

FMW Newsletter, March 2015

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Friends Meeting of Washington

Order of Worship

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

February 2015

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

As we approach our business we need to put aside how the world reaches decisions in temporal affairs and to recollect that we have come together to seek not equity, nor compromise, nor even the most "democratic" solution to the matter at hand but the Truth as God gives us to see the Truth. We believe that God is revealed and gives guidance to all who seek. Thus, in business meeting, we should listen to

the views of all, just as we do in meeting for worship. We further believe that as Truth emerges we will have substantial unity in recognizing it, for Truth is undivided and that of God within each person responds to its presence.

We need to allow sufficient time for the conduct of the affairs of our Society. In our modern hurried life it may be hard to take time to search thoroughly for a right course of action. Failing unity, we may defer action until we can all see the Light together. Yet the practical business concerns we address in monthly meeting are as important to our individual and corporate life as the more directly spiritual concerns addressed in our meetings for worship.

- BYM Faith and Practice

Voices

Even if Friends are careful to attend Meetings for Business and to assemble promptly, they may nevertheless fritter away God's opportunity, perhaps because the business has been poorly prepared and presented, or because Friends do not apply themselves promptly and earnestly, or because Friends are self-indulgent, or simply because Friends do not wait upon the Lord.

The Query whether Friends are careful to come to Meetings for Worship "with hearts and minds prepared" should be extended to include our Meetings for Business as well. It is essential that the period of worship prior to the undertaking of business be long enough to permit Friends to put aside the heat and tumult of the day's anxieties and to enter into the quietness that comes from trust in God and in God's concern for the affairs of men and women.

- Thomas Shipley Brown, 1963

In meeting for business, Friends are seeking to discover and to implement the will of God. Aware that they meet in the presence of God, Friends try to conduct their business reverently, in the wisdom and peaceable spirit of Jesus. Insofar as a divine-human meeting takes place, there is order, unity, and power. The Quaker way of conducting business is of central importance. It is the way Friends have found of living and working together. It can create and preserve the sense of fellowship in the meeting, and from there it can spread to other groups and decisions in which individual Friends or meetings have a part. Thus it contributes to the way of peace in the world.

- Faith and Practice, New England Yearly Meeting, 1985

2015/2-1 Welcome of Visitors

Meeting for Business opened at 12:35 pm with 30 present. Friends welcomed Ryan Ashworth and Amy Jackson as first time attenders to Meeting for Business.

2015/2-2 Clerk's Report

The Clerk asked that the Meeting hold the following people in the Light:

Susan Griffin and her family as her mother recently died; Beth Cogswell and her family as mother is in hospice care; and Ricki Didisheim, Paul Didisheim's wife, who had a fall and was injured.

Personal Aid asks for people to volunteer to drive others to appointments.

The annual Super Bowl Sunday First Day School ski trip was fun with about 35 Friends of varied ages, which provided a successful opportunity for community building.

Jim Clay, Director of School for Friends, will be holding his parenting classes for parents with young children at Quaker House Living Room starting Thursday, Feb. 12th.

The following reports are scheduled to be heard at Meeting for Business next month: Library Committee and Personal Aid Committee.

Friends are reminded that items of business for the next Meeting for Business should be in to the office by Thursday, March 5 by close of business or they will be held over for a month.

Major items

2015/2-3 Worship sharing on proposed Friends Meeting of Washington Guidelines for Safety and the Welcoming of Friends with a History of Sexually Abusing Children, a copy of which is attached.

The Meeting considered the underlying issues of the Guidelines for Safety and the Welcoming of Friends with a History of Sexually Abusing Children. As this topic is likely to be challenging to the Meeting, approximately thirty minutes of worship sharing during the February, March and April Meetings for Business will be reserves to allow for careful discernment.

In considering our Meeting's response to ensuring the safety of our children and welcoming people with difficult pasts, we earlier held several worship-sharings. A number of principles were extracted from the worship sharing and a group representing the relevant committees was asked to consider how the Meeting could build on them. The group working on these guidelines wrote a draft, which was sent to committees for seasoning. It was published in the fall for general comment.

Friends were reminded that we are seeking our Guide—God’s will—through our worship; we are not debating. Friends are asked to focus on principles rather than editing. Friends were reminded to rise and speak only after you have been acknowledged by the clerk and to speak only once over the three months process. When everyone who wants to speak has spoken, then people may speak a second time to bring additional Light to the process.

A Friend expressed his appreciation for the safe and beautiful space that Friends have made for his and all the other children. It has taken an enormous amount of work of many people to make it the way it is today.

Another Friend expressed that the Child Safety Guidelines already approved by the meeting captured the essence of child safety. Her concern about this document dealing with welcoming is the separation between discernment and support. She feels that at least one-half of the group discerning should be from the support group.

While speaking with respect and gratitude even of people with whom she does not agree, the Friend related that as a member of the support group she has never felt unable to separate her position as a member of a support group and as a member with a concern for the safety of our children. She feels that it is important that the discernment group has major input from the support group. She notes that not all persons can be welcomed.

A Friend spoke as being basically in line with the Guidelines as written but believes it should be focused on more than just people who sexually abuse children. He asks that we consider those persons who have a difficult time with sexual boundaries with adults as well.

A Friend spoke about the idea behind separating the group involved in discernment and people who are part of a support group. While no one has shown any sign of conflict, human nature is such that it could happen and we must make sure we are not asking anyone to do what they cannot. It was essential that the discernment committee have input of the support group. In addition the Friend noted that the Meeting has a history of asking a committee to do the work and then saying, “No, thank you. We will do it ourselves.” We need to give deference to the work of the group.

A Friend feels that there is no conflict in the guidelines as they now read, and no ban on a member of the discernment committee becoming a member of the support committee.

A Friend observed that when another Friend wrote from prison noting he wanted to worship with us upon his release, there was a polarization of the Meeting. Friends on one side felt accused of not caring for the safety of children. Friends on the other side felt accused of not caring for the openness of the Meeting. But he saw that everyone shared concerns with both sides of this split. He expressed

concerns about the draft and felt that the discussion of the concerns would be divisive and therefore not appropriate in meeting for worship with a concern for business. He feels we need to have further discernment within the group. He will not raise his concerns about the draft here today.

A Friend spoke of her concern about process. All decisions are ultimately made by the Meeting for Business. Everything we do is meant to make our Meeting for Business decisions more effective. The work of committees is not the only work. We are early in this process. The work the committee does is to bring something to Meeting for Business for a decision. We needed an opportunity for the committee involved to hear what was in the hearts of the Meeting. This is not about editing these guidelines. It is an opportunity for us to speak from our hearts and to be heard by the people doing this work and for them to go back and to do further work. This is not an attempt to rework; we need that group to continue the good work it has done already. And it is an opportunity for the Small Group to continue its deliberations and to bring us in the fullness of time something on which we can find unity. At this time we are talking and sharing, that is all.

A Friend thanks a Friend who is sitting through this to wait his turn to be on the agenda. He feels appreciative of being led by Friends. Reading a section from the Guidelines about a person's reason for joining, he said that should be a query for all Friends, not just some. He feels this is important to him because it is important to his community. He would like to speak directly to individual Friends rather than in Meeting for Business. He expressed a concern about what some of the young Friends are being told or may hear about this issue.

