

NEWSLETTER

ASHEVILLE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Twelfth Month 2003

Water Water Everywhere

by Steve Livingston

Fortune Magazine recently defined water as “the oil of the 21st century.” Americans are wealthy enough to be largely insulated from the fallout of the sudden discovery of water as a private commodity. But how long can we afford to ignore the impact of corporate thirst for profit-making swallowing up what was once considered a basic human right?

How has quality of life been affected by the privatizing of water supplies? In the US and other developed nations, it is primarily observed in rate increases. One of the longest-running private ownerships in the US is in Pekin, Illinois, where residents have experienced a 204% increase in rates since 1985. Another lengthy experience with private ownership in Wales shows a 102% increase in rates and a tripling of the number of people who have had their water shut off. However in developing countries such as South Africa, privatization can lead to an awful choice between food and shelter or clean water. Since privatization began a decade ago, one-fourth of South Africans have been disconnected, resulting in a cholera outbreak last year that affected over 135,000 people.

In the Americas, trade agreements provide channels to help private firms infiltrate water supplies, with generous subsidies, low-interest loans, and pernicious clauses allowing corporations to sue municipalities for protecting their citizens. Privatization in Bolivia resulted in huge rate increases, and the resultant public suffering and outcry brought police action, suppression, and violence in

defense of Bechtel Corporation’s investment. After the government finally capitulated to citizens’ demands to end the contract, Bechtel sued for \$25 million damages in

a special court of the World Bank. At the same time, Sun Belt Corp. is currently taking Canada to court for \$10.5 billion in damages under a NAFTA provision, because the Canadian government refused to allow them to dredge water from British Columbia’s lakes for resale in California.

Even without the intervention of helpful laws and subsidies, private firms seeking to cash in on “21st century oil” engage in other familiar tactics such as bribery and smear campaigns to lock up public water supplies. A huge scandal erupted in New Orleans three years ago when hundreds of thousands of dollars changed hands as US Filter, a subsidiary of French water giant Vivendi, sought to take over the city’s water service. A year before that, Chattanooga saw a successful multimillion dollar smear campaign against Mayor Jon Kinsey when the City Council unanimously supported his effort to cut off the private control enjoyed by Tennessee-American, ironically now a German-owned company.

Water quality is naturally subverted by privatization, as profit-making is favored over the public health. An example comes from a town in Canada, where a private company withheld test results showing bacterial contamination, resulting in 2,300 infected citizens and seven

Fun Water Facts

Amount Americans spend on bottled water every minute:	\$10,700
Proportion of water bottles that end up as garbage or litter:	90%
Number of water bottles added to the waste stream every day:	30,000,000
Barrels of oil required to supply Americans with water bottles for one year:	1,500,000
Number of homes that could be supplied with electricity generated by this much oil:	250,000
Percentage of Americans who refuse to drink water from their taps:	20
Percentage of bottled water that began as tap water:	40
Varieties of meat-flavored bottled waters sold by the K9 Water Company of Valencia, California, “so your dog can decide“:	beef, liver, chicken, and lamb
Proportion of the world’s population that lacks easily accessible, safe water:	50%
Frequency with which children die from a preventable water-borne disease:	one child every 8 seconds

continued next page

Water... (continued from page 1)

deaths. The company could not be held liable because new regulations permitted the secrecy. Another example comes from Puerto Rico, where four years of private water management resulted in rate increases, loss of capital, loss of jobs, and loss of water quality.

Corporations nurture the public misconception that privatization improves efficiency by referring to job losses as “trimming” or “right-sizing”, while downplaying the loss of revenue to the community as well as the loss of proper maintenance and oversight. Is it possible to lay off 50% of workers, as was done in the Philippines, and still provide the same quality of service? Since water service in England has become largely privatized, 10,000 workers have been laid off, yet a comparison of England’s water service to the publicly-owned Swedish system shows higher rates, poorer service, and lower water quality result from privatization. From Atlanta we learn of an aborted contract with a private firm which began in 1998 but was cut short just last year when it was revealed that the company had charged the City over \$10 million for repairs and capital improvements that had not been performed.

What are the chances that private firms will be concerned with environmental protection when there is so little demonstrated concern for basic human rights? Already two of America’s major rivers, the Colorado and the Rio Grande, have been sucked so dry that they no longer flow to the sea. Western water giant Cadiz has reached an agreement with California allowing it to export up to 30,000 acre-feet of water, through publicly owned pipes. They are currently negotiating for rights

to remove water from aquifers beneath the Mojave Desert.

