



Titus Huest
Quaker Meeting Center

FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, First Month, 2005

2755 Providence Street
Fort Myers, Florida 33916

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|---------------------------|--|----------------|
| Clerk: | Larry Butler | (239) 337-3743 |
| Recording Clerk: | Nancy Fennell | (863) 699-1276 |
| Treasurer: | Albert Webber | (239) 466-3890 |
| Newsletter Editor: | Erica Lynne | (239) 514-5060 |
| Website: | www.quakers-swfl.org | |

- Potluck luncheons are once a month, the first First Day of the month.
- Deadline for inclusion in the next newsletter is First Month 12, 2005
- If you want to save postage and get your newsletter by email, please email: ericalynne@earthlink.net

QUERIES FOR THE FIRST MONTH

What is the state of your Meetings for Worship and Business?

Religious Meetings

- Are your meetings for worship and business held in expectant waiting for Divine guidance?
- Is there a living silence in which you feel drawn together by the presence of God in your midst?
- Do your meetings give evidence that Friends come to them with hearts and minds prepared for communion with God?
- Are they a source of strength and guidance for daily living?

Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Twelfth Month 12, 2004

The Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, and the annual meeting of the Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Inc., was attended by 19 people. The meeting opened with a consideration of the twelfth query on the Peace Testimony. Friends acknowledged that this testimony is a difficult one to live. There are a number of peace activists in our membership whose work is supported to one degree or another by the meeting. However, we are mindful of the admonitions from Yearly Meeting about Friends' lack of reconciliation and sensitivity in political matters of importance to those among us and we believe that we need to continue to work in this area. The meeting has worked to understand the difference between war and protection of the innocent, requiring us to consider our attitudes about law enforcement.

04MM23. Friends reviewed the proposed State of the Meeting Report. After some additions and corrections, Friends approved the report, which will now be forwarded to Southeastern Yearly Meeting.

Ministry and Counsel provided the following summary of our year:

This year has been an unusual year for our Fort Myers Meeting. We had one member murdered, and we had other members move away from Florida. Two of our members suffered very stressful legal battles. Both members were supported throughout their ordeals by our membership. The legal outcomes were satisfactory, if not joyful.

We had a handful of new members and attenders who have become faithful worshipers in our community, much to our deep satisfaction.

We also witnessed three acts of unusual charity from Dick Squires, which were minuted at our Eleventh Month Business Meeting. Today we have presented Dick with a scroll that records that minute and expresses our appreciation.

The Treasurer's report was given and accepted. Nancy Howell raised an issue for the Treasurer regarding maintaining anonymity of the specifics of our giving versus the analytical needs of the Finance Committee. Friends want the long-held tradition of anonymity to be upheld.

04MM24. Friends agreed that the Treasurer may provide information to the Finance Committee about contribution trends and patterns, without giving names of the individuals or families involved.

The Finance Committee presented the proposed budget for 2005. After discussion, Friends realized that a shift in our philosophy of giving seems to be occurring. Not all members of the Meeting are comfortable or in agreement with this apparent shift. Budget issues will continue discussion at our next business meeting.

The Clerk read greetings sent by those who have worshipped with us as visitors during the past year. We are also appreciative of the lovely letter sent us by Friend Erica Lynne.

The Education Committee announced that plans are underway for future studies for the Adult Discussion Group. Friend's suggestions are always welcome.

Friends reviewed Southeastern Yearly Meeting's draft of two sections of our Faith and Practice document, which is currently under revision. The Recording Clerk will forward the suggestions to the Clerk of the review committee.

The annual Corporation report, given by Tom Fennell, advised us of the following:

04MM25. Albert Webber is retiring as Treasurer of Fort Myers Monthly Meeting. The Corporation expresses deep gratitude for his loyal service throughout his long term of service. Nancy Howell is appointed Treasurer of the Corporation. The officers and shareholders of the Corporation authorize Nancy Howell to sign checks for the Corporation.

Albert Webber will continue to be the registered agent and will be added to the list of Corporation directors.

The minutes were reviewed and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Fennell, Recording Clerk

IT'S NOT TOO LATE...

