

# Documents in Advance (DIA)

Fall Executive Committee Meeting, October 6, 2006

Fall Interim Business Meeting (FIBM), Saturday, October 6-7, 2006

to be held at the St. Petersburg Meetinghouse  
130 19th Avenue SE, St. Petersburg, FL 33705; 727.896.0310

## Clerk's Welcome

Dear SEYM Friends,

Recently I noticed how often I read or hear comments about how much work Friends do in the world, given our small numbers. Quakers and non-Quakers alike make such statements. And, the comments are true. However, Friends, that "so much is done by so few" is an observation—not a recommendation!

In *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers* of 1927, Rufus Jones wrote about the work of some "public" Friends. Then he followed with:

*But even more impressive is the large array of ordinary, unnamed Friends who had no fame and no publicity, but who were saints in the farm-house and leaders of light and truth in their communities, by the sheer strength of their inward life and by the simplicity and spaciousness of their souls."*

On behalf of our yearly meeting, I invite and encourage all our saints, would-be saints, and say-it-ain't-so saints to gather at St. Petersburg meetinghouse on Saturday, October 7, for worship, fellowship, and the Fall Interim Business Meeting. Yearly Meeting needs your light and truth, the sheer strength of your inward life, most of all, the simplicity and spaciousness of your soul. I look forward to greeting you.

Travel in peace and safety,  
Nancy Fennell, Clerk of Interim Business Meeting

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### Directions to Meetinghouse:

In St. Petersburg, from Interstate-275 SOUTH  
Take exit #22 onto I-175 EAST toward TROPICANA FIELD - go 1.1 mi  
Take ramp onto 5TH AVE S - go 0.3 mi  
Turn RIGHT on 3RD ST S - go 1.0 mi  
Turn LEFT on 19TH AVE - go 0.2 mi  
Arrive at 130 19TH AVE SE, ST PETERSBURG, on the RIGHT

**Child care** may be coordinated by parents/caretakers as need arises.

### Accommodations/hospitality:

- 1) **Hampton Inn**, 1200 34th St North, North Saint Petersburg, Florida, United States, 33713, 1-727-322-0770, 5.6 miles from meetinghouse. (Normal rate is 89.00; you may do better with AAA, or other clubs.)
- 2) **Dolphin Beach Resort**, 4900 Gulf Boulevard, St. Petersburg Beach, Florida 33706; 727-360-7011, 9.7 miles from meetinghouse. < <http://www.dolphinbeach.com/>>. They said that they have internet specials so check in advance. The resort is literally on the beach. Herb got us the rate of \$98.00.

**Lunch:** Pot luck provided by St. Petersburg Meeting members and attenders.

*Please, for those requiring vegan/special diets, please bring own.*

—Thanks

## FALL INTERIM BUSINESS MEETING SCHEDULE

October 6-7, 2006

FRIDAY, October 6, 2006, 7:00 PM Executive Committee Meeting, St. Petersburg Meetinghouse (All welcome.)

Opening Worship

1. Additions to agenda
2. Treasurer's/Finance Report
3. Secretary's report/concerns
4. Follow-up:
  - Reports of projects currently underway: handbook, inter-visitation proposal, representative travel guidelines, etc.
  - Funds needing attention: New recommendations needed regarding Gathering Youth and Michener Funds.
- 5) New Business
6. Other
7. Review of minutes.

Closing worship.

