

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING



NOVEMBER 2002

NOVEMBER 2002					1	2
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 ○	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Every Saturday	10:30 AM	Silent Vigil for Peace on the Triangle Green, Downtown Middlebury. Until 11 AM.
Sunday, November 3	8:30 AM	Ministry & Counsel
Sunday, November 10	7 PM	Dessert Potluck at Unitarian Church (Cross & Water Streets) followed by viewing of the video "Greetings From Missile Street"
Monday, November 11	7 PM	Men's Group, at Jerry McBride's (388-0339)
Sunday, November 17	11:20 AM	Monthly Meeting for Business
Sunday, November 24	9 am	Friends Forum: Topic TBA
Sunday, December 1	8:30 AM	Ministry & Counsel
Monday, December 2	7 PM	Men's Group at Spence Putnam's (388-1644)
Saturday, December 7	ALL DAY	Northwest Quarterly Meeting hosted by Plainfield/Barton-Glover
Sunday, December 22	10:00 AM	Holiday Worship Sharing and Potluck at Olive & Ted Colwell's (388-3632)

Please Note: No Monthly Meeting for Business in December

“Ever since there have been men, man has given himself over to too little joy. That alone, my brothers, is our original sin. I should believe only in a God who understands how to dance.”

— Henri Matisse

BENEVOLENCES PROFILES:

#1 ADDISON COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP

The food offerings we bring to Meeting go the Emergency Food shelf, one of the many efforts of ACCAG. This active agency was founded in the '70s with the help of, among others, Shep Colman, a founder of our Meeting. Its mission is: “to end poverty in Addison County and empower all people to participate fully in a just society.” Among the services this agency provides are several affordable housing units owned and maintained by ACCAG, a recycled clothing store, and many emergency services including help with rent, utilities, and food.

The CSC, Community Service Center, on Boardman St. behind the Humane Society, is owned and operated by ACCAG. It is home to seven important service agencies and a number of programs which allow people to effectively access tools they can use to change their lives and become independent, such as Vermont Adult Learning and the Court Diversion Program. Our Meeting has worked with its executive director, Jeanne Montross, in support of the Volunteers for Peace project.

#2 CLERGY RENT FUND

I asked Carolyn Delisle, administrator of this fund for ACCAG, how long this support program has been in existence, and she said, “My Lord! Forever! Tom Plumb (a former member of our Meeting) started it and I’ve been taking care of it God knows how long!”

People who need help getting together a rent deposit can apply to Carolyn’s board on the 1st or 3rd Wednesday of any month for a loan of \$200, specifically for this purpose, to be paid back in monthly installments of \$10. The fund is supported by gifts from local congregations.

- Ruth Barenbaum

MINUTES, MEETING FOR BUSINESS

OCTOBER 20, 2002

Co-Clerk: Spence Putnam

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Meeting began at 11:35 AM with readings from Lawrence Scott, “*Origins of Peace Witness*” (*NEYM Faith & Practice*, page 183) and Adam Curle, “*Preparations for Peace*” (page 185). Present were Priscilla Baker, Spence Putnam, Fran Putnam, Jerry McBride, Grace McGrath, Olive Colwell, and Ted Colwell.

02.10.01 Minutes from 9/15/02 were approved.

02.10.02 Treasurer’s Report. Treasurer Olive Colwell submitted the following report: “During September 2002, contributions totaled \$722.00, and expenditures amounted to \$45.60 for newsletter printing. For the first quarter, we received gifts of \$1,428.00 and spent \$1,327.80. Our bank balance at September 30, 2002, was \$2,406.38.

“So far in October we have taken in \$145.00 and expended \$1,761.50. These payments included postage, expenses in connection with the Quaker Grove tree planting, library books, and the quarterly payments for rent, contributions to NEYM, and the Northwest Quarterly Meeting. We also began making benevolence payments to Addison County Community Action Group and the Clergy Rental Fund. Our current balance is \$789.88.”

