

Newsletter of the
Ithaca Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

April 2010

IMM CONTACTS

Clerk:

Steve Mohlke
52 Gray Road • Ithaca NY 14850
607-216-8411
clerk@ithacamonthlymeeting.org

Ministry & Worship:

Carolyn Kenyon
607-273-7922 • ckenyon@twcny.rr.com

Treasurer:

Mike Simkin
3137 Jacksonville Road
Trumansburg NY 14886
607-387-5174 • mes13@cornell.edu

Childcare Requests:

Ginny Gartlein • 607-272-3471

Burt House:

Mary Balfour, Friend in Residence
227 N. Willard Way, Ithaca, NY 14850
607-273-5421

Listserv:

To join our email list for solely for meeting-related announcements, send an email message addressed to:

IMMRSF-L-request@cornell.edu

with body of the message as simply:

join

Events:

To set up or schedule a program or presentation for the meeting, please see the instructions on the meeting website.

Website: ithacamonthlymeeting.org

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS
Due April 22nd**

Materials for April 25th's newsletter may be submitted by the method of your choice to:

Rini Clarkberg
150 Giles St., Ithaca, NY 14850
279-4722 • mec30@cornell.edu

Meeting Affirms Purchase of Property for New Meetinghouse

"We find ourselves led by the Spirit to purchase the property at 120 3rd Street and 409 Madison Street for a Meetinghouse. We look forward to worshipping there, to a space that welcomes our children, and a space where we can share food and fellowship. We feel we are coming of age and becoming more visible to and active in the community and look forward to being knit into the neighborhood.

"We are willing to accept the challenge of working within and expanding our capacities. Ithaca Monthly Meeting enthusiastically embraces the possibilities and challenges represented by the property at 120 3rd Street and 409 Madison Street and approve its purchase and renovation for the Ithaca Monthly Meeting's new Meetinghouse."

—Minutes of the March 14th Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, see page 5

Message from a Meeting House

—Pat Sewell

I find political process

Tends to make me nauseous
Cajoling and coercing; the blaming and
the cursing
To me, there is so much lost.

But Friends have found a way
To keep the pains at bay
Through something they call "Clerking"

To Clerk is to begin
To find out what's within
And keep our Friends as Ends

To Clerk is to unearth
As a midwife sharing birth
To search and find a leading; to enable
sense of meeting
And bring us back to mirth

To Clerk it does require
A tending of the fire
To sift and shape such embers as a
meeting and its members
Through dreams and hopes and
memories
As passions come unlimbered

When the Meeting's all but mired
And we're all so sick and tired
And bridges come tumbling down
And we are wondering where to go; what
to do; what to say

The clerk must bring us back
Enable us to act
To show an opening way

So the messages we hear
Our loves; our hopes; our fears
They mold and tend and hold
They enable to unfold

As spring born through the winter
They bring us back to center

I do not hope to ever clerk
I'd rather watch the others work
And dream of simpler days

Enfolded by a building
Dreamed up by a Meeting
Midwived through a clerk

Green Oasis on a War Torn Country: Ramallah Friends School

— *Wilma Brown for the Peace Witness Committee*

On February 16, a very pleasant evening was enjoyed before a cozy fireplace at the Burt House with Joyce Ajlouny, director of the historic Ramallah Friends School (RFS) on the West Bank in Palestine. There were more than 26 people present: Quakers from our meeting and other meetings, students from Ithaca College, local high schools, and the Ithaca community.

The Ramallah School has long been an important part of Quaker outreach, and our meeting has a long history of supporting it. Sometimes over the years some of our members have visited the school and the Quaker meeting in Ramallah. (Indeed, see “Violet to Visit Ramallah,” right.)

The opportunity, however, to actually meet the director and to hear her firsthand accounts of life in Ramallah made everything very different and very special for the gathering that evening.

