

Middlebury Friends Meeting

April
2011



APRIL 2011

| SUN | MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
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QUAKER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Every Saturday 10:30 AM Vigil for Peace on the Triangle Green, downtown Middlebury. Until 11 AM.
- Fri. Apr. 1 6:00 PM April Fools Day potluck at Dickinson's, 388-2594. Bring a story to tell about a time that you were fooled - either on April 1 or at another time.
- Sat. Apr. 2 9 AM-3:30 PM NEYM meeting on local meeting finances and YM priorities; Canterbury, NH; talk to Stewart Kirkaldy for details
- Sun. Apr. 3 8:30 AM Friendly Forum: *Carrying Silence Into Our Daily Lives* led by Ann Barker
- Sun. April 10 10:00 AM Meeting for Worship at the Parent/Child Center (Havurah unavailable on this date)
- Mon. April 11 7:00 PM Women's Group at Fran Putnam's, 388-1644
- Wed. April 13 7:00 PM Men's Group at Tom Baskett's, 758-2055
- Sun. Apr. 17 8:30 AM Worship & Study Committee at Havurah House
- Sun. Apr. 17 11:30 AM Monthly Meeting for Business

cont.

“For it is not so much speaking true things that doth good, as speaking them from the pure, and conveying them to the pure: for the life runs along from the vessel of life in one, into the vessel of life in another; and the words (though ever so true) cannot convey life to another, but as the living vessel opens in the one, and is opened in the other.”

— ISSAC PENINGTON

Please note that on Sunday, April 10, Meeting for Worship will be held at the Parent/Child Center, on Monroe Street in Middlebury. Havurah House is unavailable that day, so we'll be once again in our old home!
Meeting will begin at 10 AM as usual.

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| Sun. Apr. 17 | 1-3 PM | Earth Day on the Middlebury Green |
| Sun. May 1 | 8:30 AM | Friendly Forum, topic TBA |
| Sun. May 15 | 10:00 AM | Annual Celebration of Life at Quaker Acres, Washington St., including potluck lunch |
| Sun. May 22 | 11:30 AM | Monthly Meeting for Business at Havurah House (Note: change of date) |

Middlebury Friends Meeting

Monthly Meeting for Business

20 March, 2011

Clerk: Stewart Kirkaldy

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Present were Laura Asermily, Tom Baskett, Ted Colwell, Win Colwell, Tom Dickinson, Grace McGrath, Chris Stackhouse, and Jill Stackhouse.

11.03.01 **Minutes from 20 February 2011** were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

11.03.02 **Treasurer's Report** (from Laura Asermily & Jill Stackhouse): "During the month of Feb. 2011 the Meeting had an income of \$750.00. The income for the comparable period last year was \$1065.00. Total income for the fiscal year 2011 through Feb. is \$8963.25, which is \$ 2497.25 ahead of this same period last year. Expenditures during Feb. totaled \$220.28: Children's Program \$180, News Letter \$35, Postage \$5.28. The bank balance at the end of Feb. was \$3025.06, which includes \$1,602.80 in the carry-over surplus fund.

Cash Balance at the end of Feb. 2011 was \$ 3,025.06. Current bank balance is \$3075.06."

11.03.03 **Worship and Study Committee (W & S)** (report from Tom Baskett)

1. *Celebration of Life*: W & S Committee proposes that we shift our date to June 5 to assure the possibility of warmer weather for this outside gathering. FOLLOW UP: Due to availability of our preferred and ideal location it was decided to hold this year's Celebration on May 15 at Quaker Acres on Washington Street. May monthly meeting will be moved to May 22.

2. *Friendly Forums*: April 3, Ann Barker will lead a discussion on carrying silence into our daily lives. Topics are under consideration for May and June FFs.

3. *Twice monthly singing before meeting for worship*: W & S clarified that even if people are tempted to continue singing a little longer, silent worship should always start at 10:00am. FOLLOW UP: It was decided to send out a survey on Listserv to gather wider input about whether or not to continue singing and in what format.

11.03.04 **Fellowship Committee (FC)** (notes from Wendy Goodwin, edited for these minutes by the recording clerk)

The most recent meeting focused on all-meeting potlucks which require a large space. FC noted only a few homes are large enough to accommodate the entire meeting. They note that fewer people are attending all-meeting potlucks, perhaps because of active participation in Friendly-8s. They suggest cutting back from monthly potlucks to bi-monthly, with the option to hold other potlucks when a special occasion arises,

e.g., a guest speaker. FOLLOW UP: It is suggested that we hold seasonal all-meeting potlucks: Celebration of Life at the end of spring, a summer picnic at a park, a fall gathering, our holiday gathering in December and our annual state of the meeting potluck in January. It is hoped Fellowship Committee members will be present at next monthly meeting to continue this discussion.

It was noted that this issue may reflect one of the challenges of growing larger. While in the past most MFM Friends could and would attend potlucks, this is no longer the case.