A Friend said that he wanted to say "you're welcome" since he has been told thanks for raising this concern. He has lived the worst of exclusion for twenty years. He has seen prison and the exclusion of individuals within the prison. He has seen people driven mad from exclusion. As Friends, we cannot do that. None of those people he saw for twenty years were beyond redemption. There is an ember in each person and Quakers can provide the oxygen to reignite his or her ember. If such a person comes here to reignite that ember they would surely follow some basic rules. Surely we would not show them the door. If we do, will we not at least give them help to find a way back into the door? We cannot exclude people without doing everything we can to fan that ember back to life. We should not exclude any person. It is a slippery slope. We have struggled before with how we include gays and African Americans. We should not talk of exclusion.

A Friend noted that we have come a long way on this issue. The initial reaction was polarizing and we were motivated by fear and a belief that this was a dangerous thing upon which we were embarking. There are Meetings that have excluded people. There are groups which came to regret throwing their doors too wide open with people getting hurt. We have come to a different place where we all feel a compassionate concern about our community and for people who have committed terrible crimes and for families with young children. We are motivated now by compassion not by fear. We need a welcome open heart and a deep understanding of the struggle and risk.

Mark Haskell, a member of the Trustees, gave the Trustees Annual Report, a copy of which is attached. The written report captures the Trustees year of work especially the upcoming renovation. The financial review by the auditors was clear. Trustees were grateful for the help from other members, which helped envision the financial future of the Meeting. A Friend expressed concern about the apparent deficit in the report. It was explained that the chart reflected the amount that we expected and did not received in donations. The difference comes from rent and investments. The Meeting is solvent and Friends are encouraged to read the full report. A more detailed report can be found in the library. A Friend commended the Trustees for the information and style of the report.

The report was **ACCEPTED** with gratitude and pleasure.

2015/2-5 Marriage and Family Committee

Susan Griffin, member of Marriage and Family Committee, presented the first request for marriage of Michael Andrew Hubbard and Stephen RyanAshworth. This lies over for one month, as is our custom.

2015/2-6 Healing and Reconciliation Committee

Grey Handley, co-clerk of Healing and Reconciliation Committee gave its annual report, a copy of which is attached. Their work is intended to foster a loving resolution or at least an understanding of the source of hurts. They still struggle with finding an appropriate way to interrupt hurts as they happen.

The report was **ACCEPTED**, with one Friend asking to be recorded as in dissent.

2015/2-7 Membership Committee

Janet Dinsmore, Marcia Reecer, co-clerks of the Membership Committee, presented its annual report, a copy of which is attached. They sent out 200 letters to absent Friends and got some responses. They will be contacting associate members to encourage them to join. They will be bringing this issue to a future meeting for business.

The report was **ACCEPTED**.

2015/2-8 Ministry and Worship Committee

Blair Forlaw, of the Ministry and Worship Committee, brought forward a request for a change to the Handbook to reflect a more realistic deadline for Spiritual State of the Meeting. We report to

Baltimore Yearly Meeting as well as to ourselves. The change is to move the process closer to the deadline that is presented by Baltimore Yearly Meeting. First report would be given in March and held over to April Meeting for Business for final approval in time for the Baltimore Yearly Meeting deadline.

The change was **APPROVED**.

Blair Forlaw reported that last year's Spiritual State of the Meeting survey was too long for most people. So this year the initial steps toward this year's Spiritual State of the Meeting will be an email sent out with a very short survey and then six worship sharing opportunities. There will be three on February 22nd: one with Clerks, one with First Day School Parents and then an open meeting. On Feb. 25th after midweek meeting there will be another open meeting with refreshments. For the first time we will include worship sharing for the Young Adult Friends retreat on Feb 28th and with our teens March 1st.

2015/2-9 Nominating Committee

Harry Massey, clerk of Nominating Committee, brought the following resignations:

- Kathy Lipp Farr from Personal Aid
- Steve Coleman from Trustees
- Kathy Brandt from Finance and Stewardship

The resignations were **ACCEPTED**.

Harry Massey also brought the following nominations:

- Maurice Boyd as co-Liaison to FCNL (member)
- Elaine Wilson as co-Liaison to FCNL (attender)

The nominations were **APPROVED**.

2015/2-10 Recorder's Report

Debby Churchman, Recorder, gave her annual report, which is attached. She reported that due to a balancing of the incoming and outgoing members, the membership in the Meeting has remained fairly constant, which is an improvement over the last few years when our numbers have been in decline.

The report was **ACCEPTED**.

2015/1-11 Friends **APPROVED** the minutes.

2015/1-12 The Meeting closed at 2:30 with approximately 27 members in attendance to reconvene as way opens on 8th day Third Month 2015.

Friends Meeting of Washington Guidelines for Safety and the Welcoming of Friends with a History of Sexually Abusing Children

Background

Quakers experience and are therefore convinced that there is that of God, or something of the Divine Spirit or Light, in everyone. This belief is manifested in the testimonies of Integrity, Equality, Community, Simplicity, and Peace, which generally lead us to welcome Friends and strangers to our Meeting community and worship without further inquiry. In the case of persons who may be perceived to pose a threat to the community, we need to find ways to know them better and understand their situations well enough to manage both possible dangers and our own fears and concerns.

We have developed the following guidelines for including individual worshippers who may have committed child sexual abuse. The guidelines grow out of established Quaker structures and practices for corporate oversight and discernment, such as clearness committees, that can be adapted to maintain the security of our children and honor our values as a Society of Friends community. They complement the Child Safety Policy adopted by the Meeting at our Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business in October 2013.

Guidelines

Sexual offenders fall along a broad spectrum ranging from those who have been convicted and ultimately released to the community to those who have never been identified or prosecuted. These guidelines are intended to address all cases as they become known to us. Individuals adjudicated to have committed sexual abuse and others who may self-identify or become known to us through other means are expected to meet with the Safety and Welcoming Discernment Committee ("SWDC"). The SWDC will be a special committee of 4-6 individuals chosen by the Nominating Committee and composed of Members, Sojourners, Quakers and Attenders of the Meeting who represent but may not

be limited to, the Child Safety, Religious Education, and Healing & Reconciliation Committees. Nominating will select individuals with an eye toward the Meeting's dual concerns for safety and welcoming.

Upon being contacted by or learning of the presence in our community of an individual with a history of sexually abusing children, the SWDC will notify the Clerk and Alternate Clerk of the Meeting of the contact and will meet with the individual to explore his or her needs and expectations. Members of the SWDC agree to honor and protect the individual's privacy within the confines of the law. The committee is responsible for getting to know the individual's history and character well enough to evaluate concerns raised by proposed participation in the FMW community, form a plan for managing those concerns, and assist in putting that plan into effect. It will inquire into details of the individual's history of child sexual abuse, views regarding that history, treatment experience, legal status, reasons for wishing to join our community, and aspirations for his or her role and level of participation in FMW.

Together, the SWDC and the individual will decide on the terms of that person's participation in FMW activities. Those terms may range from total exclusion from the community to unrestricted inclusion under the terms of the current Child Safety Policy, although most such individuals will be expected to agree to avoid direct interaction with children at the Meeting and refrain from volunteering for or participating in First Day School activities. The process and the agreement will be tailored to the individual and may include specific procedures (e.g., having an escort at meeting events at which children are expected to be present). The procedures and limits may be adjusted or terminated with the mutual agreement of the SWDC and the individual. In exigent circumstance, or if the committee is unable to reach agreement with the individual concerning procedures and limits, or the individual cannot or will not cooperate, the SWDC may, in consultation with the Clerk, decide to take steps outside of this process to protect the community. This may include the committee communicating restrictions on the individual's participation in Meeting activities.

