

# October 2013 Newsletter

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## FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

### MONTHLY MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS

**September 8, 2013**

**2013/9-1 Opening** The meeting opened with silent worship at 12:00 PM. David Etheridge served as Presiding Clerk, Margaret Greene as Alternate Clerk, and Hayden Wetzel as Recording Clerk. The clerks read a Query from Baltimore Yearly Meeting's draft Faith and Practice, and appropriate advices and other readings. 16 Friends and visitors were present, including first-time attender Telent Nyathi.

**2013/9-2 Personal Announcements** The Clerk announced that the memorial meeting for our deceased member William Cousins will be held on September 14 in the Meeting Room. Our member Marcia Reecer is recovering from knee surgery. Our member Faith Williams has lost her mother Margot Wilkie at age 101.

**2013/9-3 Statement Regarding Syrian Action** An FCNL statement regarding possible U.S. military action in Syria is available for Friends' consideration, as is a model letter for transmittal to Congressional members.

**2013/9-4 FUM "Bridging Gaps" Retreat** Gene Throwe and Shannon Zimmerman will attend the Friends United Meeting-sponsored "Bridging Gaps: A Retreat for Those Who Care for Youth and Young Adults" September 20-22 in Richmond, Indiana.

**2013/9-5 Memorial Minute for Marie Elois Rogers** Margaret Greene read the memorial minute for our deceased member Marie Elois Rogers written by Robert "Riley" Robinson. Friends **approved** the minute (attached), and spoke of the lost member.

**2013/9-6 Marriage of EunSung Kim and Jocelyn Burls** Thomas Goodhue, of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee, presented for the second time the request of EunSung Kim and Jocelyn Burls to be married under the care of this Meeting. Friends **approved** the marriage. The marriage ceremony is planned for 26 October at the Friends Meetinghouse. The committee will bring a proposed oversight committee to Friends next month.

**2013/9-7 Marriage of Caleb Brown and Angela Erickson** Thomas Goodhue, of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee, presented for the second time the request of Caleb Brown and Angela Erickson to be married under the care of this Meeting. Friends **approved** the marriage. The marriage ceremony is planned for 5 October at the Friends Meetinghouse. The committee will bring a proposed oversight committee to Friends next month.

**2013/9-8 Transfer Out of Mark Meinke** Hayden Wetzal, co-clerk of the Membership Committee, presented the request of Mark Meinke to transfer his membership from this Meeting to Langley Hill Friends Meeting. Friends **approved** the transfer.

**2013/9-9 Nomination to Nomination Committee** David Etheridge, clerk of the Search Committee, reported the nomination of Robert Meehan to the Nominating Committee for a term to end in December 2015. Friends **approved** the nomination.

**2013/9-10 Capital Campaign Committee** Grant Thompson, clerk of the Capital Campaign Committee, reported (attached) that, inasmuch as the Meeting community has largely united on a proposed renovation and expansion plan for our campus, this committee has now finalized a program titled “Welcome Home” to raise the necessary funds. He emphasized that fund-raising for this capital campaign cannot be accomplished at the expense of annual giving. In regard to planning how to approach potential donors, the committee has contracted with a private research company to search public records to identify likely contributors. Committee members will take the campaign personally to donors, being prepared to explain its goals and finances. The committee’s goal initially is \$2 million. Although the committee had earlier promised to report donations monthly, it now feels that a more flexible reporting regimen will serve the Meeting better.

**2013/9-11 Annual Sessions of BYM** Debby Churchman, David Etheridge, Windy Cooler and Margaret Greene reported on the recent annual sessions of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Issues discussed included: the proposed revision of the Yearly Meeting’s Faith and Practice (which was not approved by Friends); “white privilege” in our society; the Yearly Meeting’s budget; and treatment of salaried staff in Friends’ meetings. Friends spoke of the loving and constructive atmosphere of the session in spite of potentially divisive differences of opinion on many questions. The gathering’s youth program was active and well-received.

**2013/9-12 Youth Programs Coordinator Report** Windy Cooler, the Meeting’s Youth Programs Coordinator, reported on activities for our children over the summer, the Meeting’s growing childcare program, the renovated Terrace Room, and planning for this year’s First-Day School program. Informal activities for children will begin at 10 o’clock before the 10:30 classes. Classes will focus on the monthly queries.

