

FMW Newsletter, 6.2016

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Minutes

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

May 2016

Queries

Do you live in accordance with your spiritual convictions? Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs and in service to society? Do you practice simplicity in speech, dress and manner of living, avoiding wasteful consumption? Are you watchful that your possessions do not rule you? Do you strive to be truthful at all times, avoiding judicial oaths?

Do you strive to develop your physical, emotional and mental capacities toward reaching your Divinely given potential? Do you cultivate healthful and moderate habits, avoiding the hazards of drugs, intoxicants, and over-indulgence generally? Do you try to direct such emotions as anger and fear in creative ways?

Advices

Self-indulgent habits and luxurious living dull our awareness and make us insensitive to the needs of others and the leading of the Spirit. Ostentation and extravagant expenditure should not be a part of Friends' lives. Friends should be particularly aware of this in planning marriages, funerals, social gatherings or public occasions. True simplicity does not consist of particular forms or the absence of grace, symmetry and beauty, but of avoiding over-indulgence, maintaining humility of spirit, and keeping material surroundings in proportion to human needs. - BYM Faith and Practice

Voices

Some among us have a clear sense of what is right and wrong – for themselves personally if not for everyone else. They have a reassuring certitude and steadiness, which can serve as a reference point by which others may navigate. There are others who live in a state of uncertainty, constantly re-thinking their responses to changing circumstances, trying to hold onto what seems fundamental but impelled to reinterpret, often even unsure where lies the boundary between the fundamental and the interpretation...

Please be patient, those of you who have found a rock to stand on, with those of us who haven't and with those of us *who are not even looking for one*. We live on the wave's edge, where sea, sand and sky are all mixed up together: we are tossed head over heels in the surf, catching only occasional glimpses of any fixed horizon. Some of us stay there from choice because it is exciting and it *feels like the right place to be*.

- Philip Rack, 1979

2016/5-1 Welcome of Visitors

Meeting for Business opened at 12:20 pm with 18 Friends present. Friends welcomed Justin Kwang, Liz Kane, Maggie Dorr, Michael Wood from Indiana Yearly Meeting, and Dana Connors as a first time attenders to our Meeting for Business.

2016/3-2 Clerk's Report

- The clerks were introduced and Friends were reminded to speak clearly into the microphone so that all can hear.
- The Meeting will continue its discernment regarding alcohol policy – 20 minutes of open discussion.
- The presiding clerk has asked an ad hoc group to discuss Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Faith and Practice and provide some feedback on our behalf to BYM. Members of that group are Malachy Kilbride, Patty Murphy and Joe Izzo.
- The Spiritual State of the Meeting has been delayed, but we will look forward to receiving the first draft at June Meeting for Business.

- We are trying a different arrangement of the benches to see if it affects acoustics, and are eager for feedback. Friends may also be interested to learn that Property and Ministry and Worship intend to meet soon to discuss more thoroughly options for improving acoustics and then come to Meeting for Business with a coherent strategy. If we decide to try one of the more expensive options, we may need Meeting discernment.
- Our teens are starting to hear from and make decisions about colleges. Lizzie Wiggins has chosen Haverford and Nathan Gale (son of Martha Willcox) will be going to Case Western Reserve.
- Basil Kiwan has taken some photos of Friends to add to our Photo board. They turned out beautifully. He's now taking an extra class in portraiture, and plans to bring his camera back here in June to take more photos. The date will be announced in advance.
- Now that we have a beautifully refinished cork floor in the Meeting, property manager Ken Orvis has turned his attention to the rest of the Meeting Room. It was thoroughly cleaned (including a super-vacuuming of the cushions, to help alleviate some of the allergy-inducing dust), and they are refreshing the beautiful black walnut paneling on the walls.
- Merry Pearlstein has been equally focused on Quaker House Living Room and pass-through room, curating the bookshelves, adding furniture, and generally improving the space. One direct result is that we're charging a bit more for the space in event rentals.
- Our tenant Tostan has let us know that they will be leaving at the end of the month. Most of their staff is now in Dakar, so they can no longer justify the space. Please let Ken or the Property Committee know of any groups that may be looking for office space.
- J.E. McNeil and Debby Churchman had fun recovering five of the seven bentwood chairs, now in the Decatur Place Room. The chairs now look much better and are more cushioned.
- We are in the process of redecorating the Administrative Secretary's office. In the process, we're going through a lot of files and getting rid of things that should have been tossed years ago, including 3 ancient computers. Neil Froemming cleaned these up and donated them to a group which gives them to kids in the D.C. public schools. Let the office know if you're looking for filing cabinets—we will have some available in the next week.
- Anne Kendall, clerk of the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund Committee reported that we have received more than sixty applications, which we are processing. Our interviews are at the end of June.
- Special thanks are given to our office administrator Debby Churchman for all that she has handled in the recent months with grace and humor.

