

# March 2014 Newsletter

 [Printer-friendly version](#)

## [F&S Report](#)

## [Memorial, Miles Wedeman](#)

## [Memorial, Raoul Kuhlberg](#)

## [Upcoming Events](#)

## [Scholarships](#)

## [Thinking About Race](#)

## [FMW Banner](#)

## [Random Happenings](#)

### **Friends Meeting of Washington**

#### **Order of Worship**

#### **Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business**

**9 February 2014**

### **Queries**

Are meetings for business held in a spirit of worship, understanding and forbearance? When direction seems lacking, is this seen as a challenge to a more prayerful search for truth? Do we humbly set aside our own preconceived notions as to proper action, seeking instead Divine guidance as to the right course? Is the Meeting aware that it speaks not only through its actions but also through its failure to act?

Do you participate regularly in meetings for business, discharge faithfully your committee responsibilities, and assume your share of financial support of the Meeting?

### **Advices**

Come to Meeting with hearts and minds prepared to be open and faithful to the leadings of the Spirit. Then the conduct of business will lead to truth, unity, and love.

When a matter is before the Meeting for Business, each person present contributes to the corporate search for a decision that accords with the will of God. Inaction is a form of action. Silent worship in

the Meeting for Business contributes to the process of achieving unity.

Listen attentively to others' words and use the silence between messages to reflect carefully on what you might contribute. When you are clear, speak simply what is in your heart, without repeating what has already been offered. While making your insights clear, lay aside personal opinions and attend to what God requires.

- Pacific Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

## **Voices**

Leading and being led: the words are simple enough. But for Quakers they have their most profound resonance as defining religious experience. Friends speak variously of being drawn to an action, feeling under the weight of a concern, being called or led to act in specific ways. We speak of being open to the leadings of the Light, of being taught by the Spirit or the Inward Christ. Extraordinary claims lie embedded in those phrases. They say that it is not only possible but essential to our nature for human beings to hear and obey the voice of God; that we can be directed, daily, in what we do, the jobs we hold, the very words we say; and that our obedience may draw us to become leaders in all spheres of human life—in the professions, arts, and sciences, but also in discovering the ethical, political, social, and economic consequences of following the will of God.

- Paul Lacey, 1985

## **2014/2-1 Welcome of Visitors**

Jenny Moore and Scott Cunningham were welcomed as first time attenders to Meeting for Business (MfB).

## **2014/2-2 Clerk's Report – Meg Greene**

- Several Friends in our Meeting have been facing challenges: Jean Harman's mother died on January 29<sup>th</sup>; Paul Didisheim is in considerable discomfort and pain from back trouble; Alex Mathews is at home being cared for by his sister after his recent time in the hospital; and Marcia Reecer has recently had a second knee replaced at Sibley Hospital. We are holding these Friends in the Light.
- FMW Ski Trip was glorious as was the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women's Retreat.
- The Young Adult Friends held a successful and enjoyable game night with roughly 15 participants.
- Committee of Clerks Meeting will be on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March.

## **Major items**

### **2014/2-3 Membership Committee – Joe Izzo**

The Membership Committee took feedback from the last MfB on the reformulation of a proposal regarding associate membership. The issue is seasoning with the Committee.

- The first presentation of Shannon Zimmerman for membership was read. The second presentation will take place next month.
- The resignation of Leland Stone from Friends Meeting of Washington was **accepted**.
- The transfer to Bethesda Friends Meeting of Jacqueline DeCarlo was **approved** with great affection and gratitude expressed for Jacqueline's service to FMW.

#### **2014/2-4 Nomination Committee – Beth Cogswell**

- Nomination of Margot Greenlee to Hospitality was **approved**.
- Nomination of Gerry Fitzgerald to Peace and Social Concerns was **approved**.
- Resignation of John Pepper from Peace and Social Concerns was **accepted**.

