

The Provident FRIEND

March 2013

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Interfaith Power & Light Workshop - Rescheduled Thursday, April 11, 5-9pm, Roger Williams Park Casino

Rescheduled from the snowed out March 7 event, a multi-faith activist panel line-up and new discussion format creates networking on climate solutions, from community organic gardens run by faith groups to faith community group action for investing in renewables or protesting fossil fuel development & more - for families, businesses & faith leaders. Car pooling from Meeting House and perhaps other areas. Go to www.ri-ipl.org and click events for details and registration, or contact Eugenia Marks.

AFSC Event - Rescheduled Friday, April 19 - Providence Meetinghouse

Rescheduled from the snowed out March 8 event is this celebration and fundraiser to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the American Friends Service Committee of Southeast New England. Join AFSC-SENE for a buffet meal at 6pm, with lots of tasty treats, and time to visit with old friends and meet some new ones. At 7:30pm, many of the wonderful women performers who had planned to be with us in March will join us, and we are adding some fun ways to celebrate AFSC-SENE's official 10th anniversary. It will be at the Providence Friends Meeting. Tickets are still \$15 for dinner (\$10 for low income) and \$20-50 for the program. (Pay as you can - please join us!) RSVP to sene@afsc.org You can download the flyer by going to the event page of our website, <http://afsc.org/event/celebrating-women-artists-working-peace-and-justice> Help spread the word.

Special Threshing Session April 7

Starting at noon on Sunday April 7 there will be a threshing session at the Providence Meetinghouse to consider a proposal by RISD student Jordan Taylor that he be allowed to make an audio recording of one or more Meetings for Worship. Jordan will present his proposal, there will be time for questions and answers, and then we will try to discern how to proceed, as we gain insight into methodology, suitability, and potential problems.

Tenth Annual Rhode Island All-Day Singing April 20, 2013 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Providence Meetinghouse is the site of Rhode Island Sacred Harp Singing's 10th Annual All-Day Singing. This is "shape-note" music, so called because the notes are written in different shapes, to allow reading by participants that have not learned to read music. Started in the early 1800's, this style of music that was specifically designed to be all inclusive. Therefore, novice and experienced singers are welcome. Dinner will be served, and for information contact Bob Elliott or see:

<http://www.ri-sacredharp.net/>.

Calendar (also see p4)

April 7 Sun: Potluck lunch, after rise of meeting, Providence Meeting House

April 7 Sun: Noon (p1, 2) Threshing session, Providence Meeting House.

April 11 Thur: 5-9pm (p1) Interfaith Power & Light workshop, Roger Williams Park Casino.

April 13 Sat: 2pm (p2, 4) Grace Lamb Memorial, Providence Meeting House

April 14 Sun: 12:00 (p2) Meeting For Business, Providence Meeting House

April 19 Fri: 6pm (p1) AFSC 10th Anniversary event, Providence Meeting House

April 20 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

April 20 Sat: 10am-3pm (p1) 10th Annual RI All-Day Sacred Harp Sing, Providence Meeting House

April 21 Sun: (p4) Walk or bike to services if possible.

April 28 Sun: (p7) After Meeting, Friends Camp Director talks about the camp at Providence Meeting House.

April 28 Sun: 12:30 (p4) Walk with Eugenia Marks, carpool from Providence Meeting House.

April 28 Sun: 3-6pm Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes – 10 Third Month, 2013

We gathered at 12:15 p.m. at the Providence meetinghouse, with 22 in attendance. In the opening worship, the clerk read the following queries from *NEYM Faith and Practice* (given preliminary approval 2012):

- Do you maintain an appropriate balance among work, service, worship, family, and recreation?
- Are you ready to rest if God asks it of you?

1. Announcements:

The NEYM Permanent Board will be meeting from 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM on Saturday March 16 at the Smithfield Meetinghouse. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

The 2013 NEYM Midyear Gathering "Let the Living Water Flow! Friends Serving God's Purposes," will be Saturday, March 23, 8:30 AM to 6:30 PM. at Portland Friends Meeting in Portland, Maine.

There will be a memorial service for Grace Lamb at the Providence Meetinghouse on Saturday, April 13, starting at 2:00 PM.

