

Following a period of silence Peter Lasersohn, clerk, called the meeting to order and called for a report from the nominating committee.

Nominating Committee Report -- Dawn Rubbert reported that Jeannie Marvin of Clear Creek is willing to serve as clerk for the coming two years, until Spring 2009. Meeting approved.

Friends appreciated the service of Peter Lasersohn over the last two years. In addition to compiling all minutes from recent history which could be located he coordinated our work in a welcome orderly fashion. Friends agreed that Peter could step down and that Jeannie would clerk the remainder of this meeting.

The new clerk called for reports from the Monthly Meetings, worship and preparative groups.

Clear Creek -- Beth Schobernd reported that they have three new members since spring - Ruth Raffensperger, Todd Kuzma and Rebecca Conant. They have decided not to have their regular Homecoming celebration this fall. Instead Anne McGhiey will share her spiritual journey at 10:30 on November 4 as part of First First Day. Beth Schobernd is the new clerk with Jeannie Marvin serving as assistant clerk.

Beth added via email: Something I should have included, but forgot - In May several youth and adults traveled to Quakerdale in Iowa. They took with them the hand-tied fleece blankets that First Day School participants had been working on through the winter. The blankets were given to the young girls who reside at Quakerdale.

Decatur Worship Group -- Grayce Mesner gave brief reports for Decatur and Springfield, IL worship groups which are under the care of Clear Creek. Grayce read the following message from Cindy Reynolds: "Decatur Worship Group continues to meet -- even though there are only three of us. We support each other whenever we can. Although we don't do anything in the community as a group, each of us is involved in some kind of volunteer activity. Gary continues to volunteer at the library and is on a committee of a local group that addresses domestic violence; Eva continues to volunteers with the Kiwanians and does projects for many people who ask her; Cindy volunteers at the local CASA office (Court Appointed Special Advocates) helping to organize their records and files. We enjoy gathering with the Springfield Worship Group about once every other month. Yes, we are concerned about our small group, but we also continue to draw support from our group.

Springfield MM -- Grayce read the following report from Springfield sent by Diane McCluskey: "We meet almost every Sunday at my home with anywhere from two to seven in attendance. We have social chat before and after our period of silence. We manage to meet with the Decatur group about once a quarter followed by a potluck where we catch up on personal lives and solve some of the world's problems in a Quakerly way. We thoroughly enjoy and admire each other and are friends as well as Friends.

We have enjoyed Brad Laird's annual visits the past two years. We are trying to arrange a trip to Urbana within the next six weeks to worship with that community.

Our social action consists of cooking and serving dinner one night a month at a local homeless shelter. Two of our regular members also volunteer at the Springfield emergency overflow homeless shelter when it is operating during the cold months. I participate in a grassroots interfaith committee which hosts quarterly interfaith services open to the public where each faith tradition is asked to make a brief statement, prayer, song, etc., addressing that quarter's topic. This quarter's topic is international peace.

I do not know of anyone planning to attend the Quarterly meeting this time and wish you great success. Peace and Light"

Columbia MM -- No Friends from Columbia being present Margaret Katrinides reported as the YM visitor to Columbia MM. Columbia Friends are pleased to have some children attending and are now conducting First Day School. They are working on learning to love each other so that all may feel free to speak their own truth. Bob Wixom recently had knee replacement surgery. He is now at home. Lorena Jean is not doing well and Friends are asked to hold her in the Light.

Peoria-Galesburg MM -- Elke Narkiewicz reported for Peoria-Galesburg MM. "We have monthly meeting for business as well as a monthly worship sharing and potluck where we use Marsha Holliday's guide *Exploring Quakerism*. It has enriched our meeting and has helped us to grow inwardly. We are doing a lot of outreach. We choose one idea per month at business meeting and implement it. Believing Friends need to be more visible, we are listed in area newspapers within an hour radius of our meeting. We are also on listings of area churches for colleges and universities within an hour radius from us. We are in the process of making a sign for my house, where we worship. We have articles in the area papers announcing and inviting visitors to join us for each worship sharing. We have had two recent guests who have long histories with Friends. We are encouraged despite our small size that our community is growing in many ways."

St. Louis MM -- Thanks to more than a year of hard work - particularly of a group committed to nurturing gifts and talents - St. Louis Monthly Meeting is beginning a new phase in how we are organized. Lenny Donelan and Steve Tamari described some of the details of the meetings new structure. The intention of the new structure is to increase opportunities for Friends to participate in both long-term and short-term service to the Meeting. We have two new co-clerks who have overseen their first meeting for business,

Rolla Preparative Meeting -- Chris Jocius reported for Rolla Preparative Meeting which is under the care of St, Louis MM. They had to locate a new place to worship as the building they previously used has been torn down. They are now in the parlor of the First United Methodist Church of Rolla where they gather at 1:30 on Sunday afternoons. There are often only three persons for Sunday worship.

