

Southeastern Yearly Meeting Minutes of the Winter Interim Business Meeting 1/19/08

The Winter Interim Business Meeting of the Southeastern Yearly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, was held in the Orlando Meetinghouse, Orlando FL. Committee meetings were held in the morning. These minutes record the Interim Business Meeting in the afternoon. The numbered minutes are included here and as Attachment 1: Numbered Minutes – WIBM 2008.

The meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business began with silent worship. IBM clerk, Nancy Fennell, had welcoming words for Friends. The roll call of the meetings and worship groups followed. [Attachment 2: Attendees]

Among the milestones reported:

Clearwater goes forth in a new place of worship in Dunedin.

Gainesville MM noted the passing of Louise Stone, who was a member of the Gainesville Meeting during the 60's and 70's. She was instrumental in establishing representative (now, interim) meetings to better consider business between the annual meetings. She served on Ministry and Oversight, House Committee, First Day School, and several Wedding Committees during her membership at Gainesville. She was clerk of the House Committee for a term and First Day School for several years.

Jacksonville MM brought greetings from Noel and Daisy Palmer, and they rejoice in the birth of baby Wright Geiger, born in Seattle WA to JMM member Danny Wright Geiger and his wife.

St. Petersburg MM noted the transformation as it membership changes through relocations and deaths.

Tampa MM announced the recording of two new members.

Following general announcements, the Agenda was approved as amended.

Sybil Ann Brennan, Assistant YM and IBM clerk, informed Friends of a fundraising project for Quaker organizations. There is a market for used stamps. Stamps are sorted and then sold to dealers or collectors.

A Quaker project has undertaken this activity to raise funds for Quaker organizations. The Quaker stamp project has been an activity of Gainesville MM for four years.

Barbara Letch, convener of the Earthcare Working Group, requested attendees to complete a survey regarding the environmental cost or "carbon footprint" of travel to the WIBM. A carbon footprint is a "measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of green house gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide."

Tom Fennell, assistant to the committee's co-clerks, gave the **Worship and Ministry** report. The committee met Saturday morning. Four members and four guests were present. A minute of appreciation thanking the host meetings was approved.

The committee discussed Outreach. It was also noted that the Pendle Hill scholarship for sojourners is at risk due to financial constraints.

Friends General Conference (FGC) will be holding a weekend ministry and nurture consultation, April 21-23, at Powell House, Chatham, New York.

08IBM01 WIBM selects Nancy Triscritti and Joan Carney as SEYM representatives to the FGC consultation on spiritual nurturing, April, 2008.

Herb Haigh, clerk of the **Trustees**, reported the matching funds challenge was successful. In summary, FY to date show Trustees' Funds have a net income of \$5,896.30. Of \$17,789.89 total income, \$1,893 was transferred to SEYM.

There are opportunities we might consider. There is a continual need to give more support to representative travel and our SEYM involvement with the greater Friends community. But, we need Friends to undertake the time and travel involved in this service. We may consider subsidizing older Friends so they may attend the Gathering.

Nancy Fennell, presented the **Executive Committee** report. The clerk reminded Friends of the early date for Yearly Meeting Gathering this year. Friends need to make their reservations as soon as possible. Nancy requested volunteers come forth prior to the Gathering to write the annual epistle.

EC considered the selection of the SEYM Naming Committee pursuant to 07YBM12, which states: "YM adopts the practice of appointing a Naming Committee to nominate members of the Nominating Committee. Members of this ad hoc committee shall be appointed annually by the Executive committee clerk and approved by E.C. Names of members of the Naming Committee shall be brought before the Yearly Meeting at Winter IBM. Any nominations arising from the floor at WIBM shall be taken under consideration."

08IBM02 WIBM approves the appointment of Ed Lesnick, Susan Taylor, and Herb Haigh as members of the Naming committee for 2008.

The **Faith & Practice Report** was given by Phoebe Andersen, clerk. The committee has worked on the last section to be done by the Committee for the Faith and Practice revision. The sections of the Faith and Practice under review are on the SEYM website. Because of her absence, there was no threshing session for Faith and Practice at the 2007 Gathering.

The committee will include the history of the beginnings of the YM, up to 1963, in the Faith and Practice. Later, they plan to publish a full history of SEYM. They are looking for information on when meetings were established, the names of founding members, and other information. The committee also will prepare a glossary, bibliography and index for the Faith and Practice. The committee is accepting favorite quotes reflecting Friends' personal faiths. Connie Ray suggested the inclusion of memorable messages at meeting for worship.

