



FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Fifth Month, 2003

2755 Providence Street
Fort Myers, Florida 33916

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- Potluck luncheons are once a month, the first First Day of the month. -- **EXCEPT NOT in MAY!**
 - Deadline for inclusion in the next newsletter is Fifth Month 14, 2003
 - If you want to save postage and get your newsletter by email, please email: ericalynne@earthlink.net
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Holding in the Light



Our Friend and clerk Larry Butler has undergone yet another surgery for a detached retina and his vision is greatly impaired. All Friends are praying for him and his family.

POTLUCK: 4th month 26, 2003

12 Noon

Home of Ken Masters

1255 Medinah Drive, Ft. Myers * 239-489-3531

Friends will meet for a potluck and to learn about the Quaker activities of Ken Masters at the United Nations. This is part of the new Education Committee's Adult Education Potluck series.

Directions from I-75 and Daniels Exit: Travel west on Daniels to Rt. 41. Turn right (south) on 41 to Gladiolus (Walmart on the corner). Turn right on Gladiolus. Pass Summerlin (major light). The first intersection (light) after Summerlin is Winkler. Turn left on Winkler. Brandywine Circle is about a quarter mile. Turn left and drive to the Guard Shack at the end.

QUERIES FOR THE FIFTH MONTH

How do Friends care for one another?

Education

- Do your children receive the loving care of the meeting?
 - Does the influence of the meeting promote their religious life and encourage their desire for service to others?
 - What efforts are you making to educate all your members in the knowledge of the Bible, especially the teachings of Jesus and their relevance to the principles and practices of Friends?
 - Do those of you who are parents seek to share your deepest beliefs with your children, while leaving them free to develop as the Spirit of god may lead them.
 - Do you respect that of God in each one, thought it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or Do you encourage members to consider the advantages of education in Friends' schools and colleges for their children and do you give such financial aid as may be necessary?
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Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Fourth Month 13, 2003

The Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, attended by 22, opened with a consideration of the fourth query on Unity within the Meeting.

Ministry and Counsel continues to work on outlining the duties of the Meeting to its members, the process of becoming a member in our Meeting, and the guidelines for membership clearness committees.

The Treasurer's report was given and attention was called to the fact that we have a shortfall in the budget for the first three months of this year. Contributions, thus far, are only about two thirds of those expected.

The Finance Committee reported that we are slightly ahead in our volunteer hours (our rent) to the Calusa Nature Center. However, four people donate most of the volunteer hours and it would be helpful if we extended our volunteer base.

It was suggested that the Properties Committee address two problems: the condition of the floor in Iona House and the condition we leave the room in on First Day. The Committee is asked to report back to Meeting on these issues.

Peace and Social Concerns has several issues under discussion, including fostering discernment within the meeting and examining how we can best support our peace activists.

The Education Committee announced that the program for our potluck in June or July will be a discussion and video on right sharing. We will invite Ruth Hyde-Paine to speak to us soon about ProNica's work in Nicaragua.

The Minutes were reviewed and accepted.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Fennell, Recording Clerk

Peace and Social Concerns
Minutes of 3/23/03 Meeting

The Peace and Social Concerns Committee met on March 23, 2003 with a moment of silent worship. Present were clerk, Nancy Fennell, Tom Fennell, Ann De Nevers, Bill Wells, Hank Fay and Erica Lynne.

Hank Fay updated us on the CIW hunger strike; they got great support from the Catholic Arch-Bishop in Los Angeles who urged Catholics to join a hunger strike in support of the farm workers. Our meeting had 28 people participating and we collected \$116 which will go to the workers to replace in lost wages. No response from other meetings, except the Tampa meeting we have already heard about it.

Ann De Nevers reported on FCNL status report on war. What to do now that war is in progress was discussed. Safety of the population versus the rights of individuals was discussed.

Nancy Fennell will continue on as clerk of PSC meeting.

AFSC is asking for money for projects, for Iraqi work and we can take that to the general meeting. There is no money currently in the budget; we would raise it ourselves. AFSC will be in desperate need of extra cash for relief efforts following the war.

There was continued discussion on how PSC committee can serve the Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Erica Lynne

Thoughts from the Road in Nicaragua - Marki Webber, March 11, 2003

It was a short late afternoon stop on the journey. Just time enough to stretch our legs, recover a bit of equilibrium from all the jostling on the very bumpy roads, and take a few minutes to explore the city of Leon. Most of the group had headed around the corner to a tourist information shop where they had postcards, information in English, music CD's and other goodies for sale. I was in dire need of some real exercise after many days of sitting- both in the car and during presentations from the various projects ProNica supports, so I had opted for some fast walking around the large block- staying on the shady side of the street to avoid the full force of the strong tropical sun.

When I rounded the corner back to the starting point, I saw Lillian, sitting at a small outdoor table at a nearly empty café, getting her shoes shined by an industrious young boy of about 8 or 9 named Winston, chatting with him in Spanish. I sat down to join them and was immediately approached by an even younger boy, dirty and disheveled, about 4 or 5, asking me for a Cordoba (about 7 cents). I hesitated, not because I couldn't spare the coin, but because I wasn't sure how I felt about the whole issue of begging. Then I looked into his face and compassion won out; I handed him the coin. At this point, Winston told Lillian that it was good I had given Roberto the coin, since Roberto's mother beats him if he doesn't bring home 10 Cordobas a day. He also spoke of Roberto's survival skills, adding that if Roberto gets more than the 10 Cordobas he spends the difference on food for himself. One time, Winston said, Roberto got 10 dollars US, (about 150 Cordobas) and treated Winston and himself to a feast of hotdogs and sodas.

As I contemplate this experience, it touches many thoughts about my travels with ProNica in Nicaragua. The contrast between the great wealth that we have here in the US and the incredible poverty in Nicaragua is startling. A small contribution to ProNica really makes a huge difference in the lives of those that it touches. I was also struck by my hesitance to give. In the face of such great need, I am aware that I could give everything I have and still not solve the larger issues of poverty and injustice, corruption and deep seated social problems. I have become somewhat hardened by all the appeals arriving daily in my email inbox and the mailbox at the end of my driveway. The world is full of good causes, and they all need money to continue the truly important work that's taking place.

There's another, more important lesson I was reminded of by the experience with Roberto, however. The experience of offering a small gift from my heart to meet a genuine need is one that gives back to me with much greater abundance than anything I've given away. Of the many lessons I carry with me from the short time I spent in Nicaragua, the deepening of that knowledge and the opportunity to experience it so directly was perhaps the most valuable.

Fifth Month Calendar

5/4/03	Biblical Foundations of Quakerism	9:15 am	STILL ON!
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 a.m.	
	NO POTLUCK: worship will be in classroom of Nature Center		
5/11/03	Education Committee	9:30 am	
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 a.m.	
	Meeting for Business	After rise of Meeting	
	Last Chance Book Club	After rise of Meeting	
5/18/03	Biblical Foundations of Quakerism	9:15 am	
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 a.m.	
5/25/03	Peace & Social Concerns	9:15 a.m.	
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 a.m.	

Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
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