

Pacific Northwest Quarterly Meeting
Lazy F Camp & Retreat Center -- September 26, 2009
Minutes of Meeting for Business

09-09-01 Following opening worship, presiding Co-clerk Iris Graville introduced herself and Recording Clerk Don Goldstein. She reported that our other Co-clerk, Alan Mountjoy-Venning, is ill and unable to attend this session. The posted agenda was accepted by Friends present without revisions. Minutes from our Meeting for Business in April 2009 were effectively approved at that time and have been distributed to meetings and worship groups. Copies were also made available on the clerks' table.

09-09-02 Continuing Committee report - Iris Graville Iris reported that the Continuing Committee met during NPYM Annual Session on July 16, 2009. Minutes have been circulated to Continuing Committee members and to monthly meeting and worship group contacts. Business before the Committee included:

- How to address the deficit from Spring 2009 Quarterly Meeting
- Approval of a registration form for Silent Retreat regarding attendance by registered sex offenders
- Approval of Regon Unsoeld as Junior Friends Advisor for a two-year term beginning in July 2009.

Interested Friends were invited to attend the Continuing Committee meeting this evening in Ridgeview Lounge.

09-09-03 Treasurer's report - Louis Webster Louis reported that he did not create a written report this time, but that our current balance is approximately \$4000. There has been little change since the report that he submitted to Continuing Committee in July. Listkeeper Don Goldstein added that the July report from Louis was not circulated with the Continuing Committee minutes, but the most relevant figures from the column concerning our Spring 2009 QM session were included in the body of those minutes. [A copy of the full July report is attached.]

09-09-04 Ministry & Oversight report - Pablo Stanfield Pablo reported that he and the other M & O Co-clerk, Sandy Harold, communicated over the summer concerning M & O's role within our Quarter, and found that they both had a leading to travel in the ministry, particularly among meetings and worship groups that may be relatively isolated and/or struggling to maintain themselves. They intend to carry out such visitation in coordination with the NPYM Outreach & Visitation Committee. Pablo also reported the M & O meeting earlier today was a good one, with reports being shared by nearly all monthly meetings in PNQM.

09-09-05 FCWPP report FCWPP clerk **Tom Ewell** reported that the organization continues to support a half-time staff person, and expressed thanks for the financial support of meetings and individuals around PNQM. Sixty people attended Quaker Lobby Day this year. A small victory was won in the legislature this year, in connection with restoration of voting rights for released offenders. FCWPP continues to work on other prison-related issues, including sentencing reform, and has established a reputation for responsible leadership on these matters. In the year ahead, FCWPP hopes to begin work on some environmental and health care reform issues, which Tom explained are definitely relevant at the state government as well as national level. During discussion a Friend expressed concern with regard to overly-restrictive state regulation of midwives, and Tom explained that FCWPP can only take on issues when there is a champion within (or willing to join) the committee who can do most of the needed work.

09-09-06 Registrar's report - Margaret Coahran Margaret reported that our attendance at this session includes 2 infants/toddlers, 8 preschool children, 8 early elementary children, 8 upper elementary children, 7 Central Friends, 13 Junior Friends, and 110 adults for a total of 156. She said that attendance had literally been decimated by illness, being down about 10% from what we would normally expect at a fall QM session. She learned of a few last-minute cancellations before traveling to Lazy F, and 16 additional ones only after arriving here. Normally Lazy F bills us for the number of meals estimated to them a week in advance, whether eaten or not, but this time there is the possibility of an adjustment since so much of the shortfall was due to illness, which also severely affected Lazy F's recent summer program. This decision will be made following a Site Advisory Team meeting, which Margaret will attend as our Site Liaison, on October 3rd. Those who cancelled will also be offered the opportunity to donate some or all of the fees they paid in advance, which may ease the impact of so many cancellations on PNQM finances. We minuted our **thanks to Margaret for her long-running and very thorough work as our Registrar**, and she replied that it's work she really enjoys.

09-09-07 Children's Program report Our new Children's Program Coordinator, Adrienne Solenberger, reported the program had started out well and all the children seem to be happy. Both teachers recruited for the Infants and Toddlers group were unable to attend due to illness (personal or family) and they were replaced by volunteers. This group was also combined with the Preschool group.

09-09-08 Concern regarding finances Our Clerk introduced this topic by announcing that the Spring QM session had left a deficit of over \$1800 despite good attendance and by reading a list of some possible options for addressing the session-financing problem while still retaining our basic pay-what-you-can policy with regard to fees. This financial report and list had been sent out to meetings and worship groups in very early September with a request to season the options and suggest others that might be helpful, but very few meetings have yet been able to do so. The options listed were: (1) increase annual assessments from meetings and worship groups (currently \$1.00 per "active adult participant") so that the Quarterly Meeting as a whole is providing substantially more subsidy than currently to finance self-awarded financial aid for attenders unable to pay the suggested fees; (2) ask attenders from monthly meetings to seek financial aid from their meetings, instead of or in addition to setting their own fees using "pay-what-you-can"; and (3) eliminated the "pay-what-you-can" policy with respect to those who register after the deadline, thus adding more incentive to register on time. The floor was then opened for comments and questions.

A number of questions were raised concerning assessments, including the amount, their history, and what body had the authority to increase them. Don expressed his opinion, based on long experience with the structure of PNQM, that only the Meeting for Business (and not the Continuing Committee acting on its own) was authorized to increase assessments, although if circumstances of timing required it the Continuing Committee might authorize an increase for one year, subject to later approval by Meeting for Business. The primary question for our discernment, he suggested, was whether it was fair and reasonable to ask PNQM as a whole to subsidize financial aid for QM attenders to a much greater degree than it currently does. (He noted that assessments already provide more revenue than our operating costs require, thanks primarily to reductions in photocopy and postage costs due to use of email.)