#### **2014/2-5 Finance and Stewardship Monthly Report – Byron Sandford**

Committee Clerk Byron Sandford presented the Finance and Stewardship Monthly Report.

There was a discussion among Friends about official membership and financial contributions. Friends expressed concern over the perceived difficulty of becoming an official member, unclearness over what the process entails, and the possibility that potential members may feel unable to fulfill the obligations of membership and therefore avoid membership. Friends also explored the meaning of membership to the Meeting and to Individuals.

#### **2014/2-6 Marriage and Family Relations Committee – Anne Herzog**

On behalf of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee, Anne Herzog recommend that Jenny Moore and Scott Cunningham to be married under the care of FMW. The matter will lie over for one month, as is custom. If approved, their marriage date would be April.

#### **2014/2-7 Milestones**

**2014/2-7a** The Memorial Minute for Miles George Wedeman was presented to Meeting for Business. Friends **approved** the minute as written.

**2014/2-7b** The Memorial Minute Raoul Kulberg was presented to MfB. Friends **approved** the minute as written, with consideration for one possible revision. Friends shared many fond memories.

**2014/2-7c** Request for approval for the following willing Friends to write memorial minutes:

- Kevin Camp was **approved** to write memorial minute for Elizabeth Brache.
- Hayden Wetzel was **approved** to write memorial minute for Jacqueline Kearney.

### **2014/2-8 Other business**

Dan Dozier presented an update on property tax appeal. FMW's appeal of the property tax assessment was denied. The Trustees are considering next steps.

**2014/2-9 Minutes**, Friends **approved** the minutes.

**2014/2-10** The Meeting closed with approximately 28 members in attendance.

## **Finance and Stewardship Report to Friends Meeting of Washington**

**2/9/2014**

As we prepare to launch the Capital Campaign to make our meeting welcoming to all, we are strong financially. Our revenue exceeds our expenses. Our fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

This is the result of developing assets, preserving the assets that we have and supporting our meeting with our donations. Combine this with conservative spending, we find ourselves at a very good place at this halfway point in our fiscal year.

**Donations:** for the first 6 months of this year, we set the goal of receiving \$119,000. We received \$116,860.

**Space usage:** for our long term tenants we budgeted \$62,970. With one tenant having moved to larger quarters we have received \$50,826. However for "occasional" usage such as weddings, non-FMW rental of space we have received \$31,463. The budget for that income was \$6,000. **Thank you Debby.**

**Investments:** We have used part of our investments to renew and refresh our property, which has resulted in the space usage income. Our total fund balance is \$2,369,428. The income for the first 6 months was \$38,200. We budgeted \$42,650.

**Total Income:** For the first 6 months, our budgeted income was \$268,925. Our income for those 6 months was \$276,316.

**Total Expenses:** We estimated that we would spend \$250,961. For the past 6 months our expenses were \$232,349.

**Net income:** The net income is the difference between the income (\$276,316) and the expenses (\$232,349). That leaves us with a net gain in our assets of \$43,967.

In the past few years, the Friends Meeting of Washington has recognized that as stewards of this property, we needed to invest in its upkeep, improve its functions and budget accordingly.

I will prepare a financial report monthly.

Byron Sandford

Clerk

## **Miles George Wedeman**

**January 23, 1923 - October 23, 2013**

Born in Baltimore, MD on January 23, 1923 Miles George Wedeman was the son of Wayne Edgar Wedeman and Sara Jane Cowlam. He grew up in suburban Philadelphia. A superb student, he completed high school at 16 and graduated from Swarthmore College in 1943, at the age of nineteen. He first encountered the Religious Society of Friends at Swarthmore, where he became increasingly engaged in and committed to Quakerism. Miles spent the summer of 1941 in Salinas, KS working with those opposing the United States' entry into World War II. When the bombing of Pearl Harbor led the US to declare war on Japan, he attended Harvard Law School for three weeks. He then enlisted in the Navy and was sent to midshipman's school, after which he was appointed to the post of Second Lieutenant in the US Navy. Miles spent most of his War service as a bomb demolition specialist in the South Pacific, either taking bombs apart or escorting them back to Pearl Harbor to be dismantled. When the war ended, he completed his education, graduating in 1948. His fondest goal had always been to travel the world, and the role of civilian lawyer with the US Department of the Navy allowed him to do this.

