

# The Provident FRIEND

Feb 2011

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

## First ... Second .....Nth Snow of 2011



### Calendar:

**Mar 5:** 6pm-9pm (p4)  
"Fancy" Potluck, Providence Meeting House

**Mar 6:** After potluck (p4):  
Walk with Eugenia Marks, Providence Meeting House (raindate Mar 20)

**Mar 13:** 12:15pm (p2)  
Providence Meeting for Business, Providence Meeting House.

**Mar 20:** After coffee hour (p4):  
Walk with Eugenia Marks, Providence Meeting House. (This is a raindate - see Mar 6)

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes- Second Month 13th****Providence Monthly Meeting for Business - 13 Second Month 2011**

1. The meeting opened at 12:15 p.m. with fourteen Friends present. In the opening worship the clerk read an advice and query on peace and reconciliation from the *Faith and Practice* of Britain Yearly Meeting (1994):

*Bring into God's light those emotions, attitudes and prejudices in yourself which lie at the root of destructive conflict, acknowledging your need for forgiveness and grace. In what ways are you involved in the work of reconciliation between individuals, groups and nations?*

2. Announcements:

Peace and Social Concerns will sponsor a garage sale on September 30th and October 1st. The plan is to have a preview and silent auction with live music Friday evening, and a large community event Saturday. Half of the proceeds will be donated to The Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence and the remainder to either one or all of the following: Camp Street Ministries, the George Wiley Center, and Amos House.

The 2012 Friends General Conference Gathering will be held at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, July 1 to 7. Friends are invited to serve on the Gathering Committee and/or the Local Arrangements Committee.

3. Nominating Committee: The clerk reported that in addition to the persons named last month, Ariana Steele has agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee, as an informal liaison with Saylesville. Friends approved.

4. Ministry and Counsel: The clerk reported that the annual State of Society report is being prepared, following a worship-sharing session.

5. Treasurer's Report: Peter Swaszek presented an interim report for the first eight months of the fiscal year. He noted that contributions from members and attenders have been just under \$26,000, significantly below both last year and the previous year. Some additional contributions have been deposited this month. Expenses are running pretty much as expected.

6. Saylesville: For Saylesville Preparative Meeting, Hans-Dieter Gomes reported that Historic New England, owner of the nearby Arnold House, is using the meeting house today for its annual meeting.

7. No other business appearing, we closed with worship at 12:45 p.m., intending to meet again, God willing, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of 3d month at 12:15 p.m.

Mark Conley, Clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, Recording Clerk



### Winter Time - Summer Time

Last week as I was snowshoeing around Friends Camp on one of the coldest days of the winter, I realized with some sadness that all of the beautiful snow-covered buildings were lifeless and empty with none of the wacky, fun-loving energy that fills them in the summer. As the days start to slowly get longer, I look forward to the time of year when we have six more hours of daylight and everyone goes to vespers to see a wonderful sunset.

Over the next few months, I will pull together a caring, thoughtful creative group of young adult counselors who will give our campers a few weeks of a camp that is engaging and accepting of all youth. One camper wrote about her Friends Camp experience: ***"It is a place of freedom and acceptance for those who cannot find it elsewhere, a place of communication and sharing that does not happen in what campers call 'the real world'. It is a place where connections form between people who may have ignored each other anywhere else."***

I am full of gratitude and happiness to have the opportunity to play an important part in Friends Camp, to help create and support an incredible camp community with Quaker values, interesting activities and lots of zany fun for the young people who attend.

For many campers the Friends Camp experience is summed up in this quote ***"I wouldn't be the same person I am today without Friends Camp."***

If you wish to know more about Friends Camp, please use the various active links in his e-newsletter to take you to different sections of the Friends Camp website.

See you this summer,

Nat Shed

2011 Friends Camp Brochure Information:

You Can Now Sign Up Online [www.friendscamp.org/](http://www.friendscamp.org/)



## Around the Meeting

### March 5 event from Program Committee and Game Night Report:

Mark your calendars.....

We're going to have a second "fancy" potluck Saturday March 5th at 6pm at the meetinghouse. It is for fun and fundraising. Participants will be asked to bring a dish to share and make contributions based on the cost of going out to eat.

Questions? See Sarah Baily or Debbie Block.

Also, we had a fun,

successful game night on Saturday February 12th with over 20 people. Participants, ranging in ages from 3months to over 80 years old, enjoyed twister, hearts, uno, bananagram and many more games.

### March 6 walk with Eugenia Marks:

Walk to extend friendship and worship on March 6 with a storm date of March 20, the first day of spring! Nature is all around us whether in the city or in more bucolic

setting. We are natural beings creating brick and mortar environment. We'll ponder the irony as we walk. After potluck, carpool from meeting.