As **Membership Recorder**, Phoebe requested monthly meetings forward changes to the directory as requested.

Treasurer Neil Andersen stated the budget to date is not completed. This is due to monthly meeting apportionment submissions, differences in the calendar and fiscal years, and the donations category.

The budget will be updated for the *DIA* and YBM. The FY 2007-2008 final budget appears on the SEYM website.

Finance Committee clerk, Caroline Lanker, explained the proposed budget to be adopted at YBM in March. There were a few changes to the version printed for WIBM.

For the first time in several years, the Finance Committee is not expecting a large budget change from the previous year. Based on this projection, meeting apportionments would change, on average, by only about 1 to 2%. The following budget changes are being considered by the Finance Committee.

1. Increase in the representative travel budgets. This is in response to the YM minute which approved the intention to fully fund travel for all YM representatives who request such funding. The same minute directed the Finance Committee to develop a proposal for funding travel. Such a proposal has not yet been prepared; however, increasing funding in the budget is expected to be part of the plan.
2. Increases in some administrative expenses due to inflation and experience

3. A more realistic figure for the secretary's health insurance (less than the current \$5000 budget)

In addition to these items, the Finance Committee needs guidance from the Yearly Meeting regarding whether and how much to budget for FUM and/or FUM-related activities. [Also see *DIA*, pages 5-8]

Additional budget requests should be directed to the Finance committee clerk.

In recent times, the same monthly meetings have been hosting the interim business meetings. Traditionally, Orlando and Winter Park hosts the winter meeting and the Michener Lecture. Recently, St. Petersburg and Palm Beach have alternated as FIBM hosts. The question arose; should the YM assume the out of pocket costs to these meetings?

Friends shared their views. No action was taken.

Steve Kinney, clerk, gave the **Gathering Committee** report. Planning for the Gathering is going well. The registration process has been streamlined.

As of this date, estimated charges by the United Methodist Life Enrichment Center (LEC) are expected to be \$45,350.75. Income is currently expected to be \$43,157.00, the difference being \$2,193.75. These figures include SEYM supported scholarships to the Gathering.

Friends were reminded that because of an early Easter, the Gathering will be held March 19 – 23 this year. Also, the LEC is requiring prior payments. There will be no onsite registration for accommodations.

Committee clerk Becky Steele offered the **Peace and Social Concerns** report. Members of the committee shared peace and community concerns facing our various monthly meetings. They also shared great information about the work that the various monthly meetings are doing.

1. Among these were:

- ❖ Homelessness. This problem affects communities all around the state. Some monthly meetings (St. Pete, Orlando) are involved in hands-on assistance to the homeless. Others are working in coalition with other groups. The committee discussed some of the factors underlying the problem, including unmet needs of the mentally ill and the toll that military service has taken on many veterans.

- ❖ Workers' Rights, including especially farm workers
 - ❖ AVP, including work in prisons
 - ❖ Peace Concerns – holding signs at street corners, demonstrating with other peace organizations, and “Peace Week” program at the University of South Florida (brought in a national speaker; worked with Muslim groups).
 - ❖ Politics – Jack Bradin reported on FCNL, committee discussed possibility of setting up a Florida “FCSL” to have a lobbying presence in Tallahassee. Also discussed is the need to give attention to upcoming issues in January election, including property tax amendment. Suggested that monthly meetings host forums before every election to educate Friends and supporters about the issues at stake.
 - ❖ Police practices – police shootings, need for civilian review boards.
 - ❖ Various great outreach programs, including “What I Heard About Iraq” play performed by Tampa meeting; “Peace and Popcorn” 6-part film series (Tampa also). ACLU “Freedom Files” TV series (50-minute episodes) available – can order DVDs for free at ACLU website (aclu.org).
 - ❖ LGBT issues – marching in Gay Pride parades, concern re upcoming marriage amendment on ballot in Nov. 08.
2. The committee discussed ways to help strengthen the work of SEYM and the monthly meetings in addressing and educating people about peace and social concerns. Among those were how to use the website better, getting the word out about what we're all doing, and setting up a speakers' bureau.
 3. Next, we discussed plans for yearly meeting. We'd like to host an interest group to talk about public outreach, including sharing info on programs, press, and other public education work. Jack Bradin also volunteered to set up his laptop in the lobby, where there's Internet access, to demonstrate how easy it is to send letters to Congress via the FCNL website. Becky Steele will also bring information about how to do in-district lobbying with Congressional or state representatives. The Committee will seek to draft a minute on the issue of homelessness, also reporting more fully on what's going on with the various monthly meetings in this area. [Also, see Jack Bradin's FCNL report in the *DIA*, page 11.]