SATURDAY, October 7, 2006

8:15 AM Fellowship Coffee, Meetinghouse

9:00 AM Worship

9:30 AM Committee Meetings

12:00 PM Lunch

1:00 PM Meeting for Worship for Business

FIBM Proposed Agenda

1. Roll Call of Meetings and Worship Groups
2. Visitors
3. Announcements
4. Changes to agenda
5. Executive Committee Report
6. Worship and Ministry Report
7. Faith and Practice Report
8. Gathering Committee Report
9. Youth Committee Report
10. Peace and Social Concerns Report
11. Archives Report
12. ProNica Committee Report
13. Handbook Ad Hoc Committee Report
14. Half Yearly Meeting Committee Report
15. Reports to Representatives to Organizations
16. Treasurer's Report
17. Finance Committee Report
18. Trustees Report
19. Nominating Committee Report

## FROM THE RECORDING CLERK ED LESNICK:

My effort is to insure the records of our Yearly Meeting business sessions are accurate. Minutes will consist of what Friends approve with a brief explanation (numbered minutes), written or electronic committee and representative reports, milestones, and other items directed by the clerk or Friends in attendance.

Friends who propose formal minutes should present such before the meeting or placement on the agenda. Committee clerks, representatives, and those who report on MM activities have regularly provided written or electronic versions of their reports. To them I am most grateful.

If Friends have an extended minute of concern that will be presented for consideration, please e-mail me prior to the IBM or before your time on the agenda. This would be of great help.

From William Watson's *Before Business Begins*:  
*... an elderly Friend same up and said, "Its such a pleasure to have you read those minutes, now I can hear everything that goes on."*

Do enjoy the peace and fellowship, Thank you for your cooperation,

—ed Lesnick, SEYM Recording Clerk  
 edlesnick@earthlink.net

## INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDAS

**Please presume that if you are on a SEYM Committee that your committee will be meeting Saturday morning 9:30 to lunch.**

**If you are a first time attender at FIBM, please know that your presence at any committee meeting is welcomed.**

**If you are exploring what committee might light your fire, please feel free to pop in and out, and to chat with a Nominating Committee member at an appropriate time.**

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Archives Committee Report** (no report provided)

**Faith and Practice Committee Report** (no report provided)

**Finance Committee Report:**

This is the first finance committee report of Fiscal Year 2006-07 (June 1 through May 31) - prepared 8/15/06.

We are pleased to report that the SEYM operational funds are in good shape at the current time. Thanks to the commitment shown by the monthly meetings and a number of individuals in supporting the yearly meeting and to the careful use of the YM funds by the secretary, clerks and committees, the General Fund enjoyed a net income of \$4071 for fiscal year 2005-06 (ending May 31, 2006). Unfortunately, this net surplus was partly due to the fact that we were unable to spend the \$2000 budgeted by the yearly meeting for the Cuba YM Havana Peace coordinator. We are no longer able to take money into Cuba. Please hold Friends in Cuba YM in the Light as they continue to spread the Light in their isolated situation.

Some facts and figures for the General Fund FY 2005-06 include the following:

- Meeting donations were 95.8% of budget
- Individual donations were 60.6% of budget

- Administrative expenses were 97.3% of budget
- Overall expenses were 90.3% of budget

The special operating funds—the YBM Gathering, Half Yearly Meeting, Michener Lecture, and publications – were all in the black. A surplus of \$1192 from the Gathering was transferred to the Trustees' Gathering Youth Endowment Fund, where it will benefit the youth at future SEYM gatherings. In the current fiscal year, which began June 1, we have a bigger challenge to meet our income budget. A significant increase in the budget in order to increase the secretary's hours to full time (40 hrs per week) was approved at the 2006 SEYM Gathering. A full explanation of the budget was provided in the DIA for the Gathering, which is available on the SEYM web site, [www.seym.org](http://www.seym.org).

Although the fiscal year is still young, the meeting contributions are about on target, with 6 meetings having contributed over \$12,500 so far. However, individual donations total only \$165 from 3 families. We started the year with \$21,717 in General Fund reserves, which represents a little less than 1/3 of our 2006-07 budget of \$68,697. These reserves provide a good buffer to make up for any vagaries in the flow of contributions during the year. So, all in all, our outlook is positive for the continuing financial health of SEYM in the coming year.

