

# FMW Newsletter, May 2014

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## Friends Meeting of Washington

### Order of Worship

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

April 2014

#### Queries

Do you make time for meditation, prayer and worship? Do you read the Bible, the writings of Friends, and other inspirational works, seeking new light? Do you regularly seek God's guidance? Are you open to guidance and support and do you give thanks for them? Do you share your spiritual insights with others and willingly receive from them in turn?

#### Advices

The Society of Friends arose out of personal experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. The conviction that God can and does speak to all human conditions enabling, directing and working through us is at the center of Quaker faith and practice.

The Divine Spirit, which Friends variously call the Inner Light, the Light of Truth, the Christ Within, That of God in Everyone, has power to reveal, to overcome evil, and to enable us to carry out God's will. Quaker testimonies arise from listening to and obeying this Spirit.

Quaker faith welds the beliefs of its Christian foundation with the conviction that the Holy Spirit speaks to men and women and children of all races at all times. It draws individuals into a community of worship and of work for the redemption and improvement of human life. A Friends Meeting should be such a community. It should involve frequent, regular coming together in a common spiritual search, with members sharing experiences and insights, and finding the channels of service to which we are called individually and collectively. Baltimore Yearly Meeting

## **Voices**

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* - Hebrews 11:1

I think a quiet spirit before the Lord and not always looking out for "concerns," but knowing how to be still, is a very great point in the religious life. - Elizabeth Fry, 1847

Friends find their essential unity in their profound and exhilarating belief in the pervasive presence of God and in the continuing responsibility of each person and worshipping group to seek the leading of the Spirit in all things. Obedience to the leading of that Spirit rather than to any written statement of belief or conduct is the obligation of their faith. - New England Yearly Meeting, 1985

## **2014/1-4 Welcome of Visitors**

Meeting for Business opened with 29 present. Friends welcomed visitor Michael Gilbert from Philadelphia Monthly Meeting on Arch Street.

## **2014/2-4 Clerk's Report**

- *Marriage of Jenny Moore and Scott Cunningham on April 12<sup>th</sup>.*
- *DC Emancipation Day Celebration, 16 April 2014. There will be a recognition/celebration at Walter Pierce Park at 6 pm.*
- *BYM annual session – 3 first-time-attenders certificates are available.*
- *There will be **two community gatherings** at which everyone will get to share their desires, expectations and concerns regarding **child safety and the treatment of sex offenders**. These meetings will take place on **Friday April 25<sup>th</sup>** at 6 pm, and **Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>** at 12:30 pm and both will start off with potluck meals. We hope you can join us at one of those meetings. Please sign up using the Doodle poll in the announcements to choose which meeting you will attend. It is not necessary to attend both of these meetings, as the topics covered at each will be the same.*

### **2014/3-4 Major items**

Anne Harper from Ministry and Worship presented the Spiritual State of the Meeting for the second reading. After the first reading, a meeting was hosted by Ministry and Worship to discuss issues and concerns raised by the spiritual state of the meeting survey and the report was presented at the Committee of Clerks Meeting. MfB **approved** the report.

### **2014/4-4 Milestones**

Marney Akins passed away on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014. A Memorial Meeting for her will be held on May 10<sup>th</sup> at noon. The Clerk proposed Riley Robinson to write the memorial minute for Marney Akins with input from Molly Tully. The proposal was **approved**.

The Memorial Minute for James Akins was **approved**.

### Membership Committee - Joe Izzo

- Second presentation of membership for Michael Beer. Membership was **approved**.
- Associate membership for Kian JOSH Thomasbeer was **approved**.
- Associate membership for Skye KAELE Thomasbeer was **approved**.
- The transfer of membership of John Coleman from Haverford Monthly Meeting was presented for the first time. The transfer will be held over for one month, as is our custom.

The issue of associate membership is still being considered by the membership committee, which is consulting with other relevant committees. There was an extended discussion as to the process by which we help our associate members determine whether or not they wish to become full members as adults or pursue another course. There was a lack of clarity around both current practices and how they might be changed. The Membership Committee is currently working to develop a process for communicating with – and welcoming - our associate members in ways that go beyond the letters we send as they approach age 25.

## **2014/4-5 Other business**

### Personal Aid Committee– Pam Callard

Personal Aid Committee presented their Annual Report. Personal Aid focuses on providing practical assistance focusing on short term needs as well as Meeting-wide initiatives such as the Emergency Information form, provision of an AED, a First Aid workshop, and Scholarships. Personal Aid issued a request for more volunteers. The report was **accepted**.