11.03.05 Outreach and Social Action Committee (COSA) (from Tom Dickinson, edited for these minutes by the recording clerk):

1. *Report on Quarterly Meeting* held in Hanover on March 6. ** At the QM Peace and Social Concerns committee meeting, there were reports from five Monthly Meetings on their activities. Karen Nawn-Fahey's idea for peace witness on 9-11-2011 was well received by those assembled. ** In meeting for business, the Middlebury minute on FUM policies was discussed at length, but unity was not reached about adopting this and forwarding to Yearly Meeting. Many felt that this position had already been expressed by YM and many MMs in Quarter during the last few years, and there was no need for a new statement. ** The minute from Wilderness on discrimination against American Muslims was considered, but when it became evident that there were two versions of this before the meeting, the discussion was ended. ** There was an announcement from the director of the Meeting School in Rindge, NH, that the school is going on sabbatical for the next year while they try to figure out how to reach financial viability.

2. *Middlebury Meeting will sponsor the Middlebury Community Supper in May.* We seek someone (or more than one) to coordinate this effort.

Here is a website to read various monthly meetings' minutes, NWQM and NEYM minutes concerning Friends United Meeting personnel policy:

<http://omlets.tripod.com/omnilucent/nwq-minutes-fum-policy.pdf>

11.03.06 Clarence and Lilly Pickett Endowment for Quaker Leadership:

Middlebury College student and MFM attender, Olivia Grugan, has been awarded a leadership grant which she will use to promote a locally based food economy in her hometown in Pennsylvania. MFM will be the administrator of the grant and help Olivia form a clearness or oversight committee to help her along the way. Much delight was expressed for her accomplishment. Pastoral Care will follow up with Olivia about her committee.

11.03.07 The 2011 State of the Meeting report was approved with one change: It was noted that the closing quotation, attributed to Honey Knopp, should read "the words of Issac Penington, often quoted by Honey Knopp, "to help each other up with a tender hand."

Monthly meeting closed after a moment of silence.

Laura Asermily

Laura says that walking her dog Abby twice a day is her “Zen exercise.” It puts her in touch with the natural world and her neighbors.

Laura grew up in northern New Jersey near Greenwood Lake, West Milford, in an environment much like Middlebury. The oldest of five children, she helped out in the family restaurant during her growing years. From a young age she was taught to take responsibility seriously. She considers herself lucky to have gone to Franciscan Catholic schools all through high school, and it was there she learned the virtues of turning away from the material world toward service and the protection of Nature. Her hero among heroes is St. Francis of Assisi.

Laura wrote for her high school paper, the college paper at St. Bonaventure University in Olean NY, and her hometown paper. She was convinced that as an investigative reporter she could make sure that people knew the truth about events, and majored in journalism until graduate school advisers at Columbia encouraged her to specialize and develop an area of expertise. It was through her political science courses that she discovered the power of multi-national corporations and made this the focus of her “senior project.” In the early 80s when she graduated, it was already dangerous to tell the truth about things.

Her first job was as a social studies teacher at her old high school, but after three years of trying to teach 100 kids three subjects in half a trailer, and feeling that she could “never catch up,” she left because she didn’t want to become “a grizzly in the classroom.” Laura looked for other work.

From then until now her MO has been “to clear the present unfavorable situation so I can step into a better one.”

Soon after, she became a product manager at a major educational publishing firm where she researched what teachers (and administrators) wanted in their various textbooks. It was at this position that she met Bill Schneider, with whom she eloped on their way to a textbook convention in 1987. “Very radical behavior for a nice Catholic girl!”

With the birth of Johannah (Josie) in 1992, Laura began to feel a strong need to be part of a spiritual community again. Upon moving to Addison County from New York City, the family turned to our Meeting, since Bill had been raised as a Friend in Vermont. When she came to the first Meeting, Laura said to herself, “I’m home!”



cont.

Many of us loaned books and had long conversations to help her discover Quaker ways and history. “Everything about Quakers seemed completely aligned with my core values,” Laura says.

She loved her return to the classroom and worked at Fair Haven, Middlebury and Otter Valley high schools. Otter Valley had to let her go in 2007 due to declining enrollment and a reduced budget. Laura turned full time to community organizing, still looking for ways to insure that people have information they need, especially when she became aware of issues surrounding global warming.

As Acorn Energy Co-op manager, a part-time start-up position, she worked almost full time supporting “this brilliant idea,” as well as substitute teaching and implementing climate action initiatives in the Middlebury area. But now, on her own and with Josie doing well in college, Laura feels herself to be looking for the “right work,” searching for her “right place” in the work world. She uses this time to build resilience and to assist with the “great turning” from an industrial growth society to the life-sustaining one described by Joanna Macy, a contemporary prophet she adores.

“I want to work for the community in which I live,” she says. A new threshold is about to reveal itself for Laura.

—RSB with LA

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

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388-9478

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Middlebury, VT 05753

388-9224

Pastoral Care Committee

Caring for one another in a loving community is an important part of our life as a Meeting.

Call any member of Pastoral Care to share a concern or need.

Priscilla Baker (388-8024)

Ruth Barenbaum (388-2651)

Sas Carey (388-1301)

Brud Leedom (623-7533)

Grace McGrath (388-6576)

Carrie Reed (388-0436)

We welcome your submissions! — win@wcolwell.com

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

PO Box 1026

Middlebury, VT 05753

Meeting for Worship

10 AM every First Day

Havarah House, 56 N. Pleasant St. (Rt.7), Middlebury

www.middleburyquakers.org

Please send newsletter submissions to
the address above or to win@wcolwell.com