



Newsletter of the

Ithaca Monthly Meeting

of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

October 2016

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Listserv:

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

IMMRSF-L-request@cornell.edu

with message body as simply: join

Marilyn's List:

To email Friends and others non-specifically Quaker messages that may be of interest to Friends, consider sending your message through Marilyn Ray. To join or contribute, email:

mlr17@cornell.edu

Quakers Blocking Gas Storage Entrance Speak

Before dawn on a very cold day in December of 2014, several Quakers met at the Third Street Meetinghouse to car pool to the west shore of Seneca Lake a few miles north of Watkins Glen. At the gates of Crestwood (later known as Inergy and now Stagecoach), we joined people from all around the Finger Lakes as part of We Are Seneca Lake. December 16 was "teachers day" at the gates. Forty-one people got arrested that day, including Barbara Barry, Sue Kinchy, Jeff de Castro and Margaret McCasland, all from Ithaca MM.

While we were charged with misdemeanors that could have been dismissed at our arraignments merely by paying a fine, most of us chose to go trial because we got arrested intentionally in order to protest the expanded storage of fracked gas in unsafe salt caverns.

During the last three years, over 400 people have been arrested more than 600 times (some of us have been arrested multiple times). However many arrestees have had the charges against them dropped due to lack of evidence of trespass and/or because of deals with the Schulyer County DA. Now that the first arraignments and pre-trials hearing have occurred, trials for the hundreds of cases still outstanding have started happening on a regular basis.

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Barbara Barry making her way amongst police vehicles.

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One of the first trials took place this past June, when Barbara Barry and Sue Kinchy appeared for trial in the Town of Dix court. Their lawyer, IMM member Jerry Kinchy, presented a “justification” defense. Judge Gregory found them guilty, but Barbara and Sue have filed for an appeal, where they will again plead that their action was justified by the greater harm caused by gas storage.

Below are the statements Barbara and Sue read in court.

Barbara Barry

In December 2014, I came to Seneca Lake to protest the storage of gases in the salt mines of this beautiful area. I was willing to risk being arrested for trespassing in order to make clear that I saw the current plans of Crestwood/Inergy to be a danger to the health, welfare and environment of the Finger Lakes region. Whether I was trespassing is a separate question. There were no clear demarcations except for a gate and a fence which I did not enter, and prior to my arrest I was not told that I was trespassing.

Since my 20's I have been part of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). One of the major testimonies of Friends is to live with simplicity. I have always taken this to mean avoiding excess and turning the impetus towards consumerism into a tender attention to the needs of my fellow human beings and into the loving care of the Earth. Quakers have always practiced an adherence to the higher moral law and, although we are law abiding citizens in general practice, there are times when civil disobedience must be considered. Quakers actively protested slavery, they participated in the Underground Railroad, and they were active in the movement for women's suffrage. All of those things occurred at a juncture in history where we were shifting how we think.

At the time of slavery, many people said it was good for the economy. We are at a similar juncture. It is clear we have benefitted greatly in terms of level of comfort in our lives due to the fossil fuel industry. But we now also have to face the fact that the same process which gave us that ease of living has wreaked havoc on the environment, on the very things that support us: a living ocean, the atmosphere, our water. It is affecting our lives.

This area is rich in organic farms, wineries and fresh water, which is an essential resource. When we act as if the damage we do to the planet, to our water, is unavoidable, or as if it does not really impact our lives—even when it does, it becomes a much larger problem. This problem is reflected in the concerns all over the world about climate change, rising sea levels, rising temperatures and the sustainability of our current life styles.

Part of my religious belief is to look for the good in all people. That includes people who work in corporations that act in ways that trouble me. That is my daily practice. And it isn't always easy. But Inergy has made it hard for me to keep that practice. They tell lies. They initially said this was the safest type of gas storage. In fact, it is the most dangerous. They lied to regulators about eminent domain in Pennsylvania. They have claimed there is no earthquake risk, but a fault line runs through the facility. And the salt caverns have been rejected as storage sites by previous owners because the

caverns were geologically unstable. To me this storage of gases puts too much that matters to me, my community and future generations in their hands.

