

The Provident FRIEND

May 2014

Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

NEYM's 2014 Annual Sessions

Castleton State College VT - August 2 (Sat.) through August 7 (Thurs)

Registration and information: <https://neym.org/sessions> (508) 754-6760

With the theme "You are my witnesses", NEYM Annual Sessions is taking place in Vermont for the first time in its 354 year history. Along with the change in place, there is a new fee structure, and plans for intentionally flexible afternoon time to encourage creative opportunities for group activities, workshops, worship, relaxation, and recreation both formal and informal, pre-arranged and improvised. The location in the scenic Green Mountains is near a lake for swimming. A suggestion has been forwarded to provide bus transport, perhaps from Worcester MA (on the way from both Providence and Boston) to make the trip easier, cheaper, and more ecologically friendly.

Each day includes Anchor Groups, Interest Groups, Vespers, Bible, and more – a PDF of the tentative schedule is at:

<https://neym.org/sessions/2014-sessions-program>

Friends General Conference Gathering, California, PA Sunday June 29 through Saturday July 5

Registration and information: <http://www.fgcquaker.org/> 215-561-1700

Similar in structure to the NEYM Annual Sessions, this gathering lists a lot of interesting workshops: "Biking in the Light" (at least 10 miles a day), "Call & Response" (music improvising), "Campaign for Human Rights in Palestine/Israel", "Ecstatic Dance Worship", "Naming God in Poetry", "Nontheism Among Friends", "Shared Security: A Quaker Vision for US Policy", "Singing from the Sacred Harp" (someone alert Bob Elliott), and "Photography as a Contemplative Practice". Some are already full; for a complete list including descriptions, browse to:

<https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering/programs-and-events/workshops>

CPR Class To Complement Meetinghouse Equipment Noon June 22 at Providence Meetinghouse

An automated external defibrillator (AED) has been installed at the Providence Meetinghouse. It can be life-saving in the event of a cardiac arrest, but it only works if it is used in conjunction with basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Some of us at Meeting have CPR training, but many have not.

Marianne Stepanian at Lifespan Community Health Services will be providing an instructional session on basic CPR and use of the AED. This will not be for certification, and there will be no test, but it's an opportunity for Friends to learn about or review CPR.

(cont. page 6)

(Published June 9)

Calendar (also see p4 Events)

June 8 Sun: 12:00 Meeting For Business, Saylesville Meeting House.

June 19-22: (p4) Summer Solstice Retreat, Woolman Hill

June 21 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

June 22 Sun: 12:00 (p1) CPR class, Providence Meeting House

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

June 26 Thurs: 7pm (p3) "Democracy Now" viewing and discussion, Bristol RI

June 29-July 5 (Sun-Sat): (p1) Friends General Conference Gathering, California, PA.

Aug 2 – 7 (Sat-Thurs): (p1) NEYM Annual Sessions, Castleton, VT.

July 19 Sat: 10am-12pm Saylesville Bookswap

Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business Minutes – 11 Fifth Month, 2014

1. We gathered at the Saylesville meetinghouse at 12:00 pm with seventeen present. In the opening worship, the clerk read the following advice from NEYM *Faith and Practice* (prelim. Approval 2012):

Remember that love is a gift of the Divine, not simply a human emotion. As imperfect human beings we are not always able to feel loving toward one another, but by opening ourselves to the Light Within, we can receive and give love beyond our human capacity.

2. Announcements:

The next Meeting Movie Night will be at the Providence meetinghouse at 7 PM on the 14th of this month. The film to be shown is *Weapons of the Spirit*, a documentary that tells the story of how a village in Nazi-occupied France sheltered and protected 5000 Jews during World War II. Our member Jeanne Whitaker grew up in this village and her father was a leader of the project. Admission is free and there will be coffee and cookies.

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee is hosting a “Nurturing the Nurturers” potluck following meeting for worship at Providence on the 18th of this month. Meeting participants are encouraged to invite someone who bears witness in his or her daily life to the values of peace, integrity, service, and community. A fuller explanation has been circulated on the listserve and the newsletter.

NEYM is sponsoring “Friends and the Internet Day” from 9 to 4 on Saturday, May 17, at Moses Brown School. This is an opportunity to explore how online resources and social media can help enrich meetings, attract seekers, and communicate the Quaker message. Facilitators include Brent Bill (FGC New Meetings Coordinator) and Robin Mohr (FWCC Executive Secretary, Philadelphia office). Lunch is provided; bring laptops for hands-on experimenting. More information is available at <http://www.neym.org/sites/default/files/Friends%26Internetflyer-2.pdf>.