### Nominating Committee - Beth Cogswell

- Nomination of Nicole Else-Quest for Child Safety Committee. Friends **approved** this nomination.
- Nomination of Montague Kern for co-clerk of Personal Aid (through Dec 2016). Friends **approved** this nomination.
- Nomination of Jim Steen for co-clerk of Personal Aid (through Dec 2014). Friends **approved** this nomination.
- Nomination of Michael Cronin to continue on the School for Friends board, (through June 2015). Friends **approved** this nomination.

### Committee of Clerks – Dan Dozier

Dan Dozier from the Committee of Clerks proposed two changes to the Handbook.

The first proposed change would allow the Committee of Clerks to allow other clerks, not already listed on the Committee of Clerks list (clerks from task forces and ad hoc committees), to participate on the Committee of Clerks at the discretion of the Clerk. After concerns were expressed, the Committee of Clerks, decided to layover the issue until this fall.

The second change requested was shifting policy statements out of the Handbook proper, into the direct control of committees. One example of this is the 'Duties of Committee Clerks" Appendix 8. It

was decided that this issue will also lay over until this fall.

**2014/4-6 Minutes**, Friends **approved** the minutes

**2014/4-7** The Meeting closed with approximately 27 members in attendance.

### **The Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW)**

#### **2013 Spiritual State of the Meeting**

***“The Meeting is as active as I have seen it in the 40 years I have been a member. Wonderful to see it come alive as it has in the past few years.”***

During the first months of 2014, 55 FMW Members, Attenders and Sojourners shared their thoughts about the spiritual state of our Meeting. While a majority of these respondents worship at the 10:30 First Day gathering in the Meeting House, more than one-third meet for worship at 9:00 in the Parlor or at 10:30 in Quaker House. Our two other weekly worship groups also were represented. Of these Friends who shared their views, more than half find that the Spirit prospers “well for us collectively” and another one-third feel the Spirit prospers “well for them individually while less well collectively.” The majority feels that FMW well supports our spiritual growth particularly through: the time we spend with one another, Meetings for Worship, First Day School, memorial meetings, and the Young Adult Friends group. Many of us also find the Spirit manifested in: study groups, Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business, committee work, and Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Marriage.

***“I was impressed with the great community connectedness of Washington meeting... and how well organized the meeting is in all that it does. I have been telling others... how impressed I was [with] the way the meeting is responding to community needs and is so welcoming and affirming.”***

Many feel a deep appreciation for the variety of worship, service and community engagement opportunities at FMW. There is a general feeling that FMW grew spiritually during 2013 through: a focus on the inclusion of children and young people, fellowship opportunities, invigoration of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, and by reaching unity on how we will make our buildings fully accessible. For some there is a sense of trust and caring that allows both “friendly and difficult conversations”, such that “honest speaking seems to be cultivated” at FMW. Many consider FMW their spiritual home, retreat, haven, refuge and beloved community. Still, there are lingering concerns about our ability to welcome all seekers, in particular individuals with difficult histories, while maintaining FMW as a safe, nurturing spiritual home for all.

***“FMW – big, and sometimes jumbled and fractured, but with pockets of real beauty, joy and community.”“A bit crazy and annoying, like any good family.”“A quietly supportive community that requires significant patience and an investment of time to realize and feel the sense of community.”***

Ours is a large and diverse community with many outspoken, assertive individuals, and some with physical and mental challenges. Most of us welcome this diversity but it also can challenge us to quiet our inner voices and listen deeply to one another with openness and generosity. Some feel that FMW is particularly burdened by an abundance of vocal messages that seem pre-planned or self-serving, and by electronic messages that come across as hurtful or self-righteous rather than Spirit-led. Some note that it is difficult to receive such messages with compassion. Others observe that “the Spirit is often visible in the patience, care and kindness Friends manifest towards some FMW community members who have special needs or difficult personalities.”

***“We can bring the Spirit and peace into our conversations by being open, by actively listening, and by asking ourselves continually whether we are responding to others as though we truly believe there is divinity in each of us.”***

Another continuing challenge and opportunity for FMW is the mobility of our community with its steady stream of seekers and sojourners. Many wish for a more organized welcome for newcomers and a few even worry that FMW has “grown too large to foster a sense of community and shared responsibility.” Others find we have made progress building community and they foresee this expanding as we continue joyful inter-generational events, spiritual journey sharing, active committee work, enhanced First Day School, and efforts to be more inclusive. An often expressed wish is that more FMW members and attenders “live” their Quaker beliefs through committee service and greater engagement with disenfranchised populations in the D.C. community. Some hope FMW also will rise to the challenge of spiritually supporting our eldest members and attenders.