Joyce was in the midst of a grueling tour across the state to visit meetings of New York Yearly Meeting, to bring Friends news of the work of RFS and its mission and to publicize its need for financial support. We were so fortunate to be on her itinerary. In spite of her intense travel schedule, Joyce had arrived by tea time and seemed so lively and energetic that we were quite inspired and energized by her very presence. Throughout dinner she shared stories of the school and her family life in Ramallah. Joyce is a graduate of the RFS as were her parents. Currently she is the parent of three children attending the school. She is a member of the Ramallah Monthly Meeting and one of the very few Palestinian

Quakers left in the country. Her job as director involves oversight of the functioning of both the lower and the upper school campuses. This includes ensuring that the rigorous academic program develops to meet the modern day challenges, fundraising, community building and administration.

By 7pm, dinner was finished and in the living room the assembled group gathered in silent worship. Since 1869, the school has been an important Quaker presence in Palestine, surviving many wars and occupations. Joyce spoke with poignant detail about the difficulties of their lives in Palestine, living under a military occupation. She spoke of the terrible toll the military presence had on the children: their fears, the awful night terrors. She described how an important mission of the school is to provide a haven of peace for the children – a place where they can learn in a safe environment, a place where they can experience flowers and trees and a grassy playing field. This grassy oasis is a botanical garden open for all the people of the neighborhood to enjoy - one of the many ways in which the school provides dignity and beauty to a neighborhood in the midst of a war zone.

We were quite moved by Joyce’s presentation. Now we had a much clearer image of the program that we had been supporting all these years, and best of all, we had a new friend – a name and face we could associate with the Ramallah School. We were so impressed by the challenges of living under a military occupation and also the challenges for many of the families to afford the tuition, especially those with more than one school child enrolled. Joyce spoke of how donors sometimes sponsor scholarships and what a relief it is for a family to know that tuition costs will be covered.

Spiritual Discernment from Ministry & Worship

“Pray without ceasing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Praying during a business meeting is one way of praying without ceasing. Perhaps the continuous prayer might be “thy will be done” or “we trust you” as we take our breaths. Perhaps it is the prayer of beaming God’s love to all the participants.

Since effectiveness in group discernment requires that we speak only occasionally, we will have plenty of opportunities to pray. While we listen attentively to others speak, we can simultaneously listen to God. At their best, the words of others will be God’s words.

Listening to these words is part of our prayer.

— *Practicing Discernment Together:
Finding God’s Way Forward in Decision Making
by Lon Fendall*

Violet to Visit Ramallah

Violet Goncarovs has been selected to be part of a delegation of Young Adult Friends traveling to Ramallah in Palestine this summer. Congratulations Violet!

The trip is being organized under the care of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. It is the 100th anniversary of the Friends Meeting in Ramallah. The delegation will travel to holy and historic sites throughout Israel and Ramallah. They will also participate in a joint project with the American Friends Service Committee’s Public Achievement Youth program, as the purpose of the trip is peace and community building.

Violet just got official notice March 19, so much is still unknown at newsletter time. Anyone wishing to contact Violet about the trip can reach her at vgoncarov1@ithaca.edu.

Violet will be expected to raise funds for this trip—and to share a presentation on her experiences with the meeting upon her return—so please look for more information soon.

Announcements

Quaker Eights Back in 2010!

Would you like to spend time getting to know people from meeting in a relaxed, small environment? We're reviving Quaker Eights groups, where eight (or so) people meet for dinner eight times. After eight dinners, a new cycle begins! These groups are a fabulous way to make intergenerational connections and welcome newcomers into our meeting.

Typically, each participant, couple, or family hosts at least one dinner. But hosting responsibilities can be informally divided among group members. If you live in a small apartment, for example, you could consider "hosting" an outdoor picnic or a dinner at another friend's home. The pace of the cycle is up to each individual group.

If you'd like to get in on the action, or if you have questions, please contact Emily Williams at ewy310@gmail.com.

World Premier Screening of Film based on Sandra Steingraber's "Living Downstream"

Friends, a feature-length documentary film, *Living Downstream*, based on the acclaimed book of the same title by our very own Sandra Steingraber will be screening at Cinemapolis Saturday, April 3, at 7pm. This screening is a special presentation of the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival.

