

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

FEBRUARY 2001

FEBRUARY 2001				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

- Sunday, February 4 8:30 AM Ministry & Counsel Meeting.
11 AM Singing.
- Monday, February 5 7 PM Men's Group Meeting. All men are welcome.
At Marshall Hoagland's (388-0812)
- Tuesday, February 6 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship, Priscilla Baker,
Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington St.
- Thursday, February 8 7 PM A Dessert & Beverage Potluck, followed by a
discussion of "Fifth Force," a new concept of having Peace
workers and a Peace Academy. Cheryl Mitchell will fac-
ilitate the discussion. At Ruth Barenbaum's (388-2651)
- Sunday, February 11 4 PM A discussion of how Middlebury Friends Meeting,
as a pastor-less congregation, can best minister to one
another within the Meeting. After the talking, we will
share a Potluck Supper. At the Schneider/Asermily's
(545-2602).
- Wednesday, February 14 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship. Jerry McBride,
Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington Ave.
- Sunday, February 18 11:20 AM Monthly Meeting for Business.

*Changes in attitude never come easily.
The development of love and compassion is a wide, round
curve that can be negotiated only slowly, not a sharp corner
that can be turned all at once.*

It comes with daily practice.

—His Holiness, the Dalai Lama

- Tuesday, February 20 12 Noon. Mid-Week Meeting for Worship. Jann Grace Seale, Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington Ave.
- Sunday, February 25 9 AM Adult Discussion on Fossil Fuel and Alternatives, another Sustainability issues. Facilitator will be Jean Rosenberg.
- Wednesday, February 28 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship, Jean Rosenberg, Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington Ave.
- Saturday, March 3 Northwest Quarterly Meeting, hosted by Barton/Glover Friends Meeting. Site to be announced.
- Sunday, March 4 8:30 AM Ministry & Counsel Meeting.
11 AM Singing.
- Monday, March 5 7 PM. Men's Group Meeting. At Ted Colwell's (388-3632)
- Tuesday, March 6 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship, Priscilla Baker, Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington Ave.
- Wednesday, March 14 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship, Jerry McBride, Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington Ave.
- Sunday, March 18 11:20 AM Monthly Meeting for Business.
- Tuesday, March 20 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship. Jann Grace Seale, Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington St.
- Sunday, March 25 9 AM Adult Discussion on Problems of Population. Facilitator to be announced. Another part of the Sustainability study program.
- Wednesday, March 28 12 Noon Mid-Week Meeting for Worship, Jean Rosenberg, Convener. At Gibson's, 266 Washington St.

MINUTES, MEETING FOR BUSINESS

January 21, 2001

Co-clerk: Priscilla Baker

Acting Recording Clerk: Ted Colwell

The meeting began at 11:21 AM with a time of silent worship. Co-Clerk Priscilla Baker read from *A Quaker Book of Wisdom* by Robert Lawrence Smith a portion of Chapter Three concerning Meetings for Business. In attendance were: Priscilla Baker, Sam Fogel, Jerry McBride, Fran and Spence Putnam, Barbara Battell, Mimi Love-Nicholson, Cheryl Mitchell, Ruth Barenbaum, John Vincent, Sas Carey, Winslow Colwell, Elizabeth Rosenberg, and Olive and Ted Colwell.

