

Blue River Quarterly - Minutes

Saturday, April 9, 2016 Camp CILCA

In Attendance (those in bold attended Meeting for Business/others worked with the children):

Rebekah Buchanan, Jack & Lucy – Macomb WG
Beth Carpenter – Clear Creek
Joy & Owen Duncan, Tiegan, Riona & Niall – 57th Street
Dale Gardner, Liam, Quinn & Anya – U-C
Mariellen Gilpin – Urbana-Champaign
Laure Goode – Downeere’s Grove/Clear Creek
Margie Haworth-Davis, Sam – Urbana-Champaign
Barbara Harroun, Anna & Jack - Macomb WG
Chris Jocius - Urbana-Champaign
Rose Johnson – Clear Creek
Brittany Koresch - Urbana-Champaign
Peter Lasersohn and Nathan - Urbana-Champaign
Jean-Marie Marron-Beebe - Urbana-Champaign
Neil and Grayce Mesner – Clear Creek

Jackson Meyer-Lee – South Bend
Fariba Murray - Bloomington-Normal
Ava Rockafeld – Evanston
Dawn Rubbert - St Louis
Kelly Schobernd, Kiva & Zara – Clear Creek
Christina Schulz, Gwen & Collin – B-N
Chuc & Denice Smith – St. Louis
Amal Tamari – St. Louis
Erin Taylor, Sean West and Lorelei – Macomb WG
Bobbi Trist, Malolm & Malachi Matthews – U-C
Eric Volkel-Barno & Andrew – Springfield WG
Judy Wolicki – 57th Street

26 Adults and 22 youth, including 6 high schoolers

1) We began the meeting with waiting worship.

2) Agenda Review – A space for announcements was added to the agenda. Recording clerk, Mike Ruberton, sent regrets that a work obligation prevented him from attending. Fariba Murray volunteered to serve as recording clerk for these sessions.

3) Treasurer’s Report: Margie Haworth-Davis, Treasurer, presented a written report – see below.

TREASURER'S REPORT TO BLUE RIVER QUARTERLY MEETING

9-Apr-16

Balance on Hand September 18, 2015: \$4,463.04

DEBITS

10/16/2015 DuBois Center - Fall '15 4392.80

TOTAL DEBITS 4,392.80

CREDITS

9/28/2015	Fall '15 Fees & Donations	3,526.00
9/28/2015	Fall '15 Fees & Donations	626.00
9/30/2015	Interest 30 days	0.55
10/31/2015	Interest 31 days	0.86
11/30/2015	Interest - 30 days	0.52
12/31/2015	Interest - 31 days	0.54
1/3/2016	Donation - St. Louis	88.00
1/31/2016	Interest - 31 days	0.55
2/29/2016	Interest - 29 days	0.51
3/17/2016	Donations	350.00
4/1/2016	Donation - St. Louis	88.00
	TOTAL CREDITS	4,681.53

Balance on Hand April 9, 2016: \$4,751.77

Sep '15 - Apr '16 Meeting Contributions:

9/28/2015	Southern IL	\$48
1/3/2016	St. Louis	\$88
3/17/2016	Columbia	\$200
4/1/2016	St. Louis	\$88

[NOTE: As will be reported at Fall Quarterly we had a shortfall of nearly \$500 for this Spring Gathering.]

4) State of the meeting reports for four meetings were read: Bloomington-Normal, St Louis, Clear Creek and Burlington, Iowa Worship Group. See below.

5) We received a report from the working group for the development of job descriptions for the offices of Blue River Quarterly Meeting including Clerk, Recording Clerk, Treasurer, and Website Manager. Dawn Rubbert reported for the committee which included Michael Ruberton, Bobbi Trist, and Mariellen Gilpin. The report included the position of Overall Coordinator for ILYM responsibilities. A description of the responsibilities of the website manager is yet to be developed. Friends reviewed the draft and accepted it with a few suggested changes which were noted by the clerk. See Attached. [Note: A revised report will be presented at Fall Quarterly.]

6) BRQ Website improvement updates: Sean has done some research and work on the website. He will continue developing the new website and launch it when ready. It is on Wordpress which is more flexible and can be edited by any number of persons.

