

Appendix E: Representative Reports

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American Friends Service Committee

The American Friends Service Committee's annual corporation meeting is a mixture of information, inspiration and dialogue with representatives of Quakers from across the nation. Staff and board leaders report to the group and corporation members share their perspectives. In November 2006, Carol Lamm of Berea Monthly Meeting represented SAYMA at the AFSC Corporation meeting. A number of other SAYMA Friends were present as board members or representing programs of AFSC-SERO (South East Region Office).

Some of AFSC's international peace efforts were highlighted at the meeting. The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), which AFSC staffs in cooperation with the Friends World Committee for Consultation, has been involved in advocacy among UN member nations and staff around under-attended crises. Of particular concern has been the situation in northern Uganda, a disaster on the scale of Darfur, with twice the death rate, but less international attention.

QUNO was also a key player in setting up a small meeting of U.S. religious leaders with Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad when he visited the U.S. last fall. After plans for a large public meeting fell through, Mennonites, who have maintained a seminary exchange program with Iran for years, proposed "a quiet meeting at Quaker House." Ahmadinejad accepted, although in the end the meeting occurred at a hotel. AFSC was represented by Mary Ellen McNish. The group challenged Ahmadinejad on some of his more outrageous positions, but the tone was notably different from the confrontational atmosphere of his only other meeting in the U.S., with the National Press Club. In subsequent briefings in Washington, Congressional leaders encouraged the religious leaders to maintain dialogue with Iran at a time when political leaders cannot. The 2006 meeting led to a visit to Iran by a delegation of U.S. religious leaders, including both AFSC and FCNL representatives, early in 2007.

In addition to such high-profile peace work, AFSC continues many quieter efforts. In Korea, for instance, following the collapse of Korea's food system after the break-up of the USSR, AFSC has been working with four large cooperative farms. Innovations such as green manures and in-field threshers have led to significant improvements in yields and in the health of farm families. AFSC

sponsors several Korean agricultural delegations each year on visits to other countries to learn about farming methods they might apply in Korea.

AFSC is turning 90 this year and is celebrating, among other ways, by kicking off a large fundraising campaign. AFSC's planning giving staff report that people who put AFSC in their wills live longer than any actuarial tables predict.

Friends Committee on National Legislation

The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) educates and lobbies Congress on Quaker issues of national interest. FCNL staff and volunteers work energetically to bring Quaker values to the forefront of our country's domestic and national/international policies. Bettina Wolff and I represented SAYMA at the FCNL annual meeting November 9-12,2006. The theme, "Building a Living Peace: Beyond the Absence of War," was carried throughout the plenary sessions, workshops, and worship groups. We approved a list of priorities for FCNL's work with the upcoming Congress. These priorities are listed on the FCNL website at www.FCNL.org.

Participating in FCNL work and the annual meeting is spiritually nurturing and fun. Ruth Flowers, who spoke at a plenary session on FCNL Today, shared a reflection from an outside attendee at one of FCNL's strategy sessions. He said, "We've demonstrated that we have the capacity for democratic change." We can all be a part of this change by reading the FCNL newsletters to become informed, taking action by contacting our representatives, and spreading the word about FCNL.

Thank-you for allowing me to represent SAYMA at FCNL. I have gone off the FCNL Policy Committee, but have now been appointed to the Field Committee. Please let me know who your FCNL meeting contact is, and bring to me any FCNL ideas or concerns.

Carol Nickle

Friends General Conference

Our numbers have been reduced this year by the hiring of Julia Sibley-Jones by Friends General Conference's Development Program. Elaine Ruscetta has had a very full year at college, but participates in the work of the Long Range Conference Planning Committee which has as its focus the support of the planning of the annual Gathering and other smaller conferences.

My service as your representative comes to an end with Central Committee in October. I thank you for the opportunity to serve you and the wider world of Friends in this manner. It has been a fulfilling and deeply spiritual time for me. My work within FGC has been primarily serving on the Ministry and Nurture Committee, although I also serve on Traveling Ministries Committee as

an appointee from M&N. Coinciding with the completion of my appointment from you is the completion of my appointment by Central Committee as clerk of M&N. As I look back on those years, I see that M&N has deepened its commitment to caring for the spiritual well being of Central Committee, mostly during our annual meeting but also through various means of spiritual support of other committees within Central Committee. One of my joys in this work has been the coming to fruition of a dream held by three members of M&N when I joined that committee in 1998 – as an ex-officio member by virtue of being your yearly meeting clerk. We three were all yearly meeting clerks and we yearned for an opportunity to meet with other clerks to hear how they went about that ministry. In April 2005 and again this April, our committee sponsored a consultation for yearly meeting clerks. They were well attended and fruitful and with this year's consultation we were able to extend an invitation to yearly meetings not affiliated with FGC – reaching across the divides of Quakerism.

