

At Blue River Quarterly Meeting, held the 5th of Fifth Month, 2012 at Camp CILCA:
Eighteen Friends were present.

1. We gathered in silence.
2. The clerk reviewed the business to be considered, and asked for additional items, several of which were offered.
3. In the absence of the recording clerk, Peter Lasersohn was appointed to act in that capacity for this meeting.
4. The question was raised whether to reserve Camp CILCA for next spring's meeting, or instead to return to Camp MennoHaven. Following initial discussion, a decision was deferred until after the treasurer's report.
5. Margie Haworth-Davis presented the treasurer's report (attached). Debits since our last meeting totaled \$4378.20; credits totaled \$3442.84. Balance on hand is \$4695.76.
6. At our last meeting, the treasurer was asked to investigate whether our current suggested donation by monthly meetings of \$5 per adult resident member per year is sufficient, and make a recommendation. She reports that even if all monthly meetings had paid the suggested amount, the quarterly meeting would have had a shortfall for the last two years. Actual donations were somewhat lower than the suggested amount last year. She recommends increasing the suggested donation to \$8 per adult resident member per year. Friends approve.
7. Returning to the question of our location for next spring, we decided to reserve Camp CILCA for the second weekend in April 2013, if available, leaving to Urbana-Champaign Monthly Meeting the final decision whether to hold the gathering instead at Camp MennoHaven, and allowing flexibility in the choice of dates, depending on camp availability.
8. The recording clerk read a letter from Southern Illinois Monthly Meeting, asking support for its member Justin Leverett, who is undertaking volunteer service with Quaker Voluntary Service in Atlanta, Georgia. Justin is committed to raising \$4000 to support this work. Southern Illinois Meeting has already pledged \$500. After the letter was read, Justin spoke about his plans, providing additional details about the work. Several Friends spoke afterwards, stressing the importance of supporting Friends volunteer service, at both an individual and an organizational level. The meeting approved a donation of \$500, and encourages individual Friends to donate as well. The clerk is directed to compose a letter conveying this decision to Quaker Voluntary Service, and to communicate our support as well to Southern Illinois Meeting and to the Finance Committee of Illinois Yearly Meeting.
9. Justin Leverett read a letter (attached) from Southern Illinois Monthly Meeting reporting its minute of Third Month 25, 2012, calling for a thoroughgoing reform or closure of Tamms Correctional Center in Tamms, Illinois. Friends recall that Blue River Quarterly Meeting

passed a minute with regard to Tamms in its Spring 2009 session. Urbana-Champaign Meeting is also involved in this issue. The clerk will contact Urbana-Champaign and Southern Illinois Meetings to be sure they are aware of each other's efforts before bringing this issue before Illinois Yearly Meeting.

10. Friends read State of Society reports from Urbana-Champaign, Columbia, Clear Creek and St. Louis Meetings (attached). Erin Taylor reported orally on the Macomb Worship Group: It has been meeting since October, with six adults and four children. First Day School is held every week. A "Quaker Buffet" is held after meeting twice a month. Other Friends remarked on the well-organized outreach efforts of Macomb Worship Group.

11. The meeting then concluded.

TREASURER'S REPORT TO BLUE RIVER QUARTERLY MEETING

May 5, 2012

Balance on Hand Sep 24, 2011: \$5,631.12

DEBITS

9/25/2011	Supplies & Childcare - D Amos	80.00
9/27/2011	ILYM - World Conf Delegates	250.00
9/27/2011	FWCC - World Conf Travel Fund	250.00
10/2/2011	DuBois Center Fall '11	3,260.00
10/6/2011	FGC - Fall '11 program expenses	<u>538.20</u>
TOTAL DEBITS		4,378.20

CREDITS

9/27/2011	Fall '11 Fees & Donations	1,888.00
9/30/2011	Interest	2.62
12/31/2011	Interest	2.26
3/31/2012	Interest	1.96
4/26/2012	Spring '12 Fees	1,018.00
4/27/2012	Donations	<u>530.00</u>

TOTAL CREDITS

3,442.84

Balance on Hand May 5, 2012:

\$4,695.76

Oct '11 - May '12

4/27/2012

St. Louis

\$330

4/27/2012

Columbia

\$200

Letter from Southern Illinois Meeting in support of Justin Leverett's volunteer service

Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting

A Monthly Meeting of Illinois Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

www.siquaker.org

info@siquaker.org

Interfaith Center

913 S. Illinois Ave.

Carbondale, IL 62901

Dear Friends,

We would like to invite you to join us in supporting Justin Leverett, both spiritually and financially, as he embarks on a year of Quaker service. Our small meeting has pledged a minimum of \$500 support and we are asking others in the Quaker community to join us in providing support as Justin spends the next year working through Quaker Volunteer Service (QVS) in Atlanta, Georgia. He is committed to raising a total of \$4,000 to support this work.