02.10.03 Peace Vigil Signs. During the past year Ruth Barenbaum has made many signs for our use during our Saturday morning vigils on the Middlebury Town Green. These signs were also used during the peace rally in Middlebury last Sunday, 10/13/02; however, most of them were not returned or were damaged by the rain on that evening. The following were discussed and agreed upon:

(a) Middlebury Friends Meeting (MFM) accepts the in-kind donation of \$286.50 by Ruth Barenbaum for the purchase of materials over the past year to make signs. MFM will give a receipt for this amount to Ruth.

(b) The MFM Peace and Social Concerns Committee has a budget of \$100, and this will be made available for materials to make new signs for our ongoing use at our weekly Peace Vigils and other gatherings. Anyone wishing to be reimbursed for these materials should submit receipts to Treasurer, Olive Colwell.

02.10.04 Ministry & Counsel (M & C) Report: (given by Grace McGrath).

(a) Friends Forum. Preference for 9:00 AM meeting time. A few suggested topics have come in. Grace will circulate idea list again after Meeting. Laura Asermily will facilitate discussion on elder care at 9:00 AM, Sunday, 10/27.

(b) Memorial Tree Planting. The planting of Shep Colman Parker's memorial tree was very successful. MFM expresses its appreciation to all the people who made this planting a lovely experience. M & C is compiling a list of all the details involved. A tree for Fay Honey Knopp will be planted in the Spring.

(c) October potluck at Cheryl and Don Mitchell's (co-hosted by Fran & Spence Putnam) was enjoyed by both MFM newcomers and long-time Middlebury Friends.

(d) Circles of Care will be explored further at the next M & C meeting.

02.10.05 Quaker Memorial Grove. Monthly Meeting clarified that trees will be planted for people who are no longer living and were a part of Middlebury Friends Meeting. Trees will be planted along the border of the parking lot where they will greet Friends as they arrive for Meeting. It was decided that there should be a Memorial Tree Coordinator to oversee the planning and planting of trees as these occasions arise. Anyone interested in serving the Meeting in this capacity should speak to one of the co-clerks (Spence or Jean).

02.10.06 Parent Child Center Liaison. Sas Carey volunteered to be a liaison between MFM and the Parent Child Center.

02.10.07 *Faith and Practice*. It was agreed to have a discussion about revisions to NEYM's Faith and Practice as a Friends Forum topic.

02.10.08 Passage with Care Packets. Middlebury Friends are reminded that Passage with Care materials are available. Friends are encouraged to pick up a packet and to fill out the end-of-life form. It was suggested to have a gathering of those who want company while thinking about and filling out their forms. It was agreed to have such a gathering during the winter.

02.10.09 Peace Rally on 10/13/02. Many Middlebury Friends were involved in planning, and participated in, a peace march through downtown Middlebury to the college where President Bush's press secretary, Ari Fleischer, received an Alumni Achievement Award. Despite rainy weather, well over 1,000 townspeople, college students and staff met on the lawn outside Mead Chapel for a peace rally to demonstrate concern about Bush's proposed war on Iraq.

The peace network throughout Vermont currently is planning for immediate action in the event of a U.S. airstrike on Iraq. At this time, there will be demonstrations in many towns throughout the state including Middlebury. Fran and Win are helping with local planning.

Saturday morning Peace Vigils continue, from 10:30-11:00. During the past month, 25-30 people have stood in witness on the town green every Saturday morning.

02.10.10 MFM Phone Tree. Co-clerks continue to work on updating the phone tree which is used when emergency or immediate information needs to be shared throughout the Meeting community.

Business Meeting closed after a moment of silence at 12:45 PM.