Central Committee and its committees have been energized by the emerging and expanding programs of Youth Ministries; Advancement and Outreach and the Committee on Ministry for Racism with ever deepening and widening impact on our meetings. The Traveling Ministries Program celebrated its eighth year of service and continues to be called upon regularly by monthly meetings for visits by those traveling with ministry. Our programs are growing as are many of our monthly and yearly meetings. We have seen a rise in consideration of what Quakerism is today. Although FGC is not a policy making body for its member yearly and monthly meetings, we have been able to provide opportunities for conversations around this question among our members and other Friends.

The Monthly Meeting Contact program in which a meeting names a Friend to be a recipient for quarterly information packets about various aspects of committee work seems to have brought about more direct conversation between meetings and FGC. We encourage more meetings to participate.

An exciting change for www.Quakerfinder.org is the inclusion of pastored Quaker meetings from FGC and Friends United Meetings. This work is under the care of Advancement and Outreach Committee. We are blessed to have the clerk of that committee, Jane Berger with us this year as our Ministry and Nurture Committee's sponsored workshop leader. Jane quakes with enthusiasm about this work and I hope you have an opportunity to attend her workshop or talk with her.

Not only does this yearly meeting session mark the close of my service as your representative to FGC but also my presence among you as I move to Vermont, to live among my ancestors. Thank you for the bountiful gifts of the spirit you have bestowed on me.

In the Love and Light that unites, Penelope Wright

Friends Peace Teams

Friends Peace Teams is a Spirit-led organization working around the world to develop long-term relationships with communities in conflict to create programs for peacebuilding, healing and reconciliation. FPT' programs build on extensive Quaker experience combining practical and spiritual aspects of conflict resolution.

Our staff and team members come from many countries. In starting a new project, we collaborate with established programs in the community in order to create culturally appropriate programs. We use Quaker process for clearness, support and oversight to strengthen the spiritual basis of peace team work by Quakers and non-Quakers alike.

We have learned how to work with local partnerships to adapt proven alternatives to violence and trauma-healing techniques to create sustained, community peacebuilding and reconciliation programs. Programs in Africa (Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, and the Congo) and in Colombia address the causes as well as the effects of costly long-term wars in those countries. New areas of work in 2007 are Central America and Indonesia (Aceh and Northern Sumatra).

In partnership with Quakers and others in the region, the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) has developed an innovative program of Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities based upon focused trauma-healing work in specific communities at risk. This program is well-developed in Burundi and Rwanda, and is being piloted in Uganda, Kenya and the Congo. The Alternatives to Violence Project's nonviolent conflict resolution skills have been taught to hundreds of Africans and there are strong AVP programs in all the countries in which we work. As increasing violence is erupting in Kenya [other areas?] we are involved in emergency efforts of Friends and others to respond.

"In this workshop, I have discovered that there are many kinds of trauma. Before I was thinking that only having lost family members is traumatizing. But now I have seen that the wrongdoer can be traumatized by the horrible things she/he did." –Genocide survivor.

In Colombia, the Latin America-Caribbean Program has helped form an AVP program that plans over 50 workshops this year alone. FPT supports work in Bogotá and on the northern coast, where many displaced people, demobilized combatants (from the Army, guerrilla and paramilitary groups) and young Conscientious Objectors struggle to find more peaceful ways to survive. This year, community-based trauma healing work modeled on the work of African partners will be added to their efforts.

"The situation in Colombia makes peacebuilding (and, within that process, reconciliation) very challenging. At the same time, working to help strengthen a

commitment to a nonviolent lifestyle is hard, but it is possible. We know that AVP provides individuals with strategies to peacefully resolve conflict.”—Colombian AVP Facilitator

Our new areas of work in Central America and Indonesia will bring us new challenges and new partners with whom to work. In Central America, the legacy of civil war has added to the continued poverty and injustice that sparked the conflicts. Weapons abound and crime, gang violence and continued political problems have compelled Quakers and others to seek new solutions. We plan on introducing and supporting the development of AVP and, after piloting it in Colombia, community-based trauma healing and reconciliation work in the region.