He met Martha Jean Hall in the early 1950s through mutual friends. She had come to Washington as an intern and later became one of the Washington Post's first female news reporters. They married in at All Souls Unitarian Church in January 1955 and had four children: Sara, (b.1956) a psychologist, business consultant and active member of Abington Friends Meeting in Pennsylvania; Andrew, (b. 1958), a political science professor; Benjamin, (b. 1960) a Middle East correspondent for CNN; and Nicholas (b 1961) a USAID contractor. All four children were welcomed by the Friends Meeting of Washington during their infancy. The family was active in the meeting until they moved to Seoul, South Korea, in 1968. From there they moved to Cambodia, the Ivory Coast, Syria, and India.

International work was Miles' life-long passion. He loved history, politics and culture, especially that of the Middle East, Asia, and India. In an interview with the Foreign Affairs Oral History Project of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, he credited the Upper Darby High School's world affairs club, which he joined as a youngster in Depression-era Philadelphia, with opening his eyes to the wonders of the big, broad world. The world beckoned and he accepted – with fascination, wit, and a commitment to effectiveness through compassionate reflection and thoughtful action.

Miles was appointed economic attaché to the US Embassy in Phnom Penh in 1971 - the summer after Nixon's invasion of Cambodia. Between 1971 and 1973, he was responsible for ensuring that this civilian city was properly provisioned, despite being surrounded and besieged by the Khmer Rouge. In 1972, he wrote to the Meeting to say that the position of Friends on the war in Indochina made it impossible for him to support the Meeting financially. On behalf of the Committee of Overseers, Louis D. Harrington wrote back with a thoughtful letter regarding following one's inner light, with an understanding that thinking people could come to divergent conclusions when assessing the same

situation. Friends, said Harrington, place far more on value on our shared humanity and on compassion for one another than they do on any political system.

In 1973, Miles returned to the United States to serve as director of the Viet Nam desk for USAID. From 1974 to 1978, he was Director of the Regional Economic Development in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast. He was then transferred to Damascus, Syria, where he spent four years as USAID mission director.

He retired from USAID in 1980, and then served for 5 years as director of the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in Hyderabad, India. Returning to the US, he worked between 1985 and 1992 as a consultant to USAID projects and international agricultural research projects. Miles was seriously injured by a car in 1992, after which time he had to give up going abroad as a consultant. From the mid-1990s to 2001, he worked as a volunteer in the Clinton White House, answering the President's mail. Apparently, it was an intriguing job.

In 2007, Miles and Martha moved into Goodwin House, in Falls Church, VA. She lives there now, among friends and a surprising number of fellow travellers from overseas posts. Miles participated in a local Meeting for Worship and led a biweekly foreign affairs discussion. He read the New York Times, religiously, every day. He had an extraordinary memory, and even as his days came to a close, his eyes would sparkle at the mere mention of anything related to international affairs.

Miles passed away on 24 October 2013 of natural causes. He is survived by his wife Martha, his four children and seven grandchildren.

## **Raoul Kulberg**

**4 December 1930 - 2 January 2011**

Raoul Kulberg was born in Cleveland, Ohio and travelled widely with his parents in his youth. He earned his BA in International Relations from Pomona College in 1952, later studied at Haverford College (1952-53), and finally took MAs in political science from The George Washington University and in political science from the former Federal City College (now UDC). His specialty was East Asian studies. During these years he held positions with the Veterans Administration, the International Cooperation Administration (now USAID), and the Department of State.