We live in a time when the constitutional mandate to “promote the general welfare” is being commandeered for the purpose of profit-making, and the efficacy of public projects is increasingly measured entirely in terms of return on investment. Knee-jerk aversion to government spending and government control results in a growing dependence on self-regulation by profit-making firms. Reporting agencies that depend largely on private companies for their subsistence cannot be expected to provide information critical of their benefactors. Private firms may be expected to feed fears of scarcity and contamination, to increase the value placed on clean water, which in turn will maximize their profits.

Meanwhile Americans flush some three billion gallons of clean drinking water down their toilets every day. What would happen if we mandated that gray water be used for this purpose?

Decadence

*How do you know when your own life
verges on decadence?*

*Certainly when the force of form becomes
more important than the force of substance.*

When procedure becomes more important than creativity.

*When patriotism becomes more important than measured
governing and enlightened treatment of other nations.*

*When the opera becomes more important than helping
the poor and homeless.*

*When ambition becomes more important
than benevolence.*

*When the academy becomes more important
than the streets.*

*When outrageousness becomes more important than
communication.*

When style becomes more important than function.

When books become more important than teachers.

*When you smell these things happening, you are not far
from decadence.*

from 365 daily meditations of Deng Ming-Dao

Meeting House Phone
(828) 258-0974

Clerk of the Meeting
Evan Richardson

Recording Clerk
Margaret Farmer

Treasurer

Newsletter Staff

Steve Livingston (ed.), Margaret Farmer,
George Gjelfriend, Lynnora Bierce

The Asheville Friends Meeting *Newsletter* is published monthly. Friends are welcome to contribute letters, book reviews, announcements, articles, and quotations. Please submit copy via email to

newsletter@ashevillefriends.org

Hard copy is acceptable. Deadline is third First Day.

The Asheville Friends Meeting is located at 227 Edgewood Road, between Merimon Avenue and the University of North Carolina campus. Friends meet for singing at 9:40 and for worship at 10:00 a.m. every First Day. First Day School begins at 10:00. Friends meet to conduct business on the second First Day at 11:30 a.m. On other First Days, the hour following meeting for worship is used for adult education or for fellowship.

MINUTES

OF THE MONTHLY MEETING FOR BUSINESS TWELFTH MONTH, FOURTEENTH DAY 2003

CLERK: EVAN RICHARDSON
RECORDING CLERK: MARGARET FARMER

Opening of Meeting

1. Meeting for Worship convened at 11:30 a.m.
2. Out of the silence, the clerk read from a transcript of a lecture given by Jan Hoffman, "The Measure of Light We Are Given"

In approaching the Fifth World Conference of Friends, some of us from different parts of the United States were called to explore drafting an epistle from Friends for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (FLGC) to that Conference. We set ourselves a discipline of praying at the same time every month for the World Conference and seeing if an epistle would emerge. An epistle did not emerge to be sent to the World Conference. But the process of praying every month was astounding in gathering those of us who prayed. Sometimes we were led to write each other about things that had come up in prayer, and this is something one person wrote:

"The body of Christ (i.e., the community of the faithful) is whole, healed, and resurrected in the mind of God. We experience it as broken; broken relationships, painful communications, misunderstandings, schisms. But we are called, I think, to live into wholeness, to hold wholeness in our minds and hearts, and act and speak and move toward wholeness, as individuals and as a community.

3. There were twenty-one Friends attending including Lynnora Bierce, Christy Bischoff, Alice Brown, Peter Buck, David Clements, Carrie Coward, Steve Coward, Margaret Farmer, George Gjelfriend, Kristi Gjelfriend, Martha Huggins, Nancy Kuykendall, Steve Livingston, Rusty Maynard, Philip Neal, Kitty Reynolds, Evan Richardson, Elizabeth Roebing, Ursula Scott, Sarah Jane Thomas, and Jennifer Walker.

News of Ourselves

1. Kristi Gjelfriend reported her experience as witness in a case. She was moved by the acceptance of her need to affirm rather than swear on the Bible that she would tell the truth.

2. Elizabeth Roebing is experiencing tension about a request from the Grove Park to relocate the Martin Luther King breakfast to another site. She is asking for us to hold her in the Light as she works with both the African American community and PARC.

Treasurer's Report

[at this time our Meeting does not have a Treasurer - ed.]