...for you to give your tax-deductible donation to the Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Our treasurer, Al Webber, will provide you with a letter acknowledging your generosity that meets the IRS guidelines. Our expenses for 2004 have exceeded our income and stocks will have to be cashed in if we don't get a rush of last minute contributions. Please send your contribution to Al Webber, 335 Nautilus Ct., Ft. Myers, FL 33908.

.....make your donations by 12/31/04

EPEC

The Environmental and Peace Education Center

At the last meeting for Worship for Business, Friends discussed the Peace Testimony and ways that we can influence peace on this earth. The Environmental and Peace Education Center, located right here in Fort Myers, has spent the last 20 years working toward the goal of peace and environmental sustainability.

One of the most concrete efforts by EPEC to promote peace is to coordinate the Conflict Resolution Training. The immediate goal of this program is to reduce violence in our schools and community by disseminating strategies through networking with agencies concerned with children and families. EPEC conducts *Train the Trainer* seminars in which adults are trained in conflict resolution techniques and how to teach these techniques to others. The course teaches communication skills, problem solving skills and how to deal with anger. Peer mediation to work toward win-win solutions are also taught. These trainers then go back to their schools or social services agencies and can disseminate this knowledge into the community. They also educate the public about the philosophy and techniques of non-violent conflict resolution, and enlist their efforts to support the teaching of these strategies to children, their parents, and other members of the community.

The next Train the Trainer seminar will be held on January 29, 2005, from 8:30 am to 3 pm at the Vince Smith Center. The seminar already has a significant enrollment, but there is room for more participants for those interested.

EPEC also co-sponsors Peace Vigils; many have been held over the past year protesting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. On January 2, 2005, EPEC is holding a Candlelight Vigil in Centennial Park in Fort Myers from 6-7 pm. To further the messages of nonviolence and peace, EPEC will have a booth at the Martin Luther King Day festivities at Centennial Park on January 17, 2005. The MLK parade begins at 9:30 am and lasts until it arrives at the park, where many booths and displays will be gathered. EPEC's message there will be develop support for the new Department of Peace, which is already part of a House Bill sponsored by Denis Kucinich. Also at the park that day: *A Taste of Dunbar*, featuring an abundance of fine foods.

EPEC also sponsors a website: www.epec.org, which provides current news articles relevant to those concerned with peace and the environment. This week's feature concerns the recent Nobel Peace Prize winner, Wangari Maathai, who won the award based on her contributions to sustainable development, democracy and peace. Another article features the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. There are also *Action Alerts*, many of which will send you directly to a page whereby you can email the appropriate persons about the specific concerns, with suggested text already in place. From the current EPEC page, you can email your concerns about clean air, the crisis in Sudan, and Florida's waters with just a few clicks of a mouse. You can also find your local political representatives, links to other vigils and other news stories on the home page. The EPEC website is updated weekly, so there is always something new and of interest to read.

The EPEC board meets once a month on the campus of the Unitarian Universalist Church. EPEC is a nondenominational not-for-profit group. The next meeting is January 12, 2005, at 7 pm. All are welcome. To learn more, you can go to the EPEC website or call Phyllis Stanley at 239-369-1897.

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| 1/2/05 | Meeting for Worship | 10:30 am |
| | Potluck | After rise of Meeting |
| 1/5/05 | Naples Midweek Meeting for Worship | 7:00 pm |
| 1/9/05 | Education Committee | 9:30 am |
| | Meeting for Worship | 10:30 am |
| | Meeting for Business | After rise of Meeting |
| | Last Chance Book Club | After rise of Meeting |
| 1/12/05 | Naples Midweek Meeting for Worship | 7:00 pm |
| 1/16/05 | Adult Education Class | 9:15 am |
| | Meeting for Worship | 10:30 am |
| 1/19/05 | Naples Midweek Meeting for Worship | 7:00 pm |
| 1/23/05 | Peace & Social Concerns | 9:15 am |
| | Meeting for Worship | 10:30 am |
| 1/26/05 | Naples Midweek Meeting for Worship | 7:00 pm |
| 1/30/05 | Meeting for Worship | 10:30 am |

Friends Meeting of Fort Myers
Religious Society of Friends
 c/o Erica Lynne, Editor
 676 110th Ave. N
 Naples, FL 34108