

The Provident FRIEND

September 2013

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Yard Sale Saturday, September 28 9am-3pm Ready For Participation and Help!

The Providence Meeting Yard Sale is happening on Saturday, Sept. 28th. The yard sale is a large Meeting event that raises money for both Meeting and a social justice concern. This year our social justice recipient will be the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence, which works to reduce violence in Providence. It assists people in violent situations to change their lifestyles and it teaches children and adults alternatives to violence. The Institute was started by Bernard LaFayette, one of MLK's trainees, who was a scholar in residence at Moses Brown, and last year the institute worked with a fifth grade class there. We hope to use the sale as an opportunity for outreach and education about Meeting and The Institute.

As of Sunday Sept 8, there were not enough items for a successful sale. Please ask neighbors, families and friends for items, and scour your neighborhoods the night before trash pickup (it's amazing how many good quality items are tossed). Phebe Howland has graciously opened her garage (37 Elmgrove Ave., Providence) to store contributed items. You may leave items there - no need to call ahead (see notes at end of article)

The Yard sale is an event that brings together Meeting members with different talents, skills and preferences. It's a chance for us to clean out *(cont p 3)*

News From NEYM Ministry and Counsel – from Mark Conley Events of September 28

The Ministry and Counsel Committee of the New England Yearly Meeting reported plans to focus its work in three main areas this year: pastoral care, resources and travel/intervisitation. The Yearly Meeting has also asked the committee to update monthly meetings regarding discernment and progress in our participation with FUM, particularly as related to its personnel policy.

NEYM M&C seeks to increase awareness of and participation in its work. You are encouraged to attend M&C gatherings. The next meeting is Saturday, Sept. 28 from 9 am to 4 pm at Mount Toby Meeting in Leverett, MA. *(cont p 2)*

Information Regarding Events In Syria: Various Resources For Guidance and Action

Our country's involvement in the very complex situation in Syria places it near the center of many Quaker testimonies, and is well suited for the types of actions that our traditions focus on. Member Betsy Cazden notes "The count of likely votes in Congress, compiled by ThinkProgress, says that Rep. Langevin is 'Lean Yes' on approving an attack, while Rep. Cicilline is 'Lean No'. Several of the SE Mass. representatives are listed as 'Undecided'. That sounds to me as if pressure from constituents may matter a lot." In this light, several notes have *(cont p 3)*

Calendar (also see p4)

Sept 21 Sat: (p2) Saylesville Bookswap, Craft Fair, and Historic Treasure Hunt (with Arnold House). Saylesville

Sept 22 Sun: Walk through Swan Point with Eugenia Marks
(contact Eugenia)

Sept 22 Sun: 3-6pm
Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

Sept 24 Tues: 6pm (p4)
Historic presentation (with Arnold House). Saylesville

Sept 28 Sat: 9am-3pm (p1)
Yard Sale, Providence Meeting House

Sept 28 Sat: 9am-4pm (p1)
NEYM Ministry & Counsel gathering, Leverett, MA

Sept 28 Sat: (p1) 4 week
NEYM course starts.

Oct 4-5 Fri-Sat: Bike-Walk
Summit Providence Biltmore Hotel.

Oct 5 Sat: 10am-12pm (p4)
Walk along Woonasquatucket River with Eugenia Marks
(contact Eugenia)

Oct 13 Sun: 12:00 (p2)
Meeting For Business, Saylesville Meeting House

Oct 18-20 Fri-Sun: 7pm (p6)
YAF Retreat, Framingham, MA

Oct 19 Sat: 10am-12pm
Saylesville Bookswap

Oct 27: 3-6pm
Sacred Harp Sing at Providence Meeting House

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes – 8 Ninth Month, 2013

1. We gathered at 12:05 at Saylesville meeting house, with twelve present. In the opening worship, the clerk read a query from *NEYM Faith and Practice* (revision given preliminary approval 2012):

Does our worship lead us into faithful action?

2. Announcements:

The craft fair at Saylesville meeting house will be held on the 21st of this month, with the monthly book swap and a treasure hunt in collaboration with Arnold House.

Phebe Howland's garage, at 37 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, is accepting items for the meeting yard sale, which will be on the 28th of this month at the Providence meeting house.

3. Nomination: The names of Bernie Oakley, Dennis Pasqualino, and Ruth Bourns have been brought forward to serve on the Finance Committee starting immediately. All are willing to serve. We approve these names.

4. Saylesville: Joanne Griffin reported that the preparative meeting has been planning several upcoming programs in association with Arnold House.

5. Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Peter Swaszek presented an interim report on the first quarter of the fiscal year. Expenses are running about as expected. The meeting has received a grant of \$8,800 from the Obadiah Brown Benevolent Fund to assist with the renovations to the Saylesville meeting house. Peter reminded us of the David Smith Fund, which is available for special projects at the Providence meeting house, and of the Providence Addition/Renovation Fund, for which we are still awaiting a recommendation (see minute #6, 11th mo. 2012). We accept this report.

6. Marriage Clearness: David Hazlett presented a report from the marriage clearness committee on the two weddings that took place under the care of the meeting over the summer. A meeting for worship was held on 15th of 6th month at the Providence meeting house to celebrate and affirm the marriage of John Gaffney and William Brown, following a legal marriage ceremony held the previous day in Boston, Massachusetts, at which our member Debbie Block officiated. Julia Shaw and James Diaz took each other in marriage on 10th of 8th month at a called meeting for worship held in Bristol, Rhode Island, according to the good order of Friends.

7. No further business appearing, we closed with worship, intending to meet next on the 13th of 10th month at the Saylesville meeting house.

Dan Lederer, Clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, Recording Clerk

News From NEYM Ministry and Counsel (cont from p 1)

The next event in the "Cracked Open" series is a four week course beginning September 28 entitled "Reading Isaac Penington: The Authority and Government Christ Excluded out of His Church." You can find information this course and other events in the series by visiting neym.org/m-c/

Meeting Directory To Be Updated

Communications Committee will be publishing an updated Meeting Directory in October. If you're not listed but would like to be, or if there needs to be a change in your current listing, contact Dan Lederer.

Providence Meeting Yard Sale (cont. from p1)

our basements, garages and closets and to tell our friends and neighbors about this opportunity. Whether you have objects to donate or not we still have ways for you to contribute your time and talents.

There is something for everyone. Some of you enjoy baking. First Day School will be holding a bake sale that sustains the workers and entices customers to linger over and buy items as they buy and eat our delectable offerings. If this appeals to you contact Rebecca Smith.

Perhaps you enjoy sorting, creating order, and/or creating an environment that encourages buying. During the sale we need sales people and people who assist customers to box their items etc. If you are a numbers person we need cashiers to accept money and keep track of it while discouraging haggling. Besides this we need energetic people who can quickly clean up and bring the remaining items to appropriate places.

During the first three weeks of September we need people to work in Phebe Howland's garage organizing donations. Please call her at 751-8338 or (c) 401-286-0372, or email: phebehowland@gmail.com

Sunday the 21st we need to move tables into the dining room in preparation for the sale, and if trucks are available we need to start bringing items to the Meeting House. During the week you can bring items to the Meeting House and we will sort and arrange our donations. Friday night we need to put up a tent.

Saturday runs from 7am-4pm. At 7:00 a.m. we need to move things into the tent, set up coffee etc. Then at 9:00 a.m. we sell! Finally at 3:00 p.m. we clean up and collapse.

NOTE on donations: Please only donate items that are clean, in good repair and function properly. Clothes should be cleaned, not stained and on hangers or nicely folded as appropriate (no underwear). Furniture, jewelry, house wares (not dented, chipped, cracked), electronics and electrical appliances (working with no missing or broken parts), books etc. are all accepted. Please place things in proper containers. The garage is not visible from the street; the door is usually open. It would be helpful if large pieces of furniture could be delivered to the meetinghouse during the week of the sale. There is a need for all kinds of coat hangers.

Information Regarding Syria (cont from p 1)

Betsy informs that those who feel moved to express their opinions can use the tools provided by our lobby in Washington, Friends Committee on National Legislation, at: www.fcnl.org

There you will find information about how to make your voice heard in the debate about Syria. A relevant link on that site is: <http://www.sharedsecurity.org/> This is a joint project of the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation, seeking "A Quaker Perspective on U. S. Foreign Policy in the 21st Century ... We envision a new role for the United States in the world, one dedicated to advancing our shared security as a nation and a global community."

The blog has various resources of its own, including a working paper "Shared Security: Reimagining U. S. Foreign Policy", and the top article (by Doug Bennett) is about this topic.

Another resource is the website of the Quaker United Nations Office (<http://www.quno.org/>). It was mentioned that, among other things, they provide a respected informal discussion spot where various parties can meet 'off the record' in a relaxed setting. They deserve our support and interest, too, and their work is sure to benefit from each inquiry and use of their resources and information.

This is likely to be an ongoing situation, and the editors here are interested in continuing a discussion of the topic and related resources. If anyone has a contribution to this process, whether a related resource or information or other information that may guide us, please contact us (see p 7 for Newsletter email, or contact Steve Schwartz at 401-273-7076).