Major items

2016/5-4 Membership Committee

Gray Hadley, member of Membership Committee, brought forward for the first time the request for membership of Mary Melchior. Mary wrote about her thirty years of attending FMW as an attender even though she was educated in Quaker schools and had several relatives who still used the “thee” and “thou.” But even with years of connection she drifted away as life and children pulled her away. But at her drumming circle she heard a message about the Light and realized how much she missed Friends.

This request will lie over until the next Meeting as is our custom.

2016/5-5 Proposed Budget

Jim Bell made the first presentation of the proposed Meeting budget for FY 2017. A summarized version is attached with a full version available on the Meeting webpage. He acknowledged the work of Laurie Wilner and Ed Hustead.

This budget is driven by the contributions we receive from people in the FMW community. Since 2012 the contributions have been going down. Once we had \$240K in contributions. Now contributions are expected to be \$190K. This resulted in reductions in what we can do. In particular we have reduced our support for several causes including FNCL, AFSC, BYM camping program, William Penn House, Mary Jane Simpson scholarship, and SOME. FY 2016's figures show that at this time we project a deficit of \$13,000. This is very difficult.

We projected \$124k rental income but with Tostan leaving we had to reduce that amount by \$5,000 assuming it will take at least a month to get new tenants.

Eventually we will want to go to the banks to borrow money to pay for renovations. How will declining budgets allow us to borrow what we need?

If we cannot meet the budget next year the committee will be asking us to draw down on our reserves in Friends Fiduciary Corporation and to cut other line items

A member suggested we give a really big party or sale to raise money. An attender asked about the in-kind contributions in relation with a capital campaign. Perhaps an effort should be made to look for matching contributions from corporations as was done at All Souls Church Unitarian?

The administrator noted that we have to invest in furniture to rent out space.

If things improve, budget items can be reinstated.

A Friend recommended we look at what other churches and schools do to raise money and what obstacles we might face.

Jim Bell noted that only twenty-five people were here even though we theoretically have about 200 members.

A Friend asked how much will be lost in rent. The current expectation is \$5k per month. We also lost an event rental tenant which may be a \$50k loss per year. Staff has done a good job renting the space but tenants come and go. The Friend noted that an organization she is connected with has reserves, which help with bank loans. She wondered how much of the revenue came from regular monthly contributions versus episodic contributions. About 50% of the members contribute or 100 families and an additional approximately 116 attenders contribute. This is average for Quaker Meetings.

A Friend noted that she was reading a book on growing more generous congregations. That may give us ideas as how to increase the giving. Martin Luther King, Jr. at his first church made contributions non-private, showing non-gifts as well as gifts.

Several finance committee members went to a meeting with churches on capital campaigns. That is where Jim Bell learned about the debt finance ratio. This is not an issue for the Finance Committee. This is an issue for our meeting. If each person in here could bring another member or attender to meeting for business it would help. Trustees should be here. We need more people to talk about this.

A Friend stated that we may not want to get involved with corporations but we could look at foundations or the government to help with greening and accessibility. A Friend suggested that we form a separate charitable organization that focuses on the historical nature of the buildings and property since most foundations will not give to a house of worship. Jim Bell noted that the federal government does not give to churches. He was also concerned that foundations would not want to fund day to day costs.

A Friend noted that Friends are bad about talking about money. We should see this as an opportunity. We would feel more powerful if we felt we had more control on how the money was spent and raised. We have had programs on how to be more powerful with our money. Secrecy comes at a high cost. He suggested that rather than disclosing absolute dollar amount of contributions but we should consider talking about a percentage of income. His family gives 4% to charities including FMW.

Jim Bell explained that most of the people at the conference were from Pentecostal churches. He noted that their leadership would contact individuals about the amount they were giving. This resulted in increases. But Friends are more low-key. We could each talk to someone about this conversation and that would help.

A Friend remembered that Sidwell Friends raises a large amount of money with a “next to new sale.” Friends are willing to pay more for something if it is going for a good cause.

A Friend noted that for most people would rather talk about sex than money. Could we have a thank you board when people give with no identification of how much? She also gives money to her kids to put in the box. She feels that the thank you should be the same regardless of the amount.

Jim Bell pointed out the line in the budget called ‘others’, for \$4,000, which is the money that comes from the box. We appreciate those who do give to the Meeting. We are making progress but we still have a big renovation project that we want to do.

A Friend noted that when she attended Sidwell they held a joint used sale with FMW. We should rebuild our relationship with Sidwell.

A visitor noted that in our financial culture today we are about getting something when you give something. We need to note the benefits that they receive from the meeting when give to the meeting. Fundraising is based on marketing. We need to communicate the benefit of the Meeting. Until the meeting can distill the benefit of the meeting and communicate it clearly it will be difficult to raise money.

Finance will be sending a fundraising letter in June and would love to hear from each of the persons here what they get from the meeting. The committee deals with numbers. The meeting, itself, needs to raise its money.