Southern Illinois MM -- Mark Amos reported for Southern Illinois MM in Carbondale. The building they meet in will be razed and they are actively seeking a new location. They are working on outreach and even before they began, three new people began attending including a small baby. Kathy Cotton added that the meeting found great joy in supporting the Amos family in their trip to Kenya for the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) workcamp.

Urbana-Champaign MM -- Peter Lasersohn reported. (See attached written report.)

Treasurer's Report -- Margie Haworth presented a written treasurer's report (attached). A Friend asked how much groups were expected to contribute to BRQ. The answer is \$5 per resident adult member per year.

Blue River Quarterly Planning Follow-up Report -- Elke Narkiewicz gave a report regarding establishing a system for planning quarterly meeting gatherings (attached). Elke was thanked for this report.

BRQ Website -- As one of the responses to this report a discussion took place about having a website and/or some form of interactive electronic communication. A website could be one repository for information about BRQ history and procedures. A committee was formed to consider how this might move forward: Peter Lasersohn, Dawn Amos, Steve Hinson and Jenny Donelan volunteered. We anticipate a report at the Spring BRQ meeting.

Green Burial Committee -- In 4/06 a committee was established to gather information about alternative burial practices and to bring forward a report recommending whether BRQ should move forward in support of the minute proposed by Urbana-Champaign MM and whether it should be taken forward to IYM.

The initial committee members were Steve Hinson, convener; Jeanette Baker; and, John Gilpin. In April 2007 Margie Haworth and Bobbi Trist were added to the committee, Steve again asks to be relieved of the responsibility of convening this group. Margie Haworth agreed to ask Bobbi Trist if she will convene the group. We recognize that the next report may be that there is not sufficient support within BRQ to take this matter forward.

Upcoming BRQ Gatherings -- The question was raised whether we have a site reserved for next fall. The small meetings in the south -- Columbia, Southern Illinois and Rolla -- are responsible for planning. We remind these Friends that they should feel free to call upon others from within BRQ for assistance with the planning and execution of this meeting. Following discussion it was agreed that we would reserve space at Dubois Center for fall 2008, Dawn Rubbert will take care of this.

Spring 2008 BRQ will be April 11-13 at Mennohaven. It was announced that the IYM Winter Retreat will be March 28th also at Mennohaven.

The minutes were approved as read and at 3:10 we closed with silent worship.

**Blue River Quarterly Planning Follow-up Report
September 2007**

Presented by Elke Narkiewicz

This is a report to follow up on the request to explore problems in planning Blue River Quarterly gatherings. I spoke with as many previous coordinators as possible to gain information about what works and what is problematic in planning BRQ gatherings. Here is a summary of the 6 main problem areas:

1. The need for coordinators and volunteers to plan BRQ gatherings. Planning often becomes the responsibility of one person. Perhaps the fear of not getting help keeps Friends from stepping forward at all. Working in a group of about 3 committed people to divide up planning the location/food/housing, adult program, and youth program works well and is a manageable distribution of work. Getting the next gathering organized soon after the last one is helpful because ideas are fresh and it is less of a burden later on. Some coordinators said it was helpful to email or mail out a "save the date" card in a bright color to set the date and then to work out the details of the next gathering afterwards.
2. Last minute reservations. Coordinators need to know how many people are coming to plan for food, lodging, and activities. Friends need to be more considerate of our coordinators and hosts by signing up early. Some suggested a late penalty fee to discourage last-minute planning.
3. Access to guidelines for planning BRQ. Excellent guidelines have been written and are available in paper form from a handful of previous coordinators. Online access would make them available to everyone. Coordinators benefit from these well-tested guidelines for planning. Lack of an obvious process may intimidate Friends from volunteering, for fear of not knowing how to go about planning such an event.
4. Getting enough people to come. All of us- not just coordinators- need to invite others to come to BRQ. Because our meetings are spread out across Illinois and beyond, it's a great opportunity to reconnect with each other. Youth involvement is essential. Children might invite friends along. Families need to personally invite and encourage other families, especially those with children. Newcomers may need an explanation of what BRQ is and be encouraged to come along. Newcomers may not be familiar with how Friends do business. Pamphlets about Quaker practice, process and terms may be helpful. It is important that whatever site is used, that there are comfortable sleeping accommodations (not everyone is a camper) and that the food is good. Paying particular attention to vegetarian options is important (cooks may need recipes and suggestions).
5. More help with childcare is needed. Please try to ask people who enjoy working with children but who are not parents themselves. Parents need a chance to be with other adults and find refreshment. In small meetings this is especially important, as parents are often caring for the children of their meetings. Parents may want more specifics about sleeping accommodations and programming, to feel comfortable attending, especially with a range in ages of children

Blue River Quarterly Planning Follow-up Report - September 2007 – continued . . .

