

Secretary's Report **to EC 10/03/2008 to be held at St. Petersburg Meeting House**

This report describes activities that have taken place since EC Meeting, 07/19/2008.

General office activities during the summer:

Routine office work continued, albeit in a curiously sporadic manner, was hectic at times. This was mostly of my own doing:

- Participating in the Patriots for Peace PEACE MARCH *to avoid war in Iran* and hosting/appreciating the wit of the SEYMers who joined me.
- Feeling driven in my off hours to contribute time, energy, and layout talent to support peace candidates. Yes, in Melbourne, FL, we have a peace candidate for Congress who posts AFSC videos and AFSC's 'cost of the war' calculator on his website.

Summertime, however, are devoted to publishing, and the past 9 weeks have been no exception. Steve Smith's Michener Lecture, *In the Love of Nature*, and Steve Angell's Walton Lecture, *The Foundations of Liberal Quakerism*, have both gone to press. The summer newsletter went to press, was bulk mailed, and has arrived in your mail boxes. FIBM-DIA materials have been compiled into a 10-page document emailed directly to EC; Meeting Clerks, Representatives, and Treasurers; Organization Representatives; Committee Clerks; Trustees; Youth Workers. The assumption is that Meeting and Committee Clerks forward important mailings to their members.

Financial/Bookkeeping:

Thanks to Neil's and Caroline's careful notes and discernments, the books have now nearly been reconciled—an intensive, time consuming labor! Only five minor changes need to be made regarding attribution of funds from one fiscal year to a former or to a next. How best to post them awaits direction since in a double-entry system, there are numerous ramifications for decisions made. The discrepancy of the \$1875 (in our favor) was shown to have been correctly posted in a previous QBP accounting in archived records and had been deleted in last summer's upgrade-patch. This was dually discovered and confirmed by Neil and Caroline.

I want to emphasize that from my point of view it is imperative to have, at a minimum, two support people regularly providing oversight and decision-making. This is especially important since using QPB software, SEYM no longer pays an accountant \$3000 annually to do this task (a savings of over \$15,000 in the past five years). While one would think that bookkeeping should not be such a huge boondoggle, I want to remind Friends that while the printouts look simple and are certainly complete, SEYM's QBP bookkeeping functions as a singular corporation over multiple financially independent departments. Operational funds for these quasi-independent entities are commingled and/or separated as approved in business meeting minutes. These decisions may require multiple steps per entry.

Publications (Print and Electronic):

Publications, as always during the summer, are a major focus, but this year publishing waited in queue behind the bookkeeping reconciliation. Discerning selections from submissions to provide readers with a congruent mix of letters, articles, reports, ponderings and poetry, art and images is an interweaving—laced at times with joy or angst, but always with appreciation for your contributions. In today's world of instant messaging, the need for it to be a 'news'letter is misleading. Epistles sent to the office electronically are immediately forwarded to our body of Friends. National Quaker news reaches our desks nearly daily when Friends subscribe to the various Friends' news organizations. Our mailboxes are filled with media from Friends

organizations. So the task of the publications secretary is to create a tri-annual journal that reminds us who we are (or were)—in our tender and thoughtful moments. Its task is to raise questions, encourage thought, and to cheer us. To accomplish this, your secretary sees our newsletter as being our personal journal—an art form.

Creating the pamphlet/booklets requires different skill-sets. This requires communicating with the speaker-authors to decide what best visually represents them. Few seemingly know that the subtleties of font selection affect readers (and the authors). Covers matter. Our printer searched high and wide for a particular cover stock I wanted for Steve Smith's booklet: 100% recycled green. My choice of '*hats thrown askew on a table*' for the cover of Steve Angell's booklet at first perplexed him, but I think it is fair to say, that he liked its quiet message. Foundations in faith are reflected throughout all our actions—and short of putting another Quaker tree on his cover, I was flummoxed as to what to create. So these are some of the ponderings in the office that many of you have no clue of! Vital? Perhaps not. Curious? Perhaps—only noteworthy because it reflects **who you are to you, and who we are to the wider world of Friends.**

Then this particular FIBM-DIA followed suit: Nancy's selection *Yes, Of Course It Hurts* by Swedish poet Karin Boye for her Clerk's Welcome speaks to many of us.

Website:

Please use the SEYM website <www.seym.org> as your access to SEYM files! It is kept current with organizational details. The Peace and Social Concerns web pages are updated at least monthly by Michael Shell who continues to do an outstanding job.

New Concerns:

- No new concerns.

Other related (or unrelated) information:

This summer the office/house was apparently inundated with noseems when Tropical Storm Fay dumped tons of water in Brevard County. Apparently these critters blew in from the beach and of course penetrated screens. Needless to say, there was an element of stress that every time I sat down at my computer desk where my ankles became fair game for nibbling. In an ordinary office, the place could have been fumigated, but alas, we have me in this office, and after the natural remedies failed, an exterminator was hired to kill all biting insects. Now no open windows—ever; no doors open to let in the cool morning breezes. Such is life during the summers in FL.

Respectfully submitted by Lyn Cope