

# The Provident FRIEND

*News from the Providence Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends*

February 20, 2018

## Lunch and Learn: Meetinghouse Expansion Discussion Following Meeting This Sunday

The Meetinghouse Expansion Committee would like to announce that next Sunday, February 25th, at the rise of Meeting for Worship everyone is welcome to have lunch provided by North Side Pockets caterers. This lunch is to thank all of you who lend a hand in building our community of Friends, and it is a chance to talk about the ways we can be taking a hand in our future. We want to share the expansion plans with you, answer questions, and ask for your views of our meeting's future.

### Opportunity at Saylesville

by Dan Lederer

I'm writing to you as clerk of the Ad Hoc Saylesville Meetinghouse Committee, which has been asked to prepare a recommendation to Meeting for Business for use of the Saylesville meetinghouse. There have been many thoughtful suggestions, including participating in tours and other events initiated by Hearthside and other local historical groups, renting space for weddings and lectures, using the galleries for exhibitions and/or studios for artists and writers, and forming a "Friends of the Saylesville Meetinghouse" group that would help with fundraising and other tasks.

However, what is lacking is a person, or persons, willing to take on a leadership role in seeing that at least some of the many suggested uses for the Saylesville meetinghouse come to fruition. The position would require the following: (a) Overseeing the building itself, which will mean, in the short term, supervising necessary renovations, and, in the long term, identifying needed repairs and ensuring that all is in working order for any scheduled events; (b) serving as liaison to the various local historical societies; (c) taking responsibility for planning, publicizing, and staffing upcoming events; and (d) establishing, recruiting members for, and promoting a support group, "Friends of the Saylesville Meetinghouse".

Would you be interested in talking about taking on some or perhaps all of these responsibilities? If so, please contact me so I and others from the committee can discuss this with you further. I can be reached at 401-831-0243 or [dlederer1@verizon.net](mailto:dlederer1@verizon.net).

### CALENDAR

#### Friday, February 16

**1:30 pm**, Fellowship with Muslim neighbors  
Masjid Al Kareem  
39 Haskins Ave., Providence  
Come if you can to share cookies, coffee and tea!

#### Saturday, February 17

**10 am-12:15**, Saylesville  
Meetinghouse Bookswap

#### Saturday, February 24

**2-5 pm**, Project Peacework  
Women's Interfaith Craft  
Collective/Potluck  
Providence Meetinghouse

#### Sunday, February 25

Community Lunch  
(Catered by North Side Pockets)  
Learn about meetinghouse expansion plans, share your views, get involved!  
Providence Meetinghouse

#### Saturday, March 3

**10 am - noon**, Neighborhood Open House  
Providence Meetinghouse

#### Sunday, March 4

**11 am**, PMM Monthly  
Potluck, Providence Meetinghouse

#### Sunday, March 11\*

\*\*Daylight Saving Time Begins - Set your clocks forward!\*\*

**12 pm**, PMM Business Meeting,  
Providence Meetinghouse

#### Saturday, April 14

NEYM Living Faith Gathering  
Portland, ME (Registration begins in March)

#### Sunday, April 22

PMM Expansion Groundbreaking  
Ceremony

\* community arts/general  
interest events

**Providence Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business**  
**11th of 2nd Month, 2018**  
**MINUTES**

1. We gathered at 12:10 pm at the Providence meetinghouse, with twenty present. Following the opening worship, the clerk read following Queries from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's *Faith & Practice*:

- Is our meeting for business held in the spirit of a meeting for worship in which we seek divine guidance?
- Are we careful to keep in the spirit of worship each of the concerns that emerge, whether of nurture, of Spirit, of social concerns, of property, or of finance?
- Are Meeting decisions directed by prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and are difficult problems considered carefully with patient search for truth, unhurried by the pressures of time?
- How do we respond if we notice the meeting has lost an understanding of the presence of God?
- Do we recognize that we speak through our inaction as well as our action?

**2. Announcements**

The Building Expansion committee is hosting a catered lunch on the 25<sup>th</sup> of this month, following meeting for worship, to explain the project and invite Friends' participation.

The committee is also planning an open house for the neighborhood on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3<sup>rd</sup> month, from 10 am to noon, to inform people about the construction plans and invite conversation.

A ceremonial groundbreaking for the addition will be on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of 4<sup>th</sup> month following meeting for worship.