The program he will be working through is described at this website:

<http://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/> This is the inaugural year of QVS in Atlanta and each participant is asked to help in raising funds. The participants will live together in a spiritual community and each will be placed with a volunteer organization which, in the words of QVS, "offer[s] direct support to marginalized individuals and communities, and that strive[s] to transform unjust systems."

Let us tell you a little about Justin. He has been a part of our meeting since he was eight years old and in third grade. His father, Tom Leverett, and stepmother, Jen Dunn, are both members of the Meeting and were married in the care of the Meeting. Justin participated in First Day School education throughout his childhood and his teenage years. He is a compassionate, intelligent, committed young man who approaches what he undertakes with humor and creativity. He is just the sort of person who will help QVS grow.

Justin's college career was marked by many achievements, including spending a semester in France, being inducted into Phi Beta Kappa and living in a cooperative dormitory where he served as the Food Board Manager, a position that involved assuring that residents had quality meals and a healthy and safe food preparation and dining area. He majored in journalism and French, and served on the staff of the student newspaper, maintained blogs and served as a DJ and reporter for the student-run radio station. Throughout his college career, he shouldered the greater part of college expenses through scholarships, working and loans. During college, he continued to visit and participate in Meeting activities when returning home on break. He attended meeting for worship, "Life of the Meeting" events, which combined fellowship with discussion and discernment activities, and he participated in our meetings for worship with a concern for business.

Since returning to Carbondale following his college graduation, Justin has significantly increased his participation in and service to the Meeting, regularly helping with child care, participating in worship, discussion and business. The Meeting enthusiastically accepted him as recording clerk this year. Justin has become an important voice in SIQM.

Justin applied to QVS after a clearness process through the Meeting. We are confident that he has much to offer through the QVS program and that this opportunity will contribute both to his own spiritual growth, the growth of others who will join him in the community created through QVS and to the work of the agency with which he is placed.

Donations may be made to QVS at the following address:

Quaker Voluntary Service
668 Elbert St. SW
Atlanta, GA 30310

Your donation should indicate that it is part of the fundraising effort for Justin Leverett. Currently QVS has a matching grant, and donations of \$250 or more will be matched dollar for dollar up to a total match of \$10,000. QVS states that it "is an incorporated nonprofit and [it is filing [its] 501(c)3 paperwork. This means that donations can be considered tax-exempt now, assuming [it is] granted tax exempt status before November 2013." They state, "[w]e are confident this will be the case. If you have any questions, please contact [QVS]."

Please join us in holding Justin in the light as he undertakes this year of Quaker service, and, if you can, please help support this important program for which Justin is volunteering.

In the Light,

Michael Batinski and Doc Stodden
Co-Clerks
Southern Illinois Quaker Meeting

Letter from Souther Illinois Quaker Meeting on the subject of Tamms Correctional Center

Dear David,

The Southern Illinois meeting as spent several weeks pondering the proposed closing the supermax prison at Tamms. We have discovered differences and learned from one another. After three weeks, the meeting gathered around the minute below which was then read before a state committee investigating the proposal to close the prison and then printed in the local paper. So preoccupied, we have forgotten that Blue River Quarterly is nearly upon us. I do hope this arrives in time to be read.

Minute adopted 3/25/2012

The Southern Illinois Quakers recognize the treatment of prisoners at Tamms Correctional Center as detrimental to human dignity. Starting in 2009, the Belleville News-Democrat documented policies of near-constant solitary confinement, without effective mechanisms for mental health treatment or eventual release to the general prison population. This deeply offends our conscience, and by some definitions it qualifies as torture.

We also recognize that many families in our region are dependent for their well-being on employment at the prison and that there are few other employment opportunities in the area. We come together in the belief that the rights of prisoners to humane treatment and the right of prison employees to the means for earning a decent living need not be viewed as antagonizing alternatives.

We thus believe that the current policy of isolation that leads to mental suffering should cease and that the prison with its current staff should continue to work toward devising a humane program that may lead to rehabilitation and restoration. The Mississippi State Penitentiary Unit 32 supermax has revolutionized its program, and so can Tamms.