**2013/9-13 Further Funding for Quaker House Renovation** Steve Brooks, co-clerk of the Property Committee, requested on behalf of the committee approval to use up to an additional \$10,000 from the Property Reserve to continue renovation of rental space in Quaker House. Friends **approved** the request.

**2013/9-14 Writers of Memorial Minutes** Friends **approved** Marcia Reecer to write the memorial minute for Sara Satterthwaite; Diane McDougall for William Cousins; and Robert “Riley” Robertson to write the memorial minute for James Akins instead of Hayden Wetzell

**2013/9-15 Correction to July Minute** Friends **approved** correcting the name of our deceased member listed in last month's minute (2013/7-8) from Richard to John Atlee.

**2013/9-16 Minutes** Friends **approved** the minutes.

**2013/9-17 Closing** The meeting ended at 1:45 PM with 13 Friends present, with silent worship.

### **Marie Elois Rogers**

**November 23, 1911 - June 26, 2011**

Elois Rogers was a Washington, DC native. Strong-willed and straight-talking, she found herself living out Quaker testimonies early in her adulthood.

During WW II, employees virtually everywhere were urged to buy War Bonds, or United States Government savings bonds. Elois determined that, as a committed pacifist, she could not do so. This led to her termination from her position as a librarian for an insurance company in September, 1942. Traditionally men are acknowledged for acts of conscientious objection, but Elois acted from her strong conscience as well. Fortunately, however, she went on to quickly find employment at the Library of Congress that lasted for 33 years. She joined Friends Meeting of Washington in 1945.

Elois had gumption, and it never left her. And, her long-term friends agreed, neither did her wry sense of humor. To a visitor in 2011 she recalled Friends Meeting of Washington member Harriet Sutton, and chuckled, "When I was new, she wanted to MAKE SURE that I knew about Quakerism. She had meetings with groups of six people to discuss it until they faded out. True, I thought I knew it all." Her commitment to Friends remained strong for the rest of her life, even beyond her Monthly Meeting. Elois served as Recording Clerk for Baltimore Yearly Meeting – Stony Run (there were still two Yearly Meetings) in the late 1950s.

There is no indication that Elois ever married. She was close to her parents, whom she cared for in their later years. It appears that the Meeting and the wider circle of Friends generally were also her family, along with her co-workers.

Elois knew that managing the Meeting's business took both tenacious attention to detail and respect for long-term perspectives. Her extensive committee work at Friends

Meeting of Washington included service as Clerk of Overseers in the mid-1960s, and she later wrote an article about the history of the Meeting's counseling service. For a number of years in the mid-1970s, she may have set some kind of record for the Meeting by serving as Recording Clerk, Trustee, and member of both Nominating and Personal Aid Committees all at once! Her honesty led her to speak very frankly in person or in meetings. Others could find this unsettling, but it often revealed much. This is Elois' writing from 1997, recalling member Ralph Boyer in regard to the long and complicated story of the Ross bequest, from the most recent Meeting history.

They stipulated that Friends Meeting of Washington would inherit a portion of the residue, if any, after all of the servants had died. One by one, they passed away--all except the butler. So every year or so, usually every couple of years, one Trustee or another visited the bank in New Jersey to inquire about the matter. I think Ralph went a time or two, John Jones went. Ellis Williams went. It was all very embarrassing, really awkward. We didn't wish the man dead, but we didn't want to lose track of the money, which was to be used to preserve Sarah Ross' collection of fans if we didn't inherit, and we thought the Meeting could put the money to better use than that.

Elois was, though, deeply spiritual as well. In June 1997, she wrote some recollections of her participation in the "Pathways" group at the Meeting. She wrote, in part:

It went on for years, maybe 15 or 20. I think all of us spoke acceptably in Meeting for Worship at one time or another . . . We read Evelyn Underhill, Jung, a collection called *The Choice is Always Ours*, and other material that we felt would strengthen the life of the Spirit in us . . . We always started off with silence and then discussed what we had read, dropping in and out of silence as led. . . . As I look back on it now, I know that the Pathways group got me through difficult times. I believe that each of us was strengthened by our reading, thinking, and worshipping together. I think that the Meeting also benefited.