Friends General Conference will be having its 2014 Gathering from the 29th of 6th mo. to the 5th of 7th mo., at California University of Pennsylvania (35 miles south of Pittsburgh). The theme will be “Let Love Be The First Motion”. Financial aid is available.

NEYM Annual Sessions will take place Saturday August 2 through Thursday August 7 at Castleton State College, Castleton, VT. Registration opens in early June.

3. Membership: For Ministry and Counsel, David Bourns brought a recommendation, following a clearness process, that Megan Smith be accepted as a member of the meeting. She has been a regular attender for a year and has found comfort, connection, and inspiration among us. We approve this recommendation. Anne DiMase and Bob Elliott agreed to arrange a welcoming event, on the 1st of 6th month or another time convenient to Megan.

4. Disposition of Money Withheld from FUM: The clerk reminded us that over the past several years, New England Yearly Meeting has permitted monthly meetings to withhold a portion of their regular donation to the yearly meeting budget that would have gone to Friends United Meeting. This permission came out of Friends’ unease with FUM’s Personnel Policy. Providence Meeting in turn has allowed individual donors to request that no part of their donation to the monthly meeting go through yearly meeting to FUM. (See 5th mo. 2012 min. 5; 5th mo. 2013, min. 3.) During the current fiscal year about \$40 has been withheld in this manner, representing the applicable fraction of approximately \$7,000 in contributions.

Ministry and Counsel recommends that this amount be added to the meeting’s budgeted donation to the African Great Lakes Initiative. We approve.

5. Budget: Peter Swaszek presented a Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15, which the Finance Committee recommends to us. The major policy change is that Peace & Social Concerns Committee has requested more discretion and intentionality concerning the meeting’s donations to outside agencies and groups, so the budget has a single

Providence Monthly Meeting for Business Minutes (cont. from p2)
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line instead of a detailed breakdown. The P&SC committee's intention is that they will review the donations that have been made in the past, discern what contributions are appropriate, and bring recommendations for use of this money to the meeting for business. We approve this change, leaving to the Finance Committee how to format and label the new procedure.

We note that the budget as presented includes an almost 6% increase in budgeted spending, much of which is for maintenance and utilities on the buildings and an increase in our donation to the budget of New England Yearly Meeting. We have been getting more income from rental use of the Providence meetinghouse, which has also increased our maintenance and heating costs. We expect increased investment income using the percentage formula we have previously established. The budget does not call for an increase in household donations over the current budget, although we note that actual donations have not come up to the budgeted amount. It is difficult for committees to anticipate all their expenses more than a year in advance, so it is customary for actual expenses to be considerably under budget. The Finance Committee has felt it is more important to project realistic funding for the actual costs to run the meeting, including prudent care of the meetinghouses.

We approve this budget. We also confirm our ongoing policy that the Treasurer has permission to overspend any individual line by 5% or \$100 (whichever is greater), and the Finance Committee can authorize overspending up to 10%.

6. Use of David Smith Bequest: Bob Elliott has proposed that the David Smith bequest be used to purchase twelve copies of The Sacred Harp, totaling about \$280, for use by the shape-note singing group that meets regularly at the meetinghouse. Although this is not a meeting-sponsored activity, Providence meetinghouse has been the site for its monthly and annual gatherings, and several meeting members have participated regularly. We approve this request.

7. Saylesville: Joanne Griffin reported that the meeting had a public presentation and film on the topic of Bullying, which provoked good discussion and consideration of future activity. The meeting plans a gathering next First Day for members to share music. Moses Brown students will be coming to do grounds work on the 16th of this month, as a community service project, as they have in years past.

8. No further business appearing, we closed with worship at about 1:20 pm, intending to meet again on the 8th of 6th month at the Saylesville meetinghouse.