A Friend noted that giving money is part of that person’s growth. Many churches put that idea forward.

A Friend is unhappy that we are cutting back on support for various causes. That feels wrong to many. A visitor noted that highlighting how we help the community will appeal to banks.

The budget will lie over until next Meeting for Business as is our custom.

2016/5-3 Discernment regarding alcohol policy

Property committee has brought forward a recommendation to allow soft alcohol at non-worship events at the meeting.

A Friend felt led to speak as a recovering alcoholic to note that it was socially useful that there is one place where alcohol is not kept or used. The safe place is helpful for recovering alcoholics. This should not be buried but should be a public statement. This statement should be a negative but emphasize while there are other places where alcohol is used, that FMW is unusual in this respect. It is a matter of making a choice of providing a useful alternative.

A Friend pointed out that as a Young Adult Friend he would not consider getting married here because there is nothing more awful than a dry wedding. With respect to other Friends' struggles, he agrees we should not have alcohol generally but serve it at receptions in a limited manner. Many Friends consume alcohol in their personal lives. We should help Friends who struggle with addictions but he does not believe this is the way to do it.

A Friend noted that if the issue is to discuss having wine or beer at various events, she had no problem. But she is troubled that we are looking at this question to raise money while deciding against traditional moral objections. She looks to be convinced otherwise.

A Friend has been considering commits from other discernments. She noted that the Property Committee only recently found unity on this issue. Although this is a possible revenue source as we consider the renovations, the committee needs to know if this revenue source is a real possibility—yes or no. Certainly it is partly motivated by money but also by a need for integrity. She grew up in a Meeting in which Meeting was so integral to her life that there was little distinction from home and Meeting. She feels that she is not being forthright in her integral relation with this Meeting, if she is obliged to make the distinction between a sacred and secular distinction where she can drink wine. Her mother spent time looking at archives at the struggles over the years in Meetings over many things such as plain speech, which set them apart from the community. Giving up those distinctions has made it easier for Friends to relate to their community as a whole. She wants the Meeting to become a more relevant part of the community in which we are located and she believes we can do that in a controlled way. We may want to have further discussions about when and where we would allow alcohol to be served.

A Friend noted that the original presentation had specific requirements that allowed it only by licensed caterers and in primarily non-meeting activities. It would keep people safe from having alcohol in front of them when they didn't want it.

A Friend read from the advices with which the Meeting opened. The Friend noted he had spoken before on this issue. He has professionally dealt with people with additions. We as Friends have prided ourselves as being countercultural. He noted that as a culture we seem only to be able to celebrate with mind altering chemicals. What is wrong with being clear-headed? There is a place for Friends to say we do not celebrate with chemicals.

A Friend noted that she became a convinced Friend in elementary school. There are aspects of Friends testimonies which have shaped her life. The testimony about alcohol doesn't prohibit any alcohol but drunkenness which blocks your relationship with God. She thinks alcohol would not be a bad thing. She wants to get married under the care of the meeting but she could not do that here where she could not invite people from other cultures who drink at weddings. The *Faith and Practice* talks about excess.

The clerk noted that she has heard things about this issue over six to seven years in her position as clerk and alternate clerk. She understands the concern about the driving nature of money at this time, but the interest in clarifying the alcohol policy has been there before. She was married at the meeting but then schlepped her guests to her parents' house and is sorry she felt she couldn't have her reception here. She noted that there was discussion on the listserv about how other meetings struggled with this issue and the positions they came to unity on that may provide us guidance. She noted the important one-year time limit on this trial, which means we will have discernment about making it a permanent choice. She thinks this is a thoughtful way to go forward.

A Friend noted that she drank but she has never been drunk. She spent time with a Friend who couldn't stop drinking. It was a very difficult time but she learned a lot of the symptoms and she sees those issues in other addictions including to "healing." She expressed a concern about the "12-step culture" within the meeting. She feels we need to talk more about hidden relationships.

A Friend noted that this is not about including alcohol in meeting events but for outsiders using it in their events. He noted that most Friends he knows drink and serve wine and beer. He doesn't drink himself, but he doesn't experience this as a Quaker value. Most Quaker Meetings don't do much from rentals. Most Meetings are modestly sized and have no ability or need to do rental. In Burlington Meeting, the membership has faded away and the Meeting is overseen by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and they allow alcohol with proper license as does the Live Oak Meeting in Houston. The property committee has discussed this for five years. We are imposing a value that we don't have as Quakers on others. We present ourselves as teetotalers when we are not.

A Friend reminded us of an earlier comment at an earlier meeting that prohibition was the wrong answer to a real problem. We don't have rules but we do have values. We like to include. But when we include, we exclude others. We have a Friend who is allergic to gluten and another to nuts and we make an effort to accommodate them. When you sign up for FGC Gathering there is a litany of things where you can impose your dietary and other needs. We are trying to work out a solution where we are responsive to people who have a huge allergy to addictive substances yet without letting it drive the whole Meeting. She had no answer.

