



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

December

Saturday	December 3		Friends Committee on Maine Public Policy meeting, call Ernie Foust (582-8615) if interested
Sunday	December 4	rise of worship	Potluck - Holly Baldwin reports on WGYF (World Gathering of Young Friends)
Thursday	December 8	5:30 pm	Ministry & Counsel meeting
Sunday	December 11	Noon	Monthly Meeting for Worship for Business. Bag lunch.
Sunday	December 18	rise of worship	Impromptu Christmas party?
Sunday	January 1	during worship	New Year's Day candle lighting and worship sharing

* 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.

The Quaker Motto Calendar: A Gift from the Havilands

For a number of years Peter and Deborah Haviland have enjoyed giving family and friends the Quaker Motto Calendar at Christmas. Again this year, Pete and Deb would like to spread their gift to all members and attenders of Midcoast Meeting. Calendars will be on the credenza in early December. Please take one and enjoy it, with love and wishes for a joyous and peaceful year 2006.

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

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.

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

Visit www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

The Entirely Unofficial **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 11th month of 2005

based on draft minutes by Rob Patterson

Gifts & Leadings

There was no formal report, but Carmen Lavertu indicated that the group of six are reaching out to Meeting members, and in the meantime, she asks that folks stay on their respective committees until the process is completed. The pizza night meeting was not well attended.

Worthy Needs

The Meeting's budget includes \$1,000 to dispense to various causes of interest to Meeting members. We have until May, the end of our fiscal year, to decide on recipients. Suggestions included Pakistani relief and the recently established Charitable Fuel Fund, which Governor Balldaci has championed as a way to help our citizens with their heating fuel costs this winter. A minimum \$250 was approved for Pakistani earthquake relief. It was also suggested that we split the funds 50/50 between the two causes; one local and one international. Andy Burt, Paul Diamond and Nancy Booth will make the decision on behalf of the Meeting.

Sanctuary

Carmen Lavertu will research efforts within the quarter to assist war resisters. The Meeting is unable to house resisters but might assist in other ways, such as organizing their hosting in Friends' homes.

Quarterly Meeting

Carmen Lavertu reported. She and Deb Haviland attended the meeting of Quarterly Ministry & Counsel on Friday night, November 4. They are seeking representatives for the planning of the 2006 Fall Gathering. It entails three half-day meetings in Belfast during the year. Carmen noted that there was very good Quaker process at both the Ministry & Counsel and the Business Meeting. The topic of this quarterly meeting was Peace Ministry. It was noted that several meetings are having struggles regarding their Peace & Social Concerns issues. The next quarterly meeting will be in February at Eggmoggin Meeting.

Religious Education

For the committee, Sarah Ewing suggested that First Day School be held on the first and third Sundays of

Refreshments

First Day refreshments are available at the rise of meeting even if no one has signed up to provide something special on a particular day. There is a box of food—cookies, crackers, banana chips and other light snacks—in the hall storage closet. There is coffee in the freezer and tea bags in the cupboard over the sink. Cans of juice concentrate are in the freezer. Anyone who feels so moved can make a pot of coffee and mix a pitcher of juice.

the month from now on. It would be better to have a stronger part-time program than a weak full-time one. It was agreed, and the change will be made in all relevant publications and on the Web site. It is hoped that Friends will volunteer to lead children who attend on First Days when there is no formal program.

Meetinghouse & Grounds

Claire Darrow and Steve Gorry have done a great job and deserve our thanks. Part of the success, said Claire, was probably due to phone call reminders to all committee members just ahead of meetings.

An energy audit was recently completed, and it was determined that we are using 25% of the energy typically used by a building the size of the meetinghouse. Andy Burt reported that there are presently incentives for installing solar units, and in our continuing effort to be better stewards, perhaps we should consider doing some solar power installation. Paul Diamond mentioned that the \$180 annual electric bill cannot justify the investment on economic considerations; however, a desire to support the movement away from fossil fuel dependency and other considerations make it worth discussing.

A local women's spirituality group's request to rent the meetinghouse for regular gatherings was discussed. Some of their weekly meetings would conflict with CONA's use of the premises. The fact that we are in flux with regard to our rental policies was mentioned. Paul Diamond has drafted a proposed policy and has given it to Meetinghouse & Grounds for their consideration. Given the fact that we have not arrived at a new policy and rental rates, and the fact that some of their meeting times would conflict with that of another organization already using the building, it was decided that we should decline the request for the present and redouble our efforts to arrive at a comprehensive rental policy.

Holiday Observances

It seems doubtful that we will have a Christmas party this year. There are so few children in the meeting community at present and we are having a celebration on the 20th of November for our anniversary. The 18th of December is available for some sort of gathering if someone is led to be the catalyst! Since New Year's Day falls on a Sunday, it was agreed that we would have our traditional candle lighting and worship sharing at Meeting for Worship that day.