The monthly coffee-and-cookies fellowship with our Muslim neighbors will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of this month at 1:30 pm at the mosque at 39 Haskins Street in Providence. All Friends are welcome to participate.

**3. Finance Committee Request.** The Finance Committee brought a request for approval of spending by the subcommittee charged with fundraising for the new construction, to inform Friends and others, stir up enthusiasm, and raise money. The funds allocated for the construction have not included a line item for fundraising expenses, and the current fiscal year budget also did not include these additional expenses. The committee is requesting permission to draw up to \$1,000 of general funds during the current fiscal year for this purpose. Friends approve.

The Finance Committee also sees a need for some fundraising activities after the expansion is completed, and will be including that in its budget request for the coming fiscal year.

**4. Building Expansion.** Bruce Carlsten presented a status report on the expansion. In short, the project continues on time and on budget. Construction is to begin mid-April and be completed by mid-

September, in time for the new school year. The construction contract is currently being finalized. The upgrades to the parking area are not part of the construction contract. Questions were raised about what adjustments we will need to make during the construction phase; these details will be clarified by the building expansion committee.

**5. State of Society Consideration.** Ministry and Counsel has presented a set of queries to stimulate our consideration of the state of our meeting during 2017. These queries were also available for Friends to discuss at last week's potluck fellowship meal. We find much to be grateful for, and some opportunities for improvement. The comments offered will be used by Ministry and Counsel to prepare a draft State of Society report for our consideration next month.

### **Queries from Ministry and Counsel Regarding the Life of the Meeting**

What are we grateful for? What gifts of grace have we experienced in the life of our meeting community through the past year?

How is our meeting being led to do the work of the Spirit in the world? Where could we, as a meeting, be more open to learning, growing and serving one another both in our meeting and in the wider community?

Is our Meeting a community where we experience a depth of Divine Presence and transforming power? What unfed hungers do we feel in our community life?

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?

Is our Meeting community a crucible for spiritual pilgrims, an intersection of the journey inward/journey outward? Does this spiritual community offer each of us the opportunity to explore and share who we are beneath our public personae?

In what ways has our Meeting recognized, developed, and nurtured the gifts of our members and attenders of all ages? What have we been doing to invite new attenders and encourage continued participation?

6.No further business appearing, we closed in worshipful silence, intending to meet next the 11<sup>th</sup> of 3<sup>rd</sup> month, God willing.

Mike Hirtle, presiding clerk

Elizabeth Cazden, recording clerk

### **John Stively Travels to Greece for Syrian American Medical Society**

John Stively has just left for another medical mission with the Syrian American Medical Society, a non-political, non-profit medical relief organization working on the front lines of the Syrian refugee crisis. This time he will be on Chios Island in Greece, 3.5 miles from Turkey, providing primary and acute care to the current camp population of about 2500 (the camp's official capacity is 1000). He will most likely be one of two SAMS doctors at the clinic. Please hold John in the light as he undertakes this mission. As a doctor, John pays for his own transportation to and from Greece. SAMS spends 94 cents of every dollar on its programs. If you would like to donate to SAMS, please see the poster on the wall downstairs.

### **FDS Donations On Their Way to Refugees Near and Far**

On February 17, a delivery of clothes, school supplies, housewares, and kitchen items was dropped off at AHOPE's donation headquarters. The housewares, school supplies and handmade potholders and



earwarmers will be distributed to refugee families throughout Rhode Island. The coats and warm winter clothing will soon be making their way across the ocean to refugee camps in Jordan and Bangladesh.

If you'd like to continue to help AHOPE in its collections for refugees in need, they are now beginning to gather canned food and non-perishable items. We'll make a box available downstairs for donations.

Many thanks to all our First Day Schoolers, their families and supporters for making our donation drive a success!

### **Join Project Peacework Women's Craft Collective on 2.24**

The interfaith women's craft group Project Peacework will be reconvening this Saturday, February 24, from 2-5 pm to continue assembling squares into blankets for refugee households throughout Rhode Island. Bring knitting needles or crochet hook and a dish to share (no pork, please!), grab some of our bountiful yarn supply, and meet some lovely new friends. Children are welcome!

## Reconnecting with Far-Flung Friends: Jeanne Whitaker

By Rebecca Leuchak

In mid January I had the pleasure of visiting with Jeanne Whitaker, long-time member of the Providence Friends Meeting. Jeanne moved from Providence to Kendal at Longwood in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania in 2011. This was the first time, aside from the occasional card in the mail, that she and I had reconnected since then. Over a delicious lunch in the dining room of her residence, we reminisced about the days when she was with us in Providence, caught up on news of F/friends and family, and shared our current interests and activities.