I'm taking this stand because the larger truth is that Inergy is putting all the people who live in the area at great risk. This requires the rest of us to look deeper, to be vigilant when things like this come up. We all live on this Earth, so the issue of environmental destruction affects us all. It is easy for a company to say that the loss of the natural world doesn't matter or that it is a sad but necessary loss. But we are part of the natural world, so it does matter. I feel this loss. I hope everyone in this room feels it, too. I care deeply about the world we are passing on to our children and grandchildren. I am almost eighty years old and I cannot take on the world. But this is where I live and this is what I can do.

Sue Kinchy

I am here in court today because on Dec 16, 2014, I traveled to the shores of Seneca Lake to join other concerned citizens in protest of Texas-based Crestwood's storage of gas in salt caverns next to and under Seneca Lake. I do not think I was trespassing as there were no boundary markings and I do not recall any warnings from the arresting officers about trespass before I was arrested. But there is more to this arrest than trespass and I wish to share this information to the court.

I lived for many years in Bradford County, PA, with my husband Jerry and my two children. We moved there so we could raise our children in a safe environment with clean air, pure well water, an organic garden. Around 2005 the gas industry moved in, and rural life was threatened with air and water pollution, truck traffic, increase in crime, noise and crumbling roads. We sold our farmhouse and 100 acres to an investor as Chesapeake was drilling under us and moved to NY and committed ourselves to standing up against the destruction that comes with the fossil fuel industry. It seems clear that the fossil fuel industry has placed financial gain over the health of our communities and the environment.

My protest on Dec. 16, 2014 was justifiable as Crestwood is under investigation by the EPA for massive spills in North Dakota. Between 1972 and 2012, there have been 18 serious or extremely serious incidents in salt cavern storage facilities involving fires, explosions and loss of life. With the storage of gas in the salt caverns next to Seneca Lake, the people of Schuyler County are headed to a disaster. Geologists have reported that the salt caverns are not stable. They are old and are constantly being eroded away, which weakens them and exacerbates the likelihood of gas seepage. Already a cavern roof has collapsed and we know, thanks to FOIL information, that there has already been a leak and a spill at the Seneca Lake site. Crestwood admits, “Our business involves many hazards and risks, some of which may not be fully covered by insurance.” Examples they give are damage to pipelines and surrounding properties, storage cavern collapse, leaks, personal injury and loss of life. *No small risks.* The air, land and water will become polluted from traffic and gas leaks, and the beauty and richness of the land and the wineries which serve to make the region a tourist

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Committees and the Budget

It is nearing the end of the year and the Finance Committee is again beginning the process of putting together the budget for next year. Members of the Finance Committee will be contacting all of the committees within Meeting that have one or more budget lines.

We ask each committee to thoughtfully consider their budget items to ensure that they are accurate and still reflect the committee's priorities. In order to complete a timely budget, we are asking all committees to respond before the end of October, so that we can have a budget in place for Meeting to consider well before the end of the year. We would ask the property committees, in particular, to advise the Finance Committee of any projected unusual expenses to ensure that we are putting aside sufficient funds to address expected repairs and maintenance. Finally, we would like to remind all who are interested in making a financial contribution to Meeting that automated payments from your bank account can be set up to make recurring withdrawals on a monthly basis. This is very helpful in providing a reliable and year-round source of funds to meet Meeting expenses. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Finance Committee: Nancy Hillegas, Tom Brown, Marcie Finlay, or Maude Rith.

Sweepers needed to help care for our Meetinghouse

For many years a group of F/friends have taken time out of their schedules to keep our Third Street Meetinghouse tidy and ready for Meeting for Worship each week. Melody Johnson has been the leader and scheduler of this group of Sweepers, but after many years of service in this role, Melody is laying down the task of organizing the sweepers. All of us on TSMC are extremely grateful to Melody for her many years of dedication and service!

There is a need for more people to volunteer as Sweepers. The tasks are not difficult or too time consuming. Some F/friends sweep together and use the time for socializing and fellowship. This is also a job that adults and children can do together. If you'd like more information, please contact Melissa Travis Dunham, at mtravis823@yahoo.com or 607-277-9599 for more details or to volunteer.

— *Melissa Travis Dunham*

Updating the Meeting Directory

Friends, it is time for an updated directory! Please get in touch with one of us to let us know if you need to be added to the directory, or have your contact information updated.

