



FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Newsletter, Fourth Month 2006 (#2)

52 Fenny Bosk Trail
Venus, Florida 33960

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- Potluck luncheons are once a month, the first First Day of the month. All are welcome.

This is the second fourth month newsletter. The dates have been changed so that the date of the date of the newsletter corresponds with the date of the business meeting.

**“It is dangerous to be right
When those in power are wrong.”**

Submitted by Ann de Nevers

Voltaire

**Queries for the Fourth Month
How do Friends Care for One Another?
Unity within the Meeting**

- Are love and unity maintained among you?
 - Do you manifest a forgiving spirit and a care for the reputation of others?
 - When differences arise are endeavors made to settle them in a spirit of love?
 - Are you patient and considerate towards those whom you find it hard to like or understand?
 - Do you respect that of God in each one, though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or may be difficult to discern?
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Minutes of the Meeting for Worship for Business
Held Fourth Month, Ninth Day, 2006
Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

The meeting opened from silent worship with 15 F/friends in attendance.

The clerk read the Fourth Query on Unity within the Meeting.

“Are love and unity maintained among you?

Do you manifest a forgiving spirit and a care for the reputation of others?

When differences arise are endeavors made to settle them in a spirit of love?

Are you patient and considerate toward those whom you find it hard to like or understand?

Do you respect that of God in each one, though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or may be difficult to discern?”

In discussion, a friend recalled the expression “people need loving most when they are most unlovable”. A Friend spoke about seeing that stresses in Quaker meetings are frequently a result of interpersonal problems, rather than an organizational problem. She has been reading The Journal of John Woolman. Woolman made a point of not speaking to fellow Quakers about his concerns, unless his heart opened in love at that time. Quaker ways allow for dealing with conflict without threatening those with whom one disagrees.

Report of the Clerk of Ministry and Counsel: In the absence of Barb French, the Clerk, Dudley Fennell reported a proposed minute from Ministry and Counsel and the meeting approved:

06MM09: Potlucks, whether for social, informational, or welcoming purposes are to be scheduled through the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business. When the potluck is held to welcome a new member, it is suggested that the host or hostess be other than the incoming member or his/her family.

Treasurer’s Report: Dave French reported that income and unrestricted expenses are about equal so far this year. We have approximately \$1,000 in the budget to reimburse expenses of official delegates to Quaker functions. All designated delegates should submit their expenses to the Treasurer, and they will be reimbursed (but not necessarily 100%). To improve planning, the Treasurer would like to receive estimated expenses for future travels during 2006 from those representing the Meeting.

The restricted funds (\$4,400) given to the Meeting by Larry Butler and Marilyn Stahulak, which they asked to have invested in Friends Meetinghouse Fund, will be invested there shortly. The delay was caused by a freeze on new contributions to that Fund until recently. Contributions are accepted in increments of \$500, so the Treasurer will add \$100 of general Meeting funds to their contributions, to carry out their wishes.

The Treasurer will be away in May and asks that any necessary financial business be done before he leaves or wait until he returns.

The meeting returned to a consideration of the policy on restricted donations, which has been discussed several times before. The meeting is being asked to adopt the statement as our policy. The Treasurer reported that he has discussed the proposed policy by email with the treasurer and finance committee from SEYM. The policy statement was read by the Treasurer and was approved by the Meeting.

06MM10: **The Meeting encourages members and attenders to make regular (i.e., weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual) unrestricted gifts to the Meeting to support our budgeted activities.**

When individuals feel moved to make a special gift to support a particular purpose or program, the gift can be directed toward any portion of the Meeting's regular budget, which will free resources for other purposes. Such a gift will be reported to the Meeting for Worship for Business, but does not require approval because the purpose has already been approved as part of the budget process. The Meeting may wish to increase the budget allocation for that purpose, but this is not automatic.

The meeting is also maintaining a fund for the costs associated with the repair and upkeep of Iona House, which belongs to the Calusa Nature Center, and additional contributions to this fund are needed and welcomed.

Another category of special gifts is that of contributions to the Building Fund, which is maintained as a saving/investment account by the Treasurer. This money is being accumulated in the hope of purchasing a permanent home for the Meeting.

Acceptance of gifts restricted to purposes that are not part of the annual budget of the meeting (or the Iona House Fund or the Building Fund) will have to be considered by the Meeting for Worship for Business on a case by case basis. We see a danger that the business of the Meeting could be driven by individual gifts, but there may also be good opportunities for doing God's work that arise in this way.

Contributors of restricted gifts are asked to put their wishes into writing by use of a form available from the Treasurer, so that their wishes can be clearly understood and maintained over time. The document should clarify issues such as any time limits attached to the restrictions on the gift, and how to deal with changing circumstances that might affect the use of the gift.

All restricted gifts are accepted with the understanding that the Meeting for Worship for Business reserves the right to remove the restrictions on the gift when there is no reasonable chance that the specified conditions can be met in a reasonable period of time.