On March 17 at noon there will be a music program "Green Songs" at Saylesville Meeting House.

2. For Ministry and Counsel, David Bourns presented the Providence State of the Society report (see addendum to these minutes). This report and the report heard last Business Meeting from Saylesville Meeting will both be forwarded to Quarterly Meeting and then on to Yearly Meeting. Meeting received this report gratefully.

3. Anne DiMase, Membership Recorder, reported that she and Elsie Morse worked together to compile the Statistical Report this year. Our combined membership from Saylesville, Providence, and Conanicut Meetings last year was 213 and it has increased to 220 this year due to six additions by applications and three from transfers from other Friends Meetings, and was reduced by two because there was one loss by death and one by resignation. So we have had a net total gain of seven. Our membership is comprised of 109 males and 111 females, with 170 resident and 50 non-resident members. There are 12 age 14 and younger, 10 age 15 through 18, 23 age 19 through 25, and 70 age 65 and over. One Junior Member became an Adult Member. Average attendance at Sunday Meeting for Worship is 83 (counting all three worships sites) and average attendance at Weekday Meeting for Worship is 7. On average 5 attend First Day School (age 18 and younger). Average attendance at Meeting for Business is 19. The average number of Active Attenders (non-members) is 34.

4. For Ministry and Counsel, David Bourns reported that Jordan Taylor has met with Ministry and Counsel and requested to make an audio recording of Meeting for Worship as part of his art project at Rhode Island School for Design. A special Clearness Committee has already met with him to explore this matter and a threshing session will take place at 12 noon after Meeting for Worship and potluck on First Day April 7 to consider Jordan's proposal further and collect broader input from members.

5. David Bourns also reported that we will try a different approach to scheduling Meeting for Business by eliminating the evening sessions that we have been having twice a year. Meeting for Business will be on the second Sunday of each month from now on starting at noon. It will be at Providence from November through April inclusive and will be at Saylesville in May, June, September, and October. As usual, no Meeting for Business will be held in July and August.

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

6. Bill Monroe reported for Finance Committee that they are working on next year's Budget and he hopes that a draft will be ready for next month's Meeting for Business. NEYM has reported that the Hingham Friends Home has been sold and there has been a Legacy Committee appointed to receive and collect input and proposals from monthly meetings (not individuals) for guidance on the future of the proceeds from this sale. Bill will send information via the email list providing background on this matter. It was decided that we will have a Worship Sharing specially called at 11:45 AM on March 17 to consider this matter, and it is hoped that members of NEYM Permanent Board will be in attendance.

7. Treasurer Peter Swazek presented the treasurer's report through February 28. He requested that he be allowed to increase spending for nursery care at Providence by \$300 and for electricity at Saylesville by \$150 because those two lines have gone above the budgeted amounts. Friends approved.

No further business appearing, we closed with worship at 1:45 PM, intending to meet again, God willing, at noon on the 14th of 4th month.

Ann Clement, recording clerk pro tem
Daniel Lederer, presiding clerk

Opportunities For Summer Travel - Two notices that have come to us about summer travel.

Quaker Service and Study in Bolivia July 8-28, 2013 (also July 8-21 option)

Did you know Bolivia has more than 30,000 Quakers? That they are almost all indigenous Aymara? Would you like to meet some of them and see how their lives are improving dramatically?

The 2013 Quaker Service and Study Tour of Bolivia offers volunteer work with individual university scholarship students of the Bolivian Quaker Education Fund bqef.org to help them improve their English skills, and visits Quaker communities "off the beaten track" where projects of Quaker Bolivia Link qbl.org change lives.

This is an exciting time to visit Bolivia, a time of dramatic social and political change. For more information, see www.TreasuresoftheAndes.com or contact Barbara Flynn at info@treasuresoftheandes.com. 707 823-6034 California.

Quaker pilgrimage to Ireland, July 22 to Aug. 5, 2013

Margaret Fraser, former Executive Secretary of Friends World Committee—Section of the Americas, will be leading an adult pilgrimage to Ireland, July 22 to Aug. 5. It will include worship and learning about the 350-year history of Friends in Ireland and the witness of Friends during the "Great Hunger" of the mid-19th century and the "Troubles" of the 20th century. The group will also attend the sessions of Ireland Yearly Meeting, a diverse (but historically very Christ-centered) body that includes Friends in both Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. Accommodation will be in a meetinghouse/retreat center. The cost is \$2,250, including accommodation and meals but not airfare to/from Dublin. For more information, go to <http://goodnewsassoc.org/associates/margaret-fraser/delegation-to-ireland/> or contact Margaret at margaret@goodnewsassoc.org.