Finance

1. David Clements distributed a handout of the proposed budget for 2004.

2. "2003 Income and Expenses. To date we have received in rent and donations about \$26,300, where we budgeted \$38,500. We have spent about \$24,600 to date. We expect about \$4,000 more in higher priority expenses for the year, including General Outreach contributions and First Day School expenses. We have deferred some other expenses and fund transfers (a form of saving for future expenses) until the end of the year, to be decided after we know how much income we have received. The Finance Committee will bring recommendations next month for how to accommodate the other financial goals we have set for ourselves.

3. "The deferred expenses include \$1,200 for our Scholarship fund, \$1,000 for our Building Fund, \$2,200 to complete our 2003-2004 payment to SAYMA (we could defer this to spring 2004), and \$1,200 for the Meeting House Improvements Fund. The Finance Committee also would like to see us maintain or build the Meeting General Fund Reserves.

4. "We will need to receive about \$2,300 more income by the end of the year in order to meet our primary goals, and as much as \$9,000 in order to meet all of the goals we had budgeted. We encourage Friends to give as they are led. Contributions can be counted for 2003 if they are either received or postmarked by December 31.

5. "General Outreach. We remind Meeting that we

Contributions

Contributions to the Asheville Friends Meeting are welcomed. Gifts may be placed in the small wooden box marked "contributions" which is located in the entry way, or mailed to

Asheville Friends Meeting
227 Edgewood Road
Asheville, NC 28804

BUSINESS MEETING

[Pat Lyon Memorial, Ministry and Counsel]

have approved only \$1,075 in General Outreach Contributions for the year. We budgeted \$3,000. We encourage Meeting to make a decision on the remaining contributions as soon as possible.

6. "Contribution to Nashville Meeting. Finance Committee was asked to advise Meeting regarding Nashville Meeting's request for contributions to assist with its new Meeting House. We considered that in 2001 we sent \$150 to Celo Meeting for its new meeting house (\$100 was a direct Meeting Contribution, and \$50 was a designated contribution from an individual). We propose \$150 as an appropriate contribution to Nashville Meeting, and would include it as a part of the Miscellaneous Budget line. Meeting is free to increase or decrease this amount. We expect to discuss this as part of the budget discussion in January."

7. One Friend expressed the wish that we could give a larger contribution to other SAYMA Friends meetings when they are building a Meetinghouse; we could do this instead of supporting other wider Quaker organizations for one year.

Pat Lyon Memorial

1. The revised memorial minute for Pat Lyon was read by the recording clerk. [see following page - ed.]

2. **After discussion, Friends approved this memorial minute.**

3. **Friends approve the clerk sending this minute to Friends Journal, to SAYMA, in a letter to the Lyons's children, to the Director of Pendle Hill, and to the President of Earlham College.**

4. Philip Neal, Elizabeth Roebing, Robin Wells, and Peter Buck will continue to follow-up on arrangements for the memorial meeting. They will report plans back to us next month. Rusty Maynard has volunteered to serve as contact with Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting to keep them posted regarding the arrangements.

Ministry and Counsel

* New Moon Worship Group Meets Weekly *
* Starting at the beginning of the year, the New Moon *
* Worship Group in Barnardsville switches from monthly *
* to weekly meetings for worship. Meeting takes place at *
* 4 p.m. on First Day at the Barnardsville United Method- *
* ist Church. When Daylight Savings Time resumes, meet- *
* ing will begin at 5 p.m. *
* The New Moon Worship Group is affiliated with *
* Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting. For more informa- *
* tion contact Susan Carlyle at 626-2572 or *
* scarlyle@main.nc.us *

1. The report was presented by Steve Livingston.
2. "Ministry and Counsel Committee met at 6 p.m. at Margaret Farmer's home. Present were Margaret, George and Kristi Gjelfriend, Alice Brown, Evan Richardson, and Steve Livingston.

3. "From our meeting there arose six items for action by the gathered community.

4. "We returned to the work of the ad hoc committee on same-gender marriage, reviewing their thorough report and the minute that arose from our previous meeting on 11/17. After a pause to hold this minute in the Light, we found that we were fully united in bringing this minute to our community, with gratitude for the careful preparation by the ad hoc committee.

5. "We also returned to the request from Hal and Valerie Hogstrom to be released from membership in our monthly meeting and the Society of Friends. Although it is a not-uncommon practice to bring a clearness committee together to consider such requests, it was our judgment in this case that the Hogstroms had given the matter as full and considered attention and consultation as such a committee could reasonably be expected to provide, and we had no doubt that their consideration fit the current direction of their spiritual journey.

6. "We considered two requests for clearness committees and began the task of identifying Friends to serve on them.

7. "We reviewed progress being made on a memorial service for Pat Lyon.