7) BRQ Sponsored Retreat – A proposal for a one-day retreat to be held in the fall at Clear Creek House was presented. The proposed topic is "Celebrating Our Gifts." Maurine Pyle and Mariellen Gilpin will coordinate. Meeting approved.

8) A BRQ Inter-visitation proposal was prepared by Maurine Pyle and Mariellen Gilpin. Mariellen presented the written proposal. Following discussion, meeting approved \$500 maximum for reimbursement of travel costs for Mariellen and Maurine to visit three meetings and attend the fall retreat in the coming year.

9) Support for Kenyan Friend, Justimore Musombi: Justimore is a member of West Richmond Friends Meeting. He was forced to leave Earlham School of Religion when his scholarship was cancelled by his Kenyan Quaker Meeting when they learned he had come out as a gay man. It is proposed that we take up a collection to support this Friend who is suffering for his conscience. This is an opportunity to perform a good deed while educating ourselves about the oppression of others who suffer in Kenya and whom he wants to help with his ministry.

Meeting approved sending \$500 from the BRQ treasury. Additional contributions from BRQ members are encouraged. Friends should send their donations to the treasurer Margie Haworth-Davis by April 19th. At that time a letter and check will be sent to Justimore. See attached letter.

10) 200th anniversary of Blue River Quarterly Meeting – 2019: Erin Taylor presented the attached written report about four retreat centers near Salem, Indiana. Since the locations are closer to the south of BRQ we would hold the celebration in the fall and it would include our regular fall meeting for business. We thank Erin for gathering this information and it will be given further consideration in the fall session.

11) Meeting minuted our appreciation for Barb Harroun, Beth Carpenter, Christina Schulz, Dale Gardner and all who made this gathering possible.

12) Friends shared announcement regarding the literature table and the upcoming visit of Pastor Elie Nahimana from Burundi who will speak in St Louis on April 16th and 17th and Urbana-Champaign on April 19th and 20th.

13) We entered waiting worship followed by adjournment.

14) On Sunday morning the minutes were read back and approved.

Clerk, Dawn Rubbert

Fariba Murray, Acting Recording Clerk

St. Louis Friends Meeting State of Society Report April 2016

The St. Louis Friends Meeting has experienced a very active year. Many good things are taking place with several very active committees but we also continue with several non-functioning committees and committees without clerks.

We average around 30 to 35 people for worship each week and most agree the quality of silence is good. We frequently have visitors who tell us we seem very friendly and welcoming. Notes are sent to everyone who leaves their contact information in the guest book. We have gained some regular attenders and many of them are youthful (which pleases us as we think of the future of the Meeting!). Recently we had a Young Adult Friends gathering and it is hoped that they will continue to meet.

Meetings for Worship with a Concern for Business are spirit-led. Quaker process is followed and usually 9 to 12 Friends are present. Meeting labored through a process to establish rules for our winter shelter that included a maximum number of guests per night.

One evening in November a wedding took place at the meetinghouse and was a beautiful and joyful event.

We regularly have four children in First Day School. At least seven of our young people are now in college. Our meeting subscribes to [Friends Journal](#) for our college students.

Activities that Friends named as the most spiritually-led and beneficial this year included the Retreat, Spiritual Direction groups, organized discussions during potluck, Winter Outreach (Friends Shelter), "Not Just for Clerks" meetings, and the Joyful Work & Worship days.

A retreat was held in spring 2015 at the meetinghouse for simplicity and low cost so all could attend. We had better attendance than expected – over 20 – and Friends expressed that it was a valuable experience. Another retreat is planned for April 2016.

Monthly discussions during potluck were offered on topics such as Quaker Decision Making and Simplicity. They were well attended, and many named this as one of the most spiritually-led activities this year.

Friends Shelter was open for our 4th winter. On Monday and Tuesday nights the meetinghouse serves as an over-flow shelter if the temperature goes below 20 degrees. Three other churches have joined us in this ministry and help us with volunteers and food. A freezer and new oven were donated to our Meeting.