[The latter - Ireland – comes to us from Betsy Cazden, who reports: "I have worked closely with Margaret and am happy to vouch for her -- it should be a wonderful trip. (No, I'm not going.)"]

Around the Meeting

Jeanne Whitaker's New
Email: Jean contacted
 Zona, and asked to
 report her new email:

jtheiswhit@gmail.com

April 28 Walk: Walk with
 a group on Sunday April

28 after meeting. We
 will carpool from the
 meetinghouse, leaving at
 12:30, returning about 3

or 4pm, place and details
 to be determined. See
 Eugenia Marks.

Grace Lamb Memorial Meeting – April 13, 2pm

The memorial service for Grace Lamb is at the Providence Meetinghouse on Saturday, April 13, starting at 2:00 PM. Grace was beloved by all who knew her at Meeting. A service in her memory was long delayed by a variety of circumstances - this memorial meeting will be an opportunity to remember and celebrate her life and her contributions to Meeting.

Walking During Earth Week (April 21) – from Eugenia Marks

If it is feasible to walk to Meeting House, please put a spring in your step for April 21. Enjoy the day, feel energized, and save the auto emissions of your trip. Earth Day is April 22, and a campaign to walk to services (and anywhere you can) is afoot. Walking is good for your health, good for your spirit, and good for the atmosphere.

Passing of Dave McNab's Father-In-Law

We who share duties with Dave McNab on the Communication Committee have been aware for some time of the effort and time he has spent caring for his father-in-law. William DeWitt Metz, 98, of Kingston RI passed away February 11, 2013, at his home. We hope all join us in our condolences to Dave and his family. To read about this extraordinary person's life, please go to:

http://averystortifuneralhome.com/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o_id=1967944&fh_id=13474

From Communications Committee

Communications Committee is in the process of a semi-annual(-ish) Meeting Directory update. If you are satisfied with your current entry, you need not contact us. Because of expressed concerns about privacy, we require explicit permission for any additions or changes. If you are not currently listed but want to be, here is an example of what we're looking for, as a typical entry:

Dan Lederer * H:401-831-0243 C:401-529-2371
 193 Medway Street, Providence, RI 02906-5201 dlederer1@verizon.net
 Benjamin, Molly, Jenny

The asterisk indicates membership. You may choose to include all of this information or only some of it. For any additions or corrections to the directory contact Dan soon since the updated directory will be coming out in early April.

On The Horizon: Future Events – Events that recur and/or happen beyond the next month

[month in brackets indicates recent issue that has an article about this event]

Conanicut Meeting For Worship (Norman Bird Sanctuary, 10:00 am): April 7, 21(May 5 returns to Meetinghouse).
 May 18, 9-4 – Saylesville Craft Show [Feb, p4]
 June 30 to July 6 - 2013 Friends General Conference Gathering, Greeley, CO [Jan]
 Summer - Friend's Camp summer employment opportunities [Jan]

Providence Monthly Meeting is blessed with three meeting houses, each of which tends to have its own group of worshippers. This report focuses on that group which considers the Providence Meeting House its home meeting house.

The Providence Meeting continues to thrive. We added 6 new members. New families find a home here and new children make joyful noises from the nursery. Older children leave to go downstairs after 15 minutes of sitting with their parents or grandparents and arrive again at the rise of meeting with important announcements and often a craft project or picture to emphasize that announcement. Many of our high school students leave the area to attend college. Some students who have moved to this area to attend local colleges come in to check us out, often expressing thankfulness in finding in this meeting some of the comfort afforded by their home or previous school meetings. Others just decide to come despite having no previous Quaker connection.

We held a memorial service for John Kellam, a member who had worshipped at the Providence Meeting since 1950. We were involved with Friends far and near including those who traveled to Rhode Island for the Friends General Conference and those who traveled from this meeting to attend other meetings and conferences ranging from local to global. The meeting house continues to be the home for a Music for Children program, a shape-note singing group, and a winter-time CSA (Community Supported Agriculture).