Her bemused co-workers reflected at the end of her life that this devotion to her faith may have had unintended consequences throughout her career, not just early on. At the Library of Congress, she was entrusted with cataloguing what was then called the "Delta Collection," the raciest of literature! This is another addition to the long list of surprising careers of Friends Meeting of Washington members.

After she retired, Elois moved to Kendall Crosslands near Philadelphia, and, for a time, moved her membership to a nearby Meeting. But a few years later she moved it back to Washington, saying that was where she truly felt her commitment a member.

She said to a visitor in 2011 that she greatly missed Friends Meeting of Washington, though she realized that few might remember her, and asked to be recalled to Friends there. Both her return to the Meeting and this wish expressed the strong bond and affection of a Friend who was led to make deep commitments, to keep them, and who expected others to do so as well.

## **Report to Friends Meeting of Washington**

### **Capital Fundraising Task Force**

**September – 2013**

#### Background

For nearly a decade, Friends Meeting of Washington has been contemplating and planning to conduct a major building project. Initially, the goal had been to make the entire campus handicap accessible. Over time, the goal expanded to connecting the buildings, rationalizing traffic patterns within the complex, and increasing the rental potential of our facilities. Understood throughout was a determination to pay attention to the environmental impact of our facilities as much as possible. Over the decade, there were a number of attempts – half-starts, if you will – involving different committees and architects, leading to a discernment process revealing what features Friends were willing to support and discarding others that interfered with deeply-loved features of the Meeting House.

Over the past few years, Friends have come to unity on a plan that includes a new entrance foyer, an elevator and connecting hallway, and extensive regrading of the west garden. Work on the plans has only recently (within the past two months) been completed with agreement on details of the garden, roofing, and water management plans.

Early in the process, a feasibility study was commissioned and conducted by Henry Freeman, a respected Quaker fundraising consultant. Freeman concluded that although it would be difficult, our community should be able to raise about \$2 million. Since the date of his study, a number of prospects with the most “capacity” (fundraisers’ lingo for potential large donors) have died, moved or become incapacitated.

The cost estimate for the approved renovation plan is approximately \$2 million. This estimate has been provided by the architects, based on their experience; it is not based on actual construction bids. It has always been the hope and goal of Trustees to raise enough money from the capital campaign to repay all the all of the costs incurred over the decade-long planning process, including those for conceptual plans that were later discarded.

#### Progress So Far

To date, the Capital Fundraising Task Force has engaged only in extremely low-level activities to raise funds, because experienced fundraisers have found that it is difficult (some would say impossible) to raise funds when the plans are as fluid as ours have

been. Only in the past few months have all of the plans reached a point where it is possible to go to donors with a near-final project.

Nonetheless, 28 Friends have already contributed a total of \$225,000 toward our \$2+ million goal. The largest contribution is a pledge of \$51,000; the smallest are several \$50 gifts. The average gift is approximately \$8,000. The campaign is accepting pledges to be paid over a three-year period, so these summary figures assume that all pledges will be paid in full.

### Challenges

Raising funds within the Friends Meeting of Washington community presents a number of challenges and differences from conventional capital fundraising. This table displays a few of these challenges, comparing a capital campaign sponsored by a university or a non-profit hospital with our own campaign.

“Traditional” Campaign		FMW’s Campaign
Most campaigns have a period known as “the quiet campaign,” during which major donors are approached and pledges secured. This permits the “public” phase of the campaign to be announced with the statement that half of the money has already been raised. This encourages other donors to believe that large fundraising goals are achievable.	Quiet Fundraising	Because of Friends’ traditions, a campaign conducted out of sight would be inappropriate and could raise concerns about disclosure and honesty. Therefore, when fundraising begins, the amount to be raised looks impossibly large.
Fundraising operations traditionally spend time and resources finding out financial information about their largest potential donors. For the largest possible donors, the research can be detailed and include determining net worth, income, friends who might influence giving, and other information that is traditionally considered personal and confidential.	Donor Research	FMW has a long tradition of anonymity concerning donation patterns of its members and attenders. Although the Capital Campaign Task Force has been given access to annual donor records, that information is of limited value. Friends do not, as a group, support their Meetings generously; donor records give little useful data for a capital campaign.
Capital campaigns are grounded by a cadre of donors		FMW struggles year after year to achieve its quite modest