We feel that Tamms is a current example of the larger need for prison reform. We strongly feel that the decision to close Tamms should not be dictated by budgetary problems, but rather be motivated by the value of human dignity and issues concerning quality of life for both the prisoners and employees. However, unless Tamms is dramatically reformed, the Southern Illinois Quakers support Governor Quinn's proposal to close the prison, redirecting a portion of the savings toward creating jobs in the area.

Peace

Michael C Batinski
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Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting State of Society Report

The life of the Spirit generally fares well in Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting. Worship is rich with silence and contemplation. Many are message filled. Many other times tender only the reassuring warmth of the quiet.

Our membership strives to find useful and proper paths for ministry and service. For service, we provide sandwiches to the soup kitchen once a month. Meeting and membership supports prison work and reforms with a variety of different projects. Other local projects are supported as needs arise. We support an emergency fund to support small crisis needs within our broader community. A recent fundraiser for the emergency fund succeeded beyond expectations. Proceeds also supported a sponsored orphan abroad.

For ministry, we orchestrate support and clearness committees when requested. With organized visitation, we reach out to help our sick and stricken. Singing before worship has embraced an enthusiastic fellowship. Community time after worship stretches long after rise of worship. Meeting events have been still fewer this past year, but have included events for traveling FCNL, FWCC and ILYM Friends. Holiday gatherings remain popular. In a very welcome way, many committee meetings have become times to break bread as well as for business. We have sponsored two Memorials for passing members of our community, when we celebrated their lives with joy. Meeting encourages travel to greater Quaker gatherings and some have attended Quarterly and Yearly meetings and FGC Gathering. New attenders, members and visitors have been warmly welcomed. Two new members have joined or started the process of joining.

We continue to be blessed with a general lack of internal conflict, with very smoothly flowing business meetings and cooperative collaboration in our projects. We have been troubled by the theft/destruction of our air-conditioner, and the aesthetic damage to the Meeting House due to inappropriate construction, but we have moved forward with repairs and replacement without controversy. When friction has arisen between members, conflict has not spread and has been settled.

Religious education has struggled this year. We and the children, lost a beloved caregiver. Parents struggled to take up the slack. A key family with kids also moved away, and the RE committee only slowly recovered. Nevertheless, we continue to have a robust children's meeting with several younger children attending most days and religious education proceeding on first

and third Sundays. Vacation Friends School was an intergenerational success and planning goes forward for this summer too. There has also been no recent program for the teens. Adult religious education has been very modest with no regular weekly program and only an occasional workshop.

The financial health of the Meeting remains satisfactory, though we have started to worry about how few actually contribute to us. The grounds continue to develop with tended vegetable and flower gardens and the planting of new trees. The library grows and gets occasional use. We welcome the use of our building by a small church on Sunday evenings and a separate Buddhist meditation group on Mondays, with at least one other faith group considering our space as well. The Springfield Worship Group continues under our care.

With thought toward our lower energies this past year, meeting committees are rebuilding and reorganizing. We look forward to a coming burst of enthusiasm.

Columbia Friends Meeting State of Society Report

Once more we have used Ministry & Advancement's Queries to guide this reflection, and once more our response to #4, "Does Joy prevail among you?" resonated with a positive answer. Joy infuses our times together, beginning with Worship, which many said has achieved a richer depth this past year. "We are quieter, more centered." This has extended to the worshipful, times when we attend to business, in which a large number feel invested and attend faithfully. "We are asked to 'walk cheerfully' and we are getting practice."

Many earnestly noted how much we experience the Presence of Love among us, how it undergirds our work and fellowship and care for one another: "Love is palpable in our silence." It enables us to listen both to the Seed within — the Inward Light — and also to each other in ways which are liberating.

The Love we feel and share has been welcomed by visitors, newcomers: In retrospect we see it is a central part of our outreach, with Grace making things happen beyond what we intend or plan. We've been entrusted with a Light that we do not want "hidden under a bushel." This led to our forming a new standing committee on Outreach, which among other things is using FGC materials, and also finding new ways to become visible in the larger community.

Participation in Columbia's wider events (Earth Day, Sustainability Fair, PrideFest, our weekly antimilitarism Vigil, CROP Walk) has led to conversations which thankfully have borne fruit, through quiet but persistent witness. Sometimes we learn of those attracted by our lives of simplicity and integrity. We seem to have a ministry of Listening.