This year our traditional worship sharing on the state of the society was replaced with a modified potluck after meeting for worship. Five tables were set aside, each with a facilitator, for those interested in wrestling with queries concerning the state of our society. Responses to these queries at the potluck, from emails, and from direct discussion are the basis for this report.

1. How would you describe the Quality of our worship? In what ways were your spiritual needs being met or not met in our worship?

The quality of our worship was, in general, thought to be good, and spiritual needs were being met. The fact that many different people were contributing spoken messages, and that meetings for worship ran the gamut from being totally silent to having many messages was seen as evidence of this. The After-Thoughts tables were cited repeatedly as a useful way to continue discussion of messages after meeting, and as useful places for those “who find mingling difficult”. Concerns were expressed over insufficient time after a message to fully absorb it, and it was suggested that guidelines on speaking in meeting might be helpful, as might be a Quakerism 101 class.

2. How has our meeting for worship reached out to the wider community? What have we been doing to invite new attenders and encourage continued participation?

While Marriage Equality participation, Camp Street Ministries, and AFSC were cited as examples of outreach there was a recurring theme that we could and should do more, be it pursuing Quaker Quest, becoming more involved in social justice issues or enhancing our online presence. New attenders seem to come either by word-of-mouth, as a desire to reconnect after some prior Quaker experience (school or family), or as curious seekers. Those newer attenders who were at the potluck felt appropriately welcomed.

3. How are we attending to the needs of our own community? First Day School, the young adults group, game night, the Pastoral Care Committee’s work and the After-Thoughts discussion group were all cited as examples of how we attend to the needs of our own community. It was suggested that a phone tree-like mechanism would be useful in the event that all who attend meeting needed to be contacted rapidly.

4. How have we deepened our connection to the testimonies that guide our faith? Peace and Social Witness?

Environmental stewardship? Simplicity? Equality? Integrity? Stewardship of resources? With regard to the testimonies there was concern that the Peace and Social Concerns committee was inactive. We, as individuals and families, are guided by these testimonies and perhaps it follows that therefore the meeting is as well. There was little feedback from the potluck as to how we as a meeting are guided by them. We compost, we drive fuel-efficient cars, we wear sweaters, is that enough?

5. In what ways does our meeting recognize, develop, and nurture the gifts of our members and attenders of all ages?

First Day School was cited as an area where we feel we are doing well. The children’s announcements at the rise of meeting are a highlight for many. The nominating committee is doing a good job

(cont. pg7)

CLERK'S CORNER by Dan Lederer

How We Communicate

"Dear Friends, watch over one another in love, and stir up that which is pure in one another, and exhort one another daily." George Fox, Epistle 22

From the first days of the Society of Friends in the 17th century, Quakers communicated with one another via the written word. George Fox disseminated his epistles far and wide, both in Europe and in America, explaining and espousing his views. Of course, that was all the current technology offered at the time; Samuel Morse didn't patent his telegraph until 1837, and it wasn't until 1876 that Alexander Graham Bell patented his marvelous invention. Now we find ourselves in the midst of a cyber-revolution, with such modalities as email, texting, and tweeting available to all. While we may view the rapidly evolving technology with awe, the concern as to whether perhaps there's something un-Quakerly about all this may also arise.

How do we make use of new technology at Providence Monthly Meeting? Our newsletter, The Provident Friend, has been in existence in one form or another for many years, but whereas initially it was mailed to Friends, we now encourage readers to receive it electronically. Certainly we've embraced email as a valid way to reach out to each other. Meeting's email list, which keeps Friends informed about current issues and events, functions as our electronic bulletin board. And Meeting's website maintains a calendar of important dates in the life of our meeting as well as such features as a description of our three worship sites, copies of recent and past newsletters, information about our various programs, and much more.