Sue Baker-Carr / sbaker-carr@twcny.rr.com / 607.379.3600

Bronwyn Mohlke / BJQMohlke@gmail.com / 220-3219

Gina Varrichio / zealth_1@yahoo.com / 272-2512

Changing the Locks

In keeping with our past practices, Third Street Meetinghouse Committee will be changing the combination of the kitchen door lock on Sunday, October 2, 2016. Clerks of committees, trustees, and sweepers will all be notified of the new code. They can share the code as needed. If you have questions or concerns regarding this, contact John Lewis at 227-6273.

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attraction and an income source will be lost because of the profit making, uncaring, distant boss in Texas. Life as you know it will change--take it from me--I lived through the fossil fuel frenzy of Bradford County, PA.

Protests against the fossil fuel industry are occurring all over the world as people are realizing the danger and destruction it brings with it. So, to quote the late moral force, Father Daniel Berrigan, I apologize for the "fracture of good order." But *really*, Judge, how much air and water must be polluted before you will listen? I have heard the District Attorney question the imminence of disaster and therefore trying to dismiss the justification defense, but my protest would be a little late when a spill, derailment, explosion or fire is in the process of occurring. Christopher Hart, Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, said in January, 2016, "we have been lucky thus far that derailments involving flammable liquids in America have not yet occurred in a populated area... but an American version of Lac-Megantic could happen at any time." (For those who don't know, that was an explosive fossil fuel train accident in Quebec, Canada, that killed 47 people.) The news is full of disasters caused by the fossil fuel industry and imminence is not the question any more. The time to stop a Seneca Lake disaster is now and the protest actions--my action--is justifiable and necessary.

I assume you heard on the news earlier this month about the train carrying fossil fuels that derailed along a gorge and river near the town of Mosier, Oregon, resulting in huge fires, a spill into the river known for salmon, evacuation of schools and shut down of water supply. The Fire Chief of Mosier who helped fight the blaze was quoted in the news as saying, "We have to accept that there are going to be failures in the rail system, but we have to recognize that there are some risks that are unacceptable." Whether it is train or truck or storage in the caverns, the risk is also unacceptable in Schuyler County.

Judge Gregory, I assume you live in this region and I assume you enjoy its beauty. I understand you were a teacher and I can only think you want your former students to live in a clean, healthy and safe environment. And you are an expert on disaster intervention, so it only seems logical to me that you might be driven to join We Are Seneca Lake in a protest against Crestwood. And, with all due respect DA Hayden, it is my understanding that you prosecute crime in Schuyler County to keep it safe for the residents. In that case, it seems to me that you should be prosecuting that which is threatening the residents--Crestwood/Inergy.

I and over 600 others who have come to the Crestwood gates have committed ourselves to a clean and safe environment for our children and grandchildren. Sometimes it is necessary to shake up the order to save the air, water, land and ourselves in this world. And on Dec. 16, 2014, my act of "fracture of good order" for this very cause was justified.

— submitted by Margaret McCasland

The Coldness in Me

The coldness in me,
we're good friends.
He bit at me as I rode my bike through
winter
I barked back, growling at the white pangs.

He tempted me in
spring,
tossing light warmth through coldness
and sprinkling it with scent.
As summer rain froze warm air
he gathered in shining drops
on my bare
blue
arms.

— Thea Clarkberg

Two of Thea's poems will be published in the forthcoming *From The Fingerlakes: A Poetry Anthology*, edited by Jack Hopper and Peter Fortunato. Friends are invited to a reading on November 6th, 2-4pm, at Buffalo Street Books.

Upcoming Quaker Events in the Region

Christine Ashley, FCNL Field Secretary, in Buffalo

Christine Ashley, the field secretary for FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) will be giving a public speech on October 6th entitled "Civil Discourse and Civil Action in an Uncivil Time" Christine will be discussing FCNL's 75 years of successful lobbying on Capitol Hill following Quaker Principles. The speech will be held at Canisius College in their LEED certified Science Hall (2001 Main St, Buffalo, NY)

200th Anniversary of the Farmington Quaker Meetinghouse

October 22 and 23 (Saturday and Sunday) will be a weekend of celebration of the 1816 Meetinghouse's 200 years of history and a look towards its next 200 years. Numerous events, including a performance of Bullis, and talk by Frieda Jacques, Onondaga Clan Mother. 160 County Road 8 and Sheldon Road, Farmington, NY. For more information, visit <http://farmingtonmeetinghouse.org/2016-programs-events>

Save the date! ARCH Gathering in December

On Friday afternoon, December 9th, we will be having a holiday social gathering at the meetinghouse for Friends 60 and older. Look for an invitation in your mailbox soon!