who are accustomed to supporting the institution with relatively predictable annual gifts. For people who have illustrated long-term commitment, the shift to a larger capital gift is an easy transition.	Solid Annual Giving Program	annual fundraising goals; they have not been met for many, many years. As a group, Quakers rank at the bottom of religious donors in supporting their own Meetings.
University campuses are littered with buildings and programs named for major donors. Vanity or the desire to leave a legacy meaningful to family members are powerful incentives to donors and a goal determined by the costs of a particular building or program can cause donors to increase their gifts to meet the need.	Naming Opportunities	Friends are wary of charity that may appear tainted by vanity or self-aggrandizement. The Task Force easily agrees with this tradition of modesty and is unwilling to offer donors naming opportunities.
Traditionally, capital campaigns plan on devoting approximately 10% of their total dollars raised to campaign expenses. Fancy brochures, films, donor dinners, mailings, and other expenses are paid from the campaign proceeds.	Resources	FMW is planning on running its capital campaign “on the cheap” – with donated time, simple informational pieces produced inexpensively, and face-to-face requests for fundraising. This may slow down our ability to reach our goal.

There are other differences of course, but these illustrate the challenges that we face.

### Prospects/Prognosis

Despite the special challenges that fundraising within the FMW community presents, the Capital Fundraising Task Force is confident that we will be successful in raising the \$2+ million dollars to complete the project. Our confidence is supported by the warm reception that individual Friends have given to all phases of this project.

But just as Friends were patient for the extended planning process that led to the current plan, Friends must be equally patient during the fundraising process. Inevitably, when a plan as enticing and suitable as the one we now have in hand is ready to go, there is a desire to get moving and annoyance that funds are not growing quickly.



We are prudently recommending that no construction contracts be signed or other major obligations incurred beyond those already approved until the Capital Fundraising Task Force can report that \$1 million in gifts and pledges are in hand. At that point, we are confident that the remainder can be raised and (subject to the discernment of Friends) we can at long last see our vision become reality.

### Next Steps

In coming months, the Capital Fundraising Task Force will increase the number of individual meetings with those within our community who may be able to help us reach our interim goal of \$1 million raised as quickly as possible. At the same time, the Task Force will work to keep the Meeting informed and engaged, hoping to encourage every member and attender to contribute a stretch amount toward achieving our goal.

## **Youth Programs Update**

In the Summer months FDS is usually in recess, both at FMW and at other Meetings, but this year we tried something new: an informal one classroom approach on Sundays, joined with journaling exercises during the week, connecting the time we have together to our daily lives -- especially as we travel. This was of some interest to children and families in our program. Attendance was, of course, very limited in the Summer and it remains to be vetted out how welcome our Summer offerings truly are in the lives if of families.

FDS also participated in the renovation of our space in the Terrace Room which, thanks to the Property Committee and countless volunteers, is now ready for our use in the Fall.

The Nursery and our childcare offerings for older children has increased in capacity. With nine childcare workers serving in rotation or as substitutes, we have found the ability to regularly offer consistent, quality childcare for Meeting for Worship as well as events on Sundays or any other day of the week.

First Day School also hosted the second of our new seasonal planning session for our programming. Fifteen of us attended the Fall Planning Session for FDS on August 25th. First Day School begins its regular programming on September 8th.

The key things decided at this planning session were to divide the FDS into three classrooms, flexibly, but roughly by age. Ages 4-6 in a class, 7-10 in another, 11+ in another. Jay Harris is the point person for the youngest group, Michael Beer will be the point person for the next, and Kim Acquaviva, as last year, will be serving the tweens.

We are organizing ourselves into a set of dedicated teachers for each classroom, in rotation, for the season.

FDS will not officially begin until 10:30, as usual, next year, but we will be doing games,

music and dance and fun, settling, activities starting at 10:00. Windy Cooler will be facilitating game time before FDS.

In general we will seek to bring FDS into more relevance in the everyday lives of our children and our community as a whole.

We will be doing something else new this year. We will begin FDS as a large group, all three classes, and then do break outs into separate spaces. The two elementary groups will share space or separate as it is appropriate to the number of children on any given Sunday and to the activity. Elementary FDS will have planned activities, while the tween/teen group will be more self governed.