Those who began attending our Meeting after 2011 would have missed getting to know Jeanne, whose action and commitment as a long-time member of our Peace and Social Action committee were inspiring to many. Her commitment to issues of equality, respect, and justice grew out of her own life story. Ever the teacher, Jeanne had lessons for many of us. When she retired from her French Department faculty position at Wheaton College, I remember the downstairs room being filled with her career-long collection of French literary works, brought in for a book sale. She was downsizing from her residence on Wheaton's campus to a comfortable new home here in Providence, closer to our Quaker Meeting, and the well-used and well-loved tomes had to go! The careful planning and deliberate action that went into the sale of her beloved library were emblematic of Jeanne's graceful example in life. And I can still recall Jeanne's stirring message in meeting one day, when she spoke of her belief in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of "The World House." I was unaware of that powerful essay until Jeanne brought it to my attention, and I thank her for introducing me to it. Memories like these and many others represent for me the way Jeanne speaks her Truth.

We lingered over lunch, sharing recollections and stories. Jeanne brought me up to date on her family and shared photos of her grandchildren. And then we said goodbye, and she was off on her way to a special lecture on International Relations. Her life-long interest in world affairs continues to thrive, it appears, but so does her affection for Providence Friends Meeting. Jeanne assured me that she continues to follow her beloved Meeting through the Newsletter – so Jeanne, since you are reading this...thanks to you for your hospitality on that sunny day! You are well loved and dearly missed here in Providence.

We all send you greetings!



## **Spring Break Opportunity for PMM 4th- and 5th-Graders**

Moses Brown 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders are participating in week-long World Peace Game the week of April 16<sup>th</sup> (spring vacation week for many public schools), and Moses Brown is looking for additional students to participate. The game will take place every day that week from 8am to 3pm. Anyone interested can talk to Steve or Molly Thomas or follow up directly with the school. Flyers with more information are downstairs on the long tables.

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This section has been left blank.... But your piece of art/ book review/commentary could appear here!

**Providence Monthly Meeting Contact List**

- Presiding Clerk: **Mike Hirtle** clerk@providencefriends.org
- Assistant Presiding Clerk: **Rebecca Leuchak** assistclerk@providencefriends.org
- Recording Clerk: **Betsy Cazden** recordingclerk@providencefriends.org
- Treasurer: **Peter Swazek** treasurer@providencefriends.org
- Ministry & Counsel: **Ariana Steele** ministryandcounsel@providencefriends.org
- Pastoral Care Committee: **Adele Bourne** pastoralcare@providencefriends.org
- Finance: **Dan Lederer** finance@providencefriends.org
- Peace & Social Concerns: **Steve Schwartz** peaceandsocial@providencefriends.org
- Social & Hospitality: **Dede Carlsten and Kim Wiegand** socialandhospitality@providencefriends.org
- Religious Education: **Victoria Ekk and Elsie Morse** religiouised@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
- Archive: **archivist@providencefriends.org**
- Property: **Bob Elliott and Nina Berry** property@providencefriends.org
- Funeral & Burial: **Matt Hackman** funeralandburial@providencefriends.org
- Newsletter: **Jen McFadden** providentfriend@providencefriends.org
- Email list moderator: **Dan Lederer** list@providencefriends.org
- Website: **Sam Schifman** webclerk@providencefriends.org
- Moses Brown School Liaison: **Betsy Zimmerman** liaison@providencefriends.org
- Meetinghouse Scheduling: **Bruce Shaw** scheduling@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: 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 are welcome):**

**Monday** - 12:30pm - Moses Brown Upper School

**Wednesday** - 8:25am - Moses Brown Lower School

**Wednesday** - 9:40am - Moses Brown Middle School

**Wednesday** - 10-11:30am 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wed's - Saylesville

**Wednesday** - Noon-12:45 pm Brown University in  
J. Walter Wilson room 411

**Potluck, Providence** - each First Sunday

**Sing-along, Saylesville** – 11:30 am each First Sunday

**Meeting for Business**

Providence: Second Sunday of each month at 12:00pm

Saylesville: Second Sunday of each month at 9:30am

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99 Morris Avenue

Providence, RI 02906