If the parties agree that such support is needed or desired, the SWDC will appoint a support group to work with the individual for as long as he/she and the support group consider necessary. The support group will include responsible members of the community who agree to safeguard the privacy of the supported individual and to continue in service with that person. The support group will provide both practical and spiritual assistance to the individual, especially in cases of persons who have been in prison and are attempting to rejoin the larger community. If desired by the supported individual or recommended by the SWDC to protect the children of the Meeting and as protection from unwarranted accusation, members of the support group will escort the supported individual at Meeting events in which children are expected to be present. Ultimate authority resides with the SWDC to act on behalf of the meeting with regard to procedures and limits to protect the community. All decisions of the SWDC will be recorded in minutes and reported to the Trustees of Friends Meeting of Washington.

Community Responsibilities

As with other aspects of our Meeting, members and attenders share responsibility for ensuring the safety of our children and welcoming newcomers to our community. Each of us is responsible for helping to ensure that ***no child will be alone with an adult who is not their parent while he or she is on Meeting property or engaged in a Meeting activity***, the guiding principle of the Child Safety Policy. Any person who becomes aware of a problem or has reason to suspect a problem that may endanger a child should share that concern with the Clerk or Alternate Clerk of the Meeting or the Clerk of the Child Safety Committee. Parents are asked to talk with their children about child sexual abuse, safety and safe conduct at Meeting activities. The Child Safety Committee will provide assistance to any parents who seek support on how to speak with their children about this issue. Affirming our belief in the Light in each individual, the community expects individuals who have

feelings of sexual attraction to children to reach out to a member of the SWDC. Each of us is called upon to work in concert to make our community the joyous, safe and welcoming haven we want it to be.

Friends Meeting of Washington

Trustees 2014 Annual Report and Auditor's Review of Meeting Financial Statements for FY 2014

February 2015

The Trustees are legally responsible for holding the Meeting's assets in trust for the benefit of the Meeting's members and for assuring that the Meeting fulfills the intent and purposes of its founders and donors. The assets includes our buildings, land, and investments.

Highlights of Fiscal Year 2014 —

- The state of our financial and physical assets continued to improve. Financial assets grew by \$312 thousand, and work continued on building renovation and catching up with deferred maintenance.
- Spending on property grew, compared to earlier years, but revenue from property grew even more. Other revenue and spending was fairly stable. The cash deficit from Meeting operations and property capital investments, not including the renovation project, was the lowest in a decade and investment gains contributed \$294 thousand.
- Trustees began work on plans to finance the planned \$2 million renovation to address accessibility, circulation, and storm water management and flooding issues.
- The continuing decline in unrestricted contributions to FMW is a concern. In FY 2014, donations for Meeting operations was \$201 thousand. As in past years, costs in excess of donations were addressed by spending a portion of the Meeting's revenue earned from our savings at Friends Fiduciary. As the ten year chart below shows, Meeting costs for operations and capital spending over the last ten years have resulted in a net cash flow of minus \$578 thousand. Fortunately, investment earnings from Friends Fiduciary totaled about \$1.09 million. The Meeting budgets a portion of that revenue, generally about \$80 thousand per year, to support Meeting activities.

FY 2014 Accountant's Review —

The Meeting engages independent auditors to conduct a full audit every third year and an audit review, which is less in scope, in other years.

The auditors, McQuade Brennan LLP, conducted a financial review of the Meeting's records for the past fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2014, that stated, "based on the review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

The FY 2013 full Audit reported that, "in the Auditor's opinion, the Meeting's June 30, 2013 financial statements presented our financial condition fairly in all material respects, and that Meeting records are maintained in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States."

This report includes a copy of the Financial Statements and the Independent Auditors Review for the Meeting's Fiscal Year 2014, ending June 30, 2014.

This report summarizes the Meeting's financial situation and recent financial history. The report presents the information in a cash-oriented format that will, we hope, be accessible to Friends. The report draws on information from the FY 2014 review and previous reviews and audits, supplemented by details from unaudited reports. The Trustees wish to thank Neil Froemming for helping prepare this report which we hope will display the Meeting's financial situation in a more accessible and understandable format.

Copies of the full financial reviews and audits are available in the Library. Electronic copies are posted on the Meeting's website at: www.quakersdc.org/Finance_and_Stewardship

On the next page is a table showing the factors that affected the Meeting's cash and investment balances over the last decade. Ten-year totals are in the column at the far right. The bottom line sets out the year-to-year changes in our cash and investment balance. This shows that our results are generally positive (except for the market crash of 2008-9) and that we have saved more than half a million dollars during the last ten years and can reasonably expect to do well in the future.

Sources of Funds —

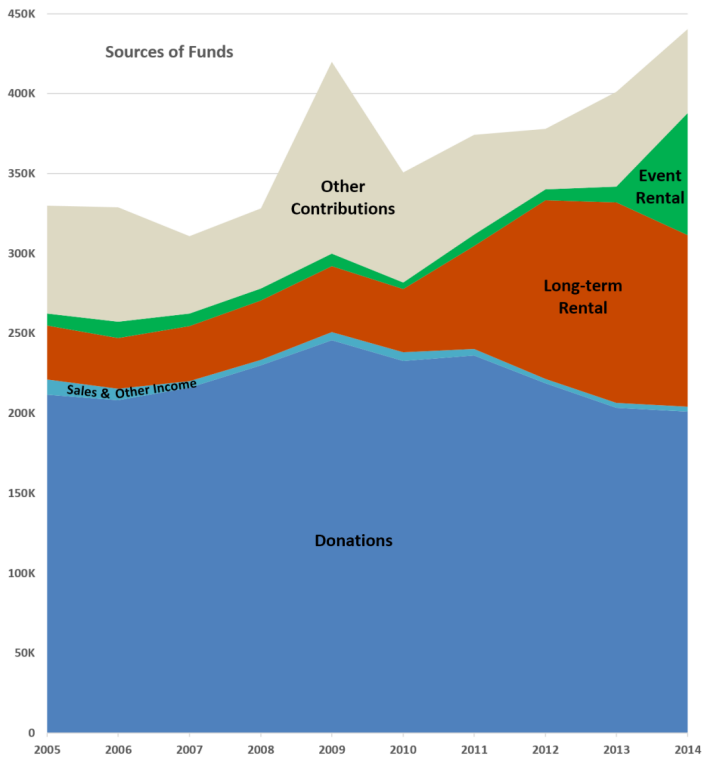
Donations to support Meeting operations were down slightly in FY 2014, at \$201 thousand.

Other contributions totaled \$53 thousand. These are contributions that are earmarked for specific Meeting projects, such as the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship, Personal Aid Fund, and the Shoebox Project.

A major shift in recent years has been the rapid increase in space rental income — up from \$44 thousand in FY 2010 to \$184 thousand in FY 2014, thanks to extensive renovations and outreach by Property Committee and staff.

Long-term rentals were down in FY 2014 due to the departure of a major tenant, but short-term event rentals were up from \$10 thousand in FY 2013 to \$76 thousand, thanks to the welcome extended by Debby Churchman in the newly created part-time position of Events Manager.

We currently share Quaker House and Carriage House space with seven office tenants, of which the largest four are non-profit organizations. We expect current levels of property revenue to continue or increase moderately, except during the major construction anticipated in 2015.