***“Our history seems more powerful than our present or our future. Our religious community was known for activism and commitment to social reform. How are we doing now?” “FMW is full of members and attenders who want us to do ‘more’ in terms of outreach, peace and social concerns...but many of those, even the most outspoken, are absent when it comes to committee work or financial support.”***

Our Meeting, like many others, finds itself to be a community of individuals who are committed to “Quaker values” while having a wide variety of conceptions about “God”, “Christianity”, and other faith traditions. For many, a joy at FMW is that we are generally open and accepting of this sort of diversity, not only at Meetings for Worship but also in our committees and in social interactions.

***“I wish that more members and attenders recognized the strengths of FMW. There sometimes is a yearning for a type of meeting that no longer exists in modern America. Instead, we need to embrace the way that FMW is establishing a new path, a way of showing what a meeting can be, a new pattern.”***

As we move into 2014, our community seems gratified that we have been led by the Spirit to address major challenges: our young adult friends are vital and engaged, our children’s programming spiritually enriches us all, beloved departed Friends have been celebrated with profound sorrow and joy, new-married couples have been embraced under our care and couples not allowed to marry in their homes have found in us a safe haven, and, following years of painful effort and growing trust, we have reached unity on an elegant renovation plan for which a capital campaign has been launched to make it a reality. While we continue to struggle with important concerns, we are holding these concerns in the Light and trusting that both the Spirit and our Meeting’s resources will open the way as we care for one another, contribute to the greater community, and demonstrate our caring for the world.

## **JAMES ELMER AKINS**

**October 15, 1926 - July 15, 2010**

Jim was born in Akron, Ohio. The son of a tenant farmer from Georgia who migrated to become a rubber plant worker, he was raised a Quaker. Although he did not always define himself as a pacifist in the way that most Friends do, his life was spent constructing policy and advising on solutions to some of the world's most serious and complex conflicts. This included sometimes living near harm's way, and putting his reputation on the line in some very public ways. Jim's life illustrates how seeking peace means diligent study, daily courage and constant commitment to nurturing relationships.

He attended the University of Akron, leaving to serve in the Navy for two years in World War II, and graduated with a major in physics in 1947. Of his World War II service, Jim much later said to a Friend who had also served in the military then, "I don't regret that for a minute. Hitler's forces had to be stopped." But Jim was also deeply respectful of Friends' efforts to seek solutions to conflict and to prevent war and suffering, including a presence in the Middle East going back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Combining his scientific abilities with his gifts for language and communication, he took on a deeply committed, active role throughout his life in this concern.

After the war, Jim worked on international relief projects in Europe, including with the American Friends Service Committee. His diplomatic skills began serving him well then, including, by his telling, on the transatlantic ocean voyage where, largely surrounded by male aid workers, he successfully courted "the beautiful woman," Marjorie "Marney" Abbott, who became his wife. They were married in May of 1954.

Jim, wife Marney, and children Mary Beth and Tom joined Friends Meeting of Washington in March of 1966 by transferring from the Meeting at Brummana Friends School in Lebanon. At that point they had been serving in the Middle East for nine years. While in Washington, he served on the Ministry and Worship Committee.

Early in his career, Jim taught physics and chemistry at the American Community School in Lebanon from 1951-52. He joined the Foreign Service in 1954 and served for more than 30 years, working in Italy, France, Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait and then Iraq from 1963 through 1965. 1963 saw a revolution in Iraq, and the Akins talked about living through the bombing.

Jim was appointed to the State Department's top energy post in 1968. A New York Times article, in addition to pointing out how prescient his predictions on the shocking rise of oil costs had been, pointed him out as a radical: in concert with his belief that Americans must use less oil, this highly-placed State Department official was actually walking to work.

He was then appointed as the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia in September, 1973, just in time to arrive during the October 1973 war and to serve during the first Oil Crisis of October, 1973 - March, 1974. He held this post until February, 1976. Jim found that his career with the state department had come to end one day, while, back visiting in the United States, he got a call from a friend who had spotted the fact in the newspaper. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had recently authored an article under a pseudonym in Harper's Magazine, entitled "Seizing Arab Oil," advocating a U.S. takeover of Middle Eastern oil fields. Unaware that the author was his boss, Jim told a TV audience that whoever had written that article had to be a "madman." This had not been taken kindly.

Jim moved on to a successful career in consulting on energy issues, and was now more able to speak freely at conferences and in the media about Middle East concerns. He was not shy about describing how the United States had mishandled affairs in the area, acting out of its fears of communism or its craving for oil, destroying its own chances to gain respect. He was able to use his knowledge to offer a different vision: that cultures that had learned to survive in the area over thousands of years before “modern” western involvement should be allowed to put these skills to work, and that, by giving time and by culturing positive experiences, there could be mutual sharing and growth between Middle East and western culture.