4. The committee would like to recommend a minute for regarding a peace letter from New York Yearly Meeting. (see below)
5. Cecilia Yocum reported on the work of the Friends Peace Team. She is available to give a presentation, "Burundi to Bogota" talking about the Friends Peace Teams work in trauma healing in Rwanda and Burundi and plans for trauma healing in Columbia with displaced people, as well as the connection between trauma healing, reconciliation and peace. She is raising funds for this effort. Cecilia also discussed an amazingly direct, united, and courageous letter from Friends Church in Kenya calling for transparency in elections, for the president to step down, and for leaders to act to address various inequities. The committee will send copies of the letter to monthly meetings, put it in the DIA, and ask SEYM's approval of a letter of support to the Friends Church in Kenya for its efforts to secure reconciliation and justice.
6. Contributions to other community organizations. The Committee decided to support the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center for its work on human trafficking, if any funds are available after meeting the committee's expenses. The Committee also agreed to seek approval for a fund through which SEYM could support other community organizations working on issues of common concern.

P&SC requested a budget item for donations to organizations which were not in the list of organizations to which the Yearly Meeting usually contributes. Peace and Social Concerns Committee would select or recommend organizations working in Florida for causes that are of interest to SEYM but which the YM does not have the resources to actively work on. They might be non-Quaker organizations.

A number of concerns about this proposal were raised, including the view that any donation from the YM to an organization should be approved by the entire YM, and the problems choosing recipients.

The committee was asked to bring a proposed minute on this request to the YBM for further consideration.

Peace and Social Concerns recommended SEYM support a recent peace letter written by New York Yearly Meeting.

08IBM03 SEYM affirms the following minute proposed by New York Yearly Meeting:

We call on friends within New York Yearly Meeting for the Religious Society of Friends and everywhere – whoever is able – to designate times for worship with an urgent concern to act for peace. In an environment of increasing threats against Iran and the possibility of national emergency being declared over perceived or contrived international crises, we call on Friends to speak out now. We will not be silenced as we work for peace. May we seek divine guidance that leads toward action, working whenever possible with other communities of faith? Let us endeavor to foster relationships with the people of all nations, including those opposed by our own governments. May we rise above our doubts and fears through God’s love and care.

Caroline Lanker noted YM’s support of Cecelia Yocum’s involvement with Friends’ Peace Teams, which involved travel to Africa and Colombia.

The **Archives** committee has been quite active since last yearly business meeting necessitating a request to increase their budget. SEYM archival material housed locally in Orlando has been organized and prepared for archival storage in several boxes of documents. The SEYM archives are located at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

For the **ProNica** update, Doug McCown, St. Petersburg MM, gave Davida John’s report, which appears as Attachment 3: SEYM - WIBM January 2008 report.

On behalf of **Quaker Earthcare Witness**, Barbara Letsch reported. Jack Bradin, Mary Jo Klingel, and Barbara Letsch will attend the QEW Steering Committee meeting in April in Chicago.

The Earthcare working group, a precursor for establishing a permanent SEYM committee on earthcare has met. Monthly meeting clerks have been contacted to enlist the support and involvement of their meetings.

Proposal of tree plantings and carbon “footprint” awareness are being discussed. The committee plans to work with the youth groups at Gathering.

Andrea Walsh summarized the community activities and finances of the **Half Yearly Meeting** held at Wekiva State Park on Thanksgiving weekend. See *DIA*, page 9.

The committee considering SEYM's new **relationship with FUM** has met twice. A third meeting was scheduled for March 1 in Tampa. Participants shared a spiritually enriching experience and some healing. For the committee to be successful, it is important that individual Friends, monthly meetings, and worship groups also share in the process.

Cecelia Yocum reported on **Friends Peace Teams**. The unsettled conditions in Kenya were reviewed. Peace Teams' tasks include the Indonesia initiative and trauma healing in Colombia and Latin America. Rwandans, who come with experience, will assist in the Latin American process.

FPT is supporting peace building in Colombia. The peace building in Colombia Initiative of Friends Peace Teams has sent a number of exploratory delegations to Colombia and is working to establish an ongoing Peace Team presence there. In Indonesia, friends and partners in Aceh, North Sumatra, West Java and Central Java, promote early childhood development, human rights defenders, and nonviolence workshops.

