

Middlebury Friends Meeting



May
2011

MAY 2011

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
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
29	30	31				

QUAKER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Every Saturday 10:30 AM Vigil for Peace on the Triangle Green, downtown Middlebury. Until 11 AM.
- Sun. May 1 11:30 AM Friendly Forum on First Day School program. All parents of school-aged children are especially encouraged to attend. Childcare will be provided.
- Sun. May 8 8:30 AM Worship & Study at Havurah
- Wed. May 11 7:00 PM Men's Group at Chris Stackhouse's
- Thurs. May 12 7:00 PM Women's Group at Cheryl Mitchell's
- Sun. May 15 10:00 AM Annual Celebration of Life at Quaker Acres, Washington St., Middlebury. Intergenerational Meeting followed by fabulous potluck lunch. All Welcome!
- Sun. May 22 11:30 AM Monthly Meeting for Business at Havurah House (Note: change of date)
- Sat/Sun June 4/5 Quarterly Meeting

Spring

Somewhere
a black bear
has just risen from sleep
and is staring

down the mountain.

All night
in the brisk and shallow restlessness
of early spring

I think of her,
her four black fists
flicking the gravel,
her tongue

like a red fire
touching the grass,
the cold water.

There is only one question:

how to love this world.

I think of her
rising
like a black and leafy ledge

to sharpen her claws against
the silence
of the trees.

Whatever else

my life is
with its poems
and its music
and its cities,

it is also this dazzling darkness
coming

down the mountain,
breathing and tasting;

all day I think of her —
her white teeth,
her wordlessness,
her perfect love.

— MARY OLIVER

Middlebury Friends Meeting Monthly Meeting for Business

17 April, 2011

Clerk: Stewart Kirkaldy

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Present were Tom Baskett, Ted Colwell, Win Colwell, Grace McGrath, Fran Putnam, Spence Putnam, Chris Stackhouse, Jill Stackhouse, and Becky Stratton.

11.04.01 Minutes from 20 March 2011 were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

11.04.02 Treasurer's Report (Jill Stackhouse): "During the month of March 2011 the Meeting had an income of \$240.00. The income for the comparable period last year was \$1155. Total income for the fiscal year 2011 through March is \$8,855.25, which is \$ 1234.25 ahead of this same period last year. Expenditures during March

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totalled \$189.00: Children's Program \$120, Friends Journal Ad \$44, Earth Day Fair Booth \$25. The bank balance at the end of March was \$3076.06, which includes \$1,602.80 in the carry-over surplus fund.

"In addition the Olivia Grugan grant of \$1840 is now in the care of MFM and has not been considered here in the end balance."

FOLLOW UP: * This summer, Havurah plans to do acoustic renovations to the room in which we meet. They have enough funds to cover expenses but may request volunteers to help with the installation. It was agreed to leave in place, for now, the funds we set aside a few years ago to help with this project. * Olivia Grugan's oversight committee is in place and has met with her.

11.04.03 Worship and Study Committee (W & S) (Tom Baskett)

1. W & S will create a *MFM calendar of events* through the year, similar to the one Ministry and Counsel kept.
2. *May 1 Friendly Forum* will focus on First Day School/religious education.
3. *Hymn singing* listserv poll resulted in mixed responses with no clear direction. It was decided to continue twice monthly singing before worship through June, take a break over summer and reassess in the fall.
4. Plans are under way for our annual *Celebration of Life on May 15* at Quaker Acres.

11.04.04 Fellowship Committee (FC) (notes from Fran Putnam, edited for these minutes by the recording clerk)

1. *All meeting potlucks*: We would like to suggest that the Meeting try for one year a plan to have one potluck every other month. The traditional potlucks would be: January, State of the Meeting potluck; May, Celebration of Life potluck; July or August, picnic potluck; December, Holiday potluck. In addition, we suggest a potluck in March and October. If it is agreeable, the Fellowship Committee will organize those potlucks which are not already being organized by the Worship and Study Committee (the May and December potlucks). FOLLOW UP: This plan was accepted and will now be in effect.
2. *Women's Group* will be changing their meeting nights to the first Thursday night of the month for the next 6 months to give those women a chance to attend who could not attend on Mondays. The Women's Group also discussed some proposals which have been shared with the Group by email and will be discussed in the coming months at Women's Group meetings.

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

1. *Spring community supper*: Our Meeting had planned to sponsor a Community Supper in May of this year and we thought we had an agreement on the date. However, the date was given to another group and we were offered either June 17 or 24. It turns out that those in our meeting who would be candidates for leading

this effort will not be available around those times, and we may have to decline to participate this spring. We still plan to sponsor a supper in September. FOLLOW UP: It was noted that too many Friends are away at the end of June, so we will decline hosting at this time and confirm our date at the end of September. Concern was expressed about the growth of serving 200+ meals which has created challenges and may be unwieldy for a small group to manage. These concerns will be conveyed to the community supper organizers.

2. *Participation in the wider Quaker community*, including activities such as Quarterly and Yearly Meetings, action groups such as AFSC and FCNL, and retreats such as Pendle Hill and Powell House. There has been good response to the questionnaire sent on the listserv and several Friends reported they have been involved in these areas. Many no longer participate due to other obligations or changed family circumstances, but involvement was characterized as worthwhile and rewarding. One way our Meeting could encourage participation is by subsidizing travel and other expenses. Several Friends are on mailing lists for these organizations, and we might try to organize an effort to select and summarize notices for distribution on our listserv. In this way our members could be notified of items of interest and learn what is going on without being overwhelmed by all the literature that is sent out.