A Friend wanted to share his thoughts he had shared online. George Fox and William Penn consumed alcohol. Later, many Quakers abstained from alcohol. There are good reasons for this. But he rises in support of the Property Committee's proposal but he wants to go further. He believes we should make a statement and a contribution to trying to deal with the damage and effects of alcohol in society. He proposes a surcharge for serving alcohol, most of which that would be committed to Alcoholics

Anonymous or to organizations that work on domestic violence. He also suggests a surcharge for meat since it is damaging to our environment and health. We could give that surcharge to environmental groups.

A visitor thought the proposal of the previous speaker was a good idea. It is about values and the surcharge would reflect our values. He thinks spiritual health is part of our overall health. Alcohol has no health benefits. The value of alcohol is a social lubricant but when we drink we speak more than listen. We do the same thing with coffee, another drug.

Milestones

2016/5-6

The clerk presented a memorial minute for member William Norman King Lee, a copy of which is attached.

A Friend noted that the Lees were examples of Friends' involvement in the Civil Rights movement.

Friends **APPROVED** the minute with improvement.

2016/5-7 J. E. McNeil presented a memorial minute for member S. Clement Swisher, a copy of which is attached.

A Friend noted that Clem was a great soul and he feels blessed he was with us so long.

Another Friend recalled that Clem claimed that until he married he was nobody, but once he married he became clerk of a committee. Or perhaps it was Sue who made the difference.

Friends **APPROVED** the minute with improvements.

Other business

2016/5-8 The Clerk's presented a summary of reports of some related organizations and special committees.

- The Meeting is still ably represented at the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission by Michael North.

- The Meeting is still ably represented at the Council of Churches of Greater Washington by Susan Meehan.
- National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund has a new director, Jack McHale, who previously worked for many years for Pax Christi.
- The Meeting is still ably represented at Right Sharing of World Resources by Karen Grisez.
- Neil Froemming, clerk of the Information Technology Committee, which helps the staff with the five computers, five printers, two servers, and various routers, switches, WiFi access points, website, backup systems, and such that the Meeting uses, reports that a good year is one in which they have nothing to do. In the last year, we upgraded the Library, Admin Secretary, and Guest computers (thanks to equipment donations arranged by Gene Throwe) and disposed of three old computers. Two printers died and were replaced. We switched to a new and less troublesome website provider.

2016/5-9 Friends **APPROVED** the minutes as improved.

2016/5-10 The Meeting closed at 3:10 pm with approximately 11 persons in attendance to reconvene as Way opens on June 12, 2016.

ATTACHMENTS

Friends Meeting of Washington

FY 2017 Draft Budget Presentation

May 8, 2016

	FY 16 Budget	FY 16 YTD Actual to 3- 31-16	FY 16 Projected Year End Budget	FY 17 Draft Budget	Notes
Revenue					
Donations					
Contribution -					
Identified	200,000	141,397	185,000	190,000	Reflects recent giving pattern
Contributions - In					
Kind	0	3,955	4,500	1,700	

Other Contributions -	3,600	3,010	4,000	4,000	Cash donations
Total Donations	203,600	148,362	193,500	195,700	
Literature Gifts	360	193	230	240	
Building Revenue					
Monthly Rental Incl	128,400	94,757	121,000	120,000	Assume Tolstan not replaced
Pass Throughs					until August 2016
Event Rental -	88,500	38,522	55,000	70,000	
Occasional Use					
Total Building Revenue	216,900	133,279	176,000	190,000	
Investment Income	77,000	43,061	85,000	83,411	Friends Fiduciary investement income
Donations for Pass Through Items	15,000	24,975	25,000	18,200	Includes Simpson
Capital Campaign	0	12,105	15,000	25,468	Includes staff & bookkeeping time
Funding of Expenses					
Shoebox Revenue	22,125	21,958	21,960	22,000	
Total Restricted Revenue	37,125	59,038	61,960	65,668	
Miscellaneous Income	500	0	0	500	
Memorial Gifts	0	4,850	4,850	0	
Total Revenue	535,485	538,783	521,540	535,519	

	FY 16 Budget	FY 16 YTD Actual to 3-31-16	FY 16 Projected Year End Budget	FY 17 Draft Budget	Notes
Expense					
Personnel Costs					
Staff Wages	126,560	87,846	118,000	124,544	Full time staff
RE & Other Wages	20,020	10,014	14,000	18,750	Part time workers
Payroll Tax Expense	12,216	7,950	11,000	14,920	Computed from wages
Friendly Presence Cost	10,666	3,640	4,000	6,500	
Employee Benefits	10,658	9,960	13,255	11,961	Incl Pkg + Medicare beginning 7/1 & 1/1
Retirement Expense	6,333	4,451	6,000	6,402	Computed from wages
Office Coverage Cost	4,236	1,118	2,400	4,080	
Training, Seminars and Similar	1,900	260	1,900	2,000	FGC & BYM
Total Personnel Costs	192,589	125,239	170,555	189,157	
Consultants					
Bookkeeping	28,500	22,499	30,000	32,500	Includes \$2,500 on Cap