1. The minutes of the November 19, 2000 meeting were reviewed. In the paragraph titled "Fifth Force," it should be clarified that no minute was approved. With this change, the minutes were approved.
2. The Treasurer reported that contributions for the month of December 2000 amounted to \$1,790.00. Contributions for the year to date total \$4,408.00 compared with \$3,565.00 for the same period a year ago. Our expenditures for the month were \$40.95, and for the fiscal year to date \$4,082.00. So far in January 2001 we have paid our quarterly commitments for Rent of the Parent/Child Center, New England Yearly Meeting, and Northwest Quarterly Meeting. Our current balance in the checking account is \$1,577.04
3. Due to car problems, there was no report from Ministry & Counsel Committee.
4. The Phone Tree is fully established. The Co-Clerks will initiate calls to six people, who in turn will each notify from five to seven others. All participants in the meeting are covered.
5. Due to the death of Tom Bassett, the planned public meeting to hear him speak on "Religion In Vermont" has been cancelled. Tom was a weighty Quaker and did much for Burlington Meeting, the Northwest Quarterly Meeting, and New England Yearly Meeting. He was also a noted scholar and was the Vermont Archivist for many years.
6. A proposed new pamphlet that will bring together various services that the Meeting can and does perform is still in the formative stage. The authors will be Cheryl Mitchell, Laura Asermily, and Priscilla Baker.
7. There was called to our attention that the Meeting has its own Web Page, run most capably by Jerry McBride. The URL is www.middlebury.edu/~jmcbride/mfm.htm. Try it!
8. We discussed the concept of "A Fifth Force of the National Service System," and Cheryl Mitchell explained what this involves. There was considerable information given in the December 2000/January 2001 Newsletter, including a suggested Resolution. It

was requested that the wording in this Resolution using the term “deployed” be changed to “serve” to avoid usage of a military term. It was resolved that the topic of Fifth Force will be considered at a dessert and beverage potluck to be held on Thursday, February 8, at 7PM at the home of Ruth Barenbaum. At that time the resolution will be discussed in detail, and possibly forwarded to Northwest Quarterly Meeting for review by other meetings in the Quarter, and then possibly go beyond to New England Yearly Meeting. Elizabeth Rosenberg expressed a high degree of interest in helping to spread the word.

9. The above discussion inspired a decision to re-institute the Meeting’s Peace and Social Action Committee, which had been temporarily laid down a few years ago due to a seeming lack of interest. A new committee was appointed with Win Colwell and John Vincent as Conveners and also including, as a start, Cheryl Mitchell, Ruth Barenbaum, Elizabeth Rosenberg, and Ted Colwell. A meeting of this restored group will take place shortly, as it appears there are a number of key issues likely to be discussed and acted upon.

10. We discussed the idea of having a Mid-Week Meeting for Worship. A committee of Jerry McBride, Jann Grace Seale, Jean Rosenberg, and Priscilla Baker have met and explored the concept. It was agreed that the best way to proceed was to try having such a meeting. The schedule is to meet at Noon on alternating Tuesdays and Wednesdays during February and March, and then to switch to 7 AM in April. The meeting will take place at the home of Eleanor Gibson, 266 Washington Street, Middlebury. Eleanor is away for the winter, but has graciously agreed to let Friends meet there. This will be an experiment, and will be reviewed as time passes. The meetings are posted in the date section of the newsletter.

11. A new calendar of dates was discussed, and is posted in the Newsletter.

12. Priscilla Baker distributed copies of a draft of the State of the Meeting Report to all present, and the text will be printed in the Newsletter and placed on the meeting’s Web page. Friends will discuss the report for approval at February Monthly Meeting.

13. An ad hoc committee on Death and Dying has been formed, chaired by Jann Grace Seale. The intent of the committee is to revise and expand the existing forms now held by Sas Carey that a number of Friends prepared some years ago listing their wishes on the occasion of their death. Any one who may wish to work on this project should contact Grace Seale at 948-2270.

14. Sas Carey requested that the Meeting Treasurer be authorized to accept donations toward the financing of her pending trip to Mongolia this summer in a special fund. Friends felt comfortable with this arrangement, which has been used in the past for several projects, and the Treasurer will set up such a fund.

15. We had a long and searching discussion of the *Campaign of Conscience for the Iraqi People*. This is a project of the American Friends Service Committee and the Fellowship

continued...

of Reconciliation, which is undertaking to send to the people of Iraq humanitarian aid and materials to repair the civilian infrastructure of Iraq. The immediate program is to send four water purification units. The Campaign has sent two such units already, even though the United States Government has not yet approved the shipments.

The purpose of our discussion was to determine whether the Meeting would minute its approval of the effort, and provide information for those F/friends wanting to contribute to the effort. In view of potential severe penalties for participating in this non-violent protest, it was felt that very serious consideration should be given to this whole matter. It was agreed that a revised minute be prepared and sent to all participants in the Meeting, along with a copy of the Campaign's Participant Form, to be followed by further discussion and action at the next Monthly Meeting for Business.