Friends visiting the Akins home at the end of Garfield Terrace, NW were greeted by an abundance of roses across the front yard. The area behind the house was its own world, framed by great trees, in which acanthus, fig trees and flowers bloomed. All of this was referred to as “Jim’s gardens.” Inside were artistic and cultural artifacts from the Middle East, many of which had been dug out of the desert by Jim and Marney. These were sources of conversations that highlighted Jim and Marney’s shared love of the area’s less well-known cultural and personal values, and offered a view into what was at the heart of Jim’s public messages. Much of this collection is now held by Jim’s alma mater, the University of Akron.

Jim had said, “When the day comes that I can no longer carry my own bags, I’ll retire.” He followed through on that only with some urging by Marney, though, and their move to the Collington retirement community outside Washington may have been harder for Jim than any of the others.

At Jim’s memorial, former embassy staffers recalled that he clearly wanted them to “walk around” and get to know people well in the community rather than just sit at their desks. They spoke about how much they had gained from the opportunity of working for him.

Jim’s life challenges us still to ask, “What makes a pacifist?” He always didn’t follow the prescriptions that many Friends expect, but he worked ceaselessly for greater understanding amidst controversy all of his life. The question, “What makes a true public servant?” is still one very much worth asking, and Jim provides the example of someone who understood this. In consulting with his conscience, he chose between merely maintaining a public image and staying true to his convictions. He was gracious about challenging all Friends to stay true to theirs.

### **Personal Aid Committee’s Annual Report: April 2014**

*We must be concerned about the welfare of every member of the Meeting community. While Friends need to guard against prying or invasion of privacy, it is nevertheless essential that Meetings be aware of the spiritual and material needs of members of the community and express caring concern in appropriate ways. –Faith and Practice, BYM*

**Committee Members:** Pam Callard, Patty Murphy, Rachael Kidanne, Emilie Schmeidler, Malachy Kilbride, Adam Hixson, Montague Kern, (Co-Clerk nominee), and Jim Steen (Co-Clerk).

The Personal Aid Committee meets monthly to review new or ongoing needs of FMW community members who have sought the Committee’s help or been referred by others, plan special assistance/public awareness projects, and address concerns brought to our attention. Its deliberations are confidential, and we strive to maintain the privacy of Friends while responding to their needs.

During 2013, the Committee was blessed with a core of experienced members including four very valuable members who rotated off the Committee -Ylene Larsen, Steve Williams, Elisabeth Johnson



and Janet Dinsmore, Clerk extraordinaire. Sadly, we also lost Sara Satterthwaite who was the epitome of the Meeting's "caring concern" mission and a true inspiration to all of us on the Committee.

Adam Hixson, Malachy Kilbride, and Montague Kern are new members. We also are fortunate to have the periodic assistance of past members Ylene Larsen, Marcia Reecer, Merry Pearlstein, and Janet Dinsmore. Administrative Clerk, Debby Churchman is forever helping us in reaching out to persons in need. We depend heavily on many others beyond the Committee to identify and respond to individuals in the Meeting.

Personal Aid attempts to meet its responsibility for caring concern by providing practical assistance designed primarily to meet short-term needs of member and attenders, e.g. shopping assistance, meal deliveries, transportation, cleaning/moving help, compassionate support, and limited financial assistance. In the process, we listen, identify expert resources, visit, make telephone calls, track down absent friends and family, and serve on support groups.

Beyond providing confidential personal assistance, the Committee has carried out a number of Meeting-wide activities this past year:

- **Emergency Information-** Three years ago we asked the FMW community to fill out a confidential emergency form providing contact information in the case of an incapacitating event or death. This year we again are asking members to fill out a slightly updated form. Copies are in the information rack in the Meeting House entrance way. The Committee also will be sending out a listserv announcement making it available in electronic form. All submitted forms are kept in a confidential file under the supervision of the Administrative Clerk.
- **AED-** Two years ago we purchased an automatic external defibrillator (AED) for emergency use should someone suffer a cardiac arrest on the property. In 2013, FMW staff were trained in its use and Ylene Larsen and Rachel Kidanne led several training sessions for members and attenders. The AED is located on the back wall of the Assembly Room, left of the hallway to the Children's Library. Members can be assured it is easy to use on adults and children.
- **First Aid Workshop-** In March, the Committee held a full day workshop for some 17 individuals. The workshop included training on First Aid, AED, and CPR. With financial assistance from the DC Government registration was provided to participants free of charge. The workshop was considered such a success that the Committee is considering offering it again this fall.
- **Scholarships-** Several years ago the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business approved a Finance and Stewardship Committee's proposal for a small scholarship fund to help members and attenders participate in educational activities that enrich the spiritual life of individuals and contribute to the Meeting's corporate life. The Meeting for Business assigned responsibility and funding to the Personal Aid Committee. During this past year a scholarship help finance one young adult friend who developed a teaching curriculum on racism in Haiti. Scholarships also helped support two young adult friends who attended the FUM conference on the issues of attracting and retaining youth and young adults in the Religious Society of Friends. These friends later prepared an extensive report for Meeting for Business recommending actions that FMW might take on these issues.