Although he served in the ROTC in college, he also came in these years to know the AFSC, and in time declared himself a pacifist. Moving to Washington in 1953, Raoul attended various churches here but found that Friends worship "offers the most help . . . in my own endeavor to search for the truth" (as he stated in his letter of application). He soon became active in the Young Adult Friends, the AFSC, and various conferences and projects related to peace and social justice concerns. He was approved for membership in June 1961.

In 1962 Raoul married Evangeline "Eve Anne" Johnson Brown at a ceremony at the Washington Ethical Society. They had known each other for about ten years, and besides two step-children by Eve Anne's earlier marriage the couple produced three together. A birthright Friend, Eve Anne and two children were approved as full members of FMW in January 1981. Raoul was a devoted family man throughout his life.

Following his marriage Raoul worked as a librarian at The George Washington University and University of the District of Columbia. He was an active member of the Friends Meeting until at least 1990, serving on many committees and working in opposition to the Vietnam War. He wrote regularly

on such issues as DC statehood and censorship, and volunteered with the Smithsonian Institution, AARP, the Ethical Society, and the Council for Humanist and Ethical Concerns.

He and Eve Anne travelled regularly and always took the greetings of this Meeting to our sister meetings in other states and countries. His other great avocation was film; a New York Times article of 1986 declared him “a storehouse of arcane facts on Washington films.”

Raoul attended meeting little in his last years, but older Friends remember him fondly. The Washington Post described him in 1998 as “a large, round retiree with a Santa Claus-like beard,” but more to the point a Meeting member recalled him after his death in this way: “He was a calm and gentle presence in a time much in need of those virtues.”

Hayden Wetzel

January 2014

(here ends the Minutes and Reports from MfB, February 2014)

### UPCOMING EVENTS



Come to **S.O.M.E.** on **Saturday, March 1** at 6:15 AM and be prepared to flip pancakes and help prepare breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. The kitchen is at 70 “o” St. NW, adjacent to a parking lot. For more information and to sign up, contact Betsy Bramon at [betsy.bramon@gmail.com](mailto:betsy.bramon@gmail.com)

**Retreat, Ministry & Pastoral Care on Saturday, March 1** from 10:00 to 3:00 at Langley Hill Friends Meeting. Ministry and Pastoral Care is at the heart of Friends’ life together. How can we cultivate worship in a way that brings for the Spirit for all of us? How does our caring community enliven our responsiveness to each other and our witness in the world? This retreat will include queries about our work and conversations on effective ministry and pastoral care. Please come for a day of renewal on Saturday, March 1, at Langley Hill Friends Meeting from 10 am until 3 pm. Directions: <http://www.quaker.org/langleyhill/> This event is planned by Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee. Members of Local Meeting committees involved in ministry and worship, pastoral care, care and clearness, or any expression of spiritual life and care are encouraged to come. Please bring a lunch; we will provide snacks on arrival and fruit and drinks to share. The day is being facilitated by BYM’s ad hoc Vision Implementation Committee. It will help us if you will RSVP to Wayne Finegar at the BYM Office. ([admin@bym-rsf.org](mailto:admin@bym-rsf.org))

**FAP Training on Saturday, March 1** from 10:30 to 11:30 am at Goose Creek Friends Meeting. Would you like to spend weekends with teens, growing in their Spiritual journey? Come to a BYM Young Friends or Junior Young Friends conference as a Friendly Adult Presence (FAP)! In this training, you will learn more about the specifics of the BYM Youth Programs, and role play common scenarios. In order to serve, volunteers must also undergo a criminal background check. Email Alison Duncan ([youthprograms@bym-rsf.org](mailto:youthprograms@bym-rsf.org)) by February 21st to reserve a spot and receive advance materials.

There will be **singing** in the Meeting Room on **Sunday, March 2** at 10:00 am. All voices are welcome. We have songsheets leftover from the Pete Seeger sing-along, so we may be dipping into those, along with the hymnal.



