thursdays, from 1 to 3 p.m., for six meetings, starting on September 17. For further details on the Belfast session or to register, please visit [www.belfastseniorcollege.org](http://www.belfastseniorcollege.org) or call 338-8033.

The spring session of the seminar was a great joy. I believe I have developed a good process for meaningful discussion and learning. The plan/subjects are never final because the seminar follows the interests and concerns of the participants, but I have a study guide and suggested readings (books and Internet) to send on request. I would love to have Friends participating in the seminar.

--Carmen Lavertu ([clavertu@gmail.com](mailto:clavertu@gmail.com) or 354-9556)

~A Letter from Holly Baldwin~



After many months of Quaker process, various letters, meetings for business, and even a clearness committee, I am now officially a member at Fresh Pond Friends Meeting. I was sad to relinquish my affiliation with Midcoast. However, it feels very good to have a meeting that I can attend often and whose work I can contribute to in an ongoing way and be a member of. It feels in right order.

Midcoast remains near and dear to my heart. I miss you all and think of you often. I hope to be back for a visit in the next several weeks--it has been a very long time since I've been able to worship with you all.

Here at BHFH, life is good. I have two new staff who are excited about their work and valuable help to me and the community. The residential community is strong and stable. The Board and corporation are revitalizing their work by recruiting new members and creating a strategic plan. We are planning a winter speaker series on Wealth/Economy/Community. We're looking for names of Friends to speak, so if you have any to suggest, do let me know.

And of course, if you find yourself in Boston, I would love to show you the house! We have dinner Sunday through Thursday nights, I'm here for a cup of tea most of the time, and of course we have the bed-and-breakfast rooms if you are looking for that kind of accommodation.

Much love to you all,

Holly

•Beacon Hill Friends House, 617-777-5426, [baldwin.holly@gmail.com](mailto:baldwin.holly@gmail.com), [hbaldwin@bhfh.org](http://hbaldwin@bhfh.org)•

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**AFGHANS FOR AFGHANS**

by Carmen Lavertu

I brought my knitting to Yearly Meeting Sessions for the first time this year, inspired by Aggie Mitchkoski, a wonderful Friend and colleague on the Peace & Social Concerns Committee. Aggie brought an AFSC project, Afghans for Afghans, that her meeting, the Upper Valley Worship Group in Greenfield (MA), has adopted.

Aggie set up an attractive display with instructions and baskets of wool in every imaginable color. It was a busy spot every day, and we were pleasantly surprised to engage so many Friends, especially young girls and men who came to learn to crochet. The growing piles of squares were very impressive.

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**From the Hospitality Committee:** *We will be putting up a sign-up list in early September for Friendly 8 get-togethers. Please think about whether you would like to meet in the homes of other Friends in your local area or farther afield, if you prefer to meet for lunch or dinner, and if you would prefer weekends or a weekday. We hope to form the groups in September, so the gatherings can begin in October.*

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**Nancy Booth--A Profile in Time**

*It has taken a few years for Nancy to agree to talk about her life and to have her profile written, and it has taken me a few years to put it together. I met with her four times in the spring of 2007 and feel as though I have been given a view into the spirit and life of an amazing, articulate woman who cares deeply for her family, her friends and the world she lives in. We sat in her sunny living room, which holds many reminders of her life. Foremost are the hooked rugs that her mother Anne Peck Booth created in the later years of her life.*

--Deborah Haviland, July 2009

Nancy was born Anne Curtis Booth on May 18, 1922. She has just recently celebrated her 87th birthday and loves to take walks with her dog Maggie and to hike in the woods, enjoying the natural world around her. Her father, Samuel B. Booth was from Germantown in Philadelphia, was reared in the Episcopal Church, and became an Episcopal priest. Nancy's

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parents were distantly related, but the families had not been in touch. Samuel and Anna met in New Mexico, where they were staying at the same hotel. It was love at first sight; Sam was still at Harvard and Anna was eighteen years old. They were engaged five years and married in September 1910. His first parish was in Nampa, Idaho, where their son Robert was born in 1912, and then the family went on to Kensington, Pennsylvania. It was the time of WWI and Nancy's father signed up as a chaplain for American forces in France to minister to the dead and dying. "I'll never forget the descriptions. He crawled right out to the front lines." When he returned from the war, he and Anna went to a mission farm in Wrightstown, Pennsylvania, where he ministered to all the area farms and preached in a chapel built from an old sheep barn. Their family grew and prospered. Nancy, the fourth of six children, had three sisters and two brothers.