—Caroline Lanker, Clerk

**Gathering Committee Report** (no report provided)

**Half Yearly Meeting Committee Report** (no report provided)

**Nominating Committee Report** (no report provided)

**Peace and Social Concerns Committee Report:**

Hello Friends,

We are starting to get ready for Fall IBM in St. Pete the first weekend in October.

I have some questions and requests:

- ▶ If you anything for the committee meeting agenda, I need that soon, no later than mid-September, especially if you have materials for other committee members to review.
- ▶ For those of you who are AVP facilitators, please note that the AVPUSA national conference will be in Florida this coming year. AVPTampaBay needs your help with organizing and helping with the conference.
- ▶ Tampa Meeting is interested in what other groups are doing about the Israeli- Lebanon war.
- ▶ Tampa Meeting would also like to know what materials other meetings may have in the way of anti military recruiting for libraries and schools.
- ▶ Friends Peace Teams is bringing someone from Burundi YM on a speaking tour in November and he will be in Florida for part of that time. If you would be interested in having him at your meeting, please let Cece know.
- ▶ MMs and WGs that are interested could also use help in greening and fair trade. This could be discussed at IBM as well.
- ▶ Pendle Hill has a weekend workshop 9/8/06 - 9/10/06 especially for clerks and members of Peace and Social Concerns committees. I hope some folks from our YM can go—2 from Tampa are going—if you go, we can discuss your reactions and what you can share at this at IBM.
- ▶ Please remember, if you are a Representative to a larger Quaker group, to send us a report and send one to the web page and/or newsletter.
- ▶ Our YM Recording Clerk has offered to meet with our committee to help us learn to craft minutes for YM consideration that are, how should we say it—shorter—more precise—etc. You get the idea, ☺)
- ▶ I hope we can continue to share ideas on organizing. FCNL has a tool box on their website [remember Mary Lord's Walton Lecture] and I just became aware of two non quaker but simpatico groups—greencorps.org and

wellstoneaction.org that have great tools. What are we using in our MMs and WGs for tools?

► Ok, I have a big, a big confession. Remember how I made a big “tadoo” how we now are keeping minutes at our committee meetings well AAACCKK I lost the last ones. Hopefully I will find them before October. Fortunately much of what we did made it into the YM minutes and pertinent parts are reported below.

► I hope we can have some updates on actions from last YM. I am including the actual YM minutes related to Peace and Social Concerns:

**06YM03** Given current restrictions on providing funds to help Cuba Yearly Meeting, SEYM approves the laying down of the Cuban Quaker Project. The Cuban Quaker Project has succeeded in facilitating church reconstruction and in building relationships among Friends. The seeds for the Havana Peace Mission have been planted and there is a viable Quaker presence there. This has been a Spirit led effort and individual monthly meetings and worship groups are encouraged to discern how the Spirit leads them to further visit Quakers in Cuba. SEYM thanks all who have been part of the Cuban Quaker Project committee and all those who have participated in these efforts.

**06YM06** Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) recognizes our 350 years Peace Testimony and conscientious objection to war. We agree with the Declaration by our religious society to English King Charles II “that the spirit of Christ, which leads us to all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons.” As such, we support the peaceful use of our tax dollars and oppose military spending. The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund currently HR 2631) would allow conscientious objectors, as defined by the Military Service Act, to register with the U.S. Treasury Department. Conscientious objectors could thereby pay all of their federal tax liability for nonmilitary spending. Congress would spend those monies on anything nonmilitary. We therefore urge our Congressional representatives to cosponsor HR 2631. We ask individuals, monthly meetings, the preparative meeting, and worship groups to consider how they can work for this long standing Quaker concern. Individuals are encouraged to broadly publish this minute.

**06YM07** Miami Friends Meeting is engaged with local workers in aid of their struggle for “Jobs With Justice.” This struggle is for Jobs that provide a living wage, true

health benefits, safe conditions of labor, the right to determine if they wish union representation and how they may express that preference. SEYM asks Friends to inform themselves and take action in concert with Miami Friends to enlarge community support of the workers, to make that support evident, and to hold all those involved in prayer.

