

# Secretary's Report

## to EC 01/13/2012 to be held at Sarasota Meeting House

**This report** describes activities since EC Meeting 09/30/2011.

### An overview:

**If the Secretary's report was a tweet**—I would say that I just recorded two meeting donations (Palm Beach & Space Coast) to the General Fund.

**If the Secretary's report was Facebook page**, I would speak of the glories of hosting Cece Yocum, Tom Maciocha, & Ozzie dog for Space Coast Meeting and the Unitarian Universalist's "sermon" and workshop on Friends' Peace Teams and how successful the weekend was.

**If this were the 90s**, the secretary's report would reference its receipt of communication from committee clerks, cutting, pasting, fast copying, and bulk mailing the DIA and receiving camera-ready YBM & HYM registrations, Michener brochure, and lecture booklets. There would be no mention of finances or website or layout and design or offset printing.

**If this was the first decade in the 21st century**, the report would be much as this one with a full scope of the office work required to keep a contemporary yearly meeting office running: email & phone communication, bookkeeping for the Trustees and General Fund and all its subsidiary committees with budgets: Gathering Committee, HYM committee, and Publications to name a few of the nine 'accounts' under the one umbrella banking account that are kept separate to enable reporting but create a complex system that requires General Journal entries to swap monies betwixt and between.

**Fast forward to this present moment**, I work furiously this morning needing to be ready to welcome one of the former translators for Friends Peace Teams who is 'stopping by' for lunch and perhaps an overnight... This is the office: hopefully welcoming and seemingly always busy. Personal off-time blurs with today's rapid texting communications, phone calls in 'off hours' because all of you are also busy with your lives during regular office hours...

### General office activities Fall of 2011:

I mastered the required software for the *Online Newsletter*. I am mastering the new software for the new *The SEYM Journal* but have already fallen short in not getting it to the printer.

Bookkeeping is, as always, a seemingly solo event. It is immeasurably helpful when the Treasurer and the IT person look it over to double check entries and provide direction on double entry issues that crop up—unfortunately with their busy lives this has not happened and when I reconciled bank statements, some issues of old popped up that will require much more time to correct as the months go by than if they had been corrected prior to statement reconciliation. So it is.

Highlights include anticipation that the Gathering Committee will provide nearly camera-ready program materials—at least carefully edited—and with the daily spreadsheet schedule ready to import without corrections required!

Our printer continues to do a fabulous job with fast copy and offset printing, often with me emailing or uploading the film that Derrick prints and then delivers the 35 miles, bringing the boxes into the office thereby saving me heavy lifting and gasoline!

All this said, it is time to evaluate the process whereby we print publications. Friends may download and print

documents posted on the website. Quaker bookstores and Friends purchase hard-copy booklets and t-shirts. I would like to make our booklets available online for e-books, but, alas, it seems that this will infringe on the much needed income for our Quaker Bookstores as Friends would purchase directly from Amazon or Barnes and Noble rather than from them—not good. One idea is to put the out-of-print booklets online.

**We Quaker organizations are in these difficult financial times together.** Which leads me to my personal concern in reducing donations to Quaker organizations by 21%. For one thing, the donation to Quakers Uniting in Publications is actually a membership fee treated as a donation which means that if I choose to be involved, I will be required to pay the difference. With the exception of FWCC, FGC, and formerly FUM, SEYM had not increased donations to Quaker organizations in over 10 years.

Unfortunately, many of us understand all too well the impact of being unemployed has on our meetings and on our members and attenders and how that translates to apportionment donations. The elephant in the room, of course, is the huge heading called “administrative” that includes budget line items for all administrative functions. Friends could be reminded that yearly meetings of old had stronger personal ties, often 1-earner families leaving volunteer time for one partner or the other, and that in the days of radio and no television that the meetings, from my experience, provided the social center for any given community. We were connected because we saw one another and regularly traveled miles to attend Meeting for Worship, to Quarterly Meetings, and Yearly Meeting—freely giving of our time. By necessity, yearly meetings around the world now hire staff to do the work volunteers at one time did—the required skill sets include more than just pen and ink and stamps.

## **Financial:**

Donations envelopes as requested at summer EC cost \$310.92 for two issues and resulted in only one return: an apportionment payment from one Worship Group attender!—not cost effective. Will someone step forward to cover this failed experiment? And why did it fail? Who is going to ask for this donation?

## **Website:**

Nearly up to date, but not redesigned.

## **Publications:**

**Deadline** next week for *Directory 2012-2013*. Please send corrections including all new info on meeting officers. The new *OnLine Newsletter* is a huge success. The office received accolades for the picture of Basil for Christmas card! Note that all members and attenders listed in the *Directory* receive *The SEYM Journal* (literary) and *OnLine newsletter* (informational with active links). PLEASE make sure that Chuck Deneen has your correct mailing address and the email address YOU wish to use for SEYM. Please encourage your meeting clerks and membership recorders to provide correct lists to: **Chuck Deneen <seymreg@gmail.com>**.

## **Future:**

Having been approached at FIBM and HYM and following Cece’s talk this weekend, I understand that meetings and individuals may be experiencing PTSD due to the present number of unemployed Friends and from the difficult events over the past five years. **Hoping for healing, our Gathering Committee has planned a fabulous healing yearly meeting filled with music and workshops.**

Thanks to you each.

Respectfully submitted by Lyn Cope