In 1925 Nancy's father was called to be Bishop of Vermont and was consecrated that year. His vision and commitment were highly valued by the church. Nancy remembers moving to a big house in Burlington, which was way outside town, on fifty acres of church property on Lake Champlain. Nancy's eyes lit up as she spoke of the almost unlimited freedom to explore that she and her siblings enjoyed, a life of "benign neglect," with her parents trusting them completely and the kids enjoying themselves tremendously. They were home schooled by their mother using the Calvert School Program. Nancy credits any recall of mythology and ancient history to those years.

In 1935, from January to May, the family went to Italy, where Nancy's father was at the American Church in Florence and the four younger children went to an Italian convent school. One strong memory of that time for Nancy was Mussolini and the Black Shirts. In June, soon after they returned, her father died of pneumonia. Nancy was thirteen. Her father collapsed in the pulpit and was buried on Anna's birthday. Anna was left with six children--two in college, Robert at the University of Pennsylvania and Katharine at Vassar, and four at home. For a year, the family was able to live in another building on the church property with a pension and some financial assistance from Anna's family helping them make ends meet.

In 1936, they moved to Peterboro, New Hampshire, and Nancy attended a "regular" school for the first time: she attended Peterboro High School for one year in ninth grade and then was sent to an Episcopal boarding school in Mendham, New Jersey, for two years. (Her oldest friend from that school is Sister Marjories, now a nun who heads a convent in Haiti.) The family moved to Damariscotta Mills, Maine, in 1938, where Nancy graduated from Lincoln Academy. In 1940, she went to Boston to Leslie College, a teacher training school, moving into communal living quarters on Beacon Hill and commuting to college to study elementary education. She graduated with a diploma and then went to New York City to Teachers' College at Columbia for two and a half years. This was during WW II, and she lived at The International House on Riverside Drive. Nancy vividly remembers going to an open house at the home of Reinhold Niebuhr on April 14, 1945, when Franklin Roosevelt died. "Word got out that he was going to speak at his house and a friend told me we could go. So we went and it was wall-to-wall students. It was unforgettable to listen to this wise man, Niebuhr, comment on a great man [FDR] at this moment in history."

By the fall of 1945, Nancy was ready for a job! Always loving adventure, she took the train called the Golden Goose to Golden, Colorado, and was thrilled to see her first Western bird and the Rocky Mountains. The school year had already started, and after an interview she was offered the job of teaching second grade. She had two hours to make up her mind. When she said yes, she was told she would start at 1 p.m. What a challenge she took on! She roomed with a family on a ranch the first year and remembers the school janitor (an old miner) who had many stories. She stayed two years, and during that time she taught, learned to ride horses, drove kids to school--and her world became as big as the expanse of Colorado. It was the beginning of her love affair with mountains and a new--and priceless--experience. A good friend who was an avid hiker started her on mountain climbing on May 15: "It was snowing all day and we drove up and hiked down--saddle shoes, no hat, no mittens, no preparation, no equipment. Not a good way to start in the mountains." Gradually she learned the right and wrong way and has loved the mountains ever since.

She went home to Maine in the summers, and in 1947 she decided to move back to New York City to get a master's in education at Columbia. She lived with a family and received room and board in exchange for helping with the children. After that, she joined the staff at Plymouth State Teachers College in New Hampshire and taught second grade in the public schools there for two years.

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In the mid-1950s, with her mother was still in Damariscotta Mills, Nancy decided to go back home. She started a nursery school, got it well established at St. Andrews Parish, and then decided to head back to Boston, where she taught second grade in the Newton public schools. At this time, she started attending Friends Meeting in Cambridge and began to assess her life. She decided to move to Burlington, Vermont, to teach in the public school there. She attended to Burlington Friends Meeting, feeling immediately at home. It was a strong meeting with wonderful energy, and she applied for membership, but she was not able to stay in Vermont; in February 1962, her second year there, her sister Ellen died unexpectedly, and Nancy returned to Maine.

Nancy has had close relationships with her siblings, especially her older brother Bob. Her brother Sam died in 1956, and her brother Bob and sister Katherine died within a couple of years of each other in the late 1990s. She and her sister Maddy, who lives in Connecticut, remain. She is very fond of her many nieces and nephews, and they are very supportive.