					Campaign	
	Audit & Legal Costs	4,750	4,000	4,000	7,000	Full audit this summer
	Consultants - Other	500	0	0	500	
	Total Consultants	33,750	26,499	34,000	40,000	
	Committee Expenses	10,605	7,222	9,630	10,850	
	Shoebox Project Costs	22,125	21,958	22,000	22,000	
	Donations to Others					
	Donations & Grants	24,500	14,588	14,600	18,825	
	Scholarship Awards	11,400	29,400	29,400	18,700	Simpson
	Total Donations to Others	35,900	43,988	44,000	37,525	
	Site Costs					
	Utilities	22,850	16,543	22,000	22,750	
	Maintenance & Repair	55,000	41,259	55,000	45,000	
	Cleaning & Trash Removal	40,800	34,628	45,700	47,500	
	Insurance	16,000	15,450	17,500	17,500	
	Real Property Tax	8,300	8,255	10,320	11,500	
	Furnishings	1,500	3,431	4,000	8,500	
	Other Site Costs	150	394	500	0	
	Total Site Costs	144,600	119,960	155,020	152,750	
	Office Expenses					
	Postage & Printing & Supplies	5,652	3,782	4,250	4,450	
	Computer Expenses	5,000	833	1,250	4,000	
	Other Equipment	0	72	100	0	
	Books, Dues & Subscriptions	1,050	841	900	1,150	Includes annual dues to the Center
	Total Office Expenses	11,702	5,528	6,500	9,600	
	Apportionment Expense	62,535	46,530	62,780	64,510	
	Other Expenses					
	Payroll Processing Cost	3,500	2,514	3,150	3,750	
	Credit Card Processing Costs	3,600	3,208	4,050	4,000	
	Bank Fees	165	119	120	110	
	Miscellaneous Expense	800	(14)	0	300	
	Total Other Expenses	8,065	5,827	7,320	8,160	
	Total Expense	521,871	402,751	511,805	534,552	
	Net Operating Income Less Expense	13,614	(13,968)	9,735	967	

Memorial Minute - William Norman King Lee

March 30, 1942 - September 23, 2015

Bill Lee was a member of the Friends Meeting of Washington for nearly forty years.

He was a birthright member of Providence Monthly Meeting, in Media, Pennsylvania, where he attended First Day School as a child.

In December 1968, Bill married Doris Jean Butler in Philadelphia. They were blessed with two sons, Norman L. Lee, now in Nevada, and Jason W. Lee, now in California.

Doris died in June 2004 on her sixty-first birthday. Bill is survived by their two sons and two grandsons.

After graduating from Lincoln University, Bill moved to the Washington, DC metro area and served as a planning official for the DC Government's Department of Human Resources. Bill was also a commercially rated airline pilot. It was during his successful thirty-five year career in the civil service that he earned an MBA in Financial Analysis from American University.

An avid chess player, Bill was a member of the Arlington [Virginia] Chess Club and ranked by the United States Chess Federation.

Bill served as an usher at FMW throughout the 1980s and 1990s. His family and work obligations prevented him from committee work. When they lived in Burke, Virginia, in the 1980s, Doris and Bill were active in Friendly 8s.

At the time of his death he was living with the family of his son Norman, in Nevada.

A memorial meeting was conducted at FMW on Sunday April 3, 2016.

S. Clement Swisher

September 23, 1930 to January 31, 2016

When asked what he wanted as an epitaph, Clem would say that he wanted to be remembered for raising two children, neither of whom were wards of the state. And so he will be remembered for that and for so much more.

Clem will be remembered for being a mild man in the very best sense of that term. He had a wicked sense of humor that if you were not paying attention you could easily miss. He had strongly held beliefs that he could put forth in such a gentle manner. He had an analytical mind that lent itself to deep issues as well as how to fix a cabinet in the Meeting kitchen. Clem was clearly a man of many parts.

Stokes Clement Swisher—Clem—was born and grew up in Glenside PA, and earned a BS in Physics from Guilford College in North Carolina. He arrived in Washington, DC in 1955, to work as a patent examiner for the US Patent and Trademark Office, where he served until his retirement in 1985. He was justly proud of receiving, in 1984, a Department of Commerce Bronze Medal award for professional excellence.

A lifelong Quaker, Clem attended Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) for six decades. It was there he met another Young Adult Friend, Sue Colman Jones. They married in 1962 under the care of Wilton Friends Meeting in Connecticut, the Meeting in the town in which Sue was raised. Sue, as was the custom of the time, changed her name to Sue C. Swisher, as one Friend noted tongue in cheek, in clever anticipation that they could use SCSwisher on their shared email address years later.

