

The Provident FRIEND

Apr 2012

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Sixth World Conference of Friends (adapted from Betsy Cazden)

Betsy Cazden, along with about twenty other New England Friends, will be attending the Sixth World Conference of Friends, in Nakuru, Kenya, from April 17 to 25. Friends World Committee for Consultation organizes world-wide conferences about once a generation, and this will be the largest such gathering since the 1967 conference at Guilford College with about 1,000 participants. The conference theme, which draws on Matt. 5:13-16 as well as John Woolman and other Biblical texts, is "Being Salt and Light: Friends living the Kingdom of God in a broken world." Friends who are not traveling to Kenya can participate in and learn from this event in other ways:

- The conference resource booklet was used by Valerie Joy and Abel Sibonio during their time with us in November 2011, and used by Betsy Cazden in workshops in local meetings in Cuba last month, has readings on the theme from many parts of the Quaker world, and is available online at:

<http://www.saltandlight2012.org/materials>.

- During the conference, transcripts of the plenary talks should become available on the conference website:

www.saltandlight2012.org. There is also an active Facebook page (www.facebook.com/saltandlight2012)

and on Twitter you can follow @Kabarak2012 using hashtag #FWCC2012.



MAY BREAKFAST Saturday May 5

There will be a May Breakfast from 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM on Saturday, May 5, at the Providence Meetinghouse. It generally is a traditional breakfast of eggs, home fries, bacon or sausage, pancakes and an assortment of muffins. OJ, coffee and tea will also be provided. Open to all! Come and enjoy!



Friendly Eights - Saturday April 28, 6:30 – 9:00 pm

Last call for those interested in this next Friendly Eights gathering, a great way to meet with Friends in a different setting. If you are interested in participating, please contact Sarah Baily at 433-2474 or

bailysp@hotmail.com.

Calendar
[see also "Calendar Notes", p4]

Apr 21: 10am-12pm
Saylesville Bookswap

Apr 22: After meeting (p4) Walk with Eugenia Marks, leave from Providence Meeting House

Apr 22: 3-6pm (p4) Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

Apr 25: 11am (p4) Mid-week Worship sharing, Saylesville Meeting House.

Apr 28: 6:30-8:30 pm (p1) Friendly Eights, various houses.

Apr 29: After meeting (p4) Walk with Eugenia Marks, leave from Providence Meeting House

May 4-6: (p4) Young Friends Retreat, Hartford, CT

May 5: 7-11am (p1) May Breakfast, Providence Meeting House

May 6: 10:30am (p4) Conanicut Meeting at Weeden Lane, Jamestown

May 10: 6 & 7 pm (p2,4) 6pm potluck followed by 7pm Meeting For Business, Providence Meeting House

May 19: 10am-12pm
Saylesville Bookswap

May 24: 3:30-5:30pm (p4) Moses Brown Spring Tea, Providence Meeting House

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes – 8 Fourth Month 2012

1. The meeting opened at 11:50 am at Providence, with sixteen Friends present. In the opening worship, the clerk read queries on personal conduct from New England Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice* (1985):

Do you live with simplicity, moderation, and integrity?

Are you punctual in keeping promises, careful in speech, just and compassionate in all your dealings with others?

Do you take care that your spiritual growth is not sacrificed to busyness but instead integrates your life's activities?

Are your recreations consistent with Quaker values; do they refresh your spirit and renew your body and mind?

2. Announcements:

Rhode Island – Smithfield Quarterly Meeting will be held at Westerly on the 15th of 4th month. In addition to regular business, the program will include discussion of the upcoming Friends General Conference Gathering at URI this Summer. All are welcome.

On Saturday, 14th of 4th month, at 5:30 pm, AFSC will host a Potluck and Racial Profiling Program at Providence Meetinghouse. The youth of the Providence Youth Student Movement will talk about their experiences as Asian youth on the streets of Providence and about the legislation they (and AFSC) have been working to get passed. Suggested donation of \$25 to support the work of AFSC and PRYSM.

Next month will be our last Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business at Providence Meetinghouse until fall. In keeping with recent custom, we will hold our Meeting on 10 Fifth Month, with a 6 p.m. potluck and 7 p.m. Meeting.