8. "We considered a request from the ad hoc committee on Dying and Death and found that we fully support their intention to continue their work as an ad hoc committee in bringing light to these issues in our meeting community.

9. "We considered a request from the Spiritual Enrichment committee that the committee be laid down, with its members being assimilated by Ministry and Counsel. We did not find this idea disagreeable but felt the question would be better resolved by relying on the Strawberry Creek nominating process now in practice in our Meeting.

10. "We had a brief discussion about vocal ministry in our meeting, and about participation in a worldwide prayer for peace, and will give further seasoning to these

continued on page 6

Forums Coming Up
1/25 Steve Baumgartner of Pendle Hill will describe the newly inaugurated Pendle Hill Peace Network. Very exciting!
2/1 Peace and Earth will facilitate a discernment of spirit-led actions reflecting our testimonies in today's world.

Memorial Minute for Patricia Ernst Lyon 1926 - 2003

Patricia Ernst was born on a farm in Honeoye Falls, New York, near Rochester, in 1926. She was a cut-up as a kid, a 'wild-and-crazy' character in her home town youth, and on into college, which she entered at age 16. While at Keuka College in the Finger Lakes region of New York State she is reported (by one of her sons) to have hitch-hiked 'tens of thousands of miles, unbeknownst to her parents.' That twinkle in her eye, so familiar to all those who knew her in later years, was surely grounded in long years of practice.

Her interest in social work was expressed early. During a college internship she worked at Byberry State Hospital in Pennsylvania, where she met a young conscientious objector to military service, Robert Arneson Lyon. They later married, moving to Massachusetts for both of them to enter graduate school at Boston University. With new degrees they moved back to Philadelphia where Bob worked for the American Friends Service Committee and Patricia did social work with her new Masters in Social Work.

They returned to Massachusetts where Pat continued with her social work career and Bob joined the staff of the New England office of the AFSC. In 1964, with small sons in tow, they accepted an AFSC post in Geneva, Switzerland where they organized diplomatic conferences and formed lifelong friendships. Before long Pat and Bob were back in the Boston area. Later the Lyons would spend years at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, Bob as Vice-President of this Quaker college. During these years Patricia Lyon was Director of the Concord Area Mental Health Center in Massachusetts, and worked as a social worker in the school system of Richmond, Indiana. At that time the Lyons, now with four sons, lived in the oldest brick house in Indiana, a huge and imposing, grand residence up on a hill.

Following those years Patricia Lyon became First Lady of Pendle Hill, while Bob was director of this Quaker Study Center in Wallingford, Pennsylvania. While there she worked with clay, throwing pots, buying a loom, and becoming an accomplished weaver. During these years the Lyons traveled a lot, covering the Quaker world for their several involvements with Friends World Committee for Consultation, Pendle Hill and other Quaker entities.

Upon retirement from Pendle Hill the Lyons considered whether to move back to New England, to Kenya or to North Carolina. Bob had done part of his alternative service in North Carolina, and they had visited Greensboro and the central Piedmont region of North Carolina in summer of 1967 for the Fourth World Conference of Friends. They decided to relocate to Weaverville, North Carolina, renewing ties with other Friends living in the Asheville area, acquaintances from their many years of work in Quaker organizations. Their plan was to later move together to Highland Farms Retirement Center.

During her years in the Asheville area, Pat worked in

family court advocacy, and was active, along with Bob, in Asheville Meeting of the Society of Friends. For some time they were Co-Clerks of Asheville Meeting, yet they continued their global travel on behalf of wider Friends concerns. After Bob's death in 2001 Patricia moved alone to Highland Farms, to a small apartment there, bidding farewell to the Weaverville mountainside house on Ladyslipper Drive.

In the summer of this year, 2003, her health declined and Pat was moved to the Asheville Hospice in Montford. After a short while her sons arranged for her to move to the Crosslands Quaker retirement community in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, where, on September 5, 2003 she died.

After her years at Pendle Hill someone asked Pat what she missed most, there: the deep worship, the profound conversations, the stimulating exchange of ideas, the lectures and visiting speakers or the quality of the community? "No," replied Pat, "I miss all the laughs." We will miss the laughs with Pat. She could always see the humor in situations, and took great pleasure in the colorful, putting aside the traditional Quaker gray. Her theology took in the smallest flower, the grandest mountain and people of all ages and hues.

A first Memorial Meeting was held for Patricia Ernst Lyon at Pendle Hill, on whose board she continued to serve until her death. A second Memorial will be held at the Asheville Meeting, where Friends and friends will remember her well. Among her survivors are an older brother, Wayne (Florida), sons Christopher (outside Philadelphia), Stephen (Cincinnati, Ohio), Jonathan (King George, Virginia) and James (Dayton, Ohio), their wives and 8 grandchildren, plus 3 great-grandchildren.