Around the Meeting

Trash after Meeting and coffee hour: Bruce Carlsten has been speaking with the services involved, and we are experimenting to see if we understand it

correctly. We *THINK* that if we place trash and recyclables just inside the basement door to the back lawn, they will all be collected by the service each Monday. If

you are on cleanup (or helping with it) on any week, please do so. If any questions, contact Bruce or Steve Schwartz.

Ride sought: Athan Phynix attended a few

meetings this summer, and seeks a transport to come more often, from West Warwick near Arctic Center. 401-481-2348 or athanphynix@gmail.com

Thanks and Notes

Dear Providence Friends Meeting: I am writing from Friends Camp to say thank you so much! I am having a wonderful time here. This is a fantastic place. Everyone is friendly and welcoming, and the days are packed with things to do. Thanks so much for helping me come here! Love, Emme Grenier

Abby Jacobson wrote to us: "Dear Friends, A heartfelt thanks to the members who brought me food, company and a sympathetic ear during my recent convalescence. I am happy to report that I am feeling much better now and look forward to resuming my seat at Meeting very soon. With warm regards, Abby Jacobson."

John Gaffney called during a coffee hour to thank everyone who helped with his and Bill's wedding on June 15. They plan to be in Providence in the fall and are looking forward to joining us then.

Walks With Eugenia Marks

Walking can awaken senses. Walking can provide not only stimulation for muscles but also the brain. Walking's slowness allows us to take in the immediate world around us as well as allows time for our souls to emerge. With others walking can provide companionship and conversation apace with our steps. Planting our feet to the earth is a uniting affirmation of our being among the biota, the quick, and the sentient.

This month walking on Sundays has been structured by my work, and I invite you to join me -- however, because they are work-related, these two events have fees attached. The First is on September 22 from Goose Point to Swan Point. The second is on October 5 (Saturday) 10 - noon along the Woonasquatuket west of Olneyville. Please contact me at meeting if you are interested, or by email at emarks@asri.org

Brown Professor Presents "The Indian Great Awakening" at Saylesville – Tues. Sept. 24, 6pm

Presented by Arnold House (free). The First Great Awakening was a time of heightened religious activity in colonial New England. Among those whom the English settlers tried to convert to Christianity were the region's native peoples. Join Brown University Professor and author Linford D. Fisher for an illustrated talk on his recent book, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America*. Presented in partnership with the Rhode Island Historical Society and Saylesville Friends Meeting, this program is made possible, in part, with funding from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities.

Registration is recommended. Please call 401-728-9696 for more information, or see at:
<http://www.historicnewengland.org/historic-properties/homes/arnold-house-1/arnold-house>

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

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

December 14 – Providence Meeting Holiday Gathering. [not yet]

March 21-23, 2014, "The Spiritual Discipline of Recording Minutes", weekend workshop, Pendle Hill [not yet]

First Day School News

First Day School is organizing the bake sale for the yard sale. Please support us by signing up to bring baked goods and/or to help sell at the yard sale. There is a signup sheet in the basement at meeting.

First Day School will be learning about conflict resolution this year. We will primarily use curriculum developed 10 years ago by Deb Carpilio and others (it is still relevant). If you have ideas or are interested in helping please contact Sarah Baily.

*FDS with produce from Moses Brown School Garden to donate to Camp Street Ministries.
(photo from Sarah Baily)*



From NEYM: Welcoming newcomers (& old comers) to meeting this fall

In the last few months, your Yearly Meeting staff have been exploring new ways to combine our resources to build up the Quaker movement in New England. As you may know, our youth programs are recognized around the Quaker world for their quality, breadth and spiritual grounding, and fostering vital local meetings is at the heart of our work.

We've learned a lot in our youth work about building relationships and supporting spiritual community. In a recent conversation with staff, I encouraged Nia Thomas our Young Friends/Young Adult Friends coordinator, to partner with Beth Collea, our Religious Education coordinator, to share some of these "best practices" that we might try out in our local meetings. After all, in my meeting we've found that sharing the Life we find gives us all inspiration and helps us our communities continue to grow.

[Welcoming Month Resources](http://cts.vresp.com/c/?NewEnglandYearlyMeet/e3c4b73793/c4c60b3edf/98009285c8) [PDF] [http://cts.vresp.com/c/?NewEnglandYearlyMeet/e3c4b73793/c4c60b3edf/98009285c8]

I hope you'll find some of these ideas fun, encouraging, and useful in the life of your meeting. We look forward to continuing to connect and share how we're supporting communities of all ages to find joy and vitality as Friends in New England. And please, if you try any of these ideas out - we'd love to hear how it goes.