Also on **Sunday, March 2** the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Committee will hold their **annual fundraising lunch**. Please bring an empty stomach and a full checkbook to support this committee, which helps make it possible for D.C. public school graduates to attend college.

Starting on **Sunday, March 2** at 6:00 pm, Angela C. Erickson and Caleb O. Brown from our Meeting will conduct a nine-week **personal finance course** to help families eliminate debt, save for the future, and give like never before. Participants will be challenged and motivated to make a plan for their money and build wealth for the future. Learn more and order materials at <http://bit.ly/FMWFPU> or email Caleb at [calebbrown@gmail.com](mailto:calebbrown@gmail.com) or Angela at [angela.cerickson@gmail.com](mailto:angela.cerickson@gmail.com) The program is hosted by the Finance &

Stewardship Committee.

The Peace & Social Concerns Committee has asked John Bach, Quaker chaplain at Harvard University to speak on "***Faith, and Resistance Within the Empire: the Beloved Community's Response***" on **Saturday, March 8**. Potluck starts at 5:30; talk at 6:30. To find out more about Friend John, click



here: <http://chaplains.harvard.edu/people/john-bach> For more information about this event, contact Malachy Kilbride at [malachykilbride@yahoo.com](mailto:malachykilbride@yahoo.com)

On **Sunday, March 9** at 9:15 am, the Ministry & Worship Committee will sponsor another telling of F/friends **spiritual journeys**. Come hear two Friends tell us the highlights of their journey so far. These have been deep and meaningful sharings in which we learn more about ourselves and each other as a community. All are welcome.

There will be a **Junior Young Friends Conference** from 10:00 am on **Saturday, March 8** to noon on **Sunday, March 9** at the Charlottesville Friends Meeting. For information, check the Junior Young Friends website or contact Alison Duncan. (301-774-7663)

**What does it mean to be a Quaker?** This and other questions about the Religious Society of Friends will be addressed in the Inquirer's Class on four consecutive Mondays, beginning **March 10** at 7:00 pm in the Parlor. For more information, contact Michael Cronin at [mcronin943@gmail.com](mailto:mcronin943@gmail.com)

On **Saturday, March 15**, the Personal Aid committee will offer **First Aid/CPR/AED training** from 9 to 5 in the Assembly Room. The training is free of cost and childcare is available. All are welcome. To find out more, contact Adam Hixson by calling 202-495-1756 or emailing [adam.hixson@gmail.com](mailto:adam.hixson@gmail.com).

On **Saturday, March 15** at 7:30 pm at Friends House in Sandy Spring and again on **Sunday, March 16** at 12:45 pm at Sandy Spring Friends Meeting, **Elias Abdallah Tamara will speak about his life as a Palestinian**. Please join us for a short video presentation based on Elias' experience-- the experience of the 750,000 Palestinians who became refugees in 1948-- known as the Nakba or the "Catastrophe". Everything related to the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis follows from this tragic year. The video presentation will be followed by a question and answer period with Elias and his son Steve, a Middle East historian.

On **Sunday, March 16**, the Child Safety Committee will offer **Child Safety Training** in two sessions: one at 9:30 and the other at noon. All are welcome, whether you are currently a parent of young children or not.



What is the **Spiritual State of our Meeting?** Each year, the Ministry & Worship Committee prepares a Spiritual State of the Meeting Report, with generous input from the wider community. We invite you to share your insights with the committee on **Sunday, March 16** at noon. For more information, contact Blair Forlaw at [bforlaw@aol.com](mailto:bforlaw@aol.com)

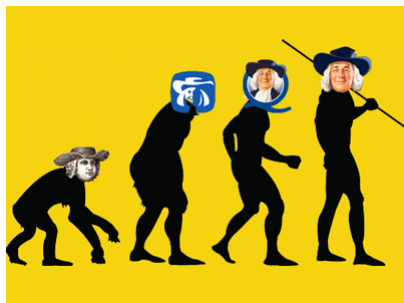
**Lunch is served!** On Sunday, March 23, the **School for Friends** will hold their annual luncheon fundraiser. Come for this delicious meal and support this splendid Quaker preschool, started by members of FMW.