Using the activity requests generated by our FDS the past two weeks as a guide for building curriculum, we have chosen to explore using the monthly queries that our community uses as our theme this season. These have to do with power, peace and education during the Fall months. There is great desire to build a program that struggles well with the question "What does it mean to be a Friend?" in a multidisciplinary approach.

We talked again about intergenerational connectivity at our Meeting and in our lives and reiterated our desire to bring children into the lives of committees and the work of our Meeting, as well as our desire to have more purely social events. As part of our desire to increase the relevance and significance of the FDS we want to ask committees to make time to talk with FDS and ask us for work. We will also increase the number of parties and mixers we help to host in the Fall.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The **Grate Patrol** will pack and deliver 120 bag lunches and soup to people living on the street on **Wednesday, Oct. 2**. 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.

Come to **S.O.M.E.** on **Saturday, Oct. 5** 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)

A **Meeting for Worship with a Concern for the Marriage** of Caleb O. Brown and Angela C. Erickson will be held on **Saturday, October 5** at noon. All are welcome.

There will be a **Friends Service Weekend** at Catoctin Camp on **Oct. 5**, and another at Shiloh Camp on **Oct. 12**. For more information, contact David Hunter, 301-774-7663 or [davidhunter@bym-rsf.org](mailto:davidhunter@bym-rsf.org))

The **Fall Work Day** at the Friends Wilderness Center will be held on **Saturday, Oct. 12**. For more information, contact Shelia Bach, [snbach@earthlink.net](mailto:snbach@earthlink.net), 304-728-4820

The next **Junior Young Friends Conference** will be held **Oct. 12-13** at Annapolis Friends Meeting. For more information, contact Alison Duncan, Youth Programs Manager, [youthprograms@bym-rsf.org](mailto:youthprograms@bym-rsf.org) or 301-774-7663.

The monthly **Vigil to Protest Drone Warfare** will be held in front of the C.I.A. Headquarters in McLean Virginia, Saturday, **Oct. 12**, at 10:00 AM. For more information, contact Malachy Kilbride, [malachykilbride@yahoo.com](mailto:malachykilbride@yahoo.com)

There will be a **visioning session on U.S. Foreign Policy** on **Sunday, Oct. 13**, at 4:00 PM in the Meeting Room. The Friends Committee on National Legislation and American Friends Service Committee have started a conversation about a new vision for U.S. foreign policy grounded in our shared security as global community. In consultation with others, they've developed a document and study guide and are starting a discussion at the website <http://sharedsecurity.wordpress.com/> They'd like to hear what you think and also encourage you to start your own discussions and discernment on these issues. Shan Cretin, the Executive Secretary of AFSC and Diane Randall, the Executive Secretary of FCNL will present the project.

Want to know more about the faith and practice of the Religious Society of Friends? Come to the **Inquirer's Class** on **Oct. 15, 22, 29 and Nov. 5** at 7:00 pm. This is a kind of Quaker 101, and is open to all, whether you've been attending for a few weeks or a few decades. For more information, contact Michael Cronin at [mcronin943@gmail.com](mailto:mcronin943@gmail.com)

The **Tenth Month Interim Meeting** of Baltimore Yearly Meeting will be held on Saturday, **Oct. 19**, at Hopewell Centre Monthly Meeting in Clearbrook, VA.



Please mark your calendars and plan to join Friends on **October 25-27** for a beautiful, easy, relaxed **weekend of community at Catoctin** Quaker Camp. This is an unstructured weekend for Friends and friends of all varieties -- single, coupled, with kids or without, newcomers or familiar faces, young adults and... less young adults. We particularly want to encourage those who have never been to Catoctin to join us this Fall -- truly all are welcome, and this is a great way to get to know each other outside of our usual haunts and habits.

The weekend includes fellowship, relaxation and spiritual renewal at our beautiful camp property Northwest of Frederic Maryland (less than 90 minutes away by car). There are rustic cabins and cold nights, but a roaring fire in the lodge and maybe even the outdoor fire circle will warm us. (Brave souls can camp out in tents; others can sleep in open air cabins, closed cabins, or the lodge. We can reserve closed cabins for those with young children or a special need, and there's also a nearby motel for those who'd like a cushier overnight experience.)