Sandra writes, "I feel like most of the Quakerly elements of my life are visible in the film (lucky for me the filmmaker's previous film, *That of God*, was overtly about Quakerism), and I hope it will speak to other members of our meeting."

Following the film screening will be a Q&A session with Sandra and Chanda Chevannes, the film's director. Copies of the newly released second edition of *Living Downstream* will be available, and a book signing will follow the discussion.

Tickets will be available for purchase at the theater before the screening. The first 50 people to arrive will receive free entry to the screening. General admission: \$9; Seniors (64 and older) and Children (12 and under) \$7.50.

Friends are also invited to visit Sandra's new website—designed by Friend Larry Clarkberg's company Knowledge Town—at steingraber.com.

Congratulations Sandra!

Dates for Summer Retreat Set

Friends, we are planning for a family-friendly Meeting retreat for four days, August 28th-August 31st, Saturday through Tuesday, at Robert Treman State Park. Some have reserved cabins and others tent sites. We will also have the upper park pavilion on Saturday, and the pavilion near the cabins on Sunday through Tuesday. Folks may come camp for one to three nights, or just come in for the day or part of the day. If you know you'd like a cabin, reserve at reserveamerica.com, or ask Rini Clarkberg for more information, mec30@cornell.edu, 279-4722.

Feinstein Million Dollar Challenge

During March and April, and food or monetary donations to Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard will increase the Cupboard's share of this million dollar grant. Your donations will stretch farther this month. Last year, the Feinstein Challenge yielded an extra \$312 for this food pantry. Please spread the word on behalf of Kitchen Cupboard.

In addition to cash, the Kitchen Cupboard welcomes your donations of packaged meals; canned fruits and vegetables; baking supplies; dried goods such as beans, rice, pasta and powdered milk; baby supplies, including diapers; and toiletries, such as soap, toilet paper, tooth brushes and toothpaste.

A Word From Pastoral Care Committee

Thank you for your enthusiastic response to the Pastoral Care survey. We are blessed to have so many members of our community willing to provide assistance to others. Please take comfort in knowing that Friends are able and willing to help. If you need assistance or if there is someone that you would like us to reach out to, please contact a member of the Pastoral Care Committee: Emily Williams, Marion DeGrossa, Bronwyn Mohlke, or Kathy Beissner.

First Day School Blogs

That's right, our FDS is techno-savvy! The blog allows teachers and students to share the things they talk about and work on in the classroom. A quick visit to the site reveals that Power Quakers are seeking to understand other spiritual communities and cultures as a mechanism for building peace. Lasers have talked about Movements (Civil Rights, Peace, Environmental) and discussed the importance of non-violent activism. Candle Kids started the year with enthusiasm for learning and understanding Quaker songs.

The blog was designed as a tool for communicating what goes on after that wave of children leaves Meeting each week. So please, take a look! <http://ithacamonthlymeeting.org/first-day-school-blog/>

Meeting for Healing Laid Down

Friends, please note that Melody Johnson and Dick Crepeau have laid down the monthly Meeting for Healing. Thank you Melody and Dick for the many years of faithful service in this capacity!

Faith and Practice Discussions Continue

The Program Committee is pleased to announce that the continuing *Faith and Practice* discussion series will meet at 9:30 in room 314 of Anabel Taylor Hall on Sunday, April 4. Our format will begin with a reading and continue with engaging discussion to which we hope everyone will contribute. The quality of the discussion can really be quite amazing. Bring your stories and a willingness to share.

Burt House Occupancies

The Burt House Friends Center has two anticipated vacancies; one July 1st, the other towards the end of August. The Burt House Friends Center is a small intentional community located in a beautiful, historic stone house on the edge of Fall Creek, just below the Cornell Campus. It has five long-term resident rooms and one sojourner room. Friends have their own private room and use of the shared kitchen, bathroom and common areas. Residents meet once a week for a meal and meeting in the spirit of Friends. Chores are shared. Laundry privileges, parking on site, and wireless internet are included in the rent, which range from \$325-\$350/month. Security deposit required. For an application, please contact the Friend-in-Residence, Mary Balfour at mbalfour123@gmail.com or 273-5421.