Fiscal Years (July 1 – June 30):	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2005-14
Income											
Donations	211,561	208,080	215,950	230,107	245,597	232,756	236,267	218,913	203,273	201,102	2,203,604
Other contributions	67,580	71,641	48,374	50,004	120,004	68,640	62,251	37,930	59,386	52,553	638,364
Long-term rental income	33,835	31,412	34,383	37,308	41,293	39,715	64,313	111,522	125,220	107,531	626,532
Event rental income	7,394	10,419	7,812	7,475	7,959	4,084	7,323	6,829	9,893	76,418	145,605
Sales & other income	9,513	7,425	4,217	3,210	5,087	5,403	4,032	2,698	3,269	2,847	47,701
Total income	329,883	328,977	310,736	328,104	419,940	350,597	374,186	377,892	401,041	440,451	3,661,806
Spending											
Personnel, office, other expenses	191,608	235,120	202,192	196,527	197,333	166,740	133,965	170,671	158,395	197,327	1,849,878
Program spending	69,890	92,152	70,157	73,953	78,869	87,963	103,289	73,671	63,626	59,560	773,130
Baltimore Yearly Meeting support	43,500	44,250	48,750	56,250	59,500	57,635	59,785	61,740	58,315	57,715	547,440
Utilities	25,704	23,076	24,062	23,455	29,276	23,421	19,958	19,301	19,161	22,040	229,454
Maintenance & repair	14,678	15,973	20,784	19,880	31,747	37,139	28,878	54,867	46,331	38,751	309,028
Cleaning & trash removal	18,186	20,022	17,184	14,346	16,650	16,848	16,838	19,709	21,644	22,845	184,272
Property tax								21,412	22,613	23,405	67,430
Insurance & other site costs	8,890	10,781	12,926	15,006	14,687	15,683	16,583	15,079	12,625	13,783	136,043
Property capital spending	2,427				18,914		40,251	44,690	18,401	48,148	172,831
Total Property spending	69,885	69,852	74,956	72,686	111,274	93,091	122,508	175,057	140,775	168,973	1,099,057
Current account adjustments	-13,792	-12,312	19,847	-8,471	5,816	8,277	2,296	-48,538	29,492	-12,458	-29,843
Total spending	361,091	429,062	415,902	390,945	452,792	413,706	421,843	432,601	450,603	471,117	4,239,662
Net Cash from Operations	-31,209	-100,085	-105,166	-62,841	-32,853	-63,109	-47,657	-54,709	-49,562	-30,666	-577,856
Cash + Investments BOY	1,749,748	1,856,722	1,991,067	2,098,628	1,915,424	1,545,387	1,654,809	1,894,003	1,844,326	1,978,026	1,749,748
Cash from operations	-31,209	-100,085	-105,166	-62,841	-32,853	-63,109	-47,657	-54,709	-49,562	-30,666	-577,856
Capital Campaign contributions	-	53,050	5,109	700	-	40,924	1,450	1,200	36,250	112,532	251,214
Renovation Project planning	-	-	-	-	-45,043	-44,124	-9,181	-15,000	-45,022	-63,643	-222,013
Investment Gain	138,183	181,380	207,618	-121,063	-292,141	175,732	294,582	18,833	192,034	293,633	1,088,791
Cash + Investments EOY	1,856,722	1,991,067	2,098,628	1,915,424	1,545,387	1,654,809	1,894,003	1,844,326	1,978,026	2,289,882	2,289,882
Change in Cash & Investments	106,974	134,346	107,561	-183,204	-370,038	109,422	239,194	-49,677	133,701	311,856	540,134

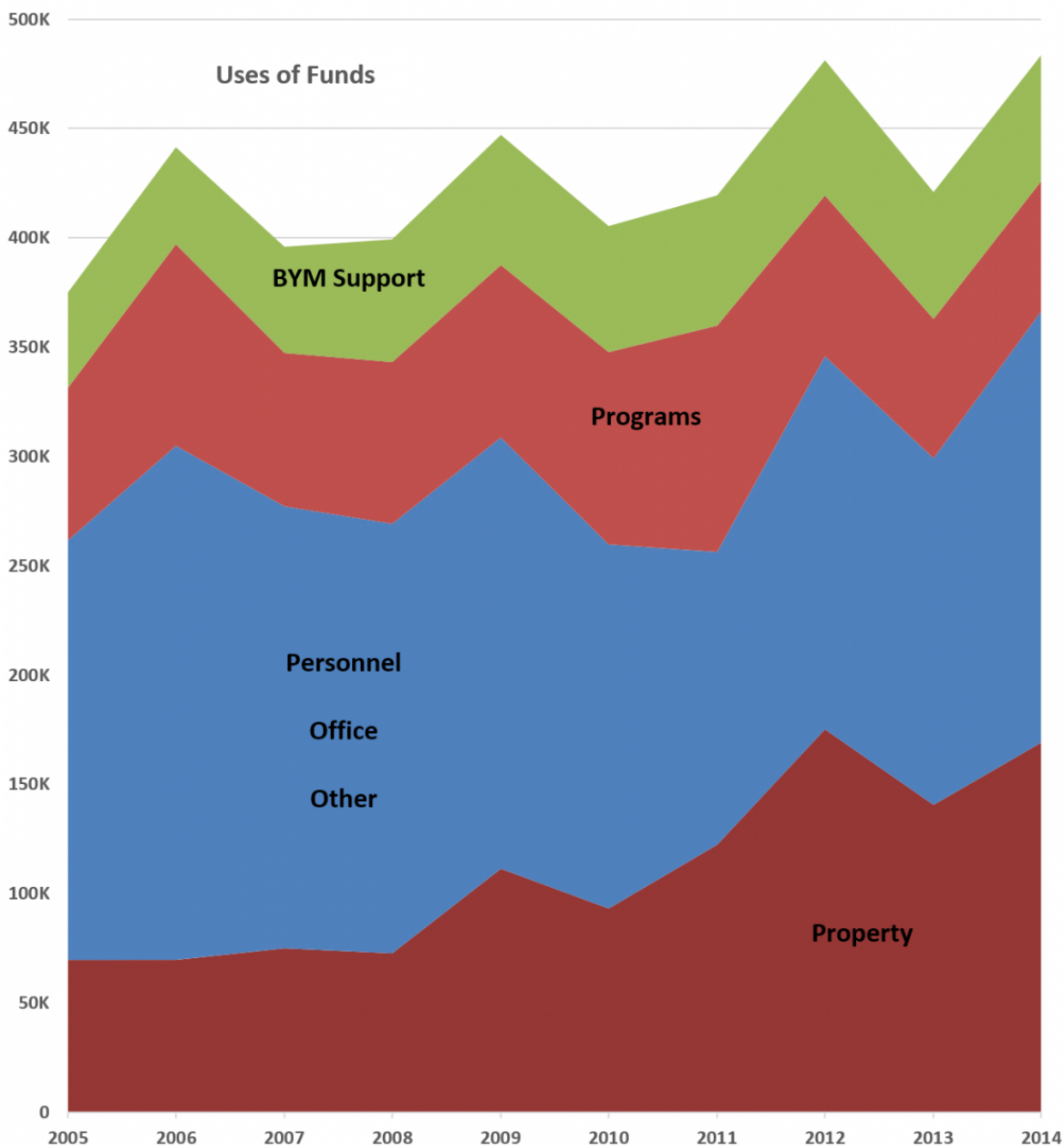
Uses of Funds —

The recent gains in property revenue have supported large increases in property-related spending, which has risen sharply in recent years from \$93 thousand in FY 2010 to \$189 thousand in FY 2014. This understates growing property costs, since a large and rising portion of personnel and office expenses are related to property management.

The increased spending has enabled the Property Committee to address deferred maintenance issues and make major renovations.

The Meeting continues to make steady progress in improving the care, stewardship, and programmatic capacity of its buildings and campus and has taken several steps to prepare for the planned major construction project to improve access to our campus.