All can play in the lagoon, compete at tetherball or walk on nearby trails, or just sit and read a book in the sun. Meals are a joint (but casual) effort, so plan to bring food to contribute. We gather together for worship on Sunday morning, and this year we may do a Halloween parade and possibly a pinata! But really there is no agenda -- just nature and community. The cost is \$25.00 per adult for the weekend, and young kids are free.

If you are interested in joining or have questions, look out for further emails to sign up, or email Robin Appleberry ([robinappleberry@gmail.com](mailto:robinappleberry@gmail.com)) or Anita Drever ([anita.drever@gmail.com](mailto:anita.drever@gmail.com)). We can send directions and loosely organize meals, and can help make arrangements if you need a ride -- there are always extra spots in cars. We hope you can join us!!

**A Meeting for Worship with a Concern for the Marriage of EunSung Kim and Jocelyn Burlson Saturday, Oct. 26** at 4:00 PM. All are welcome.

On Saturday, **Oct. 26**, there will be an **Experiential Introduction to Qi Gong** at the Friends Wilderness Center. For more information, contact Shelia Bach, [snbach@earthlink.net](mailto:snbach@earthlink.net), 304-728-4820.

Everyone is warmly invited to participate in gatherings to **share spiritual journeys!** At each gathering, two members of our community will share the story of their own spiritual journeys and then the rest of us attending will be able to reflect on those journeys and generally get to know each other better. There will be time for silence and probably some laughs – but mostly just a time of fellowship for those who can join in. These gatherings are scheduled so they will conflict as little as possible with other events on: **October 27, November 24 and January 26** at 9:15-10:15 a.m. in the Quaker House Living Room. We hope many can join these gatherings as we hold one another in the Light and our spiritual journeys converge for these few hours.

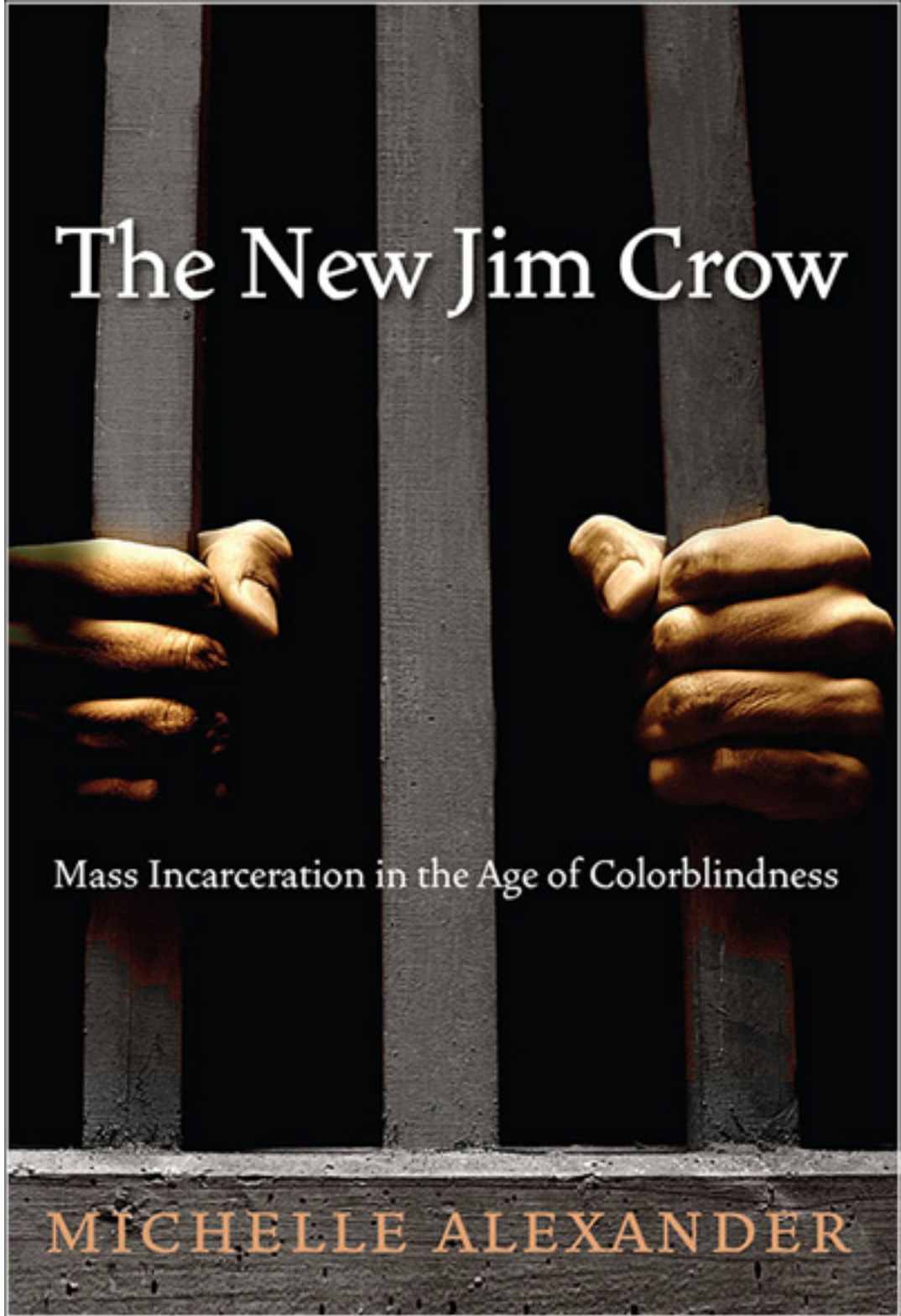
Come to the **Committee Fair** at noon on **October 27**, and explore the question of where your greatest gifts might meet FMW's greatest needs. Plus, there will be great snacks.