To face our on-going situation of non-functioning committees we held several "Not Just for Clerks" (NJFC) meetings. They are open to everyone, thus the name Not Just for Clerks, and were attended by around 9 to 12 F/friends each time. This led to several Joyful Work, Worship & Potluck events in 2015. We recognized the neglectful state of our building, especially the Firstday school wing, and accomplished a lot toward caring for it. Early in 2016 we met for several more NJFC meetings to facilitate the process of forming a Nominating Committee. We are without an Advancement Committee again this year. We hope to establish a way to present information about membership to those who might be interested.

The Michael Brown Working Group met for most of the year to organize responses to the murder of Michael Brown and the other racial injustices which were brought to the attention of the community through the Ferguson demonstrations. Condolences were sent to the family of Michael Brown and contributions were made to the NAACP for legal fees for the family. Black Lives Matter signs were made available and Meeting agreed to permanently place one in front of the meeting house. As part of the YWCA's city-wide program many Friends spent six months in a book study of "Witnessing Whiteness" by Shelly Tochluk which was facilitated by three volunteers from the YWCA. Other books were made available and films were viewed and discussed. We continue to learn about racism and how we can be white allies.

The Peace, Justice & Community Concerns committee is active. They recently received a large anonymous donation which enabled Meeting to support many local programs that serve the St. Louis community.

Financial contributions to meeting were lower but our expenses were also lower. Our dedicated treasurer provides excellent, valuable service for the meeting. He is currently training a co-treasurer.

Two new Spiritual Directions Groups were formed to make a total of three that are currently active. It is hoped that a fourth group will soon be formed as there are other Friends who would like to participate and these small groups meeting regularly help to strengthen the spiritual life of the Meeting as a whole.

Two Friendly Dozens groups continue to meet for a monthly potluck meal followed by worship shariing. We are currently asking if there is sufficient interest to form additional groups.

St. Louis Friends hosted the ILYM Continuing Committee meeting in March 2016.

A Friend reminds us of how committees can be a ministry. Ideally we work together in a mindful way, getting to know one another as we spend time doing the work of our Meeting and it can be a spiritual experience. We look forward to including our new attenders in the life of the Meeting. As we move forward we are reminded that we need our "elders" to guide us by word and example.

State of Society Report 2016
Burlington Worship Group
Under the Care of Clear Creek Friends
Illinois Yearly Meeting

The Burlington Worship Group started Meeting for Worship in late 2014 at the home of Robert and Carol Bartles. In late September 2015, we set a regular meeting time of 8:30 am on First Day, and then in December, we moved the meeting location to the Burlington Art Center at 301 Jefferson Street, Burlington, Iowa.

We have five regular attenders. Each of us are at ease with the Friends Meeting for Worship finding messages and the accompanying gathered sense is live in our small group. Two traveling ministers, Judy

Wolicki and Maurine Pyle have visited us with good discussions and seasoning of how to be a Friend in a newly formed worship group.

The Art Center location has worked well for us. We are preparing to purchase a Friends Meeting welcome banner that will hang outside the worship area. We are listed in the Quakerfinder.com website. In July 2015, we asked and were approved to be under the care of Clear Creek Friends. The Burlington Worship Group continues to formalize our group's presence, setting up a checking account and scheduling Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business.

Our attenders are active in other Friends related activities in the area. Molly Lovelock, Deb Walz, Robert Bartles and Carol Bartles participate in a weekly Centering Prayer group meeting, gathering together in an ecumenical setting. Carol and Robert Bartles are giving a program on *Quakers and the Religious Society of Friends* at the Iowa State Penitentiary's Project Harmony, an inmate organized club. Molly Lovelock and Carol Bartles are participating in and receiving training to become facilitators in the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) through the AVP program at the Iowa State Penitentiary in nearby Fort Madison.

Clear Creek Monthly Meeting

State of Society Report

Spring 2016

Once again, Clear Creek began our report year with a wedding. Rose Dennis and Peyton Johnson were married May, 18, 2015, at Ewing Manor in Bloomington. Many of our members attended the beautiful ceremony, joining in wishing Rose and Peyton many happy years together.

In August, Zeke Schobernd, son of Beth Schobernd Carpenter and the late Paul Schobernd passed away. His memorial service was held at the meetinghouse August 29, 2015, six years to the day after his father's memorial. It was attended by a number of Friends as well as family members and school mates of Zeke's, many of whom shared heart-warming memories of his life. After the service, Clear Creek Friends hosted a luncheon at the McNabb Firehouse.