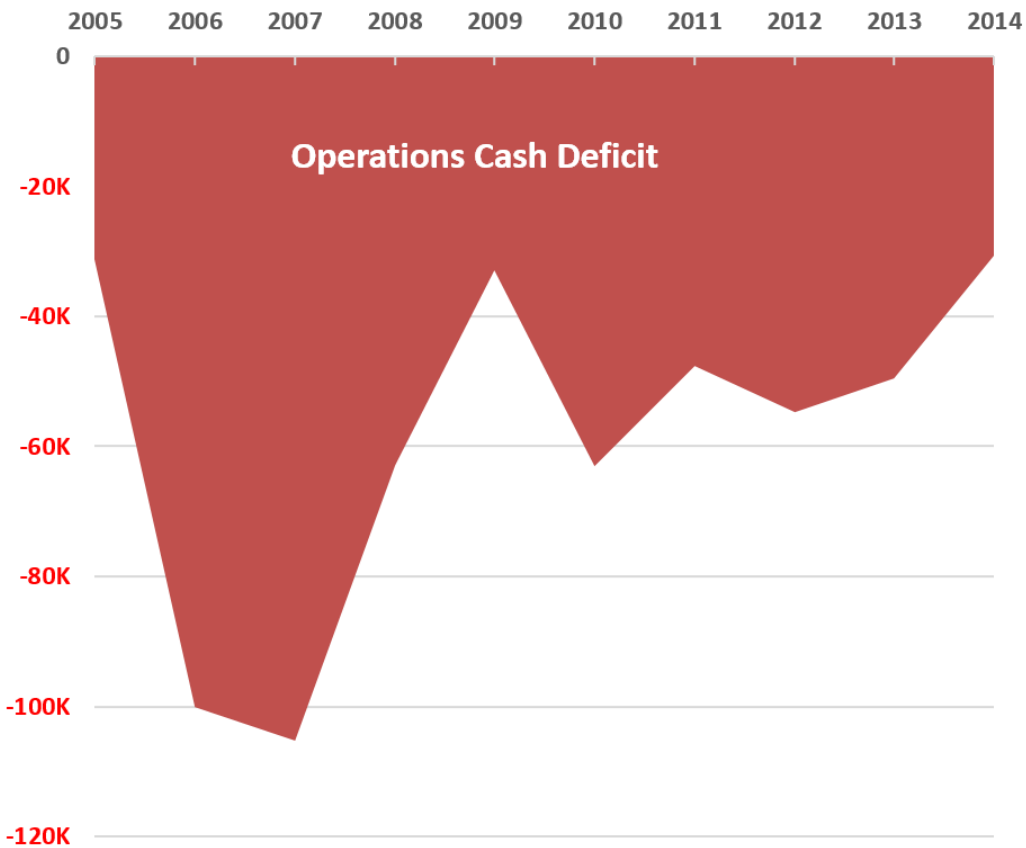
In May, for example, the Meeting approved spending of up to \$125 thousand to complete the conversion of the Quaker House and Carriage HVAC systems from hot water radiators and window air conditioners to zoned heat pumps.



There have been several important shifts in our financial patterns, compared to earlier years. Comparing FY 2014 results to the average of FY 2005-2010, we find that property income is up by \$140 thousand, while donations and other income are down by \$44 thousand. Total income is up by almost \$100 thousand.

Spending is up, but not as much. Property spending is up by \$87 thousand, but other spending is down by \$26 thousand. Total spending is thus up by about \$61 thousand.

The result has been a positive shift in the bottom line. Although FY 2014 operations spending was the highest in ten years, the resulting cash flow deficit of \$31 thousand was the lowest.



Although operations spending exceeds income from donations and space use revenue, our savings (cash and investments) continue to grow, adding \$312 thousand in FY 2014, to rise from \$1.98 million to \$2.29 million.

This is mostly because our investments had another very good year, contributing a gain of \$294 thousand. Friends' contributions to the Capital Campaign Fund also added to year-end balances by exceeding renovation spending by \$49 thousand.

Our investments play a major role in our finances, contributing over \$1 million in the past decade.

This contribution has been very positive, but irregular. As a result, our cash and investment balances *declined* by \$204 thousand in the five years from FY 2005 to FY 2009 and then went up \$975 thousand in the following five years:

Investment Gain/Loss



Meeting Assets —

The chart at right shows the breakdown of Meeting Assets at the end of FY 2014.

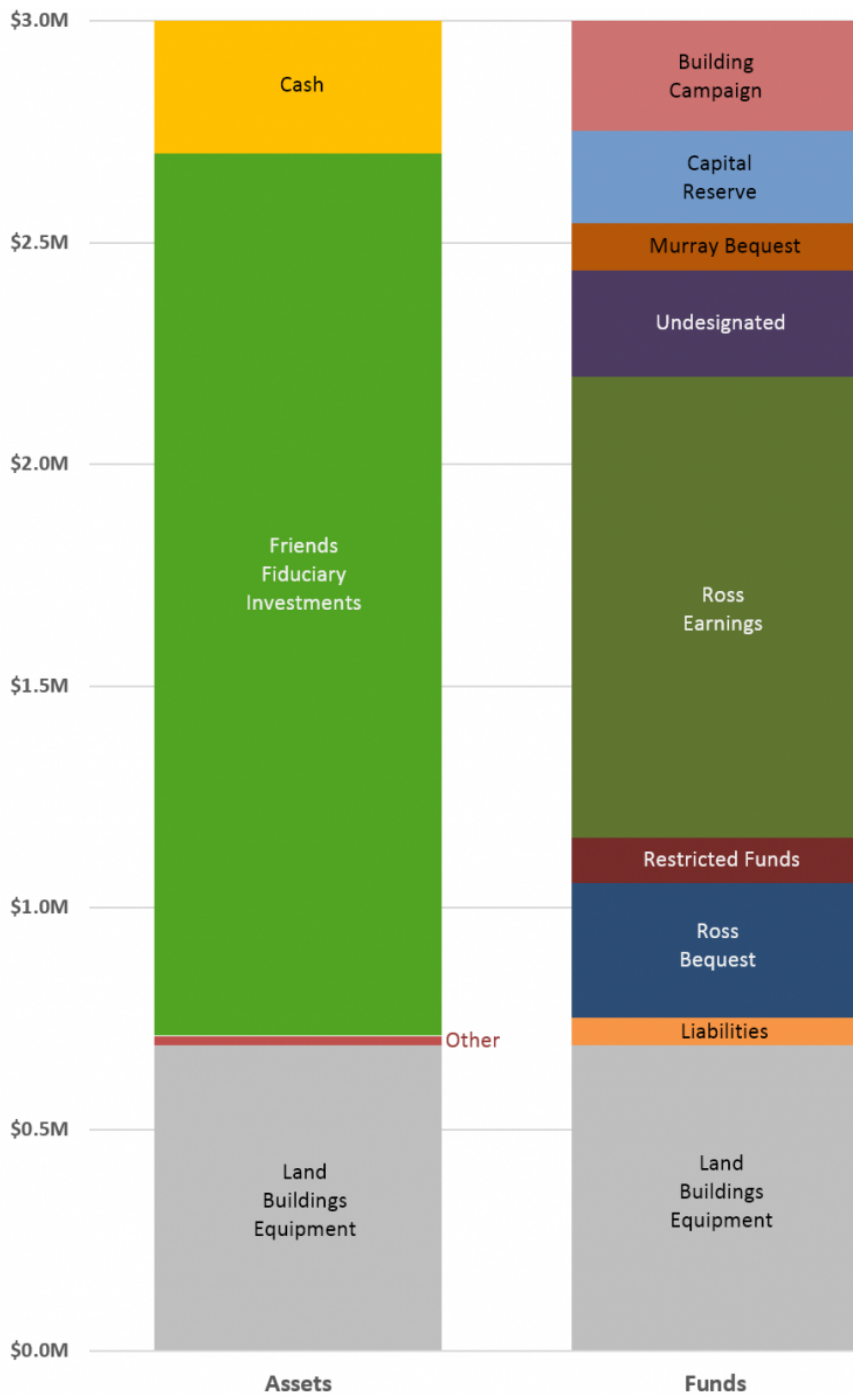
The bar on the left shows how we hold our assets. The major components are mostly cash, \$300 thousand, investments in Friends Fiduciary, \$1.99 million, and fixed assets — land, buildings, equipment at \$690 thousand.