The meal that AFSC and this meeting agreed to serve at the statehouse will be on Wednesday, 11th of 4th month. Volunteers are still needed to help prepare food the night before and to serve that afternoon.

3. Statistical Report for 2011: Meeting Recorder Anne DiMase presented the statistical report as of the end of 2011, using the format provided by New England Yearly Meeting. The total membership at the end of the year was 180 at Providence, 12 at Conanicut, and 21 at Saylesville, for a total of 213. In addition, we have about 40 active non-members. Average attendance at worship has been 69 at Providence, 7 at Conanicut, and 6 at Saylesville. Friends asked that the complete report, or a written account of it, be made available in the newsletter.

The recorder also reported that Nano Rush has asked that her membership be discontinued. Friends approved, with regret.

4. For Nominating Committee, Elsie Morse presented a proposed list of appointments to meeting committees for the coming year. The committee does not have new names for Finance or Religious Education, and would welcome volunteers or suggestions. Friends approve this report, with permission to add names if the committee has some at future meetings. We thank the Nominating Committee for its work, recognizing the valuable role the nominating process can serve in drawing out gifts, talents, and interests of the members of our meeting community. We may wish to examine the process and timing of forming the Nominating Committee, and refer this to Ministry and Counsel for further seasoning.

5. Welcoming statement for website: For Ministry and Counsel, Dan Lederer presented a follow-up to our previous minute concerning the meeting's listing by the Institute for Welcoming Resources as a religious organization that is welcoming to the gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender (GLBT) community. (2d mo. 2012, Minute 9.) Ministry and Counsel proposes the following language to be placed on the meeting's website:

In keeping with our belief that there is that of God in every person, Providence Monthly Meeting welcomes all persons regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, race or color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, or disability.

We approve this language, and authorize Ministry and Counsel to disseminate it as appropriate.

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes (cont. from p2)

6. Minute regarding FUM personnel policy: Ministry and Counsel also brought a proposed minute concerning the restrictive personnel policy of Friends United Meeting:

It saddens us and causes deep hurt in our community that FUM has a stated hiring policy that explicitly fails to recognize loving relationships that have been blessed, acknowledged and embraced by our community of deep faith, and has therefore rejected the contributions, and indeed the basic humanity, of many, both in our community and in the larger worldwide community of Friends, with a policy that openly discriminates against individuals and families based only on their sexual orientation, and not on the quality of contribution that they may be able to bring to our collective spiritual work.

We urge FUM to reconsider this policy, and to give the same loving care and consideration in employment to all couples and individuals, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.

We note that this minute does not address the question of employment of persons in intimate relationships outside of marriage. Some Friends requested that this be added to the minute, to reflect the current reality of many of our lives and honor that of God in each person. Concerns were expressed about broadening the minute. One Friend noted that acceptance of intimacy without regard to marriage is a significant and fairly recent departure from traditional Quaker practice, which most Friends in the world continue to uphold. We also note the complexity of making hiring decisions in a global multicultural context, especially for positions outside of the applicant's home country.

We were also reminded that the FUM General Board itself is in flux on this question, and that it is not clear what effect our minute would have either on deliberations of New England Yearly Meeting or on FUM.

We thank Ministry and Counsel for furthering this fruitful conversation, and ask that it continue threshing this question and when appropriate to bring back a revised minute for our consideration.

7. Budget: For the Finance Committee, Bill Monroe presented an initial proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning Sixth Month 2012. About one-third of our total budget goes to maintain our buildings and properties; one-third, as contributions to New England Yearly Meeting and other causes; and the remainder for our activities. He noted significant new requests of \$3,000 to provide a stipend for the person working with the high school students, a discretionary fund under the control of Saylesville Preparative Meeting, and small increases in our donations to Providence and Lincoln governments. The Finance Committee also recommends increases in the contributions for maintenance reserves for our properties. The proposal before us would require a substantial increase in contributions from members, and the committee welcomes comments on whether this is acceptable. It reflects both increased activity within the meeting and prudent stewardship of our assets.

Several Friends noted the usefulness of having guidance on what the average contribution should be, while recognizing that Friends need to give according to their own circumstances and leadings. The Finance Committee intends to do this periodically during the year, in part to encourage Friends to make donations through the year.

We look forward to hearing a second reading of the budget at our next meeting.