Daniel Lederer, clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, recording clerk

"Democracy Now!" Segments Relating to Israel and Palestine – June 26, 7pm

East Bay Citizens for Peace (EBCP) presents "Democracy Now! The War and Peace Report: Israel and Palestine" on Thursday, June 26, 2014 at 7 PM, Rogers Free Library, Herreshoff Community Meeting Room, 525 Hope St, Bristol, RI. The viewing of this broadcast will be followed by discussion and is free and open to the public. This is part of a series of monthly viewings of "Democracy Now!" broadcasts sponsored by East Bay Citizens for Peace. Segments likely to be shown and discussed are about actions taken against student activism by Northeastern University and other campuses, and examinations of the effects of some of the policies of Ariel Sharon, prompted by his passing in January 2014. More information can be found at:

401-247-9738 info@eastbaycitizens4peace.org www.eastbaycitizens4peace.org
http://www.democracynow.org/topics/israel_and_palestine

(Thanks to Adele Bourne for informing us)

Around the Meeting

Dieter Gomes' Illness –

In late May, Dieter Gomes went to Miriam Hospital with a complicated pneumonia and a few days later reported doing better, with a request that we hold him in the Light.

Betsy Zimmerman

Showing at Art Gallery –

Betsy's work is part of the "On a Roll/On the Road" exhibit at Spring Bull Gallery in Newport, June 7-30, 2014. Gallery Night is Thursday, June 12, 5-8pm.

Camp Street 's Lunches at Home - Lunches at

Home in the Camp Street neighborhood need peanut butter and tuna fish. Please contribute foods and personal grooming items in the box in the foyer.

State of the Society Report - Meeting's State of the Society report for

calendar year 2013 was approved at Meeting for Business on April 13. If you have not had an opportunity to read it but would like to receive a copy by email, contact Dan Lederer or David Bourns.

Quaker Voluntary Service – Help Hannah Monroe's Work

Starting at the end of August, Hannah Monroe will be participating in Quaker Voluntary Service in Atlanta, Georgia. Quaker Voluntary Service, started in 2012, gives young adults the opportunity to work at organizations in Atlanta, Philadelphia, or Portland, Oregon. Hannah's volunteer placement will be working full-time at Atlanta Legal Aid Society where she will help with their Disability Integration Project. This summer Hannah needs to raise \$2,000 dollars, which will help pay for her participation in the program. For more information or to make a donation, talk to Hannah any Sunday after meeting or contact her at 401-941-4776 or hannahemonroe@gmail.com.

BULLYING – A QUAKER RESPONSE (VIDEO & INTERGENERATIONAL DISCUSSION)

SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 2014, 1 P.M. - SAYLESVILLE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

Facilitator: Liberty Goodwin, former Alternatives to Violence project trainer, researcher on the psychology of violence, writer & producer of "The Rock" a 35-minute video, based on a Quaker girl's experience with a bully in Utah.

Description: We'll watch "The Rock" video & comment from the point of view of a chosen character, discuss causes of & non-violent responses to bullying, look over the "Manual for Discussion of Bullying", & do a few role plays as time permits.

Participants: Suitable for participation by all ages from about six to adult.

CONTACT: Liberty Goodwin, 401-351-9193, or E-Mail: friendliberty@quakerworks.net

On The Horizon: Future Events – Events that recur and/or happen beyond the next month [2014 unless noted, month in brackets indicates a recent issue that has an article about this event]

June 19-22: Summer Solstice Retreat, facilitators TBA - Woolman Hill [Oct p 7]

June 29 to July 5: Friends General Conference at California University of Pennsylvania, California PA (35 miles south of Pittsburgh). (see p1)

August 2-7: New England Yearly Meeting Sessions, Castleton State College in Castleton, VT (see p1)

Rhode Island-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting - April 27, 2014 - Quarterly Program

(freely edited from informal notes taken by Rebecca Leuchak)

The history of Quakerism is an important component of our identity, and the monthly, quarterly, yearly structure is an old paradigm, which some value for its very historicity. Our monthly meetings are connected by a historic geography of the Blackstone corridor that is no longer relevant, and some expressed a sense that the quarterly structure is vestigial and anachronistic.

The historic purpose of this structure was to manage business beyond the monthly level. Vetting State of Society reports and Memorial Minutes, endorsing Friends traveling in the ministry, and other tasks kept past quarterly meetings meaningful. The meetings for business were key for the conduct of business at the Yearly Meeting level. The agenda for Yearly Meeting would percolate up from the activity at the quarterly level, and in a reverse direction, Yearly Meeting would use the Quarterly level to test issues that were alive in the wider Quaker community. When these specific quarterly responsibilities were laid down, the move was to a more social role for the quarterly structure. The thinking was that people would be more apt to participate if it was not all business, but rather a chance to have fellowship with other Quakers in the Quarter.