She was a beloved and respected elder and will be missed by multitudes of friends and Friends in Asheville and the world over.

New Meeting Place for SVMM

Swannanoa Valley Meeting has moved to a new location for their regular First Day worship. They are no longer meeting at the Black Mountain Arts Center.

The new meeting location is called Common Light Meeting Place and is located on Center Street. To find it, just turn right on Scotland Street from the center of Black Mountain.

For more information contact Kay Parke at 669-5914 or email at kathrynpinke@hotmail.com.

BUSINESS MEETING

[Ministry and Counsel, SAYMA Name Change]

two item so that we may bring recommendations to the community in the coming months.

11. "We ask that this meeting consider the following minutes for approval."

12. Steve read the letters requesting release from Hal and Valerie Hogstrom, then read the committee's proposed minute of release. After discussion, the minute was amended and **Friends approved the following:**

13. It is with a sense of deep respect and love that Asheville Friends Meeting accedes to the requests of Valerie and Hal Hogstrom to be released from membership in Asheville Friends Meeting and the Religious Society of Friends.

14. We are grateful for the time they have taken to make their reasons and intentions known to us. It is by the clarity of their actions that they call us to the task of deeply examining for ourselves as individuals and as a community what membership in the Religious Society of Friends does mean. We feel blessed by their presence in our community and the many gifts they shared with this community. We wish them well on their continued spiritual journeys.

15. Steve read the proposed minute on same-gender marriage: "Asheville Friends Meeting opens itself to any couples in the Meeting community who are led to make or to renew a lifelong commitment to each other in the presence of and under the care of the Meeting. We will receive and respond to all requests equally, whether the couples are of the same or different gender. We invite each couple to name its relationship, whether to use the term 'marriage' or any other appropriate term."

16. Friends presented many questions, especially regarding legal issues. There are many issues Friends want attention paid to. The clerk pointed out that many of the issues around our marriage process need to be determined; this will be a lengthy process. It was pointed out that this minute is not about the details and implications of the marriage process and the legal issues, but is asking for the meeting to bless same-gender unions. This is the first reading of this minute. The second reading will be next month.

17. The suggestion was made (and reinforced) that we make everyone in our Meeting community aware of the second reading next month. This minute will be read out at the rise of Meeting, printed in the newsletter, posted on the list-serve and in the lobby.

18. It was the discernment of the Ministry and Counsel Committee to start solely with the spiritual unity for same-gender marriage, and to deal with the particulars of the marriage process later.

19. A few copies of the Ad Hoc Committee's report on same-gender marriage will be made available in the Meetinghouse library for interested Friends. David Clements will make available the Ad Hoc Committee report to those who request it. The report will be available on the website at a later date.

20. Meeting approved the following minute commending the work of the ad-hoc committee: "We recognize with gratitude the careful and thorough work of the ad-hoc committee on same-gender marriage. We recommend that the work of this committee be continued on an ad-hoc basis as we discern the practical and legal issues arising from our minute on same-gender marriage."

21. Following the discernment of Ministry and Counsel, Steve asked if there were any who felt led to volunteer their service on a clearness committee for membership for Christy Bischoff. Friends Philip Neal, Ursula Scott, Peter Buck and Evan Richardson will serve on this clearness committee and will report back to Meeting.

22. Edith and Talmadge Neece have requested transfer of membership to Durham Friends Meeting, since their relocation to Chapel Hill, so that they may become fully committed to that Meeting.

23. Friends approved with regret the transfer of membership for Edith and Talmadge Neece.

SAYMA Name Change

1. With the addition of Memphis Monthly Meeting (Tennessee) and Oxford Monthly Meeting (Mississippi) and growth of the geographic region of SAYMA to extend beyond the traditional borders of "Appalachia", the Revision Committee of SAYMA Faith and Practice is asking Monthly Meetings to consider a name change for our yearly meeting to Southern Yearly Meeting of SYM.

Do the Write Thing

Join us in writing to your elected representatives about the issues that concern you. We will supply paper, pens, envelopes, stamps, postcards, a place, and some information about issues we care about, good company, tea and cookies.

We will meet at Westwood CoHousing Community, 43 Vermont Court in West Asheville, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month, beginning with 2/7 and continuing with 3/6, 4/3, 5/1 and 6/5. Then we will decide whether we want to continue meeting.