8. Nomination of Assistant Clerk: The Clerk noted that he has served five years as clerk, and looks forward to relinquishing that responsibility. According to our custom, Ministry and Counsel presents the name of Dan Lederer to serve as Assistant Clerk of the meeting, with the expectation that he may be available to assume the clerkship in the future. This would require appointment of a new clerk for Ministry and Counsel.

We approve this appointment.

9. Religious Education report: It was reported that the Religious Education Committee has been looking for a back-up person to work with the high school students as needed.

10. We concluded at about 2:10 with a period of grateful silence.

Mark Conley, Clerk Elizabeth Cazden, Recording Clerk

Around the Meeting

Sacred Harp Singing, Apr 22, May 27 – Every 4th Sunday (Providence Meetinghouse) from 3:00 to 6:00 PM, join us and make a joyful noise. See Bob Elliott for details.

Mid-week Saylesville Worship Sharing, Apr 25, May 9 and 23 -The mid-week, small worship sharings at the Saylesville Meeting House in Lincoln continue on the second and fourth Wednesdays

of each month, the next few on April 25, May 9 and May 23, all at 10:00 AM. The group meets for approximately 1 and 1/2 hours. All are welcome. Contact Kathy Boger at (401) 475-9563 for more information.

Walks with Eugenia Marks, Apr 22 and 29 - On Earth Day, April 22, view our place on the earth from Neutacontacutt Hill. En route, we will take a look to see whether or not

herring are swimming up the Woonasquatucket River. On April 29 we'll venture further afield for a walk at Audubon's Caratunk refuge in Seekonk where we may find spring ephemeral flowers. A refreshing time in the cycle of life. A time to refresh oneself to the universal.

Leave at the end of community refreshments and re-acquaintance.

Questions? Eugenia Marks

Spring Tea May 24
The Annual Moses Brown Spring Tea is on Thursday, May 24th, 3:30-5:30pm at the Meetinghouse. This is an opportunity to celebrate the season and to express our thanks to the faculty and staff of Moses Brown School. Please join us!

Calendar Notes (Contact and other information about events ongoing and/or described in previous issues)

- May 4-6 - Young Friends Retreats - **Rest & Relaxation** Hartford, CT

For the above: To register or to find out more contact Nia Thomas - Nia@neym.org (617) 945-0373

- May 6 - Conanicut Friends Meeting return to the old 1787 Meetinghouse on Weeden Lane in Jamestown on Sunday, May 6 at 10:30 AM. Services will continue there through October. If any questions, please call 423-9122 or 848-4115.

News From Saylesville – from Rosanne Cedroni

Greetings to all! Kidsinfo was kind enough to put an article about the book swap/Open house on their web-site. Check it out at:

<http://kidoinfo.com/ri/craft-workshop-book-swap-and-history-at-the-saylesville-meetinghouse-in-lincoln-rhode-island/>

Please feel encouraged to pass this along to families with young children. It's a great little event that's free and the children are thrilled to walk away with something they've made with their own hands.

Insight from a First-day School attender:

"Hugs are the way love travels."

[Reported by Betsy Zimmerman]

NEXT MEETING FOR BUSINESS IS THURSDAY MAY 10

There will be a potluck dinner at 6pm, and the meeting will start at 7pm. This is the last Meeting For Business to be held in Providence for this winter-spring season. The following Meeting For Business will be in Saylesville.

Thanks and notes from Ben Brown concerning Women's Rights issue

Thanks to everyone who stood up against the mandatory ultrasound bill which came before the Rhode Island House Judiciary Committee recently. For those who didn't hear about this issue at the time, House Bill 7205 would have required that all women presenting for an abortion have an ultrasound prior to the procedure, and that they have the internal and external organs of the fetus described to them - regardless of whether they wished to hear that description or not. Under this law, physicians would have been given the option of either verbally shaming patients for their choices - destroying the trust inherent to the doctor-patient relationship in the process - or receiving up to a \$250,000 fine for non-compliance. This and six other pieces of restrictive legislation were all tabled by the committee, which represents a big victory for women. Friends wishing to be kept up to date about future legislative issues regarding reproductive health can sign up for Planned Parenthood of Southern New England's Action Network listserv at <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/ppsne/ppsne-action-network-38499.htm>.