OCTOBER 13 PEACE RALLY

On Sunday, October 13, an estimated 1500 people gathered in Middlebury to protest the United States' ongoing war with Iraq. Despite a cold rain and the gathering dark, the crowd kept growing larger through the evening. Those at the vigil tried their best to keep their candles lit. According to Joe Gainza of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) it was the largest anti-war rally in Vermont in 15 years.

Ari Fleischer, press secretary to "President-appoint" George W. Bush, was given an alumni achievement award that evening by the Middlebury College Alumni Association. When the event was announced several groups, including college staff, students, and the Addison County Peace Coalition, simultaneously began planning a response. Mr. Fleischer's position makes him a figurehead for the aggressively militaristic stance of the Bush administration, and he had just made personal remarks that shocked people both in and out of the pacifist community.

Pastor Gwendolyn Hallsmith expressed this well in a letter she wrote to College President John McCardell:

The front page of the Burlington Free Press quoted Ari Fleischer as saying that "it would be cheaper if Saddam Hussein simply were assassinated," when he was asked about the cost of a full-scale war in Iraq. He went on to say that "The cost of one bullet, if the Iraqi people take it on themselves, is substantially less than that." If Middlebury College gives this man an award, they are making a strong statement about the view the college takes on human rights, on war, and on the environment. Middlebury has been working hard to be an outstanding example of good environmental practices and positive social policies. With respect to alumni, Middlebury's mission statement clearly reads that "Middlebury endeavors to maintain a lifelong bond with its alumni and expects its graduates to be thoughtful, ethical leaders able to meet the challenges of informed citizenship." Since when is assassination ethical?

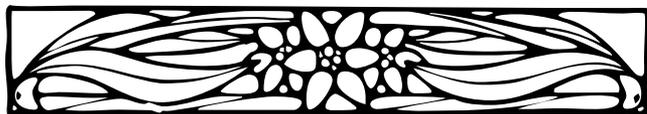
Students, staff, and townspeople quickly realized that we should organize together. Soon meetings were held to plan a rally and march up to Mead Chapel, where the award ceremony and a speech by Mr. Fleischer were to be held. The Addison County Peace Coalition, which grew out of the Saturday morning Silent Vigils organized by Middlebury Friends Meeting, became the sponsor of the rally and secured the necessary permits from the Middlebury Police. Students did a wonderful job of working closely with Campus Security, alerting the press, and making press kits to distribute that evening.

The thirteenth was a cool, cloudy, fall day that turned wet and colder just as the rally at the Middlebury Green was to begin. Nevertheless 850 people turned out to sing, show their signs (including a beautiful new quilted cloth banner by Ruth Barenbaum!), and prepare for the walk to campus. During the walk more joined in, and at Mead Chapel

we were joined by 650 additional students, including several hundred who were on line to go inside. It was heartening to see so large a turnout—families, high school and college students, representatives of the clergy in their vestments, people young and old—united.

Before and during the talk, some protesters were silent and held their candles. Others chanted or sang, and there were some who shouted out. Joe Gainza and others presented brief speeches of their own. The peacekeepers did their best to surround aggressive or hostile protesters with love. There was a great deal of energy owing to the large numbers of people there and the high pitch of emotion, but the protest maintained respect for everyone. Both Middlebury Police and Campus Security were very helpful and cooperative, and deserve our great thanks.

The next day, there was coverage of the rally on all the local news sources, the Associated Press, and a report on CNN that was repeated hourly all day. At the White House news briefing that morning, Mr. Fleischer was asked: “In Middlebury, Vermont, where you gave a speech and were given an alumni achievement award, there were more than 500 protestors...” Mr. Fleischer cut in to insert: “Oh, it was more than that!”