· **BYM Certificates-** Personal Aid administers Baltimore Yearly Meeting's two free day certificates for first-time attenders to Yearly meeting. Last year three certificates were issued. The announcement for this year's certificates is expected to be made this month.

For years the sales of Bob Meehan's Treasure Bread have enriched the Personal Aid budget. This resource has enabled gifts to individuals in critical need of emergency funds, help with travel to Quaker gatherings and workshops, and other useful expenditures on behalf of individuals requiring assistance. We are tremendously grateful to Bob for his longstanding and significant contributions to the welfare of our community!

The Committee's effectiveness relies to a great extent on the availability of others when specific needs arise. Since we call on people we know, this means a few generous, hard-working individuals often bear a heavy burden. We need more volunteers to help with such occasional needs as: transporting members to Meeting, making and delivering meals, taking someone to the hospital, or phoning an isolated Friend. Please let us know if you can help provide this type of assistance.

Jim Steen, Co-Clerk

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(this ends the minutes and reports of Meeting for Business)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 1 – 4 – Publishing the Word in a Changing Landscape: Tools and Techniques, Woolman Hill (Deerfield, MA)** Are you a "Publisher of Truth?" Are you a writer, a publisher, an editor, a translator or a bookseller? Or are you blogging, producing videos, writing songs or creating a web presence for Friends? We're all united in the work of sharing Quaker messages with the world. So let's get together and consider what that's like, now and in the next few years. The Quakers Uniting in Publications Annual conference registration is available at [www.quakerquip.org](http://www.quakerquip.org).

Come to **S.O.M.E.** on **Saturday, May 3** 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)

**Friends Service Weekend** at Catoclin Quaker Camp will happen on **Saturday, May 3**. For more information, contact David Hunter, [davidhunter@bym-rsf.org](mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsf.org), 301-774-7663

On **Sunday May 4, 2014** at noon in the Assembly Room the Peace and Social Concerns Committee will hold a **Peace Fair**. We invite all at FMW to share what they do either professionally or personally to work for peace and social justice. Participants can share literature, fliers, have laptop presentations, or other displays which show your work for peace and justice. To participate, please rsvp or contact

for more information: Louise Levathes at [llevathes@comcast.net](mailto:llevathes@comcast.net) or Malachy Kilbride, [malachykilbride@yahoo.com](mailto:malachykilbride@yahoo.com)

### **Sunday – May 4 – The Personal Story of a Peacebuilder, William Penn House**

**(Washington, DC)** FMW's beloved Recording Clerk, Shannon Zimmerman, is a program specialist in the Center for Gender and Peacebuilding at the U.S. Institute of Peace. During her graduate studies she received a Boren Fellowship to study culture and languages in Tunis, Tunisia, where she witnessed the Tunisian Revolution and the start of the Arab Spring. Her studies focused on embedded cultural norms as they relate to conflict and human security, and the role and impact of peacekeeping missions. From 2007 to 2009, Zimmerman served as a Peace Corps youth development volunteer in Ukraine working with at risk youth to address such topics as HIV/AIDS, healthy relationships, and domestic violence. She holds a master's in conflict resolution from Georgetown University. The monthly potlucks begin at 6:30 pm. This is an opportunity for fellowship among Quakers, attenders and fellow seekers. Bring a dish to share; family members, neighbors and friends are always welcome. For more information, see the William Penn House website. ([williampennhouse.org/potlucks](http://williampennhouse.org/potlucks))

The **Grate Patrol** will pack and deliver 120 bag lunches and soup to people living on the street on **Wednesday, May 7**. Soup or chili is made in the afternoon. At 5:30 PM we start making sandwiches and packing the lunch bags. At 7 PM, we load the van and one or two people go out on delivery for about an hour. You're welcome to help out with any or all of these things. Call Steve Brooks 240-328-5439 or email [sbrooks@uab.edu](mailto:sbrooks@uab.edu) for more information.