**06YM12** Southeastern Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends recognizes the endorsement of the Friends Committee on National Legislation’s Sensible Transition to an Enduring Peace (STEP) is but one action SEYM Friends can take as we continue to carry our witness against the U.S. war in Iraq. We are in unity on calling for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. We encourage all SEYM Peace and Social Concerns committees to seek leadings and opportunities for carrying this testimony forward. **06YM13** In response to the recent occurrences of National Security Agency and Department of Defense spying on Quaker meetings, groups, and individuals, Southeastern Yearly Meeting urges all Friends to oppose this illegal government activity. Southeastern Yearly Meeting unites with Palm Beach Monthly Meeting in their concern:

That we are being spied upon because upon because our religious convictions include advocating nonviolent solutions to conflict. The Religious Society of Friends has believed in and practiced nonviolence since our beginnings in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Friends’ Peace Testimony is based upon the sacredness of each individual and the unity of all; there is that of God in all people. Our country’s strength is founded upon the right to freedom of speech, religion, and peaceable assembly. Government spying upon peace activists and invasion of a church are illegal, including during times of war. Friends participated in the founding of this nation. When we gather peacefully to act upon our beliefs according to our consciences, and in doing so disagree with our government’s actions, we are protected under the Constitution of the United States of America. Freedom of religion is the primary reason that Friends and other groups emigrated to this country. In this spirit, we cannot and will not in right conscience surrender our religious beliefs. Practicing nonviolence requires great courage as we continue to speak our truth. We hold our nation in the Light during these difficult times.

—Thanks, Cece

## Worship and Ministry Committee Report:

*Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.*

—Isaac Pennington, *Letters*, 1667

Friends are warmly invited to attend the Worship & Ministry Committee meeting on the morning of Fall Interim Business Meeting—especially, those Friends who clerk or are otherwise on such a committee—or interested in such work in one's own monthly meeting or worship group.

Worship & Ministry Committee holds Yearly Meeting business sessions and individuals and situations in Tenderness and Wholeness.

We are pleased to announce that Niyonu Spann, an African American Quaker woman who is Dean of Pendle Hill, will be speaking on racial healing for the 2007 Michener Lecture on January 14th in Orlando.

Ft. Lauderdale Meeting Friend Mary Jo Klingel will represent SEYM at the Friends General Conference Traveling Ministry Program's November Consultation in Pittsburgh, PA. SEYM is allowed a second representative to this Consultation, so, please, contact W&M Committee if interested in this ministry.

There is one annual scholarship available for an SEYM Friend to participate in a Pendle Hill program—a workshop or short course, preferably during the Fall, Winter or Spring terms. Friends applying for this scholarship need to submit to W&M Committee: a letter of recommendation from one's meeting clerk; a short essay describing one's spiritual journey; and, a statement as to how attending the Pendle Hill program will be helpful. The Friend accepting the scholarship is expected to report to the Yearly Meeting through, perhaps, an article in the Newsletter or facilitating a workshop at annual sessions.

Discussing the above will be on the agenda of the Worship & Ministry Committee. Also, on the agenda are sharing joys and concerns meetings have and planting seeds for 2007 SEYM annual gathering's workshops and for finding Bible/Quaker quotes and queries for worship sharing sessions at annual gathering.

Gentle blessings,  
Wendy Clarissa Geiger, Jacksonville MM, co-clerk,  
with Barb French, Ft. Myers MM)

## Youth Committee Report (no report provided)

## REPRESENTATIVES TO QUAKER/OTHER ORGANIZATIONS' REPORTS

SEYM Representatives to a Quaker Organizations: When you participate in a Friendly activity on behalf of SEYM or on behalf of your organization, you re requested to submit a Report for publication either in the newsletter or in a DIA (FIBM; WIBM; YBM) so that the wider community of Friends may learn of your activities on our behalf.