Some of our members are facing increasing physical challenges and infirmities to which we try to minister (including rides, errands, food, medical accompaniment, friendly calls and visits.) Two

members moved into skilled nursing care: We keep up contact with them, bringing them to worship when possible. The plague of cancer has struck home with some of us this year. However, we've found that our increasing ability to make our needs known, and the responses elicited, form deeper relationships and strengthen the Meeting: We have "lots of opportunities to care in times of need."

We gratefully report a greater involvement of a number of younger attenders in the life of the Meeting. They are attending more frequently and more regularly, and they are solid folks who are staying to offer valuable service among us. God be praised! And we hosted a reunion of women who attended many years ago, some of whom said "We should do this more often," welcoming our renewal of contact.

Religious education has two dimensions: Our First Day School committee prepares programs for children who occasionally arrive with their parents, relatives, or visitors. And our "Meeting for Learning" committee schedules not only regular "Friendly Bible Study" sessions, but also a balance of speakers from both within and outside the Meeting. The latter have helped us learn more about the community's needs, spoken of the creative ways they have addressed those needs, and given us opportunities to lend support. We note that as adults, we never want to stop learning about our Quaker heritage, and value the curricula that have been shared with us.

Being part of the larger bodies of Quakerism benefitted us greatly this year. Beloved Friends have generously shared time and skills with us from ILYM. Chip Rorem led a "charrette" envisioning different ways of seeing/using our property. Maurine Pyle brought fun, community-building exercises and new curriculum possibilities. She, and traveling elders Mariellen Gilpin and Helene Pollock, each offered Opportunities for private visitation from which we continue to benefit.

There are several ways in which our Meeting has given pastoral care and found a deepening of trust as a result. We continue to use Clearness Committees, and our Spiritual Friends group moved into its 2nd year. The Meeting's times together include fun and sociability, especially when we hold our Fourth Friday Fun Nights, which include potlucks, games, cookouts, and ice-cream making. We would like to resume the hikes and birdwatching and float trips that Bob Wixom loved to organize.

Our finances seem stable. Stewardship has a broad base of support. We established a new standing committee on Finance, which has developed explicit criteria for how we give to outside groups, Quaker and otherwise.

Although our nominating committee ("Gifts & Leadings") has difficult work in filling all the responsibilities from our small numbers, they report that the positive responses show how much Meeting means to us, with cheerful willingness to take up our tasks: "It has to do with Love." In this self-assessment exercise, a Friend reminded us of the purpose of reporting on the State of Society: that we might get others' guidance and advice on our various ministries, that we may help "the Meeting to express the Divine Will." Please join us in that disciplined work.

Clear Creek Monthly Meeting of Friends

State of Society Report

It is not a secret that Clear Creek has a natural affinity for the buildings on the Illinois Yearly Meeting site. We enjoy grabbing screwdrivers, paintbrushes, brooms and cloths to spend several blissful hours repairing or cleaning wood cupboards, floors and bannisters. This year we moved awkward mattresses and beds up tight stairs with improbable odds of reaching targeted bedrooms. We painted the inside of cupboards, hung pamphlet shelves, borrowed help from Kyle Wilson (Clancy Wilson's grandnephew) to haul in a giant bookcase into the library. As usual, Dick Ashdown's red truck was invaluable in moving the mattresses, box springs and bookcase from Beth Schobernd's house to Clear Creek House. We also rolled a heavy safe that has been stored in the library closet slowly out over flattened boxes onto Dick's truck. On the same day, we picked up a beautiful oak table donated by Dick and hauled it from his house into the library.

Our focus on Clear Creek House repairs and furnishing dominated our thoughts and activities this year. We volunteered time, effort and thought to create a more comfortable and cozy environment that complements the completed renovation. At some point, we began to feel that our care for the building had nudged away time spent on our spiritual program. With this in mind, we decided to turn our attention away from building activities for a while to regain our sense of identity as a lively spiritual community.

Our year was warmed by the gentle influence and activities of our young Friends and adult Young Friends.

Claire and Laure Goode reminded us how much fun we had in the fall when we crushed and squeezed apples through an old fashion cider press. They asked to repeat this fun event this past fall. It was a wonderful example of how our Young Friends influenced the spirit of our community.

When Carol Bartles returned from her visit to Andrew Bartles, in Lebanon, she gave an account of his volunteer work at an orphanage founded by the French and his attendance at a very old Quaker meeting associated with a Friends school. The members there have asked him to represent their Meeting at the Triennial Gathering in Africa next year. His courage in engaging with an international community reminds us to remain open to new experiences.