Please contact one of us to tell us if you are interested in Doing the Write Thing.

Cathy Scott	258-8743	pjamison@main.nc.us
Deb Scott	274-8315	descott@hotmail.com
Ursula Scott	253-7490	uscott@buncombe.main.nc.us

BUSINESS MEETING

[SAYMA Name Change, Peace and Earth]

The committee will be meeting in January to begin preparing their final proposals for the yearly meeting sessions to be held in June. They would like to hear back from Monthly Meetings regarding this change before their January meeting.

2. Due to time constraints, this issue was taken up at tables during lunch. Feedback from these discussions will be forwarded to the Revision Committee by the clerk, with recognition that it doesn't reflect the discernment of the whole Meeting.

Peace & Earth

1. The committee brought two items to the Meeting.

2. First is a request for approval of the following contributions to be made from the meeting's commu-

Budget Proposals approved 11-16-03

Building Bridges	\$50
Hospitality House	\$50
International Link	\$50
Islamic Center	\$50
NAACP	\$50
People of Faith Against the Death Penalty	\$50
Pisgah Legal	\$50
WNC Alliance	\$50
SOA Watch	\$50
Kids Vote	\$100
Dogwood Alliance	\$50
Bountiful Cities Project	\$100
Wenoca Branch Sierra Club	\$50
Needmore Tract, Little Tennessee Watershed	\$125
Canary Coalition	\$50
Habitat for Humanity	\$50
Hospice	\$50
MLK Breakfast	\$75
Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society	\$75
Prison Book Program	\$100
Veterans for Peace	\$50
GI Rights Hotline	\$150
WPVM Progressive Voice of the Mountains	\$150
Helpmate	\$100
Asheville Buncombe Community Relations Council	\$200
Total	\$1,925
Already Paid Budget	\$1,075
Equals	\$3,000

nity outreach budget (see table at left).

3. Friends approved the outreach budget with appreciation.

4. Peace and Earth read to us the minute on peace in Iraq that we passed as a community in October of 2002. They ask the Meeting to revisit where it was corporately on this issue and to take some time to hold the people of Iraq in the Light.

We Do Not Want War!

*Minute on Iraq approved 10/02
by Asheville Friends Meeting*

The Asheville Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) joins with people of faith around the world in seeking a peaceful solution to the current confrontation with Iraq.

As do many in the world, we look to the United States government to set an example for the international community.

We find no justification for the human suffering, the environmental destruction, and the loss of life that would result from a preemptive strike.

Rather than attacking Iraq, we urge the President to pursue peaceful alternatives in the Middle East.

We support the resumption of weapons inspections.

We look to our government to join with the international community to take away the occasion for all wars—military and economic.

We ask our government and people of the United States to take corrective actions regarding our countries' development of nuclear weapons of mass destruction, our countries' sale of armaments, and our energy policies, which makes us dependent on oil.

We join other people of faith in holding the leaders of the world and the people of the world in the light of the Divine.

Close of Meeting

Meeting broke at 2:30 p.m. following unprogrammed worship.



Tidbits: Introducing Asheville Friends

Steve Coward

How did you come to the Quakers? He had heard of it, and for the last several years had been looking for a spiritual (landing) place. He

discovered the meetinghouse while bringing his children to classes at the alternative school (IMAGINE) which uses the meetinghouse.

How does the meeting nourish you? It gives him time to sit and be still in the company of others, something he could not do successfully alone. Even though he styles himself as introvert, not comfortable in crowds, nonetheless he finds the meeting community to be friendly, welcoming and giving.

How do you nourish the meeting? He doesn't nourish the meeting as much as he's like to. He does bring food for the kids, mowed the lawn, and offers friendship to all. Additionally, he makes a financial contribution.

What skills do you have that the meeting could draw on? He likes working with kids and has TIME to fill in as needed. He can teach or speak on health education, and even volunteers to do the dishes! He's happy to be here.

Evan Richardson

How did you come to the Quakers? Evan was a witch practicing in a Eugene, Oregon coven (apprenticing as a midwife) when a friend, Daphne Singing Tree suggested that she might like the Friends. She had already been disillusioned by her Episcopal upbringing and had begun questioning her coven experiences. She wanted a non-dogmatic way to experience Jesus, and the meeting spoke to her condition (although she rarely, if ever, stayed for fellowship after the rise of meeting).

How does the meeting nourish you? She enjoys the worship community coming together, taking a big risk engaging in the corporate experiment. She feels loved as herself, and comfortable in revealing herself. The fellowship provides a much needed sense of family, and she feels supported as clerk. She also appreciates the way in which the meeting nourishes her children, Wesley and Lila.