6. Programming style. Too much sitting is a frequent complaint of Friends about BRQ. Separating IYM planning from BRQ business helps, as does making sure Friends take breaks at least hourly to stand and move about. Because Friends typically travel some distance to attend a BRQ gathering, doing some adult activities that involve physical movement in the programming would be good. Dancing (square & contra dancing) and art (working with clay) were suggested, and appeal to all ages. Friends have enjoyed programs that start with smaller group activities which then progress into larger group activities. This helps many people overcome shyness and gives newcomers a chance to get to know everyone.

These are the main problems. In summary, it would help to compile guidelines for planning, list retreat centers (including contact information) which have been used in the past, and post these online on the IYM website. It might be good to have a place online to post tips for future coordinators. In this way, we might all learn from each other without the process being inadvertently kept secret, and we might find we have more success getting the help we need to more easily plan BRQ gatherings. My thanks to all the previous coordinators, who have given so much of themselves and to us all.

Respectfully submitted,
Elke Narkiewicz

State of Society, September, 2007
Urbana-Champaign Meeting

Page 1

We have had a healthy attendance at worship this summer and fall — triple the attendance we regularly had three years ago, before we moved into the new meetinghouse. We're looking around us and thinking, "How do we nurture all this growth?" and we're coming up with three overlapping circles, Spiritual Nurture, Building Community, and Nurturing Newcomers. With those overlaps in mind, we've reached out in various ways.

Quad Day and Adult Young Friends. Quad Day is an institution at the University —all the campus organizations have a booth on the Quad and the incoming students all descend in droves to connect with the organizations of their choice. For a number of years, this has been an institution we have run with a lot of grayheads. But over the summer, Andrea and Tim Bretl invited our students to a potluck at their house, and those students contributed their creative energies to the Quad Day effort. They helped staff the booth, which helped attract students. They decided to host a potluck on campus for the students who expressed interest during Quad Day. One of our students made a flier advertising the potluck, with a picture of the Quaker Oats guy with the slogan, "Think this is all Quakers eat? Think again." Only one new student showed up at the special potluck, but he came to worship the next day, and our students are busy contacting the others on the signup sheet to invite them again. We are blessed with all this energy devoted to attracting other young people.

Quaker Basics. We had a series of four meetings before worship to explain some basic things about Quakerism: a session about silent worship — difficulties and solutions to difficulties — a session on the peace testimony, and two sessions on Quaker history, which we advertised as "350 Years of Quaker History in 45 Minutes." Peter Lasersohn did a great job with these talks on our history, clearing up confusions among oldtimers as well as newcomers. His talks were a real tour de force, and several of us have urged Peter to publish this summary of our history. IYM Friends can find Peter's notes for his presentations on the website: <http://www.quaker.org/urbana/>

Procedures Handbook. While you're checking out our website, look for the Handbook of Meeting Procedures, which was approved by at our September business meeting. A labor of love by five devoted Friends, this nearly 40-page document was written to inform old and new Friends alike how the work of the meeting gets done. It covers everything from good manners in business meeting to how to clean the toilets. Feel free to print the document and use it to start your own Handbook of Meeting Procedures.

Vacation Friends School. We had between 9 and 13 kids on any given day of this week-long day camp, started by Brenda Koenig with Ellen Baranowski and Bobbi Trist, plus at least that many adult volunteers (not all at once, of course). It was a wonderful opportunity for the kids and adults to get to know each other better. We played games, sang songs, baked, danced, collected moths, did arts and crafts, made paper, dressed up in costumes, relaxed in the hammock, played endless games with large empty boxes, and worked together in silence every day. Every day we talked about a testimony. A favorite activity was "passing the squeeze" at closing circle. When asked, the kids said their favorite things about Vacation Friends School were: baking cookies, dressing in costumes, playing imagination games with boxes and, most importantly, playing with friends. The kids also really appreciated that they could choose most of their activities themselves (We always started the day with choosing activities).