The next Monthly Meeting for Business will be Sunday, December 11, at the rise of meeting. A brown bag lunch is suggested. *All are welcome to attend.*

Dancing with George

On a beautiful, bright, sunny fall day
A celebrating day
I went to a party
For my friend George

A clever, artistic man is he
With talents known from sea to sea

Ninety is a fine, fine age
An achievement recorded on life's page

Family and friends all came together
To celebrate his life, regardless of the weather

After feasting and cake there was music and singing
The room was buzzing, the rafters ringing

George loves to dance and took to the floor
He danced many a song and then some more

The height of my day came when I dared
To ask for a dance to be shared
With my friend George

With friends all watching we two-stepped and spun
The strong nonagenarian was having fun

The music was lilting, a fine dancer was he,
I felt so happy, so open, so free
Dancing with my friend George

I wrote this poem after celebrating George Sparks's 90th birthday with him, his family, and friends at Schooner Cove in Damariscotta on Saturday October 22, 2005. It was a wonderful occasion and I wanted to share my memories with George and others.

—Deborah Haviland

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?

Book Group, Anyone?

Is anyone interested in having a book discussion group? The books to be read would be chosen by those attending. The format would be dictated by the book and participants. Please contact Sally Wood, 633-7461, mainewoods@gwi.net.

Friendly 8s Goes Local

Friendly 8s groups have been organized by area this year. Contact people are Carolyn Miller: downeast, Nancy Booth: middle, and Sally Wood: "down"west. If you missed the sign-up and would like to gather with friends in your area for a meal and fellowship once a month, please contact your area coordinator.

Request from VQM

Friends, at Quarterly Meeting on November 5 we were charged with discerning membership for a new Intergenerational Spiritual Education committee. Please hold this need in prayer and consider whether you might be led to serve on this committee. Contact Maggie Edmondson: edmondso@ctel.net.

Kheer Recipe

Per several requests, here's the recipe for the South Asian rice pudding known as "kheer" that Todd Garth, Laura Zylstra, and Andrew Jilani brought to the meetinghouse anniversary potluck.

- 4 cup milk
- ¼ cup basmati rice
- 1 Tbs blanched almonds, slivered (I've also used chopped pistachio)
- 1 tsp cardamom seeds (or powder)
- saffron (a few strands)
- 1 tsp raisins (or currants)
- ⅓ cup sugar

Wash/soak rice for an hour.

Dissolve saffron in warm milk and set aside

Carefully bring milk to boil, stir constantly if not using a double boiler.

Add rice (stir constantly so rice doesn't stick); reduce heat and simmer until rice is cooked and milk thickens.

Stir in sugar (and cardamom seeds, if using seeds)

Stir in raisins, almonds (and cardamom powder if using powder); stir in saffron-infused milk

Serve warm or cold—add a bit of additional milk if needed to create creamy texture.

Thanks

Natalie Wriggins wishes to thank everyone from the Meeting for their care and concern during her recent illness. She feels and deeply appreciates the love and attention of the Meeting community.

Holiday Giving

By Betsy Terrell

As we enter the holiday season, we have a wonderful opportunity to examine our deeply held values and how our lives do or do not reflect them. We live in a nation of excess, and this time of the year our culture has a tradition of acting with even more excess than our already excessive norm. The alternative-gifts fair recently held in Damariscotta offered alternatives to traditional gift giving. Here are some ideas in the same spirit:

- Heifer Project: This is the organization which has benefitted from the Christmas project done by Meeting children for a number of years. Its mission includes helping hungry families to feed themselves. Giving to Heifer means giving someone a permanent victory over hunger, poverty, and environmental degradation. www.heifer.org.
- Support the AIDS orphanage in Kakamega, Africa: "A grassroots effort to help children whose parents have died of AIDS and related diseases, it is an orphanage, a feeding program, and it provides educational sponsorships for orphans so they can go to school. It is run by Kenyan Quaker women of the USFW (United Society of Friends Women, Kakamega). www.friendsofkakamega.org/USA. Contact info: Friends of Kakamega, 51 Hunter Rd, Freeport, ME 04032, 207-865-3768.

- Give the gift of time; for example, offer to babysit so a young couple can have some time alone.
- Give a homemade gift, thus not adding to the consumption machine.
- Giving a share in a local CSA (Consumer Supported Agriculture) assists a local farm family and provides wonderful, fresh local food to someone. Find info at: www.csacenter.org/movement.html and www.getrealgetmaine.com/buy/csa_farms.html
- Most radical of all, consider making a pledge to begin in 2006 to put into action the idea suggested by Gray Cox of Acadia Meeting—a 5-year commitment to reduce consumption by 10% a year each year, resulting in a net reduction of 50% after 5 years. He came up with this idea after reading that Earth's ability to function as our home can only be sustained if the typical person consumes on an annual basis about one-half of what the average person in the United States uses now.

Finally, a quote from Thomas Merton: "Our real journey in life is interior; it is a matter of growth, deepening, and of an ever greater surrender to the creative action of love and grace in our hearts. Never was it more necessary for us to respond to that action."

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Midcoast Meeting of Friends

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