How do you nourish the meeting? Even is clerk of the meeting, consciously encouraging us to be a loving community. She meets regularly with Ministry & Counsel, holds the meeting in the light, and makes a financial contribution.

What skills do you have that the meeting could draw on? Music, chanting, laughter, and a sense of humor. Also, she's drawn to adult Religious Education.



Martha Huggins

How did you come to the Quakers?

Her parents brought her when she was about two years old. When

she was a teen, she left; but when she had a child of her own, she came back because she wanted to raise him in a Quaker meeting. She enjoys silent worship, which she sees as a way we can all talk to god and god can talk to all of us. Additionally she was attracted to our nonviolence testimony.

How does the meeting nourish you? Mainly through silent worship and strong friendships.

How do you nourish the meeting? She serves on the Religious Education/First Day School committee and shares responsibility for the middle age group. She likes working with young friends and tries to connect with all of the kids on a personal level. She makes a financial contribution.

What skills do you have that the meeting could draw on? She can be a caring person.

Bob Smith

How did you come to the Quakers? Bob was searching for something that spoke to what worship and the spirit should be. He wasn't satisfied either with Catholics or the Baptists, when his wife, Donna, stumbled on someone at college who said that Bob would fit right in with the Quakers because they were "peculiar".

How does the meeting nourish you? Living is a lot of work, and living rightly even more so. The meeting fills his need for integrity and worship which he can't find in any other place. Getting ready for meeting fills his whole being, and he sees no disconnect between meeting and the rest of his life.

How do you nourish the meeting? He tries to bring in life and reality as he sees it and stay open to others. He wishes he could participate more in the fellowship following the rise of meeting, but folks persist in approaching him with concerns of social activism (which he gets enough of during the week at his agency and where he puts most of his energies). So, to avoid eroding the sense of peace and good feeling which the meeting engenders, he feels he has to flee lest it be compromised. He makes a financial contribution.

What skills do you have that the meeting could draw on? Commitment to the spirit of what he thinks the community should be. He has a sense of being in the world but not of it—and a desire to build bridges.

These Are Not Berliners

by Steve Livingston

On June 26, 1963, President John F. Kennedy uttered the immortal words of solidarity with a people imprisoned in their own city: "Ich bin ein Berliner" ("I am a Berliner"). Today, forty years later, another people are being imprisoned in their own land, a civilization far more ancient than that of Germany, whose lands were divided and ceded by decree to form the new nation of Israel. Since that 1947 decree, the nation of Israel has been at war with the people of Palestine, a war underscored by monumental religious issues as well as political, and epitomizing the ongoing worldwide conflict between Muslim and Judeo-Christian theocracies.

Between 1947 and 1992, the nation of Israel has been censured by the United Nations Security Council 65 times. Those who oppose these resolutions characterize them as a worldwide racist conspiracy against the Jews, and hold them up as an example of the domination of the UN by Muslim terrorists. In most cases Israel has failed to comply with these resolutions.



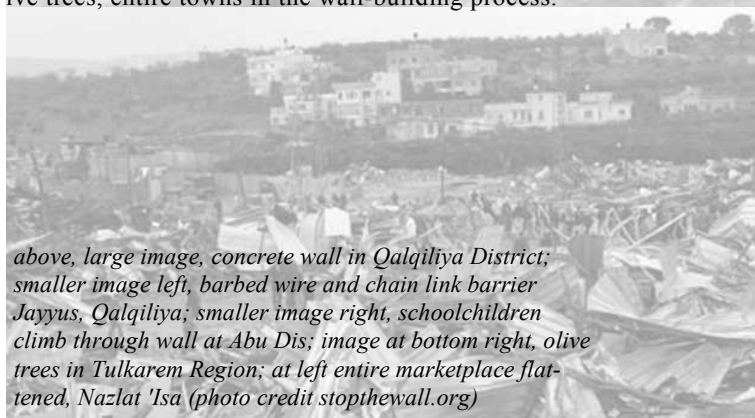
In June 2002, the nation of Israel began building a wall, ostensibly to protect its borders from the incursion of Palestinian terrorists. When completed, the wall will be approximately 400 miles long, essentially encircling the area known as the West Bank and preventing its inhabitants from accessing water, arable land, education, health care, and commerce. In some places the wall is a 25 foot high concrete barrier, reminiscent of the Berlin Wall, in others it consists of parallel rows of razor wire and chain link fences. In many places, the nation of Israel has used equipment and materials supplied by the US to destroy farmland, houses, ancient olive trees, entire towns in the wall-building process.