Clem transferred his membership from Abington Monthly Meeting to FMW in March 1963, just before the birth of their first child, Carl. Two short years later, Janet was born.

And what a member he was. He served as Treasurer of the meeting, and as clerk and member of numerous committees for FMW and Baltimore Yearly Meeting. He also served as President of Friends Nonprofit Housing and of the Memorial Society of Metropolitan Washington. He faithfully participated in the Senior Center and the Alzheimer's group each week for many years. He even remembered the Meeting when he traveled, sending postcards along the way as he found interesting places.

When he retired from the Patent Office, Clem became even more involved in the workings of FMW, for many years providing weekly service to the Meeting as a handyman. In 1993, for example, a list of one line descriptions of work he did amounted to twenty pages. He also took the time to list and label the ancient electrical system and plumbing system of the Meeting. Beyond that he provided some handyman help to members of the Meeting in times of difficulty.

But his contributions to the Meeting were not just physical. He participated in countless workshops and worship sharings at the Meeting. He provided thoughtful (and often humorous) analysis in committees and Meetings for business. He was especially concerned about racism—in particular, the cultural racism in which the Meeting members unintentionally excluded people from other races and cultures. In 1997 while on what was then called Overseers (a name later rejected for the Membership Committee because of its linkage with slavery) he wrote a thoughtful letter to an African-American attender who had felt rebuffed, noting that

FMW has had difficulty in making newcomers, regardless of race, feel at home. . . For African Americans there is the additional hurdle that the great majority of our members were raised in a white culture. . . We need the help of our African American members and attenders to point out what [we] may be doing that is racially insensitive. Even with help, it will not be easy for us to change.”

But clearly, for those who knew Clem best, we knew that Meeting for Worship was the key to his life. He came nearly each First Day of his many years at FMW, even after age and ill health had taken their toll. When he could no longer drive, Sue would drop him off. And when he struggled to walk, Sue came back each week with him.

Clem died on January 31, 2016 at home with family. He is survived by his wife, Sue Swisher; children, Carl Swisher and Janet Swisher, and three grandsons.

His physical presence in Meeting is missed but his Light is remembered.

UPCOMING EVENTS – JUNE 2016

June 1: Grate Patrol Help prepare sandwiches to take out on the Salvation Army truck to feed our vulnerable neighbors. Come to the Meeting House at 5:30 pm. For more information, contact sbrooks@uab.edu

June 4: Come to **So Others Might Eat** at 6:15 a.m. and make breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. 70 “O” St. NW. For more information, contact Betsy.Bramon@gmail.com



June 4: Adelphi Friend Meeting Strawberry Festival, 10am to 3pm at 2303 Metzerott Rd. in Adelphi, MD. The festival is a long-standing community event and day of fun for the whole family. The festival has a live-entertainment stage and outdoor grilled-food tent, an indoor care and sale of quarts and flats of just-picked strawberries from Oak Grove Farm in southern Pennsylvania. There is a large rummage sale, with additional areas for silent auction, clothing, plants, and a full room of used books. The children’s area has a bounce house, train rides, face painting and games. Come for the fun and leave with great bargain purchases of clothes, electronics, books and more. The Strawberry Festival is a rain or shine event. To learn more, go to www.adelphifriends.org/strawberry



June 5: William Penn House Potluck & Dialogue, potluck starts at 6:30 pm. Presenting this month will be **Andrei Israel**, the new executive director of William Penn House. He will be sharing about his journey to service at William Penn House and his vision for the House as a center of Quaker peace and social justice education. 515 East Capitol St. SE. www.williampennhouse.org

June 11: Friends Wilderness Center invites us to a marvelous two-part family program called **S’Mores and Star Gazing** from 4 to 9:30 pm. Part one will be an outdoor (weather permitting) singing of campfire songs, familiar from childhood and Quaker summer camps. Guitars and other instruments are welcome. Singing will adjourn for dinner around 6:00 pm to be rekindled around an open fire and the making and consuming of s’mores. Thus sticky happy, and maybe even a bit hoarse, we will turn our eyes to the heavens and let Kevin Boles guide us through the night sky using his impressive

telescope and amazing knowledge of things astronomical. Please RSVP to Sheila Bach to assist her in meal planner (dinner will cost \$10 per person—family discounts available). You may choose to do both parts of the program or just come for the sky-watching. FWC is just 1.5 hours from DC. For more info, contact Sheila Bach at snbach@earthlink.net or check www.friendswilderness.org



June 16: Friends Committee on National Legislation Reception, 6:30 to 8:30 pm at Sidwell Friends Upper School meeting room. Executive Secretary Diane Randell will share information on several of FCNL's recent initiatives including its focus on involving more millennials and generation x-ers in its policy work and on the renovation of the next door building as a conference/hospitality center. Refreshments will be served. If you can attend, please RSVP as soon as possible to www.fcnl.org/nowisthetime/rsvp For details: Andrew@fcnl.org or 202.903.2625.