There will be a **Retreat for Clerks** on **Saturday, Nov. 2** at Amelia Court House, VA. This is a day for spiritual refreshment and sharing of collective wisdom for all Friends. You don't have to be, or have been, a Meeting Clerk to attend. Anyone interested in nurturing spirit-led servant leadership is invited. For more information, contact Denna Joy, [dennajoy@comcast.net](mailto:dennajoy@comcast.net)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Ministry and Worship Committee invites you (individuals or a group) to **volunteer to serve as Head of Meeting** on a First Day convenient for you. The responsibilities are few, but important. Those who sit Head of Meeting **open and close the 10:30 a.m. Meeting for Worship** in the main Meeting Room. While FMW committees usually take turns sitting Head of Meeting, we hope others might also feel a leading to do so when given the opportunity. A written script and guidelines are provided; but most of the job requires one to display a welcoming spirit to all who are gathered. If you are led to volunteer anytime during October, November, or December 2013, please contact Kevin Camp at [cabaretic@gmail.com](mailto:cabaretic@gmail.com) or 205.305.7148 with the date(s) that you could serve. We hope to see many new faces on the Facing Bench!





**The New Jim Crow** Our Meeting has been asked by the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism to join in a “One Book Program” to read and discuss *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander. That book describes how the “War on Drugs dramatically expanded both the U.S. prison

population and the incarceration rate among African-Americans and Latinos far above the incarceration rate among non-Latino white people even though studies show that people of all races and ethnicities use and sell drugs at remarkably similar rates.

In addition to the loss of liberty that usually comes with a drug law conviction, there are lifetime consequences. It is legal to deny employment and housing to those with a criminal record. Many states also deny voting rights to convicts. Black people who have been convicted experience life much as their ancestors did during the time of Jim Crow—hence the title of the book.

Both Jim Crow laws and the legalized enslavement that preceded it were based on overtly race-based laws. The laws and programs that are the basis for the War on Drugs, of course are not explicitly race based. In this regard the War on Drugs has an impact similar to that of certain other legal systems during the Jim Crow era that were also not expressly race-based.

One of those was leased convict labor. Racially neutral vagrancy laws were construed to make it a crime to be unemployed. Black people were convicted of this type of “vagrancy” and prisons then leased their labor to farmers and other businesses.

Another system was sharecropping/debt bondage. Formerly enslaved people farmed land belonging to a white person in exchange for a share of the crop. Because those workers had no money, they became indebted to the landowner for living and farming expenses to be paid from the worker’s share of the crop. Typically the owner determined that the debt owed exceeded the worker’s share of the harvest and the worker would be obliged to continue farming with little hope of ever repaying the debt.