Learn about **White Privilege** at a conference from **March 26 to 29**. The White Privilege Conference is a conference that examines challenging concepts of privilege and oppression and offers solutions and team building strategies to work toward a more equitable world. WPC is a conference designed to examine issues of privilege beyond skin color. WPC is open to everyone and invites diverse perspectives to provide a comprehensive look at issues of privilege including: race, gender, sexuality, class, disability, etc.—the ways we all experience some form of privilege, and how we're all affected by that privilege. WPC is committed to a philosophy of "understanding, respecting and connecting." It will be held at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center AND The Concourse Hotel Madison, WI. Friends General Conference coordinates a group of Friends to attend this conference at a special rate. Registration fees will rise after February 24, 2014. For more information or to register, see the event website. ([www.fgcquaker.org/events/2014-white-privilege-conference-wpc15](http://www.fgcquaker.org/events/2014-white-privilege-conference-wpc15))



On **Saturday, March 29**, there will be a viewing and discussion of the film **MONEY & LIFE** at Quaker House Living Room. The organization sponsoring this discussion invites Friends to join them. The movie is described as "a passionate and inspirational essay-style documentary that asks a provocative question: can we see the economic crisis not as a disaster, but as a tremendous opportunity? This cinematic odyssey connects the dots on our current economic pains and offers a new story of money based on an emerging paradigm of planetary well-being that understands all of life as profoundly interconnected." For more information, contact Akiko Haruna at [akikoharuna@gmail.com](mailto:akikoharuna@gmail.com)

## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR QUAKER ACTIVITIES



Several years ago FMW's Meeting for Business approved the establishment of a small, continuing education scholarship fund and assigned it to the Personal Aid Committee to administer. This fund is designed to help members and attenders participate in outside Quaker activities that would enrich the spiritual life of individuals as well as contribute to the Meeting's corporate life.

Because the total amount of funds dedicated for this purpose is limited—approximately \$500-600 for this year—scholarships probably only will provide partial support for a proposed activity. The maximum amount for a scholarship is \$150 per individual. Preference will be given to young adults who have not previously received FMW scholarship money.

Applicants must submit a one-page request letter to me by Monday, March 17. The request should:

- Outline the activity to be supported

- Clearly state how scholarship \$ will be used, e.g. travel, registration, etc.
- Indicate what other sources of funding may have been obtained
- Outline the benefits that will accrue to the applicant and FMW

Applications will be reviewed by three members of the Personal Aid Committee who will make recommendations to the full Committee. The full Committee will consider these recommendations and make final decisions on the applications.

Keep in mind that in March the Committee also will announce the availability of BYM certificates for their July Annual Session. BYM usually provides FMW three certificates, usually good for several days' worth of Session expenses, with preference given to those people who have not attended the Annual Session before. We will transmit more guidance on this program shortly.

If you have any questions about the continuing education scholarship fund please contact me at [jimsteen@starpower.net](mailto:jimsteen@starpower.net) after February 20. I will be out of town until then.

- *Jim Steen, Personal Aid Committee*

### **THINKING ABOUT RACE(March 2014) – No freak accident**

Excerpted by Elizabeth DuVerlie from *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander, pp. 237-238.

“Saying mass incarceration is an abysmal failure makes sense, though, only if one assumes that the criminal justice system is designed to prevent and control crime. But if mass incarceration is understood as a system of social control—specifically, racial control—then the system is a fantastic success. In less than two decades, the prison population quadrupled, and large majorities of poor people of color in urban areas throughout the United States were placed under the control of the criminal justice system or saddled with criminal records for life. Almost overnight, huge segments of ghetto communities were permanently relegated to a second-class status, disenfranchised, and subjected to perpetual surveillance and monitoring by law enforcement agencies. One could argue this result is a tragic, unfortunate mistake, and that the goal was always crime control, not the creation of a racial undercaste. But judging by the political rhetoric and the legal rules employed in the War on Drugs, the result is no freak accident.”