June 16-19: Pendle Hill Program on Climate Justice, Pendle Hill Retreat Center, Wallingford PA. This will be a powerful faith-based organizing for climate justice. There will be worship, plenary sessions, workshops, and interest groups for deepening one's capacity to work effectively with others on lobbying and advocacy, constructive community resilience projects, and strategic nonviolent direct action campaigns. To learn more: Lina Blout (lblout@pendlehill.org) or www.pendlehill.org

June 17 – 19: Quaker Party, Young Adult Friends, 15 Rutherford Place, New York City. The Young Adult Concerns Committee of New York Yearly Meeting invites everyone to a weekend of joyful connection and deepening of spiritual relationships with Friends old and new. For full information, www.nnym.org/?q=YoungAdultFriendsParty2016

June 17 – 19: Silent Retreat for Friends at Dayspring. “True silence is to the spirit what sleep is to the body: nourishment and refreshment” (William Penn, 1699). Is your spirit in need of nourishment and refreshment? Come to the Dayspring Silent Retreat from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. We will keep the silence from Friday evening through worship on Sunday, enjoying the beauty of God's creation, reading, walking, resting, finding our own rhythms, listening for the Still Small Voice. The Dayspring Retreat Center is located at 11301 Neelsville Church Rd., Germantown MD. You can arrive anytime between 3:30 and 7:00 pm on Friday (dinner is at 7). The cost of the retreat is \$220. For details, contact June Christianson (420.544.1912, jchristianson@gmail.com)

June 18: BYM Interim Meeting, Maury River Friends Meeting in Lexington, VA. Gathering begins at 10am; lunch at noon, Meeting for Business from 2 to 5 pm. Overnight hospitality offered on Friday and Saturday nights by local Friends. For details: 301.774.7663, www.bym-rsf.org

July 3 – 9: The Gathering, Friends General Conference, College of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN. This year's theme is *be humble, Be Faithful, BE BOLD*. Meet with hundreds of Friends for a week packed with programs and events, from small group morning workshops to public evening plenaries,

and programs for children, teens and young adults. For more information, to go <http://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering>

Aug. 1-7: **Annual Sessions, Baltimore Yearly Meeting**, Hood College, Frederick, MD. “Discernment and Action in Spiritual Community.” What can we expect at Annual Session? Retreat and plenary speakers Nancy Bieber, Christina Repoley, Lauren Brownlee, Jen Cort, and George Lakey will offer their various insights. Workshops and interest groups will educate and challenge us. Business sessions will carry on the work of the Yearly Meeting. Our children will learn and grow and have fun together, and adults will share a week of sharing and getting to know one another in spiritual community. See the details of various program elements elsewhere in this issue of the *Interchange*. For more information and to register, go to <http://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/>

THINKING ABOUT RACE (June 2016) – White Fragility



“White people in the U.S. live in the context of white supremacy. This context provides an insular, racially privileged social environment that builds our expectations for racial comfort while at the same time lowering our tolerance for racial stress. I term this lack of racial stamina ‘White Fragility.’ White Fragility is a state in which even a minimal challenge to white entitlement and the white worldview becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves including argumentation, invalidation, silence, withdrawal and claims of being ‘attacked’ and not feeling ‘safe.’ These moves function to reinstate white racial equilibrium and maintain white supremacy. In so doing, our freedom is limited and the movement we need to create racial equity and justice is blocked. This workshop will provide an overview of white fragility and the perspectives and skills needed for white people to build their racial stamina and re-imagine more equitable and just norms and practices.”

- Description of a workshop offered at the White Privilege Conference (WPC17) by Robin DiAngelo. She holds a PhD in Multicultural Education, is Director of Equity for Sound Generations in King County/Seattle, Washington, and is a consultant and trainer. See more at:

<http://www.overcomingracism.org/resources/White-Fragility.pdf>. The WPC17 took place in Philadelphia, April 14-17, 2016. Eleven Quaker organizations were part of the 14-member Host Team, and five others were sponsors at various levels, including Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Friends General Conference had invited the WPC to Philadelphia. About a dozen people from BYM attended the conference, which had an attendance of 2500 people, 500 of whom were Quakers and 260 of whom were high school students.

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each Monthly and Preparative Meeting for publication in their newsletter or other means of dissemination. The WGR meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Locations vary to allow access to more Friends. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

Quaker Oats threatens to sue

Dear Mr. William Lovett:

I am the attorney at the Quaker Oats Company responsible for trademark matters. As you probably know, our company manufactures numerous food products, the most famous of which is oatmeal. In addition to having used the Quaker Oats name as our company name for close to 100 years, we have registered the Quaker name as a trademark.