Quarterly structure breaks the insularity of individual monthly meetings. It provides the experience and example of other monthly meetings regarding particular issues or challenges faced by one of the member meetings. It provides a larger forum for testing, communicating issues beyond the monthly level. We have experienced these strengths of the quarterly structure a few times in the recent past and our Quarterly Ministry and Counsel has been reconstituted when needed. Yet, generally the larger monthly meetings do not feel the need for participation in their quarter, and we have produced a State of the Quarter report only once or twice in the past 10 years.

We do send each other our monthly meeting newsletters to keep each other updated. The ease of travel encourages people active beyond the monthly meeting to leap frog the quarter and get involved in Yearly Meeting committees directly. Electronic communication means we can be in touch without actually meeting.

Perhaps we should suspend our monthly meetings' meeting for business three times per year specifically so that we can all get together for quarterly then. We should include a summary of our worship sharing in our Monthly newsletters and ask each Monthly Ministry and Counsel to take up the issue. Quarterly clerk, Betsy Zimmerman, has readings on the relation between the monthly and quarterly meeting that she can share and it is good for all of us to review the description of the relationship as outlined in our Faith and Practice.

Final thoughts were paraphrased from Friend Benigno Sanchez-Eppler of Northampton Friends Meeting: You can't understand Quakerism until you get out of your own meeting. We all share a relationship with the divine and by sharing that together it becomes more meaningful.

Request To Host International Students coming to RI

Forwarded to us from Eugenia Marks, this came from Molly Broadbent, a Regional Director at State Department certified CIEE [MBroadbent@ciee.org or 207.553.4263], a non-profit that coordinates and supervises international exchange students: "Our mission is to help people gain understanding, acquire knowledge, and develop skills for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world." [ed. note: That phrase is repeated many times on WRNI during the daily overnight BBC broadcasts.]

They accept all kinds of families - kids, no kids, empty nesters, single parents. The main requirement is kindness and a willingness to learn about another culture. It becomes a great learning experience for the families as well. If not ourselves a candidate to host, we are encouraged to refer other families. Eugenia's email of April 24 (1:01pm) includes a list of charming notes, not unlike personals column notes, about and from a few students that are coming to our area:

- Alix (France): "...I am looking forward to cooking French food for my host family...";
- Nicola (Switzerland): "...I have two cats and three fish. It's my affair to feed them....";

and this editor's personal favorite (here in its unedited entirety):

- "KAWIN is a 16 year old boy from THAILAND. My character is talkative, friendly and content. I also enjoy playing volleyball, watching movies like's cartoons, cooking and watching sport. I am a member of school's volleyball team. It was very funny. It's a little family that loves volleyball together. I love to spend my free time with my friends. We like to shop and go to the movies. And I also love to cook dinner with my family too. I want to be a Thai pastry chef. Student is a Vegetarian."

CLERK'S CORNER by Dan Lederer

The Invention of Wings

Sue Monk Kidd, who wrote "The Secret Life of Bees" (2002), has written another novel that may be of interest to Friends entitled "The Invention of Wings". The story takes place in the early 19th century and has two narrators: Hetty, nicknamed "Handful", a slave girl, and Sarah Grimké, the daughter of a wealthy Charleston, SC, lawyer and plantation owner. Handful is an invented character, but Sarah Grimké (1792-1873) was a real person and a fascinating one at that. Early on in the narrative Sarah's father gives Handful to her as a gift, and the rest of the book explores the two girls' relationship over the years as they grow into adulthood.

So what's the Quaker connection? Well, even as a child, Sarah was dismayed by the institution of slavery and horrified by the cruel treatment of slaves that she witnessed. To the great consternation of her parents, she secretly taught her personal slave to read, which was against the law in South Carolina at that time. Sarah's increasingly vocal objections to slavery led to her being ostracized by her family's social circle in Charleston, so eventually she made her way to Philadelphia, where she found herself drawn to Quakerism, at least in part because of its stand against slavery. Later her younger sister and godchild Angelina (1805-1879) came to join her in Philadelphia and at the Arch Street Friends Meeting. Sarah's efforts to become a Quaker minister were unsuccessful, but she and her sister found their calling as traveling speakers promoting abolition and women's right to speak publicly and engage in politics, a radical notion at the time. The two became quite famous, or infamous, the distinction depending on one's point of view in regard to the issues they addressed.