- ▶ Please plan to give a short report Saturday afternoon; remember to provide Recording Clerk Ed Lesnick with copy.

## AFSC/SERO Report:

AFSC SERO's current work:

- ❖ Continuing transitions and reorganization
- ❖ Hurricane Katrina Relief – program still developing, focusing on longer term recovery
- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> Newsletter
- ❖ Fundraising – possible Quaker market at office building, cards, Development Coordinator
- ❖ Third World Coalition – racism in AFSC
- ❖ Programs: See below. Additionally, working on evaluation of program outcomes, proposal and report writing, program committees
- ❖ Approved 2007 budget

- ❖ National budgeting concerns
- ❖ AFSC National Board working on: strategic planning, budget methodology, simplicity committee recommendations, racism and diversity

Programs – clustering based on National Focus areas

- MEPEP - Middle East Peace Education Program: conference, education, advocacy, newsletter. Based in Atlanta
- APEP – Africa Peace Education Program: debt cancellation, education, advocacy. Based in Atlanta.
- ORITA – Peace and Justice Program: “Crossroads” w/ Highpoint U. education, community capacity building, counter-recruitment, college age & migrant. NC
- AFIS – American Friends Immigration Services: legal & ed services. Miami.
- Project Voice – Immigration (Latino(a)) education & advocacy. Charlotte, NC.
- MAP – Material Assistance Program: Provide clothing, kits & physical needs. NC

**Mary Jo Klingel is on the MAP Program Committee**

**We need another SEYM Representative to SERO!!**

SERO covers 8 States:

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee

AFSC National Focus Areas:

Economic Justice  
 Migration and Mobility  
 Peacebuilding & Prevention of Conflict (Demilitarization)  
 A New Vision of Justice – Criminal Justice  
 Humanitarian Assistance and Education  
 Youth

—Submitted by Annie McPherson, SEYM Representative

**Friends United Meeting (FUM) General Board/Commissions:**

*“One of the things that distinguished early Quakers was the sense of truth as something which had to be discovered by each person for himself, by his own inward work. This is the essence of the doctrine of the light within. . . . The object of Quaker meditation is not so much to achieve union with the divine as to receive instruction from the divine, and very practical instruction at that. . . . The Good Shepherd gathers us all into one flock, and only as we are so gathered, without either pride or envy, can knowledge be made perfect in love.”* Taken from “Kenneth Boulding Speaks” 1975

COMMENTS ON FUM GENERAL BOARD MEETING ETC.

None of us has all the answers. It would be arrogant for me to assume one person’s measure of the Light is greater than another’s. I went into this with the intention of keeping an open mind and an open heart.

After my first FUM General Board Meeting, I have a few clear impressions and many questions. Some points are obvious and some need more time and in-depth investigation – on my part anyway. This paper is not presented in a typical report format, but is a laundry list of comments, any one of which might trigger discussion. I do not now have any recommendations for actions we might take. I think it best that we together discern our truth in corporate worship.

I see FUM as a large coalition of committed Quakers who are making serious contributions to the health and educational needs of persons in Third World countries – mostly Kenya but also Uganda, Palestine, Belize and Jamaica. I felt more in common with these Friends than I felt differences. They were kind and warmly receptive and seemed genuinely pleased that Phoebe and I were there.

Some YMs are exceptionally involved and committed. While we were meeting, it came to our attention that the Kaimosi hospital badly needs a new roof and, before we left Quaker Hill, enough money had been committed from some YMs to cover the entire expense. Actually, some Friends may even go early to Kenya next Feb to save money by

doing the labor ourselves.

FUM has four goals clearly spelled out in their mission statement:

1. Evangelism,
2. Leadership Training,
3. Communication (magazines, publications and bookstore) and
4. Global Partnerships.