This past October, the United States vetoed a UN Security Council resolution censuring Israel for its continued construction of the wall.

Subsequently an emergency session was called in which the General Assembly adopted by a vote of 144-4 a measure condemning the wall (US, Israel, and two Pacific Island nations voting against). The resolution, introduced by the European Union, stated that the wall was "illegal" and demanded that Israel cease, and reverse, its construction. The Israeli delegate condemned the resolution as not being "fair and balanced".

On Dec. 8 the UN voted to censure the building of the wall through the International Court of Justice. The vote tally of 90-8 with 74 abstentions was characterized by the Israeli representative as a "victory for democracy", in that all nations voting against the resolution were democratic and all those voting against were tyrannical. Among the 8 voting against were the United States and Israel, four Pacific Island nations, Australia, and Ethiopia. The Israeli delegate presented the assumption that the abstention of the entire European Union was tantamount to opposition, but delegates from the EU refuted this, openly stating their nation's opposition to the wall, but abstaining from the vote on political grounds, in that the resolution was viewed as counter-productive to the Bush Administration's "Road Map to Peace".

Forty years ago, "I am a Berliner" was a rallying cry uniting citizens of the US in our common desire to see freedom and democracy provided for people worldwide, especially those suffering from the oppression of communist totalitarianism. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, and the dismantling of South African Apartheid, one may look upon the conditions in the Middle East and ask why those who were once Berliners are not now Palestinians.



above, large image, concrete wall in Qalqiliya District; smaller image left, barbed wire and chain link barrier Jayyus, Qalqiliya; smaller image right, schoolchildren climb through wall at Abu Dis; image at bottom right, olive trees in Tulkarem Region; at left entire marketplace flattened, Nazlat 'Isa (photo credit stopthewall.org)



A recent story in a respectable news magazine reported that a Palestinian youth was shot to death because he "endangered the lives" of Israeli Defense Forces soldiers by throwing bricks at their tanks and bulldozers. Another report indicated that an Israeli citizen participating in a protest died as a result of being "shot in the back during a confrontation with Israeli Security Forces."

Asheville Friends Meeting

Weekly Meeting for Worship: First Day singing at 9:40, regular worship at 10 a.m. 227 Edgewood Road, Asheville (258-0974).

Meeting for Worship for the Conduct of Business takes place on 2/8, beginning as promptly as possible. We will break with a full meal around 1 p.m.

Sandwich Sunday: Loaves, fishes, and fellowship after Meeting for Worship on fourth First Day (1/25). Your presence is encouraged, there's always plenty of food!

Midweek Worship and Sharing each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. 30 minutes of silent meeting reflecting on peace, followed by 30 minutes of worship sharing, then a stone soup meal. WestWood Co-Housing Community, 43 Vermont Court. For directions contact Ursula Scott (253-7490, uscott@buncombe.main.nc.us).

Other Nearby Meetings

Swannanoa Valley Monthly Meeting: each First Day at 9:30 a.m., Common Light Meeting Place.

Boone Monthly Meeting: each First Day at 10 a.m., at the home of John and Judy Geary, 175 Edgewood Drive.

City View Friends Church: each First Day at 10:30 a.m., 59 Tremont Street in West Asheville.

Brevard Monthly Meeting: each First Day at 11 a.m. at the Sharing House, corner of Oakdale and Duckworth.

Celo Monthly Meeting: each First Day at 10:45 a.m., 445 Hannah Branch Road.

Asheville Friends Meeting
227 Edgewood Road
Asheville, NC 28804

address service requested

A Note of Thanks from a Prisoner

Through personal visitation, tutoring, and ongoing work with the Prison Book Project, Friend Nancy Kuykendall gives care and support to convicted criminals. Last year our Young Friends joined in her service by raising money to provide books for prisoners at the Buncombe County Detention Facility. One prisoner sent our Meeting a thank-you note via Nancy, complete with hand-drawn puzzle (at right) and poem (below). Anthony Becoats wrote:

To the Young People:

Thank you for working so hard to get the guys here at BCDF books. They are really helpfull. As far as education, knowledge, + leisure time activities.

I am sure I speak for all of the guys here, when I say thank you, God bless you. And keep up the good fight.

Thank you for the books you sent

That gives us pleasure fighting the Devil's rent.

A special friend is yet hard to find.

Especially one who helps tame our mind.

So young, yet so sweet.

That would work to help guide our feet.

What a blessing that comes from a little book.

Thank you, friend, for the time you took.