In September we held our annual Homecoming event, complete with potluck and hay rack rides. During this year's festivities, we celebrated two new members, Marydale Stewart and Trent Griffith. In Santos, Brazil, on September 23, Andrew Bartels and Fabiana Lima welcomed a son, Joseph Lee Lima Bartels. The family now resides in Dalian, China. Joseph is the grandson of Bob and Carol Bartels.

The fall Continuing Committee once again met at Clear Creek in October. The business meeting was held in the meetinghouse, while lunch was served in the Clear Creek House. It was a lovely fall day and Friends enjoyed the walk between the two buildings as a break from hours of sitting in the meeting.

We held what we called a "Procrastination Sale" in December, selling craft items made by our members, baked goods and gently used household items. The sale brought in \$500 which we dispersed to 3 families who either live or work in Putnam County. These gifts continue a tradition begun by a friend of Jim Bumgarner who

for several years donated money to Clear Creek around Christmas time, asking that we distribute it to those in need in memory of Jim.

In February, we mourned the loss of Kay Mills. While she had lived away from Putnam County for several years, her family was once active in Clear Creek Meeting. She was a previous owner and resident of Clear Creek House and donated the painting of the house now hanging in the dining room.

A large crowd attended the memorial service for Barbara Griffith, mother of Trent Griffith, at the meetinghouse in March. Many friends and family members with Clear Creek connections were able to visit from afar.

Macomb Worship Group continues under our care and Friends from there join us for special events, including our annual Easter Sunday celebration complete with potluck and egg hunt for the children. This year we also took under our care the Burlington (Iowa) Worship Group which is attended by Clear Creek members Bob and Carol Bartles.

Friendly Circle continues to visit Betty Wolf once a month at the Mendota Lutheran Home. We have worship with Betty and share readings and songs with her. Friends also visit at other times as they are able.

Our worship enriches us although it is often silent. Our attendance ranges from 4 or 5 to nearly 20, depending on the week. We hold discussion prior to meeting about once a month, typically led by Anne Comiskey. After worship we eat, pretty much every Sunday, as a way to connect with our dispersed community. We are always glad when ILYM committees meet on campus and join us for worship, and enjoy other visitors as well.

State of the Meeting 2015-16

Bloomington-Normal Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Report to Illinois Yearly Meeting

In the words of the six Friends gathered for today's (April 2, 2016) Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, 2015-16 has been a year of increasing "momentum, energy, vitality, vibrancy, joy, fun, and community" for the Bloomington-Normal Friends Meeting (BNFM).

Small, rich, Meetings for Worship that were once the norm now seem a distant memory, as we regularly have groups of ten, fifteen, and even twenty Friends gathering on a Sunday. Our Meeting benefits from the spiritual gifts of numerous new attenders, several of whom have brought family members (including life-partners and children) into our Meetings and other events.

Whether in vocal ministry during Meeting or during our sharing of Joys and Concerns at the rise of Meeting, Friends consistently speak of their joy and satisfaction in the strengthening spirit and energy of the Meeting and in the fellowship and mutual support we gain from worshipping with one another (and from eating each other's food at pot lucks).

As we have seen happen in the past, new attenders have expressed a thirst for knowledge about Quaker history and faith. Efforts to slake this thirst help deepen the knowledge of long-time members, too. Our new Quaker Book Group gathers monthly; currently we are reading and discussing Phillip Gulley's *Living the Quaker Way*.

At our previous Meeting for Business (February 2016), we re-visited the three main "buckets" of goals we set for ourselves as a Meeting for calendar year 2015. We were pleased to discover that we have made substantial progress on all three buckets:

1. Care for and sustain the Meeting
2. Create a Friendly presence in the world beyond the Meeting
3. Reach out to seekers

Of course we have a great deal of work still to do, but we are gratified to see that we have made real progress in these areas.