Lucretia Mott (1793-1880), who appears in the story as Sarah's friend and mentor, was of course a prominent Quaker abolitionist, women's rights advocate, and anti-war activist (she was also one of the founders of my alma mater, Swarthmore College). Sadly, Quakers in general do not come across particularly well in the book, which chronicles their stern opposition to the Grimké sisters' linking of abolition and women's rights, and to the sisters' advocacy of suffrage not only for women but for freed slaves as well.

I recommend the book because it's an engaging read, even though at times disturbing, and it brings to life aspects of the antebellum years of American history in both the North and the South. It's worth bearing in mind that the issues raised in the book have yet to be put to rest. Women continue to struggle for equal recognition in the workplace, as evidenced by male-female wage inequality, and slavery persists in the form of debt bondage, forced labor, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation. Although some of these problems are more prevalent elsewhere, our nation is not free of them. There is still much work to be done.

Report on "Nurturing the Nurturers" from Adele Bourne

Related performance of interest to be repeated June 13 and 14 in Providence at AS220 in

Members attending the Peace and Social Concerns Meeting May 25 were asked their reactions to "Nurturing the Nurturers," the potluck the committee had held the previous First Day, and all agreed it should be an annual occurrence. Meeting the guests involved in social justice issues who had been invited was stimulating.

Actress Sylvia Ann Soares (invited by Penny Jackim) is an actress whose play, *"The Life and Art of Nancy Elizabeth Prophet"*, was well received at the April 13th performance at RISD's Metcalf Auditorium. Nancy Elizabeth Prophet, a sculptor of international renown, was born in 1890, and became the first woman of color to graduate from RISD. Her lively Paris diaries from the 1920's to the 1930's, when she first found success, illustrate the sharp difference between Europe and the United States in racial relations. Ms. Soares will give two more performances on Friday, June 13, and Saturday, June 14, 6:30 -8:00 pm, at the AS220 Stage at 115 Empire Street.

CPR Class (cont'd from page 1)

The class will last about one hour and there will be an opportunity to practice on a mannequin. Marianne wants a rough idea of the group's size. If you will, or even just might, be there, please contact Dan Lederer (if by email, at dlederer1@verizon.net)

Our Marathon Friends

These photos are of Bill Monroe and Dieter Pohl, when they ran in the Cox 1/2 Marathon on 5/4/14.

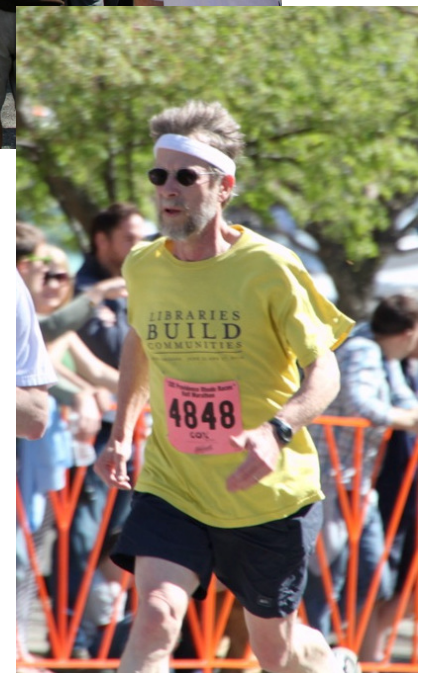
[ed. note: They are still out of breath – contributions welcome).



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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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 adulthood@providencefriends.org



Thanks to Nina Berry for the photos.



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 (Old Meetinghouse)

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 12:00pm
Saylesville: Second Sunday of each month at 9:30am

AFSC SENE Support Committee - Second Tuesday, 6:30-9:00 pm Volunteers needed and welcome.

Next PFM Issue

(from the editor)

This newsletter is normally not published in July and August, so any notices, articles or events relating to JULY, AUGUST or SEPTEMBER need to be entered in the June edition.

While this May issue is later than intended, the June issue will be sent intentionally late in the month (despite June's earliest possible Meeting For Business, which is already over). This is to allow events for the three months to be entered, and all are encouraged to think forward, notify us of any events, and send any articles. The deadline for submissions this month will be June 20.

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