When I asked, it appeared that the majority of those present agreed that the last three (Leadership Training, Communications and Global Partnerships) all exist simply as means toward achieving their primary objective, which is Evangelism, their first mission. The evangelism mission of FUM is to **“gather people in to fellowships where Jesus Christ is known, loved and obeyed as Teacher and Lord”**.

Is FUM actually committed to the principles of Quakerism? I did not notice much discussion or see many printed materials in FUM literature about what I think of as traditional Quaker values. The bookstore does carry many books written by weighty Quakers and several Pendle Hill pamphlets.

The Religious Society of Friends is not the only religious/spiritual organization on the verge of splitting over the issue of same sex relationships. This month Presbyterians, Anglicans and Baptists have all been in the news with a similar struggle. We are fortunate to have avoided similar publicity. I think most people assume Quakers are above all that because our history of having been in the forefront of civil rights is well known.

Many Abolitionists, Suffragettes, conscientious objectors and civil rights leaders in the 50s and 60s were Quakers. People are surprised to hear about the FUM personnel policy. I find it embarrassing to admit it exists.

The Yearly Meetings of Baltimore, New York and Canada are also not in unity with the FUM personnel policy.

Does the positive in the work FUM does outweigh the negative of the personnel policy?

I wonder if putting the personnel policy in place was a deliberate invitation to confrontation? What made it come up? I wonder what purpose it is supposed to serve? Could the policy not have been practiced without putting it in the documents? What outcome was expected when it was adopted? Was the unspoken hope that meetings comfortable with same sex relationships would disaffiliate and they are just too polite to say so? (I am aware that there is some history here that I am unfamiliar with.)

I ask because there are so many other actual and really distressing moral transgressions that could have been

addressed instead—like adultery, usury, dishonesty and violence—and these are not mentioned in the policy.

SEYM will never be comfortable with this current personnel policy and will never stop trying to affect some kind of change. Perhaps a compromise (win-win) will be reached one day.

Why are not we and other like-minded Quakers and gay and lesbian Quakers out there demonstrating and evangelizing our truth/? It wasn't so long ago that the women's movement galvanized women who successfully demonstrated all over the country demanding equal rights. What is different about this struggle? Why is it not happening now? Is it possible for us to bring about a revision of the FUM personnel policy? Is this our leading? Do we want to stand in silent protest at the Triennial?

The cost of sending one rep to FUM General Board Meetings at Quaker Hill, Richmond, Indiana is approximately \$700 per trip (air fare, lodging, transportation to and from airport) and we meet three times a year so that is \$2100 a year for one rep and \$4200 per year for two. This does not include the \$2200 cost of meeting in Africa every so often. I wonder if this is why SEYM has not been very proactive in FUM in recent years? Could our inability to participate fully be a practical reason to disaffiliate?

Is disaffiliating because we cannot reach unity a loving action? Is disagreement reason enough? And is it appropriate to the manner of Friends? Is this our leading?

Are SEYM and the other 3 Yearly Meetings (NY, Baltimore and Canada) standing “in the way” of FUM's success? If we actually are a distracting influence that is having a negative impact upon FUM and it's fund-raising abilities, might we choose to stand aside and disaffiliate out of a loving concern for the well being of FUM? Could this be our leading?

Does FUM “need” us – not our money, because it's not that much, but the presence of our spirit?

Perhaps we will know better what our relationship with FUM should be when we know what FUM decides what it its identity. Is FUM an Old Testament centered evangelical missionary organization or is FUM a coalition of Quaker groups focused on humanitarian efforts?

—Lisa Stewart, SEYM Representative to  
FUM General Board

*Please see SEYM newsletter, summer/fall issue for Phoebe's Report and excerpts from FUM survey regarding FUM's objectives and mission statement.*

*It is also highly recommended that SEYMers read the Richmond Declaration available from <[www.quakerinfo.com/rdf.shtml](http://www.quakerinfo.com/rdf.shtml)>.*