In the Light – Ben

Ben Brown, MS4
Alpert Medical School of Brown University
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Live From Kenya – Update and Request For Prayer

From Betsy Cazden

Dear friends,

I have been asked to clerk one of the plenary sessions here at the World Conference -- 900 people in a huge auditorium, threshing minutes on political or policy topics. It's daunting. The timing is that you will be meeting in worship Sunday while we are in that business session -- it begins at 4:15 here, 9:15 am there, and runs until 6:15 pm here, 11:15 there. So I am hoping perhaps a few people could hold us in prayer as we meet. There is a pastoral care team here that will have three people on the platform for that purpose as well, and possibly a few more, but I also wanted to give Providence Friends an opportunity.

Things are going very well here. My flights got a bit scrambled but the efficient Swiss customer service person managed to get my luggage rerouted with me. On Monday we came by bus from Nairobi up the Rift Valley about four hours to the campus. It is lovely weather until about 4 pm each day when it rains hard. My "home group" (like the "anchor groups" at NEYM) has about 17 people from North America, Europe, and Africa, a good daily opportunity for personal sharing. Some of the plenary messages are already available on the conference website, www.saltandlight2012.org.

Greetings to all,
Betsy

Those less fortunate – from the announcements at a recent Meeting For Worship.

14.2% of Rhode Islanders live below the legal definition of poverty. Poverty means hunger and malnutrition. Please remember our neighbors whose lives are plagued by poverty and hunger. Buy an extra jar of peanut butter or a can of tuna or other protein for Camp Street and put it in the boxes on the bench in the foyer. Or give as you can directly, or to a similar organization. Thank you.

Guidance for Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) – from Zona Douthit

Every two years, FCNL asks for guidance from Friend's communities in setting their lobbying priorities in the next Congress. On March 25, thirteen Friends gathered for a threshing session to devise Providence Friends Meeting's suggestions. We have forwarded the following five items to FCNL for consideration.

1. **War prevention**, including population control, women's rights, water rights, sustainability.
2. **Promotion of social equity**, including fair taxation, immigration reform, marriage equality, protection of minorities and healthcare.
3. **Criminal justice reform**, including ending the privatization of prisons for profit and rational gun and drug laws.
4. **Shifting military spending from military to social justice**, create incentives for corporations to turn swords into ploughshares. Universal public service for 18 year olds whether in the military or other public service organization. . Keep promises to veterans.
5. **Campaign finance reform**, including a constitutional amendment overturning *Citizens United* case.

[Ed. Note – for more information about FCNL, see <http://fcnl.org/about/>]

Yearly Membership Report Summary

From Anne DiMase

The following is a summary of the yearly report of the membership of the Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends. It is for the year which ended on December 31, 2011. This report is given at Business Meeting, and sent to the Quarterly Meeting and the New England Yearly Meeting.

The previous year, 2010, we had a reported total of 218 members. Additions for the year ending 2011 included 2 due to an error the previous year, 3 additions by application for membership in Providence, and one addition by Certification of Transfer in Conanicut.

Losses included 3 by death, 5 by discontinuance/resignation, and 3 by Certificate of Transfer to other Friends Meetings. This amounted to a net loss of 5 members.

The composition of the membership includes 106 males 107 females. We have 161 resident members and 52 non-resident members. 10 of our members are ages birth through 14; 9 are ages 15-18; 23 are 19-25; and 66 are age 65 or older.

Our average attendance in Providence is 69 people, 34 of whom are active attenders (non-members). In Conanicut, average attendance is 7 people, 4 of whom are attenders. In Saylesville it is 6 people, 2 of

'Soup Kitchen' Event Report from Wendy Virgadamo

(Event rescheduled from March 13 to April 10)

I wanted to let everyone know that we had a great time making lunches for the homeless Tuesday night! About 23 in attendance: kids, teens and grown-ups got together over pizza and soda and packed 100 nutritious lunches to be brought to the capital building 'soup' kitchen. We made egg salad, turkey, ham and bologna sandwiches, and included fruit, cookies, chips and a drink. With so many present it took very little time, so we were able to have a nice supper ourselves and participate in a little homegrown fellowship. (and a few impromptu committee meetings, in true Quaker style!)

Thanks to all who participated, perhaps we can do this again sometime!