Our land and buildings are worth a lot more than the book value we show on our financial statements. The District assessed our property at over \$12 million in 2014. Since we were not being taxed on any portion of our property before then and have no plans to sell the place, this wasn't important until the District started taxing us on part of the property because we rent some of our space to non-profits that do charitable work outside DC. With the invaluable help from Steve Coleman, Neil Froemming and others, we protested that valuation was way too high, since historical preservation rules and our covenants severely restrict the commercial value of the land. The 2014 valuation was reduced to about \$8 million and, while outside of the scope of this FY 2104 report, the proposed 2015 assessment has been further reduced to \$5.8 million, which should reduce our property tax bill in FY 2015.

The bar on the right shows how we categorize our funds. The land and buildings are still land and buildings, but the cash and investments are divided up according to how we plan to use them (or not use them).

The Liabilities represent funds on hand which we owe to others, so that amount is not available for spending. The original amount of the Ross Bequest funds are also not available for spending under the terms of the bequest. However, the earnings of the bequest are available for spending, with Trustees' approval.

The restricted funds are money dedicated to particular projects, such



as the Simpson Scholarship Fund and the Shoebox Fund, and not available for other uses.

Above that are funds we can spend for meeting operations or renovations, including undesignated funds, the remaining Murray Bequest funds, and the accumulated earnings from the Ross Bequest.

While the Meeting could, in theory, spend all of those funds on such things as the planned major renovation project, Trustees have decided that we need to retain those funds for the present, because the Meeting relies on income from the funds to maintain its financial stability.

The Building Campaign Fund represents funds raised for our major renovation project and ended FY 2014 at \$249 thousand. Those funds will be spent when construction begins this year.

The Capital Reserve is money set aside for Property Committee use to support major capital spending on the property for maintenance and renovations. The reserve fund balance usually averages around \$100 thousand, but ended FY 2014 at \$209 thousand, largely because of extra funding transferred to it from the Murray Bequest for the HVAC project mentioned above.

Capital Improvement Project —

Much of the work of Trustees during FY 2014 was related to analyzing and reporting about the Meeting financial situation and considering how to pay for the approximately \$2 million cost of the construction project, given our current financial situation and past and projected future fundraising.

In April, Trustees recommended and the Meeting approved spending \$80,000 of the accrued appreciation from the Ross bequest to pay for the architects to produce detailed construction documents that would then be used to solicit bids and for the design of the project.

In May, Trustees asked Merry Pearlstein, Tom Goodhue, and Ed Husted to gather information on how Meeting investments might be used to help secure financing for the construction process, and to present the costs and benefits of various options to finance the construction. This research was presented to Meeting for Business in September 2014, and the Meeting approved fund raising, borrowing, and spending for the project.

Appreciation —

The Trustees wish to thank Laurie Wilner, Meeting bookkeeper, without whose help this report – and Meeting books and records – would not be complete. We also thank Debby Churchman, who is a delight to work with and who really understands FMW from the inside, and Ken Orvis, who has managed our property so well.

We have appreciated the close and friendly working relationship with the Finance and Stewardship committee. Jim Bell, former clerk of that committee, is also a member of Trustees – which means that he had twice as many meetings to attend. His advice, counsel and support have been an important part of our committee work. Ed Husted, Meeting Financial Coordinator, also has helped Trustees over the past year.

Finally, the Trustees and the entire Meeting community owe the Capital Improvement Task Force and its clerks Merry Pearlstein and Neil Froemming our gratitude. Without their work and commitment to the Meeting, we would have found the task of designing, financing and generally shepherding the upcoming Meeting renovation much more difficult.

We are all grateful for everyone's support and help.

We are also deeply grateful for all the f/Friends – children, members, attenders, visitors, staff, partners, contractors, volunteers, and, especially, all the Meeting committee members – who continue to help lead our community into the Light.

The Trustees would like to thank Steve Coleman and Susan Lepper for their service on Trustees and for the enormous contributions each has made to the work of the committee.

In the Light,

— The Friends Meeting of Washington Trustees

Virginia Avanesyan

Jim Bell

Mary Campbell

Dan Dozier (Clerk)

Bill Foskett

Tom Goodhue

Mark Haskell

John Scales

Martha Solt

Faith Williams

Healing and Reconciliation Committee

Annual Report – February 3, 2015

As described in the Friends Meeting of Washington Handbook,

The Healing and Reconciliation Committee consists of members of the FMW Community asked to respond immediately, or after an event or situation, to limit any hurtful behavior in Meeting-related settings and to initiate processes of healing and reconciliation. Through its interactions with individuals, the Committee complements efforts of the Ministry and Worship Committee, which gives special attention to the overall spiritual state of the Meeting and its Meetings for Worship. The Healing and Reconciliation Committee undertakes activities such as the interruption of hurtful exchanges, active listening to help find ways toward spirit-led harmony in situations of conflict, and taking actions to foster healing and reconciliation. In addition to addressing specific incidents and situations that arise, the Committee may work more generally to nurture the spiritual state of the Meeting as it relates to the way we address and resolve conflicts, and to help make our peace testimony a reality in the life of the Meeting community. The Committee may recommend long-term actions to the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business and other Meeting Committees, but it does not itself undertake any actions other than those directed toward healing and reconciliation.

Because our work is confidential, it can be discussed only in general terms. We interact with individuals and groups involved in misunderstandings or conflicts which have caused hurt or distress. Our work is intended to foster a more loving and integrated spiritual community through the resolution of, or at least a clearer understanding of, our individual differences and challenges. Like our FMW Meeting Community as a whole, we hold one another in the light and we listen attentively to learn more about how we can foster healing and reconciliation.

During the year we have given much attention to verbal and electronic communications that have wounded individuals in our community. We have sought to assure that individuals causing hurt are fully aware of the impact of their actions and encouraged to be caring and attentive to Divine guidance. We have also sought to explain to wounded individuals and the FMW community (particularly newcomers) that, as Quakers, we often are presented with the challenge and opportunity of welcoming individuals who see and interact differently with “the world” and other individuals. We do not see this difference as a “pass” to allow insensitivity and hurtfulness but only as an element of our understanding.

Constantly over the year, the Healing and Reconciliation Committee has worked closely with other committees charged to foster harmony and provide support to our Meeting and its members and attenders. In particular, we have worked with Personal Aid, Child Safety, and Ministry and Worship as these committees, the Meeting Co-Clerks, and others have undertaken efforts to protect our children while also welcoming individuals who have troubling histories including child sexual abuse.

Also working with others, our committee helped encourage the Meeting Community to more fully understand “eldering” as an expression of compassion and concern which can be important in spiritual growth for individuals and our community as a whole. This effort continues and is likely never to be fully complete. We ask everyone to bring an open heart and mind to this discernment effort so that we can receive Divine Guidance on elderying as a form of spiritual nurturing.