The BYM Working Group on Racism meets most months on the third Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, usually at Bethesda Friends Meeting or Friends Meeting of Washington. If you would like to attend, on a regular or a drop-in basis, contact clerk David Etheridge, [david.etheridge@verizon.net](mailto:david.etheridge@verizon.net).

**HOW DOES YOUR LIFE HELP TO REMOVE...**

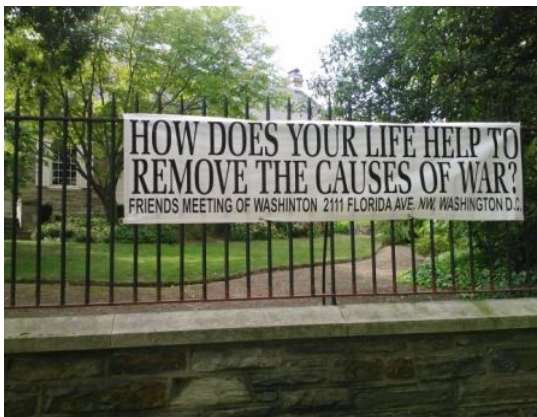
An FMW neighbor handed us a copy of a speech made by Sir Michael Barber during the Degree Ceremony of the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences on Dec. 11, 2009. In it, Friend Barber has this to say:

“Recently, in Washington, outside the Quaker Meeting House, I saw a poster which read very simply, ***How does your life help to remove the causes of war?***”

“This is a very profound question. It is also a very tough question! It uses a strong word—remove; it is not enough, this implies, not to contribute to causing war; one has to help to **remove** its causes. It requires action. It requires participation. It requires, too, that one reflects on what the causes of war actually are and does something about them—and history tells us a great deal about this. We know that intolerance, greed, ignorance, pride, prejudice, fear and revenge play their part. We also know that oppression, grotesque inequality and conflict over scarce resources—iron, oil, food, water—make their contribution.

“This question, therefore, prompts me to ask myself what I am doing in my life to **remove** intolerance, greed, ignorance, pride, prejudice, fear and revenge. It does help me to decide how to live my life, all day and every day. If I am to help remove the causes of war, I must by my own actions, challenge oppression, reduce inequality and relieve the pressures on the world’s natural resources. These are things I can do all day, every day.”

*FYI, Wikipedia describes Friend Barber as a British educationist, advisor to Tony Blair, and a global expert on education reform and implementation of large-scale system change. He was brought up in a Quaker family and attended Quaker schools.*



## RANDOM HAPPENINGS

Many bits of news to report. First, for those of you who know the **Wiggins** family—son **Dan** is taking a gap year between high school and college and spending it onboard the *Infinity*, a ship currently bound for Antarctica. In February, we received this news:

Ahoy landlubbers,

New Zealand is well and truly behind us. We had successful off shore protests with Greenpeace which we are sure you all read about on our website. The rest of our time was spent doing crew training and safety drills in preparation for the rigors of the Southern Ocean.

Our rough heading is 180 degrees, aka south. Today we passed from the roaring forties into the fearsome fifties. As each day passes we notice it getting colder and with sunrise coming earlier and



sunset later. In a few days time we will be putting the heating on but for now it is not essential.

We are now at the extreme Northern summer limit for ice bergs although we don't expect to see them until we are around 60 degrees south. Yesterday, as we were leaving the forties, the wind dropped and we took the opportunity to go for a quick swim. The water, although cold, was not as cold as we expected.