### News from Westerly Meeting - Mike Izbicki To Receive CO Status:

*(The following is quoted from the Jan 2011 newsletter of the Westerly Monthly Meeting - please contact them for any information. It is included here as it was a matter of interest to many readers of the PFM).*

Good news! Mike Izbicki, a naval officer assigned to

Submarine Service at Submarine Base New London, who has been worshipping with us for close to a year now, has received word that he will be granted Conscientious Objector status and will be released from the Navy. His request had been denied by the Navy after two hearings, and so Mike sued in Federal Court. This action apparently forced the Navy to reexamine the situation and relent. Mike is still in the Navy, but hopes to hear soon about the details of his release.

## Heads-up for Nominating! From Elsie Morse

All you good friends and attenders are most warmly welcomed to enrich our meeting as well as your own lives by serving on one of our Meeting's committees! If you are not already acquainted with such a joyful connection to the Meeting, the secret must be told; committee work is simply the very best way to feel a part of the interests, the work, and the community, of the Meeting.

If you would like to know more about the nature of any of any of the Meeting's committees, feel free to contact Elsie Morse, clerk of the Nominating Committee, at [gamepacks@cox.net](mailto:gamepacks@cox.net). She promises to get right back to you by email or phoning as long as you include your number and a few best times to call. In the meantime, here is the list of committees:

### Committees Service Available to all:

Peace and Social concerns	Adult Religious Education	Social and Hospitality
Property	Library	Religious Education
Funeral and Burial Grounds	Communications	Program

### Committee Service, Available to Members:

Marriage Clearness	Finance
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(Nominating committee does not oversee service on Ministry and Counsel, Pastoral Care, or Quaker Education Support, though members are welcome to pass along their interest to serve on any of these committees as well.)

## More on Quaker Quest from Dan Lederer

Friends:

I'm writing on behalf of Ministry and Counsel. We hope that everyone who attended the Quaker Quest workshop in November found it to be a valuable experience. Now our Meeting needs to consider whether we want to proceed with the public part of the program, which would require preparing 3 or 4 evening sessions, each with a topic and 3 presenters from Meeting. The sessions would be given on successive weeks and then repeated, so there would be a total of 6 to 8 sessions. If we decide to do this, these sessions would probably take place in the fall, would be publicized, and would be open to the public.

A necessary preliminary step in preparing for the Quaker Quest public sessions would be to form a planning group, consisting of 8 or more persons, to take responsibility for finding the presenters, hosts, small-group leaders, and hospitality-providers, for deciding on the topics to be discussed, and for arranging publicity. Participants would be expected to come from Meeting as a whole rather than just from this group or Ministry and Counsel. As you can see, this project would require a lot of work and would have to be a major commitment of our Meeting. With this in mind, another option to be considered would be not to follow the Quaker Quest format (in which case we would need to call the program something else) but instead to devise some modification of it that better suits our needs. A third option would be to forego any kind of public sessions and to direct our energies to other kinds of activities entirely.

On January 9 Meeting for Business approved Ministry and Counsel's proposal to form an ad hoc committee to explore these options, the committee to be drawn from Meeting members and attenders in general since the activities to be considered are Meeting-wide projects. The committee will be asked to gauge the level of interest in these options via conversations with members and attenders, a questionnaire, a worship sharing, or any other means they choose, and then will present a proposal as to how Meeting should proceed.

I'm writing to ask whether you are willing to serve on such a committee. If so, or if you have any questions about this, please contact me ([dlederer1@verizon.net](mailto:dlederer1@verizon.net) or 401-831-0243).

## Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering July 1-7, 2012 (yes, 2012)

The 2012 Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering will be held at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, July 1 to 7, 2012. The Gathering brings together about 1,500 Friends from liberal unprogrammed meetings throughout the U.S. and Canada for a week of workshops, plenary speakers and events, singing, and of course worship. It was last held in New England (at U.Mass-Amherst) in 2004.

FGC has invited New England Friends to join the Gathering Committee, a self-selected group who commit to planning and hosting a spiritually grounded and lovingly inclusive Gathering, inviting attendees to explore the Quaker roots of the area, participate in challenging and interesting workshops, worship both in familiar and in new ways, and hear from inspiring speakers. The Gathering Committee sets the tone for the week and plans many of the programs and activities. Nancy and David Haines of Wellesley Meeting will serve as its co-clerks. The committee's first meeting will be April 29-30, 2011 at Wellesley Meeting. A description of the Gathering Committee and subcommittees can be found at [www.FGCquaker.org/gathering/gathering-committee](http://www.FGCquaker.org/gathering/gathering-committee). One of its subcommittees is a Local Arrangements Committee, which our member Mark Conley has agreed to clerk.

Anyone interested in serving should fill out a Reply/Registration form at: [www.FGCquaker.org/gathering/next-year](http://www.FGCquaker.org/gathering/next-year).

**Clerk's Corner** by Mark Conley

Our New England Yearly Meeting has been very epistolary of late, sending many items of correspondence our way. This has been on the one hand a wonderful way of learning about all the things NEYM does and is thinking about, and on the other hand a bit of an overwhelming volume of requests for us to discern our positions as a Monthly Meeting on many topics.