One way we have cared for and sustained the Meeting is by lifting up our members and attenders. Two Friends became members in the last couple of years. We arranged a dinner out together to celebrate these new members. Here is a photo of the celebratory event:



We have also rejoiced in asserting a strong and palpable Quakerly presence at a series of events in our community. We organized and attended a "Vigil for Peace and Human Rights" in November 2015 to speak out on behalf of all people's rights to live free of violence and injustice. (The event was precipitated by the terrorist attacks in Paris, but focused on many societies around the globe where people have been victimized.) Quakers were again a powerful force in attending a "Not In Our Town" (anti-racist) rally in December 2015 in support of our Muslim-American neighbors. In response to the B-N community's outpouring of support for them at the December rally, the Muslim community held an open-house at their mosque in February 2016. Here again, Quakers made a strong showing.

Another cause for celebration in our Meeting's life is our need to provide First Day School as part of virtually every Meeting for Worship—and our success in doing so. Every active adult in the Meeting has helped lead First Day School, which allows us to get to know our children well. Currently, we are greatly enjoying use of The Giraffe Heroes Project (www.giraffe.org ; #StickYourNeckOut) as our curriculum.

We are pleased to have one of our members serving among ILYM 's representatives to the Friends Committee on National Legislation's (FCNL's) General Committee. This Friend has also travelled twice to Washington, D.C., to do some high-powered Quaker lobbying on Capitol Hill.

Two quick final notes on one thing we never thought we would do and another thing we thought we would never say.

1. We are going to have BNFM Quaker t-shirts!
2. We recently used the phrase "It's raining men" to note how, though for a while there BNFM had few (and sometimes only one) members/attenders who are (is) male, we have happily experienced a modest resurgence of male Friends to help provide the Meeting with more gender diversity.

Blue River Quarterly of Illinois Yearly Meeting Procedures and Job Descriptions

Clerk

- Plan the agenda and conduct business meetings during BRQ sessions. (See Appendix A)
- Remind Friends of BRQ responsibilities in a timely fashion. (See Appendix B for the BRQ Timetable of Clerk's Responsibilities)
- Check the Recording Clerk's minutes for accuracy and forward them to the BRQ e-list within one week of a BRQ business session. Keep electronic copies of the minutes to forward later, as part of reminding Friends of upcoming and on-going responsibilities. (See Appendix B)
- Foster the spiritual health of BRQ and the participant monthly meetings by such activities as encouraging the creation of programs to meet perceived needs of the monthly meetings; arranging for other BRQ-sponsored educational and community-building events for Friends of all ages; supporting and advising initiatives suggested and led by other BRQ members.
- One week after a BRQ session, email the minutes to all attenders of the session.
- Eight weeks before the next BRQ session, again email the minutes of the previous session, highlighting the jobs that Friends accepted for this upcoming session.
- Six weeks beforehand, again email the minutes, and highlight the jobs that need to be carried out. Also, work with the Friends responsible for planning the program, asking the leading questions they need to find their answers for: What is the theme of the program? What activities might enhance the program? How might the Young Friends and Old Friends interact with one another to enhance the program? Etc.
- Four weeks beforehand, finalize with the program planners (for Young and Old Friends) the brochure and email it to Friends.
- Three weeks beforehand, remind Friends of the deadline for registrations, and re-send the brochure.
- Two weeks beforehand, again remind Friends of the deadline, and ask for matters to be brought up during business session.
- One week beforehand, send out the agenda for the business session, along with any supporting documents.

Recording Clerk

- Attend Quarterly sessions and record the minutes
- Prepare for the recording of session minutes in advance in coordination with the clerk.
- Include names of those in attendance in the minutes.
- Send an electronic copy of the approved minutes to the clerk as soon as possible following the spring and fall sessions – no later than five days.

Treasurer

- Receive donations from monthly meetings and worship groups.
- Receive payments for attendance at spring and fall gatherings.
- Deposit funds received in the bank account as swiftly as possible.
- Send checks to pay for gathering expenses: e.g. to CILCA, DuBois Center and volunteers who incurred expenses as a result of organizing gatherings.
- Maintain records of receipts and expenses.
- Send checks to organizations or persons for whom BRQ has approved a donation.
- Assure that BRQ has designated a co-signer for the checking account and that necessary bank forms have been completed.

- Prepare written reports of income and expenses for the spring and fall gatherings.
- Attend gatherings to present the report or secure someone to report in their stead.