It was pointed out that financial aid, amounting to \$911 last spring, only accounted for about half the deficit. Margaret reminded us that we also subsidize attendance by children by setting their suggested fees below what they cost us in fees from Lazy F, and subsidize camping by attenders as well, in order to reduce crowding in the buildings and minimize the need to use upper bunks. [Our program costs have also increased significantly in recent years due to fee waivers and stipends for Children's Program staff.]

Some other comments:

--An isolated Friend who attends regularly said that no meeting pays an assessment for her and her spouse. [It was suggested later that she consider donating some money above the suggested fee level in order to contribute in lieu of assessment.]

--A regular attender said that the current assessment is so low that it could be doubled or tripled without a big impact on meetings and worship groups.

--Another Friends suggested that much of the problem stems from the current economic situation and it may not be long-lasting. Another pointed out that a substantial fee increase by Lazy F, effective at the beginning of this year, is probably more responsible and it will not be going away.

--A Friend said that not making "pay-what-you-can" available for late registrants seemed reasonable. Another reminded us that late registrants already pay a substantial late registration penalty, and it seems unfair to penalize them twice since there are sometimes extenuating circumstances preventing timely registration.

--A Friend from Olympia said that Quarterly Meeting sessions benefit all of us because of their impact in creating community for the children and Junior Friends.

--In answer to questions, Margaret reported that 23 families had registered late this time, and that donations above the suggested fees totaled \$565 for this session [as opposed to \$650 in spring 2009].

--Suggestions were made that solving the problem would require several sources of additional income, that the Continuing Committee should set minimum fees in addition to suggested fees, and that we might reduce our meal costs by sharing food on a potluck basis for more than just Friday supper.

--From meetings that had had a chance to season these issues, Judith Clarke reported that Sandpoint Friends supported the first (assessment increase) and third (no pay-what-you-can for late registrants) options, and not the second one (a partial return to financial aid by local meetings). Don reported that Bellingham Friends favored just the first option.

The Clerk sensed that there was unity in favor of some increase in Quarterly Meeting assessments and no unity with regard to the other options. We approved these minutes:

Meeting for Business agrees to an increase in the Quarterly Meeting assessment, beginning in 2010. We also agree to continue the pay-what-you-can fee policy, including for those who register late.

It was understood that the Continuing Committee, at its meeting in January 2010, will decide upon the amount of increase in Quarterly Meeting assessment for 2010, subject to review by Meeting for Business in April 2010. Notice of the 2010 assessment will be distributed in May 2010, which is the usual time of year.

09-09-09 Announcements:

--Our annual Silent Retreat weekend will be held January 29-31, 2010 at Camp Huston near Gold Bar, WA, the usual location. Flyers and registration packets were not brought to this QM session but will be distributed soon by email. [A copy of these materials accompanies these minutes.]

--Our Spring 2010 Quarterly Meeting session, hosted by Eastside Friends Meeting, will be held here at Lazy F April 23rd-25th, 2010. Planning Committee member Louis Webster distributed half-page flyers announcing the session theme, "Compassionate Listening: Finding God in the Midst of Fear", and presenting some queries related to this theme. Linda Ellsworth explained some of the committee's thinking in adopting this theme and announced that Leah Green, essentially the founder of the Compassionate Listening method, has been invited to attend and lead a plenary session. If she isn't available, another well-qualified Compassionate Listening trainer will be recruited to come instead. [A copy of the flyer accompanies these minutes.]

--The Northwest Quaker Women's Theological Conference will be held June 16-20, 2010 at Seabeck Conference Center. [For more information, visit www.pnwquakerwomen.org.]

--Don reminded Friends that as Listkeeper, he is the one who works directly with our webmaster, Walter Hartley of Salmon Bay Meeting, and is responsible for sending him the material that gets posted there. The flier for the spring 2010 QM session and materials for the 2010 Silent Retreat will be posted as soon as possible after Don receives them as computer files. Don praised Walter's generous work on our behalf and announced that Walter donates the full monetary cost of our website (domain registration and hosting fees) from his own pocket. Friends approved a minute of **thanks to Walter Hartley for his work and donations.**

--A number of announcements were made concerning Friends who are or have been seriously ill:

- Lynn Waddington of the Whidbey Island Worship Group is very ill, and she and partner Margaret Sorrel were consequently unable to attend despite their major contributions to planning this session.
- Jana Ostrom is recovering from her recent severe injuries from being struck by a car while walking home from a bus stop. She and Warren are grateful for the support of Friends.
- Kathryn Willard is on dialysis due to kidney failure and is awaiting a donated kidney.
- Nora Percival has just finished radiation treatments to try to prevent recurrence or metastasis of breast cancer, and will be in chemotherapy until the end of the year. Don is collecting donations to help her continue paying her mortgage while this treatment makes it impossible for her to work full-time.
- Pablo announced that Kristi and John Rozdilsky, who arrived at Lazy F yesterday evening so that Kristi could work in the Children's Program, were forced to return home by John's heart ailment taking a sudden turn for the worse. He shared with us the sad news that John has just passed away.
- Cards are available for Friends who wish to send greetings and well wishes to Lynn, Jana, and Kathryn.

--Don announced that Freda the Peace Dove is still in Bellingham but hasn't been nearly as busy as he anticipated, largely because he has been more busy with other things than anticipated. Freda is ready to visit elsewhere, and Don invites any interested meeting or worship group to contact him to arrange for a transfer.

09-09-10 Meeting for Business **closed** with worshipful silence, to meet again on April 24th, 2010.

Don Goldstein, Recording Clerk
Iris Graville, Presiding Co-clerk