Spring Gathering of the Farmington-Scipio Region: May 21-23

Next Stop Outreach: Sharing our Journeys
Plenary Speaker Jon Watts

All Friends from the Farmington-Scipio Region of New York Yearly Meeting—that's *our* region of New York State—are invited to attend Spring Gathering, a joyful weekend of learning, reflection and community at Long Point Camp on the shores of beautiful Seneca Lake, just north of Watkins Glen.

Spring Gathering 2010 holds the promise of new openings and understandings, of time to play together and of times to grow together!

Jon Watts has agreed to be our plenary speaker. Jon is a young and incredibly dynamic Friend. He is a Quaker rapper and spoken word poet who tours the country with his guitar and bicycle sharing his understanding of his Quaker faith and sharing how he lives into it. In a word, he shares his journey. Check him out at <www.jonwatts.com>.

We hope to make this weekend one with just the right mix of centered inner work and community play times so that we can truly feel the joy as we open to sharing. This year, some things may take on a slightly different shape and flavor. But never fear, all of your favorite elements (dancing on Saturday night, bible study, food, workshops, etc.) will still be there but may look just a bit different. We hope that you're as excited as we are and look forward to sharing Spring Gathering with you!

In addition to a variety of workshops there will be activities for all ages: worship, singing, and time for eating and relaxing with Friends. The youth program will be integrated and combined with the theme of "Sharing Our Journeys."

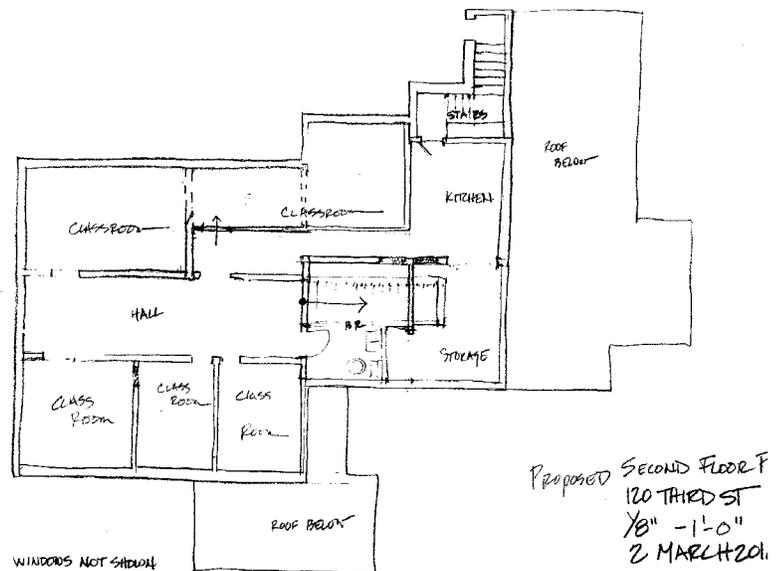
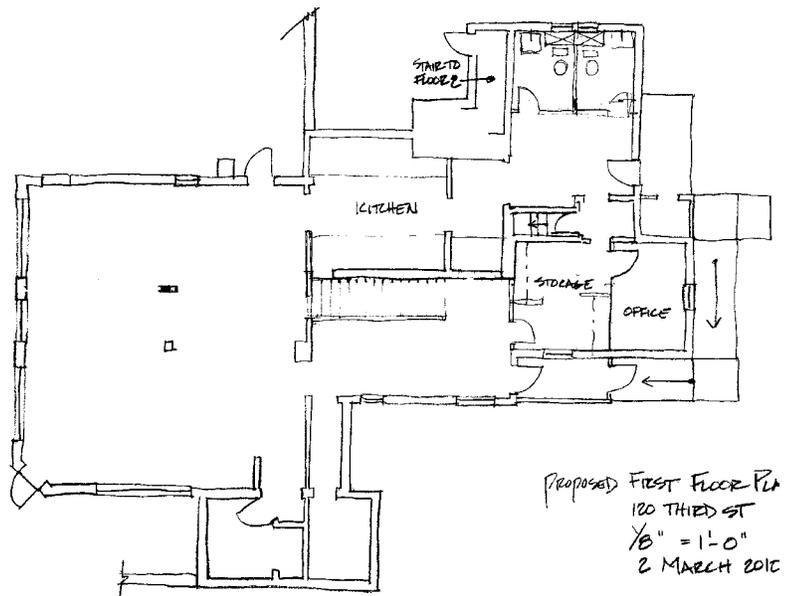
Registrations due by April 20. The registration form is available online on the regional meeting website: www.quakerwny.com. Look for the section on "Spring Gathering at Long Point Camp".