Spring was just peeking around the corner when we received news of the birth of Rose Dennis's baby boy, Milo James Johnson. We were thrilled when after a short rest she and Milo visited our Meeting. We could barely take our eyes off his peaceful face. A baby shower was held in his honor and on that day, Margie Haworth-Davis and her baby Sam Davis also visited our Meeting. It was as if we had a double blessing.

Zoe Rei began publishing "The Quake," which is a magazine for Young Adult Friends. It is her hope to provide this space for expression to all Adult Young Friends within all the Quaker branches. We are excited to witness this creative union with the Young Adult Friends and look

forward to reading what they have to say.

Sara Raffensperger is going through the long transition between her last busy year of high school and the prospect of leaving this coming fall for college. She is looking forward to assisting Scott Greenler with an F.G.C. extreme Frisbee workshop this coming summer. Her gentle humor is always a welcome presence in our midst.

Kiva Schobernd's delight in speaking with honest expression and her appreciation for celebrating life lightens our hearts. We especially enjoyed hearing of her dancing in the rain with her fellow girl scouts while they sold cookies.

Zara Schobernd is our youngest Friend. She moves with a gentle manner and kindness toward animals that reminds us that quiet actions can speak effectively. These Young Friends have been a blessing to our hearts as their presence, whether near or far away, infuse our gathering with quiet joy and hope for the future life of our Meeting.

St. Louis Friends Meeting State of Society Report

The past year for the St. Louis Friends Meeting brought some welcome consistency, and an energizing opportunity to apply our Testimonies of Equality, Peace and Community. The Meeting was asked to respond to queries for preparation of this Report. Comments about the quality of worship tended to be positive, with some concern expressed about occasional lack of depth in spoken ministry and personal or political content of the messages. The general sense of the Meeting for Business continues to be favorable, particularly on the change to segueing quickly to business from Worship.

In January Ministry and Caring initiated the Claremont Dialogues to help strengthen worship and spiritual growth. Five groups were organized to serve our sprawling geography; some have completed the six week term, others are still meeting, and the response from the participants has been positive.

We are heartened by the strength of the Rolla Preparative Meeting which is in our care. There is some concern shared by many about the need to strengthen and support our committees. While key committees have been functioning well, others need to be more fully staffed, some will need clerks, and we also need to support and nurture the current clerks.

The Meeting's spirit was most uplifted by our decision to begin working with homeless people in our downtown neighborhood through the City of St. Louis Winter Outreach program. Friends volunteered to provide meals or act as evening and overnight hosts, and others contributed supplies or financial support. Although the warm winter allowed only three opportunities for action, the Friends involved reported that the first effort was successful and gratifying. This activity is the fruit we had been seeking from our decision to move to the inner city in hope of

being able to act as good stewards in mission to the community.

On invitation from FGC, the Meeting gathered a group of over twenty young Friends and adults to participate in an intergenerational workshop led by Judy Hale Reed. The meeting house was filled with the work of spirit building and, in one exercise, several hundred feet of yarn. In November, Young Friends from around Illinois Yearly Meeting held a Youth Quake at the meeting house that provided a fun learning experience. We were energized by these events and will continue our effort to include young Friends in our Meeting's activities.

First Day School continued to be strong and provided a variety of activities, including studying the peace testimony, looking at work from a Quaker perspective, a basic bible study, and a poetry workshop. Our young Friends continue to be eager learners, and we would like to create more opportunities for teenage friends.

The Meeting house continues to be the host venue for the Friends Peace Teams office. We are grateful to member Chuc Smith for his service as the Team's staff person and to John Kintree who will succeed Chuc shortly.

We were blessed by the birth of two "young friends". Two members became active in the wider Quaker community: Caryn Wixom began an "artist in residence" internship at Pendle Hill, and Dawn Rubbert recently went on a pilgrimage to Kenya as a representative to the FWCC World Gathering of Friends.

In October the Meeting welcomed John Calvi, who presented his healing workshop on "Finding the Joy in Pain" to over twenty participants. As with his previous workshops sponsored by the Meeting, those who attended found his unique talents deeply beneficial.

There are some lingering concerns that are being held in the light. Our financial condition and stewardship of the Meeting House continue to be cautious and sometimes overwhelming concerns. We are grateful that we have been able to manage our mortgage and overall financial picture.

In summary, St. Louis Friends have been energetic and active in the past year and are seeking the Light to continue to find ways to grow and serve.