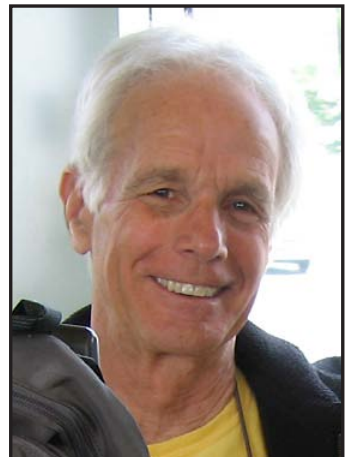
11.04.06 Nominating Committee (Becky Stratton): Members have begun to consider Friends for offices and committees for next fiscal year, July 2011 through June 2012. They will present their preliminary slate at May monthly meeting. Any Friend interested in serving in any position or committee is encouraged to contact a Nominating Committee member (Becky Stratton, Jean Rosenberg, Cheryl Mitchell, John Beattie, Don Peabody).

Monthly meeting closed after a moment of silence.

ILLUMINATING LIVES #34

Tom Baskett

In many respects, Tom's spiritual journey has been about finding a home place. That journey began early. By the age of nine Tom's family had moved ten times. This left Tom without a sense of a home town, a place where he grew up. As an only child growing up in the 50's, his parents were his "home." Wherever they were, that was home. Even then, "home" was not always a stable place; he moved to St Louis to stay with a friend of his grandmother during WWII while his father was out in the Pacific commanding a submarine and his mother contracted TB and spent



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two years in a TB sanatorium. Despite the moving and separations, however, Tom felt loved by his parents and learned how to adapt to the many changes. The move to London, England when he was nine and placed in an all-boys boarding school tested his childhood resilience, however, though the move to Virginia Beach, VA three years later opened a brief idyllic early teen life that he still remembers with great fondness. Tom struggled with giving this up in another move two and a half years later to Washington, DC. Yet, despite his uprooted life, Tom considers that his childhood was a happy one: “I did all the things little boys did—studied in school, played athletics, and thought about girls. Spirituality was pretty simple and uncomplicated. Still I always felt a bit of an outsider even though I was good at adapting. I could get along, but the feeling of belonging was elusive.”

Tom’s parents were not members of any particular religious organization in his early years: “I caught the mood of religion by touring churches and cathedrals in Europe as a young boy and later visiting Buddhist temples in Japan on summer vacations while a student at Princeton University.” He was inspired by the life he had, but still searched for belonging.

Motivated by his college’s motto of “Princeton in the Nation’s Service,” Tom did his military service as an officer in the Marine Corps which included a year on Okinawa and later worked in the intelligence world for seventeen years. He served in Belgium and the Congo (Zaire). After six years he left intelligence work, bought a VW bus, a dog, and went west to run a ski lodge in Aspen—time for hippy spirituality. After two years of this life, though, he grew restless and returned to intelligence work and lived in Paris for eleven years. He married a woman he met in Aspen and they raised two sons.

While in Paris, Tom experienced a life-changing, spiritually-awakening dream which led him to begin asking fundamental psychological and spiritual questions about who he was and what his life was about. This launched him into an introspective psycho-spiritual journey which continues to this day. “I went to the bookstore and started reading, beginning with Jung’s *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections* and a book on meditation by Joel Goldsmith.” He attended a local church. Tom soon decided to leave intelligence work and return with his family to the States. They took up residence in Princeton where Tom became very involved with the local Episcopal Church and worked for a few years as Director of a community teen drug and alcohol help center while he looked for a path into psychotherapy. Ultimately he trained and was certified in pastoral counseling and separately studied spiritual direction at General Seminary in NYC where he earned a Masters Degree in Christian Spirituality. While taking a church history course, he wrote a paper on the relation between a faith’s architecture and its theology: “I thought the Quakers would be an interesting group to study since

there was an old Meeting house in Princeton, so I went there for a worship service and never stopped going. That was almost twenty years ago.” Tom said he resonated to Quaker worship which so closely resembled the meditation practice he was following and Quaker theology. He laughed and added, “to the extent that Quakers have a theology.”

In the midst of this introspective journey, Tom and his first wife amicably divorced. He met his present wife Diane at General Seminary, and they married in 1994. Diane became ordained as an Episcopal priest and served most recently as Dean of the Cathedral in Trenton, NJ. When they approached retirement, they looked for a college town in Vermont and decided on Middlebury which was close to Diane’s son who lives in Burlington. Tom continues his own spiritual journey,—searching and finding, reading, attending retreats, and talking with anyone similarly interested. He also continues inquiries into men’s and women’s spiritualities in a world that is appropriately seeking to rebalance masculine and feminine energies. Today, he feels clearer and more grounded: “I spent the first part of life building a self out there in the world that was alternately happy, excited, disappointed, lonely. The second part has been about finding my way home, a spiritual and religious journey into freedom, acceptance, openness and love that is often messy and humbling, but always rewarding, often in surprising ways. The deep Truth of life is, I believe, spiritual, unitive, and loving while also being this daily, multifarious existence. That’s my story, and I’m trying to stick to it!”

—Laura Asermily with TB

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

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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

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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