Next Steps in a Meetinghouse

We joyfully anticipate being able to worship together in our new meetinghouse by—we hope—the end of 2010.

Trustees have created a working schedule, subject to change, and have set a deadline of June 27th (the last Called Meeting in June) for completion of the design process. They propose beginning the floor plan discussion on Tuesday, March 30 from 7-9pm at the Burt House. Together with Lynn Truame, the group will look at the preliminary sketches we already have (see below) and discuss necessary changes and additions for both floors of the building.

Everyone is invited to this meeting. If you cannot attend and you have input you would like to pass along, please send it to Lynn Truame at <thetruames@gmail.com> or call her at 607-319-0474.



**Minutes of the March 14 Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business
Ithaca Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends**

Steve Mohlke, Clerk

Tonia Saxon, Assistant Clerk

Marilyn Ray and Nancy Gabriel, Co-Recording Clerks

Mike Simkin, Treasurer

(The @ signifies that the minute has been read and approved during Meeting. Please note that copies of all report provided during this Meeting are on file with and available from the Recording Clerk.)

201003.1 Gathering

The Ithaca Monthly Meeting (IMM) of the Religious Society of Friends met for Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on March 14, 2010, in the Cafe, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University. At 12:35 p.m., 38 Friends settled into worship.

Clerk introduced the Friends who would hold the Meeting in the Light during our Worship with Attention to Business: Arianna White, Bronwyn Mohlke, and Nancy Gabriel. Clerk reviewed the agenda for the day's meeting, and read the following two passages from Pastoral Care Newsletter, Vol. 8, No. 2: January 2001:

1. Whether Friends feel strongly attached to changing the property or to keeping it the same, we each face the spiritual risk of seeing it as "my meeting." If we relinquish our sense of ownership, we can see ourselves as a body of seekers drawn together by and accountable to the Divine. In this attitude, we can accept the possibility of changes that might disconcert us but will serve a holy purpose of which we have only a dim awareness. Seeing the meeting and its property as a Divine trust helps to free us from squabbles over personal preferences and to open us to wise stewardship of our resources under the Spirit's guidance.
2. To build, buy, renovate or expand a meetinghouse usually involves expenses far beyond the meeting's normal operating budget. ... Decades of familial and cultural conditioning and personal experiences have formed in each of us deeply engrained attitudes toward money. These attitudes vary dramatically from person to person. This explains in part why money acts as such a flash point in many group decisions Working through our differences gives us opportunities to know each other better and to build friendships that transcend the need for similarity of beliefs.

201003.2 Trustees Report

Following the reading of the Trustees' report by Marilyn Ray, Clerk asked: Are we still led to purchase and renovate the property at 120 3rd Street and 409 Madison Street for a Meetinghouse?

Following discussion, Meeting APPROVED the following Minute:

We find ourselves led by the Spirit to purchase the property at 120 3rd Street and 409 Madison Street for a Meetinghouse. We look forward to worshipping there, to a space that welcomes our children, and a space where we can share food and fellowship. We feel we are coming of age and becoming more visible to and active in the community and look forward to being knit into the neighborhood.