**Junior Young Friends Conference** will be gathered at Catoctin Quaker Camp over the weekend of **May 9 – 11**. For more information, contact Alison Duncan, Youth Programs Manager, [youthprograms@bym-rsf.org](mailto:youthprograms@bym-rsf.org), 301-774-7663

There will be a **memorial service** for our beloved Friend, **Marney Akins**, on **Saturday, May 10** at noon in the Meeting Room, followed by a repast downstairs.

### **May 10 – Saturday – Quaker Spring Market at Annapolis Friends Meeting (Annapolis, MD)**

Join Annapolis Friends from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm for our annual Spring Market. There will be homemade soup, salad, quiche, and other baked goods, portobello mushroom sandwiches and other delicacies from the grill, flea market finds, annual and perennial plants, live music from our young musicians, SPCA dogs for adoption, and information on our new solar array. Bulk of the proceeds will benefit St. Philip's Quad E after-school program providing academic support for students living in inner-city Annapolis, and Madison Quakers, Inc., fighting poverty in Vietnam ([www.mylaipeacepark.org/](http://www.mylaipeacepark.org/)). The sale of handmade Afghan jewelry, rugs, and embroidery will benefit the Afghan Women's Fund ([www.afghanwomensfund.org/](http://www.afghanwomensfund.org/)). Hope to see you there! For more information, visit the Annapolis Friends Meeting website ([annapolis.quaker.org/](http://annapolis.quaker.org/)) or contact Cairn Krafft. (410-257-2379 or [cairnkrafft@comcast.net](mailto:cairnkrafft@comcast.net))

On **Saturday, May 17** there will be an all-day workshop at FMW on “**Mindful & Compassionate Service**” led by **Frank Ostaseski** of the **Zen Hospice Project**, the first Buddhist hospice in America. There is a sliding scale cost from \$75 to \$125 for the day. Hours are 8:30 am to 5:30 pm. For more information and to register, go to [www.healwell.org/healwell-presents](http://www.healwell.org/healwell-presents)

**May 17 – Saturday – Quaker College Fair, Arch Street Meeting House (Philadelphia, PA)**

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting is hosting their Quaker College Fair, beginning at 12:00 pm and running until 3:00. Colleges represented at the Quaker College Fair offer a values-based education rooted in Quaker tenets. Appropriate for all high school aged students, and particularly relevant to Juniors and their families, this Fair allows for one-to-one personalized contact with Admissions officers, and offers insight into the college search process. Information about financial aid and campus life are also provided, and an interactive panel discussion opens the Fair. Information and registration details are at the PYM website. ([www.pym.org/calendar/events/quaker-college-fair-2014/](http://www.pym.org/calendar/events/quaker-college-fair-2014/))

**"Boogaloo For The Homeless"** a Latin Dance Party to support FMW's Shoebox Project, will take place on **Sunday, May 18** from 5:30 to 10:30 pm at Bossa Bistro(<http://bossadc.com/>

), 2463 18th St. NW, Washington, DC (In Adams Morgan). We have two DJs lined up to spin dance music (DJ Yulio Gutierrez and DJ Parker Cocolo). There will be dance lessons offered at the beginning of the evening and we also have live percussion from Ty Hussel. We will have a table set up for community outreach and we will be selling tickets for \$10 at the door. (We are only set up to take cash and checks at this time)

Get into the groove!! Tie on your dancing shoes to help support the Shoebox Project. We look forward to meeting you on the dance floor at the Boogaloo For The Homeless.

### **May 17 – 18 – BYM – Friends Service Weekend at Shiloh Quaker Camp (Hood, VA)**

Come help prepare our camps for the spring and summer! Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills and an opportunity to enjoy meaningful and satisfying work. For information, check the [BYM Camp website](#), or contact [David Hunter](#), Camp Property Manager. (301-774-7663 or [davidhunter@bym-rsf.org](mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsf.org))

**FMW's Catoctin Spring Retreat, May 23-26** Join us for an unprogrammed weekend, when we share meals and fellowship in the lodge; we enjoy canoeing and hiking; we toast s'mores on Saturday night; and we worship on Sunday morning at the fire circle. Cabins are available, or bring your tent; come for one day or stay for all three. Cost is \$20 per adult staying overnight, \$10 for adult day-trippers, and free for all children, payable to FMW. And we ask that you contribute groceries for group meals.