Our committee continues to struggle with appropriate ways to prevent or interrupt hurtful behavior. We acknowledge that many wish for more direct and prompt measures in response to actions that intentionally or unintentionally cause hurt. Others feel there is no unity among modern Friends about the application of individual sanctions. We struggle to assure that all actions taken in response to hurts are undertaken with an awareness of our limitations and a commitment to not over-react to “the uncomfortableness of questioning” that our faith embraces. In this, we recall that among Friends, all of us serve as “ministers” guided by the Spirit; all are asked to hold in the Light the welfare of individuals in our community; and, all are called to nurture the Friends Meeting of Washington as a Loving Community where we interact with caring and respect.

The healing and reconciliation work of the Committee can only be done with the welcoming and participatory engagement of our community and each individual in it. Trust, that we are all working to achieve more care and attentiveness one-for-the-other, is essential.

Diane McDougall and Gray Handley, Co-Clerks, Janet Dinsmore, David Etheridge, Neil Froemming, Ylene Larsen, Ken Orvis, and Zoe Plaughter

Members in 2014 included: Marsha Holliday, Merry Pearlstein, Marcia Reecer, and Shannon Zimmerman

2014 Membership Committee Report

2014 Members: Hayden Wetzal, Clerk, Joan Gildemeister, Joe Izzo, Marcia Reecer, Janet Dinsmore, Maurice Boyd

The Membership Committee is privileged to be the group that helps those considering membership in the Friends Meeting of Washington to explore their spiritual leadings and discern whether they wish to

join. Typically this involves advising on and reviewing application letters; appointment of Friends to meet with the seeker; submitting the applicant's name to the Meeting for Business if the Committee approves membership; appointing welcomers for the new member; processing requests for associate members when children are born or adopted by FMW members; processing requests for transfer in and out of the Meeting including sojourner requests; and reaching out to absent members whenever possible.

Because the decision to formalize a commitment to FMW generally results from heartfelt soul searching on the part of applicants, it is a particular honor for the Membership Committee to share their spiritual journey. Often clarity is reached after a first clearness interview meeting with the individual, but in cases when applicants are new to the Society of Friends, the person is advised to attend Inquirers' Class and become more familiar with Quaker thought and practice before taking on membership. The Committee is preparing a recommended literature list and welcomes suggestions.

Given the small number of Friends who compose the committee, we have

sometimes not been as prompt as we'd like in responding to requests. It is our intention to act quickly in acknowledging applications, arranging clearness interview meetings and welcomes. Debby Churchman, FMW Administrative Clerk, has been extremely helpful with mailings, background information, and meeting arrangements, as always. We now have a full set of letters covering the activities Membership undertakes. Among other accomplishments over 2014 are: a proposal dealing with associate membership, a mass mailing to absent members, review/editing of the Membership section of the FMW *Handbook*; holding a new member reception; and successful welcoming events for the following new members:

Kiflu Kiddane, Katherine Brandt, Kimberly Acquaviva, and Grayson Acquaviva (associate), who were approved in 2013 and

Shannon Zimmerman, Eugene Throwe, Michael Beer, Kian Beer (associate), Skye Beer (associate), and Gillian Griffith, who were approved in 2014.

In addition to the four new full members and two associate members who joined us in 2014, we were delighted to approve the transfer of John Coleman to FMW from Haverford Monthly Meeting. We look forward to meeting with and welcoming more new Friends over the course of 2015, and are already have in hand letters from several attenders. Please let the Committee know if you would like to serve as a welcomer or have an interest in joining the Committee.

We extend a special thank you to Hayden Wetzel, Joan Gildemeister and Maurice Boyd for their service on the Committee. We miss them all.

Submitted by Marcia Reecer and Janet Dinsmore, co-clerks, Joe Izzo, Rob Farr

Recorder's Report 2014

By year to year count these are the figures for the Meeting's membership as of December 31, 2014.

The figures: According to our database, there are 310 members and 69 associate members, for a total of 379 members. There are 205 members listed as residents, and 105 listed as nonresidents.

Changes in 2014:

On the plus side, we gained five new adult members and two associate members, as well as one transfer in. Total gains equals 8.

On the minus side, two members died, four transferred out, and one resigned. Total losses equals 7.

Our database continues to tell us that we have 8 Sojourners, a number which hasn't changed for a while.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, March 1:

Meeting for Singing begins at 10:00 am in the Meeting Room. All voices welcome. We sing from the hymnal and some hand-out sheets; feel free to bring a song for all to learn.

Puzzled about FMW's Finances? There will be a meeting at Noon in Quaker House Living Room with the Finance and Stewardship Committee to go over trends, history, and the current situation with FMW's finances. Bring your questions and curiosity. All are welcome.

Wednesday, March 4:

The **Grate Patrol** will prepare sandwiches and soup to take out to the city's vulnerable people starting at 5:30. For more information, contact Steve Brooks at sbrooks@uab.edu

Saturday, March 7:



What: We make a pancake breakfast for hundreds of homeless and working poor individuals. These meals are often a gateway to other comprehensive, high-quality social services. For more info: <http://www.some.org/>

Who: 5-7 volunteers like you willing to wake up early on a Saturday!

When: First Saturday of the Month at 6:00am

Where: 71 'O' Street NW (just off North Capital) near Bloomingdale. There is a parking lot next to the building you can use if you drive.

Metro is closed at this time on Saturdays, so if you need a ride,

please let me know.

What to Wear: Closed toed shoes, no tank tops, and a baseball cap, handkerchief or other headgear to keep hair out of the way.

Please RSVP to betsy.bramon@gmail.com or 202-560-1977 by the Thursday before if you can make it.

Sunday, March 8:

A group discussing Debby Irving's book, **Waking Up White**, will meet to consider the third chapter. All are welcome, whether you've attended before or not. This is an intentional space to consider white privilege and its effects on our lives and our community.

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business will continue its consideration of policies regarding Welcoming and Safety, as well as other matters of concern.

Saturday and Sunday, March 14-15

Junior Young Friends Conference, Richmond Friends Meeting (Richmond, VA)

It's the first JYF con (for 6th to 8th graders) of 2015! Please arrive at 10 am with sleeping bag, pad, pillow, change of clothes and toiletries. The theme for this and all weekends during the 2014-15 school year will be "Sense of Self." Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is one week before the conference (March 7). Any one registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend. For more information, contact [Alison Duncan, Youth Programs Manager](#). To register, [go to the JYF Registration page on the Yearly Meeting website](#).

March 14-17



FCNL Spring Lobby Weekend, FCNL Offices (Washington, DC) Registration is open now, and it is a wonderful opportunity for young adults to learn to lobby, understand U.S. climate policy, and connect with hundreds of other young activists. Registration and program details at fcnl.org/slw. Some travel and housing assistance available. For more information, contact Andrew Silva. (andrew@fcnl.org)

Sunday, March 15

The group reading Karen Armstrong's **12 Steps to a Compassionate Life** will meet at noon in the Parlor. All are welcome. For more information, contact Joe Izzo at jizzo4102@gmail.com

The group studying the **Gospel of Mark** will meet at noon in the Terrace Room, using the [Friendly Bible Study approach](#). For more information, contact David Etheridge at david.etheridge@verizon.net

Baltimore Yearly Meeting's **Unity with Nature** Committee has asked all Meetings within BYM to consider ways to make themselves more sustainable, and lighten their carbon footprints. We will convene a meeting to consider [these queries](#) at noon in Quaker House Living Room.