When she returned in 1962, Nancy taught for a few years in Newcastle as a teaching principal. Chouteau and Stuart Chapin had just moved to the area and become a part of the Quaker meeting, where they had an immediate affinity. With a few others, they were involved in an Arts Program called Treasure Hunt, which traveled around to the schools in the Midcoast area. This successful federal grant to the arts was renewed for three years, and then the towns picked up the expense so the program could continue. The program brought art, theatre, and music together--with Nancy heading up the art section--and later became the Volunteer Teachers Research Center, which invited retired, informed people to work in the schools. Nancy put her heart into this project, an educational theory way ahead of its time.

Nancy's mother, Anna, died in 1981 at 102, and in 1983 Nancy bought the house in Newcastle on High Street where she still lives. The house came along at the right time, and Nancy was able to remodel it with a third-floor apartment, which she had always rented.

Developing breast cancer in 1987 was an emotional shock. She firmly believed in holistic medicine, and her heart said, "I don't want chemo; I have to be a part of my own healing." She followed a macrobiotic diet for a year and a half and recovered successfully. To celebrate, her sister Katherine took her on a wonderful trip to New Zealand.

Nancy has always been active with the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Sierra Club. When she was fifty years old, she was in Zurich--"Why not stay over and climb the Matterhorn!"--and she knew that she would never have that opportunity again. The guide was really "a bear" on the way up as they scaled with a rope and cut steps in the ice. But "when the guide was such a sweetheart on the way down," she realized "he had to be gruff to determine if [she] could do it." Having left at 4 a.m., they returned by noon!

She has been very involved in co-housing possibilities in the area since the 1980s. In early 1990, suggestions were made to build a co-housing project in connection with the Friends meetinghouse since at that time Midcoast Meeting was beginning to consider building a permanent home. However, Friends decided not to wait for a joint project and to focus on a meetinghouse. More recently she was part of a group that purchased land in Edgcomb and had plans that looked feasible. Unfortunately, the town never understood the concept. This has been a big disappointment, but Nancy has been able to accept that it wasn't meant to be. She is very grateful to be able to stay in her home and feels lucky to have that space.

Politics have always played an important part in her life. She belongs to the Lincoln County Democrats and works for the causes she believes in. When the Meeting became involved with Bridges for Peace, she was a strong supporter. She is a longtime member of the Peace & Social Concerns Committee of Midcoast Meeting and has always enthusiastically supported its many programs. A special concern right now is how to raise funds for Haiti, where so much is needed.

High points in her life include climbing the Matterhorn, having special friendships, and hiking in the Western US, Canada, and Europe. She's a lifetime member of the Appalachian Mountain Club

Living with her mother in Anna's later years allowed Nancy to see the evolution of her mother's art and to see an artist fulfilled. Nancy lives with that memory and in turn supports whole-heartedly her great nieces and nephews as they follow their dreams.

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Two and a half years ago, Nancy had a fall and broke a hip as she returned from a walk. A full recovery necessitated living on the first floor of her home for two months and accepting help and support. (It also gave her time to visit with me!) When she saw the doctor right after her fall, she told him she'd do anything as long as she was well enough by May

Nancy, at eighty-seven, is concerned with our nation's problems and the peace effort. She is active in Midcoast Meeting and involved with the Meeting's priorities. She has always had an ability to reach out to people and to express deeply how she feels. We leave her walking in the woods with Maggie, making plans for a trip with a friend, working at the local Food Bank, or at home, getting wood for the fire, sitting on the deck in the summer reading, or perhaps meditating on how much life as given her. We, her friends, may meditate on how much her love and faith have given to our Meeting.

MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING OF FRIENDS, P.O. Box 714, Damariscotta, ME 04543, Co-Clerks: Karen Cadbury, 230-0436, and Deborah Haviland, 354-8714; Recording Clerk: Jean Crawford, 236-4176; Treasurer: Paul Diamond, 236-0283. Newsletter--September, 2009, Vol 21, No. 9. Published every month but August. Editing/design: Diane Kirkman, 236-9078, diane\_kirkman@hotmail.com, 17 Grove St., Camden, ME 04843. Address changes: Pat Spock, 729-0826, wspock@gwinet, 10 Curtis St., Brunswick, ME 04011. Web: Guy Marsden, 443-8942, guy@artec.net, 61 Delano Rd., Woolwich, ME 04579.