“We try to train our children to live peaceful lives, but they are poorly prepared to live in a world of violence. We need to give them tools to survive and to transform our country.”—Guatemalan Quaker

In Indonesia, the work of a Friend and her Monthly and Yearly Meetings are already bearing fruit in an AVP program, educational programs for children based on Muslim peace principles, and the Conscience Studio, a project whereby Indonesians and people from the US can exchange their thoughts about peacemaking and conscientious living. Added to the trauma of a long civil war have been the effects of natural disasters (the 2004 tsunami and recent widespread flooding) and reconstruction and trauma healing is also a priority of this initiative. FPT is blessed to take this work under its care.
[Indonesian quote]

We need your help to continue this vital Quaker work. Your prayers support us and your contributions sustain it. Because we rely on the work of our partners, our budgets are quite frugal, but our work is expanding rapidly. Please send tax-deductible donations to our office:

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Written by Val Liveoak
Submitted by Sharon Phelps

Friends World Committee on Consultation

In Ninth Month, 2006, the Southeastern Region of FWCC Section of the Americas met in Jamestown, North Carolina. Jamestown Monthly Meeting (FUM) hosted us. The gathering focused on the issue of torture and the work of Friends Committee on National Legislation. Bill Jeffries spoke about peace

education and the ways FCNL engages Quakers in the legislative process in Washington. Debbie Parker spoke about the Consultation on Torture (QUIT) co-sponsored by FWCC and affect that government-sponsored torture has had on the indigenous communities in Central America. Paul Mitchell talked about his experiences while in the military and refuted the arguments that the Bush administration has put forward to justify the use of torture.

We had the opportunity to visit one of several sites of Quaker and American history in the area. On First Day we many of us attended Jamestown Meeting. About 25 Friends attended the gathering from Baltimore Yearly Meeting, North Carolina Yearly Meeting Conservative and FUM, SAYMA and Southeastern Yearly Meeting. All were grateful for the chance to get together and for the depth of discussion and profound worship.

In Third Month, 2007, the Annual Meeting of FWCC Section of the Americas was held at the Moses Brown School in Providence, Rhode Island, hosted by New England Yearly Meeting. The theme of the meeting was 2 Corinthians 9:8: "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance so that by always having enough of everything, you may be able to share abundantly...." Approximately 150 Quakers from all branches of Quakerdom attended the meeting. One representative each from Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia and El Salvador was present. (Every other year a small representation of Latin American Friends attends the annual meeting so that they can afford to gather closer to home for meetings and workshops.)

The business of the annual meeting focused on nominating individuals for positions and committees, discussing the budget and the capital fund drive, and hearing from committees. There were two controversial issues. One was the request of two organizations to affiliate with FWCC. One member yearly meeting had reservations about the affiliations, and the requests were taken back to the executive committee. The other was a request by the Ad Hoc Peace Committee to become a standing committee. This suggestion had not been presented to the executive committee, so this was also referred the executive committee for study.

In the report of the FWCC World Office, it was announced that they will recommend to the Triennial Gathering in Ireland (8th Month 2007) that there not be a Triennial in 2010 but a World Gathering in 2012.

Tim Lamm, SAYMA rep, was approved as the Clerk of the Southeastern Region of the Section of the Americas. Sallie Prugh, SAYMA rep, was approved as a member of the Youth Committee. At the regional caucus, we discussed the plans for a regional gathering in Jamaica in January 2008.

One evening Bernard Lafayette, Director of Peace and Nonviolence Studies at the University of Rhode Island, spoke about his experiences in the civil rights movement of the 60's and 70's. Another evening, individuals from New England

Yearly Meeting and the Moses Brown School talked about the history of Quakers in Rhode Island and other parts of New England.

There were many opportunities for worship. Three worship sharing sessions focused on the passage from Corinthians. One morning there was a prepared message, one morning silent worship, and one morning worship lead by the individuals from Latin America. There were many opportunities to sing in English and Spanish at the beginning of worship and during worship. Often the Spirit moved strongly among us.

One of the joys of the meeting was the late winter snowfall, which started when we were all gathered. It covered the ground and transformed the school into a wonderland. It was cold but not freezing, so we were able to walk along the paths and enjoy the beauty.

We look forward to the Section of the Americas meeting again next year in Ohio and to the opportunity to attend the Triennial in Ireland in August.

---Submitted by Sallie Prugh and Tim Lamm

Quaker Earthcare Witness

Report: This was my first year as SAYMA Representative on the Steering Committee of Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW). I attended and participated in the meeting during April 2007 at Cenacle House in Chicago, IL. This was basically a socialization meeting for me. While I had been active in subcommittee of QEW, The Friends Testimonies and Economics Project for several years, I had not been active or supported QEW.

The meeting Chicago was attended by 30-40 Friends from yearly meetings across the USA and Canada. A large portion of the conference was concerned with Meeting for Business. I was pleased to review to the financial status of the organization. I attended the Finance Committee meetings during breakout times. QEW seems to be based on a solid financial setting and its finances seem to be in order.

In addition to attending to business, we heard several presentations. The memorable presentations were Angela Manno's video and presentation, Conscious Evolution: The World at One, a long video-based presentation on ecological destruction by the Pachamama Alliance, and a video of a march and lecture by Bib McKibben of Vermont (author of Deep Economy).

I have made one presentation on QEW activities to Memphis Friends Meeting. I am available to make presentations to other monthly meetings.

David H Ciscel, Memphis Friends Meeting