But we want to be cautious about allowing any of these forms of communication to displace our time-honored tradition of face-to-face discourse. This issue came up at Ministry and Counsel awhile back, and the sense of the committee was that email could be useful for providing information to the group, but we should defer decision-making until we could meet together. Why so? Because we have faith in the ability of our process of corporate discernment to find the optimal course for our Meeting community, and our experience has been that this is best accomplished by sitting quietly together in the context of worship and hearing each other's leadings. My hope is that we can continue to honor this valuable practice while simultaneously taking advantage of the many means of communication that enhance our connectedness.

"Dwell in the power, and know the power of words in one another....Oh, in love watch over one another for good, and for the better, and not for the worse!" George Fox, Epistle 15

Mealtrain For Erikson Family *from Arianna Steele*

Friends,

Here is the web address for the Meal Train for Sam, Erik, and newborn Isaac Andersen:

<http://www.mealtrain.com/?id=mgmlf1guqtxt>

Let us all join together to support this family as they adjust to life at home with their baby, after such a long and difficult hospitalization for him. I hope we can commit to get at least a couple meals a week to them, through the end of April, to make a tangible show of the love and support which makes our community so special.

[Ed. Note: Mealtrain is a free website that acts as a collaborative scheduler. A page is made for a specific family (the Eriksons, here) and a schedule is displayed that allows people to sign up to donate a specific meal/s while seeing what meals are requested and what meals are already donated by others. See [mealtrain.com](http://www.mealtrain.com) for more detail.]

State of The Society Report 2012

Providence Monthly Meeting (continued from P5)

matching people's gifts to their committee choices. Music, whether around the piano, around the old singing tree, or by offering the use of the meeting house for shape note and other singing groups has also been a way to involve many ages in a communal endeavor, and expose non Quakers to our community, if only tangentially.

6. How did meeting for business play a part in your Meeting life in 2012?

The low attendance at Meeting for worship with a concern for business (which averaged about 14) is a cause for concern. Comments from the potluck stated it was held at a difficult time and day especially for those with families, that it was too long of a day, that there was a "poor connection between business and spiritual", and that there was confusion as to where it would be held and what was on the agenda.

All in all, this has been a year filled with blessings and challenges. We are grateful for our community, the people, activities, and worship that bind us together, and we are ready for and look forward to the blessings and the challenges that this new year will bring.

Director of Friends Camp to visit April 28

Nat Shed, Director of Friends Camp in South China, Maine, will be at the Providence Meetinghouse on Sunday, April 28. He will be available after Meeting for Worship to talk about the camp and answer questions. If you're interested in Friends Camp, please plan to meet with him that day.

Providence Monthly Meeting - Contacts

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

Presiding Clerk: Dan Lederer clerk@providencefriends.org
 Assistant Presiding Clerk: Mark Conley assistclerk@providencefriends.org
 Recording Clerk: Betsy Cazden recordingclerk@providencefriends.org
 Treasurer: Peter Swazek treasurer@providencefriends.org
 Ministry & Counsel: David Bourns ministryandcounsel@providencefriends.org
 Pastoral Care Committee: Judy Shaw pastoralcare@providencefriends.org
 Finance: Bill Monroe finance@providencefriends.org
 Peace & Social Concerns: (To Be Named) peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org
 Social & Hospitality: Dede Carlsten and Kim Wiegand
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 Religious Education: Kathi Lyons religioused@providencefriends.org
 Communications: Dan Lederer communications@providencefriends.org
 Program Committee: Nina Berry program@providencefriends.org
 Marriage Clearness: Erin Hazlett marriage@providencefriends.org
 Library: Rebecca Smith library@providencefriends.org
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 Newsletter: Steve Schwartz providentfriend@providencefriends.org
 Email list moderator: Dan Lederer list@providencefriends.org
 Website: webclerk@providencefriends.org
 Moses Brown School Liaison: Willis Monroe liaison@providencefriends.org
 Young Adult Friends: (To Be Named) 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 Religious Education: Zona Douthit adulted@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
Conanicut (Jamestown) winter: 10 am alt. Sundays (see p4)

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

Wednesday – 10-11:30am 2nd & 4th Wed's - Saylesville

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.

Game Night

from Sarah Bailey

For game night we had a wonderful evening playing games and eating pizza and pineapple upside down cake. We had participants from 7 to 70 years old. Favorite games were Funglish, Apples to Apples, and Pit. Special thanks to Mike Hirtle for bringing samples from his 1000 game collection.



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