Spirit aboard is great, we are all pulling together as one big team. Everyone has found their niche whether it be assisting in the engine room or making the daily bread. With such a large crew, there is plenty down time to sleep and relax. We

have been having movie nights, dinner parties, lots of fishing and the usual story swapping and games.

We might be the only humans for miles around but we are far from alone. We have daily encounters with the mighty albatross which have a wingspan of up to 14 feet! We have been visited by lots of dolphins and seen whales. As we get into the Southern Ocean we expect to see more whales and hopefully no Japanese whalers!

Anticipation is growing for our arrival in Antarctica which is currently about 1300NM away.

Depending on wind conditions, we could be arriving as soon as 7 days but it is much more likely to be 8-9 days.

To be continued!!!

Next, **Gerri Williams** reports on their new life in beautiful downtown Duluth, MN amidst this brutal winter: "We are managing the weather OK. There are many artistic ice formations to enjoy (and I don't mean in caves.) Last week, I broke down and purchased a merino wool face mask that covers everything but my eyes. With my dark glasses and beret on, I look like a member of a small, elderly (but sinister) mob."

Finally, this thorough explanation of what your intrepid Property Manager and Property Committee were doing in early February when the **Meeting was flooded**, including water cascading down over the main electrical panels in the Furnace Room (!!!).

"First, a ten-inch water main sprung a large leak, underneath the sidewalk directly in front of the Costa Rican Embassy, our neighbor just above us on Phelps Place.

The water -- a modest fire-hose worth -- found its way through a fair-sized hole into an adjacent Pepco manhole, and then followed Pepco conduits and manholes and other infrastructure down Phelps Place -- including down the conduit that brings our 400-amp, three-phase electricity into Meeting House. It also saturated the ground and emerged along the base of the wall in the North Room and in the Furnace Room.

Pepco responded quickly and a crew pumped out the upstream manhole by about 1:30. We had called DC Water but Pepco got them there right away and they turned off the water main. Water flow into the Meeting House slowly diminished after that, and by 5:00 PM I was able to leave things to dry. Steve Brooks stopped by to check around 6:00 PM and everything was still continuing to dry out with no new water. This morning I broke up the sheet of ice on the sidewalk down at the end of Phelps Place.

Today DC Water has people and equipment unearthing the offending pipe and repairing it. None of this affected FMW's water, which comes from Decatur Place. And by sheer luck, our electric panels

seem to have survived intact.”

With gratitude to each of you who helped the Meeting and each other as the community struggled to get through this ridiculous weather, and a special thanks to the **YAFs** for organizing a game night and ice skating event (but not at the same time), to **Louise Levathes** for bringing her teacher, Jonathan Foust, to teach about conflict resolution, to **Bob and Susan Meehan** for putting together a Pete Seeger Sing-Along to honor that great soul (and to **Kristie Anderson** for nabbing the song sheets to be used at our monthly sing, ya’ll come!), to **Caleb Brown** and **Angela Erickson** for bringing the Financial Peace University classes to FMW, to **Mark Haskell** for bringing us the totally delicious Slow Food annual potluck, to **Grant Thompson, Martha Solt, Justin Connor, Judy Hubbard, Mark Haskell** and **Jim Dickson** for launching our Capital Campaign, the **Neil Froemming** for learning video editing just in time to be able to walk us through a digital version of the capital improvements plan *and* for installing and upgrading our Bookkeeper’s new computer, to the **IT Committee** for helping the office to leap from Windows XP to Windows 2010 and untangle numerous tangles involved therein, to **Chloe** Schwenke for speaking with our First Day School about her journey as a Transgender Quaker, to **Personal Aid** for arranging an all-day First Aid training next month at FMW, and to **Child Safety** for arranging a child safety training that month as well, and to the **social media gods** who are suddenly throwing business our way from **Greenpeace, Save the Children, Peace Corps, Mercy Corps**, and many many many other nonprofits. May we be well-used.

- Debby