Saturday, March 21

BYM– Interim Meeting, Patapsco Friends Meeting (Ellicott City, MD) Get to know Yearly Meeting Committees and Friends from other Meetings! Be a part of important decision making. Join Friends for morning committee meetings and the afternoon's Interim Business Meeting. Patapsco Friends Meeting is hosting the Third Month Interim Meeting. Friends will begin gathering at 10:00 am. Lunch will be provided, and the afternoon Business Meeting will be held with dinner following the rise of Meeting. [Check the Yearly Meeting website for more information.](#)

BYM's **Unity with Nature Committee** is hosting an Open House during March Interim Meeting from 11:30-1:00. UWN welcomes Friends/friends from all Meetings to share their environmental discernment experiences as they have responded to UWN's 2014 request. The Open House is an opportunity to share Meetings' challenges and successes as the discernment process reveals who we are as Quakers facing today's difficult challenges. At Annual Session 2014 BYM embraced a request that all its Meetings enter a process of discernment on environmental degradation, resource extraction and climate change. Those unable to attend Interim Meeting may also join in this discussion on UWN's new list serve at bym-unity-with-nature@googlegroups.com. All are welcome to participate. The committee can also be contacted via e-mail at bymunitywithnature@gmail.com, and posts about sustainability are welcomed on the UWN Facebook page.

Sunday, March 22

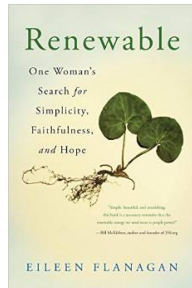
Two Friends will speak about their **Spiritual Journeys**, in the Parlor starting at 9:15. All are welcome.

The **Fibre Party** convenes at noon in the North Room. All those who work with yarn, thread, and fabric are welcome to come, work on a project, and share their joy.

BYM– Annual Travelers' Retreat, Patapsco Friends Meeting (Ellicott City, MD) *Come explore the rich blessings of visiting among Friends. Friends of all sorts, in all places, near and far - and see how this ancient practice is evolving and gaining new vitality. You are invited to the Annual Travelers Retreat, sponsored by the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Intervisitation Program. The Retreat will begin at 12:30 pm and conclude at 4:00.* All are welcome, including those who have traveled among Friends, inside or outside of the Yearly Meeting, including those who have traveled on behalf of Yearly Meeting committees; those who have simply visited Meetings or those who have traveled with a concern, shared a ministry, or offered workshops; those who think they might like to travel among Friends; members of clearness/support committees for travelers; those who have hosted or would like to host visitors; and other interested Friends. For more information or to register, see <http://intervisitation.bym-rsf.net/> or call 626-QUAKERS.

Sunday, March 29

The **School for Friends** will treat us to a delicious lunch at noon in the Assembly Room. School for Friends is an award-winning Quaker preschool started by members of this Meeting. It currently resides at Church of the Pilgrim, our near neighbor.



Eileen Flanagan, the founder of Earth Quaker Action Team, will speak at noon about her book: **Renewable: One Woman's Search for Simplicity, Faithfulness, and Hope**. The book is the story of a spiritual writer and mother of two who, while trying to change the world, unexpectedly finds the courage to change her life. With wit and wisdom, Eileen Flanagan shares the engaging journey that brings her from midlife spiritual crisis to fulfillment and hope—and, briefly, to jail.

THINKING ABOUT RACE(March 2015) – *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson

Human rights lawyer Bryan Stevenson published **Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption** in October 2014. In February 2012 he gave a TED talk on this topic – www.TED.com/talks/bryan_stevenson. The TED introduction to the talk says that Stevenson “shares some hard truths about America's justice system, starting with a massive imbalance along racial lines: a third of the country's black male population has been incarcerated at some point in their lives. These issues, which are wrapped up in America's unexamined history, are rarely talked about with this level of candor, insight and persuasiveness.” At about minute 7 into the talk, Stevenson says this:

“Our system isn't just shaped in ways that are being distorted around race, but also around poverty. We have a system of justice in this country that treats you much better if you're rich and guilty than if you're poor and innocent. Wealth, not culpability, shapes outcomes. And yet we seem to be very comfortable. The politics of fear and anger have made us believe that these are problems that are not our problems. We have become disconnected.”

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaisons 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, 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.

RANDOM HAPPENINGS



Various Friends are handling the cold in vastly different ways. Inveterate traveler **Michael North** took off for San Juan, while **Jean Harman** went to Cabo San Lucas in Baja California, temperature 68 degrees. **Virginia Avanesyan**, ignoring the weather report, went to Madison, Wisconsin to look after her mother. **Jim Bell**, woodworker extraordinaire, produced both a small sewing table and a hallway table in the Shaker style, and offered these to anyone who would give a substantial donation to the Capital Campaign (thanks, Jim!). **Alan Kellogg**, coming to the end of his Peace Corps stint in Indonesia, will

be meeting up with his family in Europe soon (but not too soon, one hopes—Springtime in Paris would be nice, Alan). And **Molly Tully**, who had been safely ensconced in sunny Florida, decided to come home to get her new knee looked at. Bad timing.



Here's how **Josh Wilson** dealt with his winter blues.

Even though it was screaming cold, February turned out to be a fun month at FMW. The Marriage & Family Relations Committee held their first ever **Singles Night** (“More Than Friends”), which was well-attended by single folk in a range of ages and Meetings. They did some ice breakers, played some games, and had a good time talking about the special issues of being a single Quaker in D.C. M&FR is talking about doing another one of these; stay tuned.

Meanwhile, the **First Day School** went **skiing** in Pennsylvania, and the **Young Adult Friends** held an all-day retreat, which they do more or less annually, and had a good time doing so. The potluck, I am told, was epic. Several groups of **Friendly Sixes** got organized and started to meet, and Virginia Avanesyan is convening new groups of **Friendly 8s** to gather families together.

In terms of event space rental, we took on some very fun groups in February. The **Children's Art Studio** brought in kids during school holidays to learn design and painting—exceptionally nice children, by the way, and a good teacher with a low-key approach. The **Family Farm Coalition** brought small farmers from around the country for a 3-day intensive workshop, mostly about the Farm Bill. They also brought locally raised meat including the best ham that Ken and I have ever tasted in our lives, and used a terrific caterer who went out of his way to get locally sourced everything. Farmers really know how to eat well. Then the **Literacy Lab**, which uses Americorps volunteers to tutor readers in the D.C. public school system, did an all-day retreat, and definitely made a joyful noise doing so.

In Recent Gossip news, beloved elder **Maurice Boyd** writes:

I would like to report that our young member **Kate Gould**, Legislative Associate for Middle East Policy at FCNL, was recently interviewed on the topic of what the US policy should be regarding ISIS on **Bill O'Reilly's Fox News** show on national TV. I was quite pleased that Kate kept her cool in the face of O'Reilly's persistent devil's advocate approach, begging for U.S. armed response to this group. Kate and fellow pacifist **Jim Wallis** of Sojourners kept trying to present the pacifist position, and held their own against the rantings of O'Reilly, I believe.

Now, as to why I have been in such little attendance at FMW (coming only once in the past year or so in response to a special invitation honoring old timers) this is engendered by several reasons. Possibly the most prominent one is that it's difficult for me to be awake in time for the 10:30 hour of worship. I don't see this changing very much in the future, at age 81.

Elsewise, FMW seems to be in a period of quiet discernment. At the Meeting for Business for February, March and April, we are spending 30 minutes per meeting to reflect on policies concerning welcoming and safety. The Property Committee, which has been dealing with internal conflicts, is going through a series of Listening Sessions to try to understand the issues and discern way forward. Trustees, the Capital Improvement Taskforce, and staff are meeting to figure out how to manage the day to day logistics of the upcoming renovation. And the Ministry & Worship Committee is conducting a series of focus groups and an online survey to find out what issues are most of concern to Friends at FMW. As **Faith Williams** says, "We are facing a lot of big issues that have brought many Meetings to their knees. We should just give ourselves a big hug for doing this, and hang in there with each other."

- Debby