The Property Committee report was given by Dave French, in the absence of Warren Bender. The first priority is to fix the roof before the rainy season starts. Several methods of repairing the roof have been considered. A new metal roof would cost about \$11,000, which is a smaller price than had been anticipated, and this proposal is under consideration by the Property Committee. Only \$4,000 has been allocated by the Meeting to date for this purpose.

The Education Committee Report was given by Ann de Nevers. The committee met on April 9 to review nine of the pamphlets on Quaker topics that we provide to newcomers. Most of them were felt to be very valuable and we will continue to offer them. The committee also agreed to make up a list of recommended readings for newcomers and others who wish to deepen their understanding of Quakerism.

There will be a potluck on April 29, at noon, held at Phyllis Stanley's house (10 Beth Stacey Blvd., Apt. 114, Lehigh Acres) to view a film on the Harry Chapin Food Bank and discuss it. They have given us a copy of the film.

The adult class discussion group will meet at 9:15 on the First and Third First Days in May and June. The first meeting will consist of a discussion of the pamphlet by Wilmer Cooper, entitled "The Testimony of Integrity." Friends are asked to come prepared to discuss the pamphlet.

The Hospitality Committee report was given by Jeannette Botha, who reported that the list of those who bring snacks and set up the Meetinghouse before meeting is not always well covered. Friends are asked to sign the list in advance of Meetings.

The Peace and Social Concern Committee report was given by Nancy Howell, in the absence of Marilyn Webber. The Alternatives to Violence Program workshop is underway for May 5-7 and Friends will be provided with a schedule and an enrollment form shortly. This event will be announced in the newspapers to open it up to the community.

The Wage Peace project continues to try to set up counter-recruiting in Lee County high schools.

Other Business:

Dave French reports that our work on Faith and Practice has been forwarded to SEYM and many of our suggestions have already been incorporated into the next set of drafts, to be considered at the SEYM Gathering next week. He notes too that the work that Nancy Fennell has done on Hospitality has been widely used. A Friend noted that Dave French's work on Faith and Practice has been appreciated, and another mentioned that the provision of soup and bread before Meeting for Worship for Business was appreciated.

The minutes were read and approved. The meeting closed with silent worship.

Submitted by Recording Clerk Nancy Howell.

Volunteer Opportunities

Congratulations to our friend, Mary Anne Ruppert. Mary Anne has joined the staff at the Calusa Nature Center as Coordinator of Volunteers and Special Events! She is excited about the opportunity of using her education in this way, and one Friend who observed her in action teaching a Florida wildlife class was very impressed with her knowledge and skillful interaction with the children.

Mary Anne is looking for volunteers for many interesting jobs some of which would require the volunteer to have the opportunity to gain some elementary training in wildlife! Here are some of the volunteer opportunities:

- Gift shop
- Plant maintenance
- Adobe Photoshop computer work in the planetarium
- Invasive plant remediation
- Trial work
- Upkeep of foliage in the butterfly garden
- Others.....

Volunteers are also needed periodically for special events.

If you have any questions or wish to sign up, please call Mary Anne at **(239) 275-3435**. Many Friends have really enjoyed donating hours which help pay for our Meeting House rent.

ALSO: Volunteers are needed to help with the “fixing up” of Iona House. Please contact Alan Ruppert at (239) 466-4127.

Thanks from Barbara Frey

I wish to thank Fort Myers Monthly Meeting and Ministry and Counsel for the scholarship to attend SEYM. Sincere gratitude to everyone! Barbara Frey

First Day Discussion Group

When: First and third First Days, starting May 7
Time: 9:15 a.m.
Subject: “Testimony of Integrity” by Wilmer Cooper

Pamphlets are available for \$4.00. For questions, contact Ann de Nevers at (239) 731-2645.

Alternatives to Violence Training

When: Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 5, 6, and 7th.
Where: Iona House.
Times: May 5 from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
May 6 from 8:30 am to 6:45 pm
May 7 from 1 pm to 7 pm

Contact Marilyn Webber for questions.

4/29/06	Pot luck at Phyllis Stanley’s	12 pm
	Film on Harry Chapin Food Bank	
5/5/06	AVP training	6:30 – 9:30 pm
5/6/06	AVP training	8:30 am – 6:45 pm
5/7/06	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Potluck – All Are Welcome!	After rise of Meeting
	Adult discussion group	9:15 am
	AVP training	1 – 7 pm
5/14/06	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Meeting for Business	At Rise of Meeting
	Education Committee	9:15 am
	Last Chance Book Club	At Rise of Meeting
5/21/06	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Adult discussion group	9:30 am
5/28/06	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
	Peace and Social Concerns	9:15 am

Committees wanting their meetings to be listed in the calendar should provide their schedules to the editor.

Note from the Editor:

- Please send articles, favorite passages, items of interest to Friends.
- Please send important dates, news of Friends/friends, etc, as it is not possible for me to attend all Meetings.
- Those wishing to receive the newsletter by email, please contact me.
- Suggestions?

My email address is: jeannettebotha@earthlink.net

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Address Correction Requested

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