Float Trips on the Middle Fork. In June and again in September, Friends converged to canoe, kayak, paddleboat, or tube down the Middle Fork. We had a brown bag lunch together. Everyone had a great time, even though the water was really low in September. Nobody got too sunburned, although those in a tube sometimes had back trouble after sitting in an awkward position for three hours. Our new clerk, Sandy Bales, suggested the Canoe Outing, and we have decided it's going to be a tradition. We are looking for other good ideas for community-building through shared fun.

State of Society, September, 2007
Urbana-Champaign Meeting

Page 2

Labor Day Parade. The Unions sponsor a family-oriented parade on Labor Day, and this was the first year we have participated. The First Day School made a float based on a child's wagon, and some of us joined the kids for the parade. Our subject was Immigration Reform, and our slogan was, "A Place at the Table." The Jobs with Justice people marched right behind us. The friendly onlookers cheered us on, calling, "Go, Quakers!"

Friendly Eights. In June we started small group potlucks for Friends to get to know each other better. There were four groups, one of them a restaurant group. Each group met on its own schedule. We all had such a good time we decided to scramble the groups with a new signup sheet, so we can all get to know other Friends and eat more delicious Quaker food. Or explore different restaurants together.

Spiritual Nurture Groups. This fall we are starting worship-sharing groups, each group having five or six members, and each group selecting its own schedule of meeting and taking turns designing a query for the worship-sharing. The first meetings of the Spiritual Nurture groups will be the week of October 15-19. We are looking forward to introducing worship-sharing to our newcomers as a way to get to know one another in a more spiritual way.

Friend in Residence. We have invited Maurine Pyle, IYM's Field Secretary, to reside in our community for a year, and Maurine is busy discerning whether and how she can come be among us. At the very least, she plans to visit us more often and longer. When she comes to see us, we work hard to book her up, rushing her from one Friendly session to another. She says she loves being treated as someone who has a function while she's here. We look forward to an exciting year with Maurine, one way or another.

Peace and Service. A number of new initiatives came from Peace and Service committee over the summer. First, a singer-songwriter from Tucson named Patricia Morrison contacted us, offering to present a fundraiser for us. We invited the community, and several Mennonites came. Her voice filled the meeting room with lovely music. A freewill offering raised \$430 for African Great Lakes Initiative and Friendship with Cambodia.

Also, Ned Stowe of Friends Committee on National Legislation joined us for worship one Sunday and talked to us about the work of FCNL. It was good to see our old Friend Ned, who was a member of this meeting in the seventies and eighties, and who got his first job at FCNL based on a glowing letter Cam Satterthwaite wrote about him.

Finally, David Zarembka, his daughter Joy Zarembka, and two African Quakers came for an evening of conversation about the African Great Lakes/Friends Peace Teams effort to rebuild community after genocide. We had on hand and sold some copies of the AGLI book, *Seeking Peace in Africa*, and of Joy Zarembka's book, *Pigment of Your Imagination*. Again, we reached out to the community with this presentation in our lovely new meetinghouse.

And ours is an academic community, which means renewed life begins in late August and slows in late May! Stay tuned for our spring State of Society. We expect lots more action over the fall and winter months.

TREASURER'S REPORT TO BLUE RIVER QUARTERLY MEETING

September 21, 2007

Balance on Hand April. 21, 2007: \$2406.14

DEBITS

| | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| 04/21/07 | Martha Tyner, Square Dance Caller | \$ 75.00 |
| 04/23/07 | Menno Haven | 1500.00 |
| 04/24/07 | Menno Haven | 855.63 |
| 04/30/07 | Menno Haven – Deposit for Spring '08 | 555.49 |
| 04/30/07 | FPT/AGLI – Amos family to Africa | 750.00 |
| 08/01/07 | DuBois Center – Deposit for Fall '07 | <u>150.00</u> |
| | TOTAL DEBITS | \$3886.12 |

CREDITS

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 04/24/07 | Spring Quarterly Fees & Donations | \$1654.00 |
| 04/30/07 | Spring Quarterly Fees & Donations | 1336.01 |
| 05/25/07 | Donations | 140.00 |
| 06/11/07 | Donations | 165.00 |
| 06/30/07 | Interest | 5.23 |
| 08/01/07 | Donations | 240.00 |
| 08/20/07 | Donations | <u>200.00</u> |
| | TOTAL CREDITS | \$3740.24 |

Balance on Hand September 21, 2007 \$2260.26

April – August '07 Meeting Contributions

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|-------|-------------|----------|
| 05/07 | Clear Creek | \$140.00 |
| 06/07 | U/C | 165.00 |
| 08/07 | Columbia | 200.00 |
| 08/07 | Southern IL | 40.00 |
| 08/07 | St. Louis | 200.00 |