Cece thanked SEYM for its support.

Ellie Caldwell gave a **FWCC** report, The Americas Section, Southeast Region, recently gathered in Jamaica. Jamaican and American Friends shared worship and learning. They explored the contribution of Quakers to the history of Jamaica and participated in Alternatives to Violence training. They saw first-hand the damage to crops and meetinghouses caused by recent hurricanes. Ellie also observed the disrepair of meeting houses and was informed that the oldest living Quaker on the island is aged 92.

Dan Vaughn, committee clerk, gave the **Nominations** committee report.

Theologian Frederick Buechner said, "The Calling of God is where your deepest joy, and the World's greatest need, meet." Please look within yourself for the source of your deepest joy, and discern whether your deepest joy might be found in some service for, or on behalf of, SEYM.

A review of the current SEYM directory will reveal the vacancies occurring in officer, committee and representative appointments this year. Those persons listed with "2008" after their names are those whose terms will end after YM 2008. ("2007" should read "2010")

In addition to the opportunities for service listed in the directory, there is a Bookstore Committee, co-clerked by Martha Morris and Carol Bechtel, and three prospective new standing committees: The Committee for Ministry on Racism, convened by Ellie Caldwell; The Earthcare Working Group, convened by Barbara Letch; and the FUM Discernment Committee, convened by Lisa Stewart. More information on those committees can be obtained from their conveners. Whether to make those committees

permanent standing committees will be considered at YM.

If your term as an officer, member of a YM committee, or an SEYM representative, is expiring this year, please let a member of the nominating committee know whether you intend to seek reappointment for an additional three year term, or to look for some different opportunity to serve.

If there is a vacancy in which you are interested, please let a member of the nominating committee know of your interest in, and qualifications for, that vacancy. Also, please let the nominating committee know of the interest, gifts, and qualifications for specific vacancies of other people in your Meeting.

All officers, committee members and representatives, and prospective officers, committee members and representatives should become familiar with the SEYM Operational Handbook, at least insofar as it addresses the duties and responsibilities of SEYM officers, committee members and representatives to organizations. That Handbook is on the SEYM website. I am also happy to forward a copy of its pertinent provisions either by email or by regular mail to anyone upon request.

Our most urgent officer needs are for an Assistant Yearly Meeting Clerk, a Clerk of Executive Committee and Interim Business Meetings, and a Co-Clerk of Worship and Ministry. All committees would welcome new members.

AFSC SERO: See Andrew Jason's report in the *DIA*, page 10.

Friends warmly approved the following **minute of appreciation**:

Once again, as it has been for so many years, Orlando and Winter Park Friends have warmly welcomed SEYM's EC and WIBM. And, again, the hospitality is gracious, the meals wholesome and delicious, the atmosphere friendly and inviting. Yet we do not want Orlando and Winter Park Friends to think that the YM takes their gentle offerings for granted. We are deeply grateful for all the loving care and effort that goes into hosting us and for all the work and love that will be shared with us tomorrow when we meet for worship and the Michener Lecture. We are blessed by being here.

Following a review and approval of the minutes, the meeting ended with silent worship.

Attachment 1: Numbered Minutes – WIBM 2008

08IBM01 WIBM selects Nancy Triscritti and Joan Carney as SEYM representatives to the FGC consultation on spiritual nurturing, April 2008.

08IBM02 WIBM approves the appointment of Ed Lesnick, Susan Taylor, and Herb Haigh as members of the Naming committee for 2008.

08IBM03 SEYM affirms the following minute proposed by New York Yearly Meeting:

We call on friends within New York Yearly Meeting for the Religious Society of Friends and everywhere – whoever is able – to designate times for worship with an urgent concern to act for peace. In an environment of increasing threats against Iran and the possibility of national emergency being declared over perceived or contrived international crises, we call on Friends to speak out now. We will not be silenced as we work for peace. May we seek divine guidance that leads toward action, working whenever possible with other communities of faith. Let us endeavor to foster relationships with the people of all nations, including those opposed by our own governments. May we rise above our doubts and fears through God's love and care.