It was therefore quite a surprise to discover that you are operating a business under the name "Quaker Oats Christmas Tree Farm." Your use of our trademark is likely to mislead consumers into believing that your business is associated with the Quaker Oats Company. It is also likely to weaken our very strong trademark. In light of the foregoing, we hereby demand that you immediately stop all use of the "Quaker Oats" name.... While we would like to settle this matter amicably, we will take all steps which are necessary and appropriate to protect our name.

Sincerely,

Janet L. Silverberg, counsel

Dear Janet Silverberg:

My breakfast this morning—rolled oats by the way—was interrupted by the arrival of your letter via FedEx, which was delivered to us despite the fact that you have misspelled our company name which is Quaker OAKS Christmas Tree Farm. Our farm was so named because religious services were held outdoors on this farm under a great oak tree until about ten years ago when we were able to move into our new Meetinghouse on another corner of our farm.

Our business is 100% owned and operated by Quakers. I suspect that your firm employs considerably fewer, if any, Quakers. We trace our Quaker ancestors back 320 years and they were mostly farmers, but I don't know how many of them grew oats for your company. My guess is that you may be selling far more Lutheran oats, Methodist oats, or maybe atheist oats. Could your company be guilty of product source misrepresentation?

We don't know why you choose to associate your commercial products with our faith, but we supposed you feel there is some marketing value from it. If you were selling machine guns, roulette wheels or some other product offensive to our Quaker faith, we would be upset by the association, but since we find your products wholesome and enjoyable, we consider your use of our name a compliment. We

invite you to visit our farm to verify that we are indeed Quaker Oaks Christmas Tree Farm. If you come in December, we'd be happy to sell you a tree!

Sincerely,

William Lovett,
Visalia, California

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

This month, we've made a number of small changes within the Meeting House to be more inclusive. The Property and the Ministry & Worship committees met to struggle once more with the issue of hearing in the Meeting Room. Unlike most houses of worship who only have to pick up and amplify sound from one place, our room has the unlikely task of trying to make it possible to hear Friends speaking from any part of the space.

Sue Swisher advised us that the original bench configuration of the 1930s was the best for hearing. That would have everyone facing the Facing bench—as un-egalitarian a set-up as you could get. No one felt like doing that, so instead we turned the middle benches to face the Facing bench and kept the others as they were.

Then we made the startling discovery that, duh, the Facing bench was equally good for speaking and for hearing. We've asked **Molly Tully** to be our tester up there to see how it's affecting her ability to hear messages; she says it's helping a bit. We also moved the table out of the way so more people could have easy access to those benches.

Steve Coleman told us that the baskets in the front hall were making it hard for his dad to make it up those 3 steps, so we moved them to the Assembly Room. We also removed the lectern that held the name tag basket and put the basket over near Will Call. All of these changes have really opened up the space there—it looks much tidier and welcoming, somehow.

With all this tidying up, we keep finding stuff that's been stashed away in obscure corners. The latest mystery was two reels of old film. Since we don't own a projector, we gave them to someone who does—our wonderful member, **Rob Farr**, who is a silent film buff. He reports that the film is a “fascinating record of (a member's) European vacation shot sometime around 1929-30. They are black & white, silent, and like most home movies, sometimes shaky and blurry. But they show everyday life in Paris, London, Geneva, Italy, and Germany before the Nazis came to power.” With our permission, Rob donated these to the Library of Congress' motion picture division. They will make a DVD copy and give it to us, in exchange for the donation.

Meanwhile, if it EVER stops raining, we will soon be enjoying summer. For many, that means an opportunity to attend the Gathering at Friends General Conference, which will be held at a gorgeous campus in the middle of Minnesota this year. Our much beloved members, **Gerri Williams** and **Ray Allard** will be there, of course, now that they're fulltime Minnesotans. The **Justin Connors**, **Michael Beers**, **Anne Harper**, **J.E. McNeil** and **I** are all going. How about you? Is this your year for FGC? Personal Aid has some scholarships available.

The thing that makes it possible for me to get there is that you're paying for it—the Meeting pays my registration. I still have to find a way to get there, though. What helped with transportation costs was a little known website called www.missingmoney.com that **Jean Capps** told me about. She looked me up and discovered that the District had some of my money. I jumped through a few hoops, and got it back—enough to cover the plane ticket. Thank you, Jesus.

Meanwhile, our hearts go out to the families of **Peter Folger**, who attended here as a Young Adult Friend in the 1990s, and of **Al Scott**, our long-time attender. Both of these Friends passed away last month. There may be a memorial meeting for Al at FMW; we will post details on the listserv as soon as we know them. We also send our love to **Ann Herzog**, whose brother Paul died in May.

Please help us hold in the Light **Martha Solt**, who is laboring with a recurrence of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. She will be undergoing chemo this month and next. Because of concerns about her immune system, she would rather not have visitors right now, but cards are welcome.

- Debby