Enslavement, Jim Crow laws, and the debt bondage and leased convict labor systems of that era no longer exist as they once did, but the War on Drugs continues. Michelle Alexander leaves us with two difficult questions: first, how can we address the unjust racial impact of the War on Drugs and, second, even if that impact is successfully addressed, what changes can we make so that our society does not continue to create systems that create Jim Crow-like conditions for Latinos and for black people?

Now is an especially good time for Friends to read this book and discuss the issues it raises because we have good company from outside our Religious Society. Many other faith groups are doing the same work right now. Questions about the fairness of the criminal justice system to Black people are on the minds of many more Americans than before due to verdict in the George Zimmerman prosecution. As Quakers we have an opportunity to bring our discernment and leadership to an important moral issue just as Quakers have done throughout our history.

If you would like to be part of the FMW group reading and discussing *The New Jim Crow*, please send me an email letting me know. I am also inviting people from our neighboring congregations, Our Lady Queen of the Americas Catholic Church, the Presbyterian Church of the Pilgrims and St. Margaret’s Episcopal Church, to join us.



David Etheridge, [david.etheridge@verizon.net](mailto:david.etheridge@verizon.net)

### **FROM THE VAULT**

A monthly series of edited extracts from the historical material of the Friends Meeting of Washington.

Earlham College  
Feb 2, 1952

Dear Friends,

We have asked our friends Bruce Pearson, Max Heirich, Nancy Shroer and others, who are visiting among you to bring to Friends of Florida Avenue Meeting this letter as an expression of our sense of fellowship with you and of being members one of another.

Just as no individual renders full service apart from other men, so we as a meeting of the Mid-West are grateful for the witness of our Quaker testimonies that you are giving in our nation's capital, and we are aware of the burden this responsibility lays upon you. But we in turn need your help, for we too face peculiar and baffling obstacles to the clear expression of our beliefs.

We are with Love,  
(Names)

A letter from the Miscellaneous Correspondence file that I found appealing.

Best regards to all,  
Hayden Wetzel  
FMW Historian

### **RANDOM HAPPENINGS**



I am slowly getting to know the neighborhood dogs and their walkers, many of whom are very grateful for our gardens. There's a particularly stunning group of three who come by most mornings, which includes two cute terriers and a gorgeous white poodle named **George Clooney**. This month, I met their owner, the dentist whose office is across from the Meeting on Phelps Place. It turns out that these are therapy dogs used to calm patients! Tragically, that dentist doesn't take my health care, or I'd switch in a heartbeat.

Staring at the calendar, I started to notice how very, very many groups we have that are Spiritual with a capital S—Spiritual Friendships, Spiritual Formation, Spiritual Journey Group, and now a new meeting organized by Ministry & Worship in which Friends will share their, you guessed it, spiritual journeys. **Patty Murphy** thinks this shows a lack of imagination on our part. Perhaps it's time for a re-naming party? Any suggestions?

Special thanks this month to **Rita Carey** for personally funding the Alternatives to Violence Project workshop held in the Quaker House Living Room, to **Elisabeth Johnson** and **Gene Throwe** for using the monthly Fibre Party to create hats for kids in D.C. Shelters (and to **Julian** for serving as their model), to **Merilee Janssen** for keeping us connected with the Friends Committee on National Legislation, to **Maurice Boyd** for bringing a member of the Christian Peacemaker Team to speak with us about the children of Palestine, to **Faith Williams** for convening a Meeting for Grieving and Loss, to **Jean Harman** for organizing the Work Days AND making regular Costco runs on the Meeting's behalf, to everyone who came to the Work Day and helped make our campus clean and beautiful, to **Emilie Schmeidler** for doing tons of grunt work on the Meeting property, to everyone who brought in their extra tea (yay!), to **Steve Williams** for bringing delicious pawpaws from his garden, and to the team of good folks—**Andrew Hall, Malachy Kilbride, Matthew Graville, Mike Hubbard, Patty Murphy, and Tom Libbert**—who staffed the building during outside events for 22 days and nights this month. Thank you, Friends!

- Debby





**Julian models Elisabeth Johnson's creation, left; Pawpaws grown by Steve Williams, above, and scenes from a Work Day, below.**