News from Jeanne Whittaker (as sent to Eugenia Marks, March 23)

I miss my Providence Meeting friends. The meeting here is very different. The range of ages is limited, as is our energy.

Everything is in bloom at Kendal. A number of my neighbors have lovely gardens, and there are flowering apple and cherry trees and magnolias on the grounds. They're predicting 80 degree heat this afternoon. Beating all records.

I'm still settling in to my new environment, trying to remember where I stored all the things that you and Lucy Ann helped me to pack. I am so very grateful to you, and for all so many members of the Meeting did to make my big move possible.

My best to all my friends there.

Love, Jeanne

Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

Providence Meeting (401) 331-4218 <http://providencefriends.org>
99 Morris Avenue, Providence, RI 02906

Presiding Clerk: Mark Conley clerk@providencefriends.org
Assistant Presiding Clerk: Dan Lederer assistclerk@providencefriends.org
Recording Clerk: Betsy Cazden recordingclerk@providencefriends.org
Treasurer: Peter Swaszek treasurer@providencefriends.org
Ministry & Counsel: Dan Lederer ministryandcounsel@providencefriends.org
Pastoral Care Committee: Judy Shaw pastoralcare@providencefriends.org
Finance: Bill Monroe finance@providencefriends.org
Peace & Social Concerns: Dede Carlsten peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org
Social & Hospitality: Zona Douthit socialandhospitality@providencefriends.org
Religious Education: Kathi Lyons religioused@providencefriends.org
Communications: Dan Lederer communications@providencefriends.org
Program Committee: Sarah Baily program@providencefriends.org
Marriage Clearness: Erin Hazlett marriage@providencefriends.org
Library: Sarah Morenon library@providencefriends.org
Archive: archivist@providencefriends.org
Property: Bob Elliott and Lee Jaspers property@providencefriends.org
Funeral & Burial: Matt Hackman funeralandburial@providencefriends.org
Newsletter: Steve Schwartz providentfriend@providencefriends.org
Email list moderator: Dan Lederer list@providencefriends.org
Website: Dave McNab webclerk@providencefriends.org
Moses Brown School Liaison: Willis Monroe liaison@providencefriends.org
Young Adult Friends: Stephen Higa yaf@providencefriends.org
To schedule the Meetinghouse: Bruce Shaw scheduling@providencefriends.org
AFSC SENE: Martha Yager (508) 399-6699 or myager@afsc.org or www.afsc.org/sene
Adult Education: Dave McNab adult_ed@providencefriends.org



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

Tuesday - 7pm - Young Adult Friends at
116 Waterman St. (yaf@providencefriends.org)

Wednesday - 8:25am - Moses Brown Lower School

Wednesday - 9:40am - Moses Brown Middle School

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

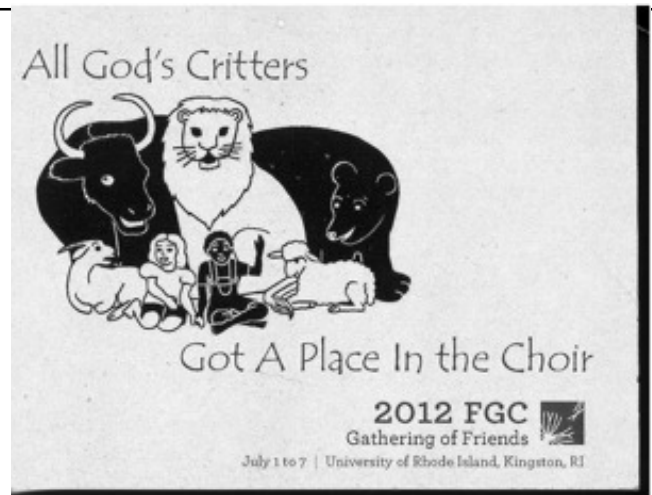
AFSC SENE Support Committee - Second Tuesday, 6:30-9:00 pm
Volunteers needed and welcome.
Call (508) 399-6699

FGC Gathering: The celebration begins!

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=-iP27eatYxE&feature=share

[Ed. suggests an alternative version at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcG1JNpazN4>]

Find more information at
<http://www.fgcquaker.org/gathering> and
215 561-1700 x 3005



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