The meeting closed with a period of silent prayer and worship at 1:30 PM.

STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT MEETING AND POTLUCK

On Sunday afternoon, January 7th, a group gathered to review the events affecting the Meeting during the year of 2000. We met at the home of Jann Grace Seale and Sven Warner in Sudbury on a cold, snowy day. Some of the more hearty ones did some sledding before the start of the meeting. About fifteen Friends participated in the session. Spence Putnam acted as the facilitator and Priscilla Baker as recorder. There was much open discussion about the successes and failures of Middlebury Friends Meeting during the past year. The result of the meeting is reported below, and will be discussed and approved, with such changes as the Meeting may make.

Following the business of the day all enjoyed a fine Potluck Supper and had an opportunity to see the Seale/Warner's house, which they had moved into only six weeks earlier.

STATE OF THE MEETING FOR 2000

Draft 1/21/2001

As we pause to reflect on the past year, we find much for which we are thankful and a number of areas that need more attention. Our annual State of the Meeting discussion reflected a hopeful, future orientation which led us to not only reflect on the past, but also explore ways to improve our practices in the coming year.

The size of MFM remains constant, although the number of children continues to be small. There has been wider representation by different age groups within the Meeting. This year we sought to increase our outreach to Middlebury College students. We

initiated dialog with the college chaplain about how to effectively interact with the college community and we held a gathering on campus in the fall. We are encouraged by the attendance of a few students this fall and hope to build on this. Questions arise concerning the size of MFM: Do we want to remain small? Do we communicate to newcomers an unspoken desire to not grow? If we were to grow, what would change? What accommodations would need to be made?

We have experienced a deepening of the spiritual pool within MFM as manifested in many truly gathered Meetings for Worship throughout the year. The practice of incorporating a Healing Circle during the first minutes of Worship is felt to have added considerably to the richness of our corporate worship experience. We appreciate both the ministry of silence and the vocal ministry among us. There is a dynamic of acceptance of different messages, and often messages are interrelated. We wonder if some people are hesitant about speaking during worship and how to encouraged their vocal ministry.

Many well established, as well as newer, practices contribute to the sense of community among MFM Friends. These include the use of a greeter each First Day morning, introductions around the circle at the close of each Meeting for Worship, weekly hospitality at the rise of each Meeting for Worship, singing after worship one First Day of each month, our monthly newsletter, periodic potlucks, and our annual Spring Celebration of Life and December Holiday Meeting. Newcomers report feeling welcomed before and after Meetings for Worship. Ministry and Counsel strives to be aware of Friends who may need support or are in any kind of distress. We feel challenged by the responsibility to minister to each other and recognize that we sometimes fall short in doing this. This raises the question: How can we best provide ministering and support to each other in our times of need?

Middlebury Friends are active in a number of local and wider community efforts to ease suffering, promote justice and build peace in the world. We appreciate that the concerns and leadings of Friends within Meeting ripple out into the community in many different ways. We dedicated our adult discussion series this year to the topic of Sustainability and we have all made conscious efforts to live more gently on the earth. When a dozen international work campers came to Middlebury last summer MFM took them under our wing, providing activities to welcome them and opportunities to explore the local cultural and physical environment. The food basket, placed in the Meeting room each First Day morning, collected 200 food items which were distributed throughout the year to local food shelves. Friends worked in their local communities on the Abolition 2000 Resolution presented at Town Meetings. Some Friends are active in a local Habitat for Humanity construction project and others in maintaining the Quaker trail at the Spirit in Nature Trail site in Ripton. We supported one MFM Friend who ran for the state legislature, and we are prepared to take actions that may be prompted by changes in our newly elected state and national governments.

continued...

Thanks to a small and dedicated group of Friends, a new children's program has been started. Besides a new and well regarded curriculum, there is now consistency in the teachers who serve for 3 month periods. Although the number of children attending First Day School is small, the quality of the program and its impact on the children who attend is felt to be positive. Issues we struggle with are the children's space, which is set up for very young children and is not appropriate for older children, and how to enlarge the pool of children within First Day School.