Please RSVP using our online sign up sheet, so we can get a count of how many of us will be there for each meal. If you have something in mind to bring or want to contribute to a particular meal, please leave a note in the meals column. Once we have a feel for the number of people and what meals are covered, I can send out requests for missing items or suggestions. For more information, contact [eileen.hanlon@yahoo.com](mailto:eileen.hanlon@yahoo.com). To sign up, click here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/ccc?key=0AnRBPXvJkUGEdFR3ZWpDYWxtNoVZRUt1VG9nTUhyOVE&usp=sharing>

**May 23 – 25 – BYM – Young Friends Conference at Sandy Spring Friends Meeting (Sandy Spring, MD)** Young Friends should begin arriving at 7:00 pm on Friday. For information, check the [Young Friends website](#) or contact [Alison Duncan](#). (301-774-7663) Please remember that the deadline to register and be guaranteed a slot is one week before the conference (May 9). Anyone registering after that date will be placed on a waiting list and may not be able to attend.

**Work Day! Work Day! Work Day!** Come to the Meetinghouse anytime between 9:00 am and 2:00 pm on **Saturday, May 24** to participate in the monthly work day. All skill sets appreciated. Come ready to clean, paint, sort, dig, discombobulate and recombobulate your Meetinghouse. Have fun, meet/hang out with F/friends, and give back to the Meeting, all in one fell swoop. Lunch will be provided. For more information, contact Jean Harman at [ellenjeanharman@hotmail.com](mailto:ellenjeanharman@hotmail.com)

The **Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism** is hosting a workshop entitled “**Undoing Racism**” on **May 29 and 30** at Friends Meeting of Washington. Facilitators for the workshop will be provided by the Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond, <http://www.pisab.org>. If you are interested in attending the workshop please contact David Etheridge at [david.etheridge@verizon.net](mailto:david.etheridge@verizon.net).

**A FRIENDS’ GATHERING of CRONES:** Wise women (over 50) walking and talking together. On **Saturday, May 31** from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at FMW, there will be a gathering of wise women (over 50).

We gather to worship and to embrace and nurture the wisdom within us.

We acknowledge our aging process with fierceness, passion, and patience.

We share our journeys and seek support from our sisters.

We gain insights into living our legacies.

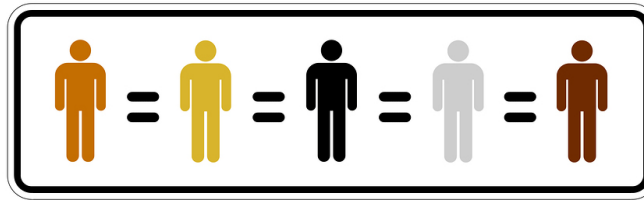
We step into our power as the wise women we are.

Please bring a potluck dish to share. \$5 to \$10 donation suggested. Register at [bette@justpeacecircles.org](mailto:bette@justpeacecircles.org) or call Bette Hoover @ 202-329-4667 or Marsha Holliday @ 202 544-2629

**May 31 – June 1 – BYM – Friends Service Weekend at Opequon Quaker Camp (Brucetown, VA)** Come help prepare our camps for the spring and summer! Work projects offer people with all kinds of skills and an opportunity to enjoy meaningful and satisfying work. For information, check the [BYM Camp website](#), or contact [David Hunter](#), Camp Property Manager. (301-774-7663 or [davidhunter@bym-rsf.org](mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsf.org))

## **THINKING ABOUT RACE – Colorblindness as blindness**

Excerpted by Elizabeth DuVerlie from *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, p. 241.



“The deeply flawed nature of colorblindness, as a governing principle, is evidenced by the fact that the public consensus supporting mass incarceration is officially colorblind. It purports to see black and brown men not as black and brown, but simply as men—raceless men—who have failed miserably to play by the rules that the rest of us follow quite naturally. The fact that so many black and brown men are rounded up for drug crimes that go largely ignored when committed by whites is unseen. Our collective colorblindness prevents us from seeing this basic fact. Our blindness also prevents us from seeing the racial and structural divisions that persist in society: the segregated, unequal schools, the segregated, jobless ghettos, and the segregated public discourse—a public conversation that excludes the current pariah caste. Our commitment to colorblindness extends beyond individuals to institutions and social arrangements. We have become blind, not so much to race, but to the existence of racial caste in America.

“More than forty-five years ago, Martin Luther King Jr. warned of this danger. He insisted that blindness and indifference to racial groups is actually more important than racial hostility to the creation and maintenance of racialized systems of control.”

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).