Attachment 2 – Attendees

Clearwater	Day Zingaro	Peter Eileen
DeLand	Gaskill Vaughen	Cathy Dan
Ft Lauderdale	Klingel	Mary Jo
Ft. Myers	Fennell Fennell Webber Webber	Nancy Tom Al Marilyn
Gainesville	Arthur Brennan Ray	Gary Sybil Connie
Jacksonville	Geiger Geiger	Al Wendy
Lake Wales	Lanker Rapp	Caroline Bill
Miami	Diaz	Eduardo
Orlando	Carlie Carlie Knudsen Lesnick Lesnick Schmalstig Schmalstig	Bill Vicki Gary Ed Kay Alan Judy
Palm Beach	Bradin Caldwell	Jack Ellie
Space Coast	Cope	Lyn
St Petersburg	Haigh Haigh Hotchkiss	Herb Pat Connie

Hotchkiss Ed
Grantham Mark
McCown Doug

Tallahassee Andersen Neil
Andersen Phoebe
Bejnar Thor
Taylor Susan

Tampa Kinney Steve
Yokum Cece
Walsh Andrea
Wolf Barbara

Treasure Coast Cook Joseph

Winter Park Morris Martha

Attachment 3: SEYM - WIBM January 2008 report

Nine ProNica Project Partners were granted a total of \$21,500 for 2008. Two libraries will purchase text books, an urban school will increase security against theft, four clinics will provide medical procedures and education outreach, another class of 25 women will learn hair cutting skills, and an international music festival will encourage Nicaraguan folkloric cultural traditions.

Art therapy for Los Quinchos former street children surviving glue addiction will be provided by the Mason Hirst Foundation. Classes will help children deal with psychological issues. Because of problems with reporting, an agreement form specifying the use of funds and report deadlines was implemented, such as we do for project grants.

Co-clerk Pam Haigh and Stateside Coordinator Davida Johns spent five and ten days respectively between 26 November and 6 December 2007 in Nicaragua. It was a very productive visit from stateside staff. They attended the Acahualinca Beauty School graduation for twenty-four women, visited La Chureca feeding program, added Davida as an authorized signature on ProNica bank accounts, and met with Los Quinchos staff concerning incomplete accounting for the La Chureca (Managua municipal dump) feeding program.

We spruced up Quaker House for a reception for all ProNica friends (advisory committee, former caretakers, project partners, attorneys) thirty-five in all. That Sunday before the reception, fourteen attended Meeting for Worship. Some came out of curiosity about Quakers. Managua Coordinator Lillian Hall explained Quaker practice; Worship messages were heartfelt and sincere. Discussion afterward compared our various faith practices.

Quaker House has a new fire exit from the back of the house onto the patio, rewiring, fresh paint in front rooms. El Centro office leak was repaired and painted. El Centro residence and office and Quaker House guest house are still lacking the official title from the government even though CEPAD has turned them over to ProNica. Final legal paperwork might take eight more months.

As emergency relief donations for Hurricane Felix trickle in, they are sent to Accion Medica Cristiana, which operates clinics in the affected region.

Ken Kinzel cremains were repatriated. The trial is complete and his murderer will be incarcerated in the women's prison for six years. Struggle for his property continues.



Volunteers: There are two potential volunteers for Nicaragua in process: application, reference letters, selecting assignments.
Stateside volunteers held two events at Eckerd College selling crafts and passing out brochures and newsletters.

Delegations2008: Eckerd College is currently in Nicaragua. Read their blog at <http://eckerd.edu/wt08/nicaragua>

In May through August, University of Florida, Washburn University and Haverford will send delegations of up to sixteen participants. Haverford students will then volunteer through the summer.

Delegation assistants Carmen Gonzalez and Aldo Marcel will help Lillian. A Friends Witness Tour in February is uncertain due to less than at least four participants.

Outreach: Davida attended a Peace and Education event in Sarasota 12 January, showing the 15-minute general ProNica video and 2-minute Beauty School video created by Carl Hirsh of Miami Meeting.

From that event another opportunity: Davida will be on a radio program in Sarasota on Wednesday 23 January.

When Lillian comes stateside for SEYM, she will be on Tampa radio WMNF and Spanish-speaking radio in Tampa.

Stateside staff thanks Caroline Lanker for keeping our financial records true with her eagle-eyed review. We continue work on an operating manual for all procedures both stateside and Nicaragua.

The ProNica Committee invites new members. Consider joining us in these exciting times as we move forward to sustain ProNica assistance to our Project Partners in Nicaragua. Three ProNica meetings a year are: the Saturday before SEYM, and 2nd Saturdays in September and December. There are many opportunities to share your expertise. When you contact the stateside office, I'll share our wish list. ☺

Respectfully submitted,

Davida Johns
Stateside Coordinator
130 19th Av SE
St Petersburg FL 33705-2810
stateside@pronica.org
www.pronica.org
727.821.2428