When considering the organizational structure of MFM, we recognize aspects which need attention. A small core of Friends maintains the operation of Meeting, and we wonder how to expand this core to include wider participation in the decision making and running of the Meeting. A consistent handful of Friends participates in Monthly Meetings for Business; however, we regret that more Friends are not involved.

Sometimes, these meetings have felt less worshipful as busy Friends feel pressured to consider issues in short periods of time. We wonder how to better discern what issues should be dealt with in Monthly Meeting, which issues to refer to other formats (e.g., committees, discussion groups, potlucks) and how to set aside, with open minds and hearts, adequate time for attending to the business of the Meeting.

Of special note this year is the Meeting Library, a highly valued part of MFM. For a number of years we have had a position of Meeting Librarian who maintains the library cupboard, orders new books and informs Friends of resources available in our collection. MFM received a generous gift of many books from a community member when she completed research on a book she is writing. We are challenged by the limitations of the small size of our Meeting cupboard where everything related to the Meeting is stored. Appreciation is expressed for the excellent work of the Meeting librarian who challenges us to think of new ways to expand awareness and use of the library's excellent resources.

In summary, we identify the following areas to attend to and/or work to improve in the future. We want to:

- increase our interaction with college students (e.g., co-sponsor peace activities),
- increase awareness of practices within MFM (e.g., through the newsletter and creating a brochure),
- increase participation in and quality of Meeting operations and decision making,
- be responsive to political issues as they arise,
- minister to one another in the best ways possible,
- increase intergenerational activities and consider how to include children in our time of Worship,
- expand awareness and use of the library (e.g., book summaries in the newsletter, encourage Friends to describe what they are reading),
- consider the size of Meeting: do we want to grow and, if so, how to encourage and adjust to this.

PROPOSED MINUTE TO SUPPORT THE AFSC CAMPAIGN OF CONSCIENCE FOR THE IRAQI PEOPLE

The objective of the Campaign of Conscience for the Iraqi people, sponsored by American Friends Service Committee and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, is to awaken and enlighten the soul of the American people and to encourage us to call for a lifting of the nonmilitary sanctions against the people of Iraq.

Because of our concern for all humanity, and our belief that love and compassion are the highest laws of life, Middlebury Friends Meeting endorses the principles of this Campaign.

Because lack of potable water has caused widespread health problems in ten years of sanctions, we join with the Campaign in their plan to install four gas chlorinators to provide essential clean water. We understand that AFSC and FOR applied for a license to ship this equipment to Iraq, but after a long wait decided to deliver the chlorinators to Iraq, risking the possibility of penalties for civil disobedience.

Though we have reached the tenth anniversary of the Gulf War, the humanitarian crisis in Iraq has not ended. The continuing sanctions are contributing to massive poverty, unemployment, widespread disease and malnutrition. Their purported aims to destabilize the regime of Saddam Hussein and to insure through inspections the dismantling of his war making capacities have not been accomplished.

In spite of growing international pressure, our government continues to block efforts in the UN Security Council to modify significantly or to lift the sanctions, which are non-military in name only. For the Iraqi people they are tantamount to siege. On the one hand the civilian population is bounded by an abusive dictator who not only has abandoned their most basic needs, but also maintains a luxurious lifestyle. On the other they are deprived by the UN's economic sanctions which have prevented them from repairing their war damaged infrastructure and starved their medical and educational facilities. They are therefore left by themselves to struggle with the post-war effects of poisoned water and residual radiation, and to die from malnutrition and diseases which include a variety of cancers caused by radiation.

Though sanctions, in other circumstances, have seemed a useful alternative to armed conflict, in the case of Iraq they are now creating far more harm than good. It is time to abandon punishment of Iraq's civilian population as an instrument of US foreign policy. Blind adherence to these failed policies now prevents a rethinking of our relationship to Iraq and obscures paths to seeking other solutions.

It is time to end the siege of sanctions. Providing the means to purify water for drinking and agriculture is a simple step of enormous good. To this end we publicly support the AFSC and FOR in their efforts to reach across political barriers and bring care to a suffering people.

continued...