Overall Coordinator for ILYM Responsibilities

- Convene BRQ planning sessions held during spring and fall gatherings.
- Prepare and submit written reports of planning progress to ILYM Continuing Committee
- Attend ILYM Continuing Committee meetings to report the state of BRQ's preparations for annual sessions or secure someone to report in their stead.
- Send, or cause to be sent, communications between BRQ gatherings as needed to secure sufficient volunteers.
- NOTE: Volunteers need not all be from BRQ. The task is to fill all the volunteer slots by capable persons regardless of geography.

Appendix A: Planning and Conducting a Business Meeting for BRQ

- It is helpful to review the minutes from at least the previous two gatherings about six to eight weeks prior to a gathering.
- This review will reveal items that need to be placed on the agenda.
- The review will also indicate what reminders need to be sent to encourage Friends who took on responsibilities of the need for them to follow through and to be prepared to report on progress at the upcoming business session.
- An early reminder, usually an email, should be sent to BRQ Friends and Meetings reminding them of the upcoming gathering and calling for agenda items.
- For spring gatherings this should include reminding Friends to send and/or bring State of the Meeting reports.
- It is helpful to send out the agenda in advance and ask for input.
- It is helpful to have printed agendas for the sessions.
- Prepare, or ask others to prepare, written presentations regarding agenda items.
- The clerk should share the agenda with the recording clerk in advance to assist in preparation for the taking of minutes.
- It is helpful to obtain from the registrar a list of attendees in advance of or at least at the beginning of each gathering to facilitate listing them in the official minutes.

Appendix B – BRQ Timetable of Clerk's Responsibilities

BRQ meets in spring – usually the second or third weekend of April (but not on Easter), and the fall – usually the third weekend of September. Also there is a brief meeting on Saturday afternoon during Illinois Yearly Meeting Sessions to begin organizing BRQ's responsibilities for the next year's ILYM gathering.

Spring BRQ usually meets at Camp CILCA, near Cantrell, Illinois. Spring BRQ program responsibilities are carried in alternating years by either Urbana-Champaign meeting or else the Small Northern Meetings (Macomb, Clear Creek, and Bloomington-Normal).

Fall BRQ usually meets at DuBois Center, near Dubois, Illinois. Fall BRQ program responsibilities are currently carried largely by St. Louis Meeting. When possible the small meetings (Columbia, Rolla and Southern Illinois) assist.

The Saturday afternoon BRQ meeting during yearly meeting is brief, entirely devoted to gathering the volunteers necessary to coordinate BRQ's responsibilities for the following summer's yearly meeting. Friends are tired, and the Clerk's responsibility is best carried out by facilitating quick division of responsibilities and a short meeting.

One way of facilitating meetings devoted to recruiting volunteers is to discuss with individuals over the course of the previous day the jobs needing done at the next annual session and to secure commitments from Friends before the BRQ planning session. Having some volunteers already committed encourages other Friends to volunteer.

Securing commitments to do the coordinating requires discernment on the Clerk's part: some Friends are always willing and able to do the jobs, but we also need to be open to new laborers in the vineyard and ready to recruit, train and encourage them in Quaker leadership. Also, some jobs are intrinsically more interesting than others; planning next year's program versus cleaning the toilets, for instance. [Giving a young adult Friend the opportunity to clean toilets for four days is not a good way to convince them that Quakers have room for new leadership, new ideas, and/or fresh insights.]

Blue River Quarterly of Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends

April 9, 2016

Justimore Musombi
10024 Monterey Road
Apt C
Indianapolis, IN 46235

Dear Justimore,

Our hearts go out to you, as you continue your journey to finish your degree at Earlham School of Religion without the scholarship from the Quakers back home. You must feel lonely at times.

During our business meeting today, we stopped our deliberations and, together, held you in prayer. We were clear that we wish to support you and your leading. Therefore we enclose a check as a tangible measure of our spiritual support. We want you to use these funds however it seems best and most helpful.

We hope you will keep us informed of how you are, and how your journey to finish your degree and return to your homeland is progressing. We know that it will be a challenge to work among Kenyan Friends, but also that you will not be without support there. We are hoping you and your ministry will come to full fruition in God's time.

In God's Love,

Dawn L. Rubbert, Clerk
Blue River Quarterly
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