It is sometimes difficult to know how to fit everything in to our busy Providence Monthly Meeting calendar, but we have had several worship sharing sessions in recent years on matters as diverse as the revision of our current Faith and Practice to our relationship as a Monthly Meeting and a Yearly Meeting to Friends United Meeting. Phew! That's a lot of meetings!

This year we have been asked to consider the Minute of Sending Forth/Commission that came from NEYM Sessions last Summer. The link to it is <http://sessions.neym.org/minute-sending-forth>, or you can find it in the new NEYM 2010 Minute Books in the library. Yearly Meeting is asking us as a community and as individuals to contemplate our spiritual priorities as we live and worship together. I commend it highly to you if you have not yet seen it.

Clerks also recently received a letter from Edward Baker, Clerk of the Permanent Board, asking meetings to consider the Minute of Purpose for New England Yearly Meeting. Whether you have been involved at the Yearly Meeting level for years or are brand new to Quakerism and are wondering what in the world I am talking about, I ask you to consider these thoughts. We are being asked to consider if these words hold meaning to us and speak to the way we work with each other in our wider community:

Witnessing to the power of God in our lives ... Spirit-led to faithful action.

Yearly Meeting provides a voice and center for Quakers in New England, upholding monthly and quarterly meetings with support, resources and connections so that Friends can do God's work.

New England Friends come together in worship and fellowship from a rich diversity of theological perspectives and both unprogrammed and pastoral traditions. We are called to listen deeply to the inward guide and to each other as we seek to be a gathered faith community.

Witnessing to the power of God in our lives, we envision a vibrant and growing Quaker presence in the world, Spirit-led to faithful action.

What say you, Friend? Do these thoughts speak to your condition? Do they help to clarify the role Yearly Meeting might play in your life and our life together as a Meeting?

And, as always, thank you for all you do in the Life of our Meeting.

## Saylesville Meeting Hosts Board Gathering of "Historic New England" - From Joanne Griffin

More than fifty board members of "Historic New England" from all over New England made their way to the Saylesville Meeting House in Lincoln for their first meeting of the year. For all except two members, it was the first time inside the structure. The meeting started later than scheduled as people went from room to room, checking out the nooks and crannies. Arnold House organizer Dan Santos had warned it would be hard to tear them away. I had set out the architectural drawings for our guests to pour over, and photographs from the turn of the century.

They marveled at the fact that the building still serves its original purpose and is still maintained and owned by the same Monthly Meeting. I explained the membership of PMM and the three meetinghouses where we worship. Countless questions arose about how we worship, how the building was used, why it is set up the way it is, how we conduct business meetings, what role children play in worship and the life of the community. Afterward, we walked to Arnold House where smaller groups met in the different rooms covering a variety of topics, switching rooms every 20 minutes at the sound of a bell.

The next event will be a walking tour in May for the Great Road District. I will be meeting with Dan in the next week or two to start brainstorming. We are hoping that partnering together will give Saylesville Meeting the chance to open the meeting house even more to the surrounding community. It is my hope to provide an opportunity to learn not only about who we were, but who we are now. Dan came by and met Bob Elliott, who was working with the teenage boys and other helpers on the building's siding a few months ago, and that led to the surprise television spot on the 6 O'clock news about volunteers working toward the preservation of the building. I am excited by the possibilities the future may hold.

### Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

**Providence Meeting** (401) 331-4218 <http://providencefriends.org>  
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Elizabeth Bonner Zimmerman

Newsletter of  
Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of  
Friends

(401) 331-4218 or <http://providencefriends.org>

**Meeting for Worship each Sunday**

Providence: 10:00 am      Saylesville: 10:30 am  
Jamestown: 10:30 am

**First Day School, Providence** - Sunday. Children join Meeting for Worship from 10:00-10:15 am and then proceed to First Day School from 10:15-11:00 am.

**Other Meetings for Worship (All welcome):**

**Monday** - 12:30pm - Moses Brown Upper School  
**Wednesday** - 8:25am - Moses Brown Lower School  
**Wednesday** - 9:40am - Moses Brown Middle School  
**Wednesday** - 7pm - Young Adult Friends at  
116 Waterman St. ([yaf@providencefriends.org](mailto:yaf@providencefriends.org))  
**Thursday** - Noon-12:45 pm Brown University in  
J. Walter Wilson room 411

**Potluck, Providence** - each First Sunday

**Meeting for Business**

Providence: Second Sunday each month at 12:15pm  
Saylesville: Last Sunday of each month

**AFSC SENE Support Committee** - Second Tuesday, 6:30-9:00 pm  
Volunteers needed and welcome.  
Call (508) 399-6699

## Important Directory Update

From Dan Lederer

For the next few weeks after Meeting for Worship, Communications Committee will be distributing a brief questionnaire to members and attenders in order to update the Meeting Directory. The form asks you to indicate what information you would like published in the directory. Personal information that you prefer not be published will be made available to committees only on an "as-needed" basis in order to contact you, and you can leave blank any items which you would like to remain private. Please take a few minutes to fill out the form when you receive it so that our directory can be as accurate as possible.

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Newsletter of  
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