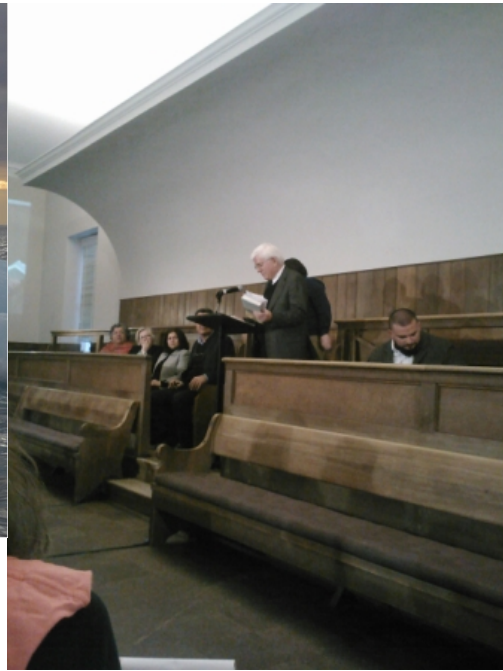
## ON BOARD THE INFINITY

*Another report from Associate Member **Dan Wiggins**' group as he sails the southern seas*

We are still on iceberg watch but sightings are few and far between, we look forward to regaling you with our photos and videos upon arriving in South America. In the meantime we couldn't resist splurging our data allowance and sharing one of our favourite photos, taken by Andy, in Cape Adare. If you could orchestrate a perfect scenario for a photo in the Antarctic, it would probably involve penguins and seals hanging out in harmony on an ice flow with your yacht framed in the background at sunset with some orcas. Apologies for the lack of orcas in the photo....

## RANDOM HAPPENINGS





Our

Meetinghouse's central location, peaceful interior, and adherence to Quaker values makes it a natural place for those working for peace and social justice to gather. This last month saw the Meeting playing a crucial role for a variety of such groups. The **Center for Constitutional Rights** brought a very moving panel of Iraqis, U.S. vets, and world experts to speak about the lasting impact of the war on Iraq. The program was narrated by **Phil Donahue**, who started the evening with a moving tribute to the Quakers and their adherence to peace.

FMW Friends brought in folks to speak to social justice issues as well. Young writers from Gaza, brought here by the **American Friends Service Committee**, came to tell of their experiences in Palestine in an evening that participants called very moving. **Chloe Schwenke** came from Adelphi Friends Meeting to talk about her journey as a transgender friend. And our own **Blair Forlaw** brought people from the **African Great Lakes Initiative** to talk about their work with libraries in Rwanda, an extremely moving tale.

A number of nonprofits held their office retreats at FMW, including the **Peace Corps, Rails to Trails** (who help convert old railway trails to walking paths), **J Street** (a group of pro-peace, pro-Israel Jews), the **National League of Cities**, the **Guatemala Human Rights Commission, Greenpeace**, and a group called **Climate First!** who were planning an action against the Keystone pipeline. Happiest for me, anyway, was the **Washington Peace Center**, who were back among us after many years, doing an anti-oppression workshop. And perhaps the most exciting group was the **Onandaga Nation**, who had come to D.C. to ask for their land rights and to plead with the government to honor their treaties. They made quite an impressive view in the Meeting Room and later in the garden.

The Meeting also hosted two memorial meetings and five weddings in April. One of the weddings—of **Jenny Moore and Scott Cunningham**—was under our care. Another was of a couple who met here at FMW more than 20 years ago and came back to the building to finally engage in the now-legal state of matrimony; long-time attender **John Meyer** got himself a special license so he could officiate. And another wedding was of my youngest son, Ed, and his long-time partner, Ben, in a ceremony that was conducted in the manner of Friends--as then interpreted by their mutual friends, almost all of whom are in the music industry. Oh, my. I had no idea that people could even *stand* in shoes like that, or that suits came in those colors. It was all very joyful and tender, and I am so happy to have Ben



officially in the family.

And speaking of tender, our hearts go out to **Tommy and Mary Beth Akins** and their family on the death of their mother, our beloved Friend **Marney**. The memorial service will be on **May 10** at noon, where we will be able to share what this good Friend meant to us.

Special thanks this month to **Malachy Kilbride** and **Patty Murphy**, who took over the office so I could go visit my grandchildren, to **Meg Greene**, **Dan Dozier**, **Shannon Zimmerman** and **Gray Handley** for gathering conversations around child safety and welcoming sex offenders, to the alert **Ron Washington**, for noticing the flood coming through the Decatur Place Room ceiling and working quickly to keep it from soaking the furniture, to **Ken Orvis**, for perhaps finally solving the mystery of the Decatur Place Room floods, and to **Zoe Plaucher**, for taking on office tasks that I've been putting off for more than a year. Thank you, Friends.