We are willing to accept the challenge of working within and expanding our capacities. Ithaca Monthly Meeting enthusiastically embraces the possibilities and challenges represented by the property at 120 3rd Street and 409 Madison Street and APPROVE its purchase and renovation for the Ithaca Monthly Meeting's new Meetinghouse. @

201003.3 Report from Ministry and Witness

The Ministry and Witness report was laid over to the April Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

201003.4 Trustees

On behalf of Trustees Marilyn Ray proposed the following minute which was APPROVED:

Matters related to making funds available from our existing liquid assets to purchase of the property at 120 3rd Street and 409 Madison Street are referred to the Finance Committee. @

201003.5 Reading of the Minutes from the Called Meeting February 21, 2010

Marilyn Ray read the Minutes from the Called Meeting which took place on February 21, 2010 and they were APPROVED. @

201003.6 Treasurer's Report

Mike Simkin presented the report for February 2010. Meeting received the report. @

At 2:40, 32 Friends entered into silent worship before adjourning.

IMM will have a Called Meeting for Business to explore next steps on March 28, 2010 following the rise of Meeting for Worship. The next Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business will be held following the rise of Meeting on April 11, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Ray, co-Recording Clerk

Advices & Queries from NYYM Faith & Practice

Advice 3. Friends are advised to be mindful of their conduct and conversation and to observe the testimonies of simplicity and moderation.

Query 2. Do we make opportunity in our daily lives for communion with God and the opening of our hearts to an awareness of the Christ Within? Are we thankful for each day as an opportunity for a new adventure of life with God?

April 2009 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Please also see the on-line calendar at
<http://ithacamonthlymeeting.org/calendar/>

Floor Plan Discussion Tuesday, March 30, 7-9p

Join us at the Burt House for a discussion of floor plan possibilities for the new meetinghouse.

Easter Sunrise Meeting for Worship Sunday, April 4, 6:30a

A special meeting for worship at the Hector Meeting House on Perry City Road. Please join us as we wait for the Light.

Easter Brunch at Marion & Nancy's Sunday, April 4, 7:30-10:30a

After Meeting for Worship at Hector (and/or before Meeting for Worship at Anabel Taylor), join Marion DaGrossa and Nancy Gabriel at 109 Sears Street for fellowship and a dish-to-pass brunch.

Faith and Practice Discussion Sunday, April 4, 9:30a

Our format will begin with a reading from *Faith and Practice* and continue with engaging discussion to which we hope everyone will contribute. The quality of the discussion can really be quite amazing. Bring your stories and a willingness to share to Room 314 of Anabel Taylor Hall.

Peace Witness Committee Saturday, April 10, 10:30a

Join Peace Witness Committee at the Burt House. This is an open committee; all are welcome to attend as we work to bring Quaker peace witness into our lives and our community. If you have ideas for the Committee but cannot attend, please feel free to contact Elizabeth Schneider at 273-3566 or neschneid@aol.com.

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, April 11, Rise of Meeting

Agenda items should be provided to Steve Mohlke, clerk, by the preceding Wednesday. (Contact information is on page 1.)

Women's Fellowship Friday, April 16, 7p

Please join us at 7pm in the space formerly occupied by ABC Cafe at 310 Stewart Avenue. All are welcome. Have dinner or tea or baked goods... or not.

Tea Party and Chris & Melissa's Saturday, April 17, 3-6p

Chris Dunham & Melissa Travis Dunham invite you to their annual, non-political tea party. This is the real kind of tea party—with little sandwiches and cups and saucers. Pretty hats and white gloves are optional. Please don't bring anything, just stop by 105 Dunmore Place to visit. Call 277-9599 with questions or for directions.

Called Meeting to Focus on Meetinghouse Issues Sunday, April 25, Rise of Meeting

More details on the agenda should be available by the preceding Thursday. If you have questions or need more information, contact Steve Mohlke, clerk. (Contact information is on page 1.)

Every Sunday

- 11:00a **Meeting for Worship** for all ages (note: on October 4th, Meeting for Worship begins at 10:30a)
- 11:15a Children are invited to join **First Day School** classes gathering outside the Edwards Room

Other Weekly IMM Events

- Wed 7:30p **Midweek meeting** for worship at the Burt House
- Thurs 5-5:30p **Peace Vigil** at the bottom of East State Street near the Community School for Music and Arts