We also call upon our Congressional delegation to introduce measures to bring the sanctions against Iraq to an end.

NEW EDITOR FOR NEWSLETTER

Beginning with this issue of the Middlebury Friends Newsletter, we have a new editor, Winslow Colwell. He is looking forward to having the newsletter continue to be a vital part of the Meeting's life.

Win succeeds Jordan Young, who served as our editor for three years and did a spectacular job. He was able to bring his considerable experience in computing to the job, and made many improvements in the content and appearance of the publication. Despite being very active at the Champlain Valley Universalist/Unitarian Church, he was able to perform an outstanding role as our editor. The entire meeting is most appreciative of his efforts.



GRACE McGRATH led another workshop at the prison recently, and recruited Anais Mitchell and Joanna Colwell to attend the session as well. It was a successful program, and the young prisoners were amazed that such young women would take their weekend to visit them for three days. ELIZABETH ROSENBERG decided not to return to Nepal after Christmas, and has become active in a number of programs here in the Middlebury Area. DAVID ROSENBERG has given Meeting Library the 8 hour PBS series on Non-violence "A Force more Powerful," for which we extend to him a sincere thanks. From their home in Durham, NH, MARTHA and CHAS MOSELY write "We still get the Addison Independent so we can check up on people, but other than that we have not had the chance to get back for a while now. Damon is doing well in his last semester at VTC, and Adrien is also in her last term. It looks like they will be graduating the same weekend! Please give our best to everyone." A traveling scholar, CHRIS PUTNAM has recently been in Canterbury and London, England studying the art of stained glass windows. The January 28th Adult Discussion in the Sustainability series on Food Production and Consumption brought out NANCY LOW, one of our true farmers. She is well and says that her sheep are likewise. Another face at meeting belongs to B. AMORE, of Hubbardton and Benson. A highly regarded sculptor, she has a show currently at Ellis Island in New York Harbor. B. taught ETHAN MITCHELL stone carving awhile back and is well-known to a number of the people in our meeting. Speaking of the Mitchells, the entire family had a great trip to Italy over the Christmas holidays. In addition to DON, CHERYL, ANAIS and ETHAN, Cheryl's parents, GEORGE and LAURINE WARFIELD, plus some of their other children were

present. Over New Year's we had an e-mail from JOAN and WILMER TJOSEM wishing all their friends at MFM a great 2001. Also via e-mail, we heard from LADYBELLE FISKE who is living in Burlington for the winter. Ladybelle is writing her memoirs and hopes to have the first draft finished by spring. The family is living in a house with a view of Lake Champlain and also Mt. Mansfield! Her address is listed below, and she says she would like to have Friends come by if they are in the area. One of Middlebury's newest merchants is JOHN VINCENT who is the new owner of In the Alley Book Shop, formerly called the Alley Beat. John has moved to the area, and was formerly active at Wilderness Meeting. He has already volunteered to be a Co-Chair of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee! Trying to keep the Meeting Directory up-to-date seems an endless task. Please take note of the following changes and additions:

B. Amore
2427 Monument Hill
Castleton VT 05735
802/273-2278
amoreb@earthlink.net

Jo Going
802/388-2072

Carol & Richard McKeever
Mckeever@capital.net

John Vincent
In the Alley Book Shop
3 Frog Hollow Alley
Middlebury, VT 05753
802/388-2743
alleytogether.net

Meg Langworthy
802/877-3217
cmlangwo@sover.net

Alan Williams
95 Lafountain Lane
Weybridge, VT 05753
802/545-2812

Ladybelle Fiske & Brion
McFarlin
P.O. Box 382
Burlington, 05602

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Co-Clerks

Priscilla Baker (388-8024)
Jean Rosenberg (388-6453)

Ministry and Counsel Committee

Donna Belcher
Anne Corrigan
Marshall Hoagland
Jerry McBride
Grace McGrath
Jann Grace Seale

Newsletter Editor Winslow Colwell (388-1961, winslow@well.com)

Treasurer

Olive Colwell (388-3632)

Recording Clerk

Laura Asermily

Newsletter Mailing

Ted Colwell
Olive Colwell
Ruth Barenbaum