In faith and service,

Noah Baker Merrill, Secretary, New England Yearly Meeting of Friends (Quakers)

CLERK'S CORNER by Dan Lederer

Abuse in Our Midst

Last June, Ministry and Counsel adopted a minute, which it then shared with Meeting for Business, concerning a deceased member of our Meeting, John Kellam. The minute appeared in the June issue of our newsletter, so by now anyone interested has had a chance to see it. Because he was held in such high esteem at Meeting due to his many contributions to the life of PMM as well as NEYM, the revelation in the minute that John had sexually abused his daughters when they were young may have come as a shock to those readers who knew nothing about it. Others in our Meeting have known about this for variable periods of time, but, up until recently, no one saw fit to raise the issue, probably because there seemed little to be gained from doing so. A couple of recent events influenced a change in that point of view. First, John became terminally ill and died. Second, his two daughters, who had reached some reconciliation with John before his death, renewed contact with Meeting after an absence of many years and made two requests, specifically that any memorial minute include mention of John's misdeeds, and that Meeting make efforts to reduce the risk of a recurrence of similar incidents.

What went awry? It seems that some members of Meeting knew about the abuse around the time it was happening and did what they thought was appropriate, including sheltering John's daughters, but no one made any public disclosure. Possible explanations are that there was no mandatory reporting of child abuse in Rhode Island fifty years ago, and exposing such activity publicly would have been considered shameful in the culture of the time. The tendency to keep quiet about what happened continued in Meeting for decades. Ministry and Counsel is to be commended for its decision to end the silence, since one can argue that doing so is a necessary first step in addressing the challenge of prevention.

Rhode Island now requires reporting of any suspected child abuse, and the most recent edition of our Meeting Handbook includes a summary of this statute, as well as the reporting requirements in Massachusetts. (The Handbook is available on the Meeting Website – www.providencefriends.org – under Resources; see page 25.) In addition, we will consider exploring this topic further by means of worship sharing, invited speakers, or a workshop. We haven't yet reached unity on the wording of a memorial minute, but the hope would be that, after enough time has passed to allow everyone to hold this matter in the Light, we will be able to move ahead with one so that others outside of Meeting can be made aware of this serious issue. Also, whether we as a Meeting should offer some kind of apology to those who were wronged is a question that needs continuing discernment.

Are there lessons to be learned from this sequence of events? I think so. First, sexual abuse can occur in any setting, even in an assemblage of well-meaning people such as our Meeting. In fact, sexual predators often seek out religious groups because of their relatively low level of suspicion of such activity. Second, the pain caused by abuse can be prolonged, and we have seen that this topic has stirred up painful emotions in Friends who continue to suffer many years after their own traumas. Third, people are complex, with the capacity to be caring and compassionate but also with the potential, under the wrong circumstances, to do great harm to others. And finally, we need to view all of this with humility, for is there anyone among us who can look back on a life that is free of regrets?

We can't change the past; what we can do now is work together to ensure that our Meeting is a safe haven for both children and adults. To do so we need to keep looking out for each other, which, I believe, is what Friends are all about.

Autumn YAF Retreat – October 18-20 - “Radical Inclusivity”

This retreat for Young Adult Friends is a weekend-long gathering of young adult Quaker-types where we explore a theme, hang out, eat, sleep, worship, and get to know each other. “*Radical Inclusivity*” started in 2012 as a YAF working group. Since then, YAFs have been engaging in conversations about what deep and meaningful inclusion would really look like for our community. What steps are needed to make our community inviting for a broader group of YAFs, including YAFs from different backgrounds and YAFs with children?

Email or call YAF Coordinator Nia Thomas <Nia@neym.org> or (617) 945-0373. Tell her your name, your phone number, where you will be coming from, your carpooling status (if you can offer a ride, if you are looking for a ride, if you are biking, if you are taking the bus/train, etc.), and any dietary restrictions our cook should know about. Late arrival/early departure is ok, just let us know when registering.. Registrations strongly preferred by October 7th.

Ingrid Werge and Geoff Whitehead announce the birth of Adelaide Charlotte

Ingrid, Geoff and big sis Freya welcomed baby Adelaide Charlotte on 5/14/13. Addie is a delight and all are healthy.



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
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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 adulthood@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) 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

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.

Back From Summer Break

Our first letter since June, these items are recommended as being of particular concern:

Coming up soon:

Lecture at Saylesville Sept 24 (p4)

Yard Sale Sept 28 needs items and help (p1)

NEYM Ministry and Counsel Sept 28 events (p1).

Guided walks of a seasonal nature (p4)

Current Events:

Resources for involvement in activities relating to the situation in Syria. (p1)

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