JOINT QUAKER/UU POTLUCK CONCERNING IRAQ

On Sunday evening, Sept. 29, we gathered for a lively potluck at the spacious Unitarian Universalist (UU) church. After dinner we watched slides brought by Joanne Commerford, New England AFSC staff. Jo visited Iraq with a delegation last June. Her slides showed us the daily lives of Iraqis, markets, schools, hospitals, many playful kids, historic sites at Babylon, and the progress of the new AFSC Water Project to rebuild the water system of the entire province of Bakooba, a citrus growing region west of Baghdad. The pictures were graphic and moving. Jo answered many questions afterwards. Win invited everyone to join the weekly vigil on the Green, which many did, as it turned out! In all 52 people, including 25 “Quakes,” came to this warm and interesting event.



Judge WILLIAM SESSIONS is to be congratulated for his bold decision declaring the Death Penalty unconstitutional in a recent decision. This is only the second such ruling by an appellate court, and we hope it will help keep the ball rolling to end this barbaric practice. After the rise of meeting on Sunday, September 29, there was a celebratory planting of a chestnut tree in honor of SHEP COLMAN PARKER. It was a lovely day, and many Friends joined to help plant this initial tree in the Quaker Grove. Shep's daughter, CONNIE COLMAN, made some gracious remarks about her mother, one of the founders of Middlebury Friends Meeting. The lovely tree was a gift from the family, and we shall all enjoy watching it grow. The Stillness Retreat was held at the Mitchell's Farm in New Haven on September 26. It was a glorious fall day, and the few participants had a great day of silence and meditation. A few weeks ago we had a visitor from Massachusetts. She was on her way to Saranac Lake for a conference and saw our sign on the corner of Route 7 and Monroe Street pointing to the Meeting. She told us she had a strong need for a time of quiet and turned off the highway to attend Meeting. She even gave a brief message after Meeting. For all those who have lugged the sign back and forth each week, it is rewarding to know that it can be helpful to passersby. The meeting and the entire local peace community is greatly indebted to RUTH BARENBAUM for the multitude of striking signs and colorful banners she has made for the Silent Vigil. One of the banners was featured on the front page of *The Addison Independent* following the protest march arising from the visit of Ari Fleischer, President Bush's press secretary. Ruth is a veteran of Bread and Puppet Theater in Glover, Vermont. It was a real treat to have JEAN BURFOOT at meeting recently. Jean has a severe problem with her back that makes it hard for her to get around, but she was moved to come to participate in the peace testimonies. The newsletter of Elderly Services is currently featuring JOHN BENSON, a nurse and assistant coordinator of the program. The article traces John's interest in working with elderly people and providing a "relaxed and homey" type of care, as well as his life journey and love of painting. The October 2002 issue of *Friends Journal* is a special one focussing on prisons. It contains a long mention of HONEY KNOPP with her picture, plus a side bar article by GRACE McGRATH on the Alternatives to Violence Program. A new book, *Nudged by the Spirit: Stories of People Responding to the Still Small Voice of God*, written by Charlotte Lyman Fardelmann, is in our library. It features a chapter on FAITH LOWELL and her wonderful work with women prisoners in Burlington. Be sure to read both the *Journal* and the book. We are sorry to report that ELEANOR GIBSON has been spending time in various hospitals. First she was at Fletcher Allen in Burlington for a pacemaker, and then at Porter Medical Center with pneumonia. Fortunately she is recovering nicely, but we miss her at meeting. Also, YONNA McSHANE has not been well and Friends have been visiting her. We note with great sadness the deaths of LAURA ASERMILY'S grandmother at

the age of 101, and of JANE LEA, mother-in-law of PATTY HEATHER-LEA. Jane was a faithful attender of Meeting for Worship for many, many years, and her quiet presence was always an inspiration. Please note the following address or e-mail changes in your directory.

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- Ted Colwell

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING
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MIDDLEBURY 
FRIENDS MEETING

PO Box 203
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Meeting for Worship
10:00 AM every First Day
Parent/Child Center, 126 Monroe Street, Middlebury
<http://community.middlebury.edu/~jmcbride/mfm.htm>
Please send newsletter submissions to the address above
or to winslow@well.com

on the cover: First Frost by Winslow Colwell