No Minutes

Because Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business was not held in September, there are no Minutes from September to be included in this newsletter.

October in IMM History

10 Years Ago (October 8, 2006)

Tom Brown reported that a new furnace has been installed at the Burt House and the house is much quieter now. Our Clerk expressed thanks to everyone involved in taking care of this situation quickly. [Note: This is an energy-efficient furnace and has worked well over the past ten years.]

35 Years Ago (October 12, 1981)

A meeting for clearness of Joanne Sturgeon's membership (Nancy Gabriel, Susan Ruff, Jean Klune, and Jim Johnson) met and joyfully recommended her acceptance. Joanne was welcomed into membership of IMM.

40 Years Ago (October 11, 1976)

It was moved to expand the present once-monthly jail meeting to twice a month, due to the fact that we are providing the only Sunday religious service and the [positive] inmate response we have had. Kirsten Tribby will look into supporting this.

50 Years Ago (October 10, 1966)

Ned Burt reported that he had volunteered to be the press representative for NYYM in Ithaca. Press releases will be connected to the work of the Yearly Meeting when possible. Ned is to send in material from IMM after consultation with the clerk. Ned reported that NYYM had gathered medical supplies for North Vietnam but the US Postal Service refused it. It was decided to send money and medical supplies to the Canadian Service Committee but the check was not allowed to be cleared and the medical supplies were not delivered. A committee of NYYM has gone to the US government and a limited license has been granted to NYYM to send medical supplies through the Red Cross to any place in Vietnam.

60 Years Ago (October 8, 1956)

Sarah Wray, reporting for the committee of herself, Ruth Freeman, and Louis Edgerton, recommended Marjorie Burt for membership and she was welcomed as a member of IMM.

70 Years Ago (October 14, 1946)

Grace Mekeel and Ruth Freeman, the two Friends appointed as a committee of membership to interview Edmund and Virginia Cranch as prospective members of the Meeting, reported that they had a very happy visit with them and it was with joy that they were recorded as members.

85 Years Ago (October 10, 1931)

Joshua and Edith Cope kindly opened their home for a reception for Friends to meet Dr. Rufus Jones, who was to preach the next day at Sage Chapel. Dr. Jones as usual brought us inspiration and courage to carry on.

— Tom Brown, IMM Historian

Women's Chair Yoga, Mondays and Thursdays 11a-noon (No class on Monday October 10)

Women of all ages are welcome to gather for gentle, yet powerful restoration of heart, mind, soul, strength. Laughter likely. No experience or equipment needed. Just come, or if you have questions ask Nancy Gabriel (339-7123; ntg2@cornell.edu.) We offer a donation to the teacher.

Gary Rith Pottery, October 8-9

IMM member Gary Rith is hosting an open pottery studio October 8-9 as well as November 25-26, from 11-4. There will be demos and pots, lots of pots! Gary and Maude live just outside Ithaca at 540 Main St., Etna, NY, (route 366 just north of route 13 and NYSEG, a light green house). Email garyrith@yahoo.com or call 607-347-6444

October 2016 Calendar of Ithaca Monthly Meeting

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business Sunday, October 9, Rise of Meeting

Join in the Quaker decision-making process. Agenda items should be sent to our clerk, Antonia Saxon, by the preceding Wednesday.

Dish-to-Pass Brunch Sunday, October 23, Rise of Meeting

Bring something tasty to share if you can. All are welcome.

Future of the Burt House Sunday, October 23, Rise of Meeting

Ithaca Monthly Meeting continues to weigh the right use of the Burt House, a house at 227 N Willard Way owned by IMM. We will be holding regular Burt House meetings the fourth Sunday of each month for the next several months, proceeding in the spirit of worship. Attendance at these meetings is strongly encouraged.

Newsletter Deadline Thursday, October 27, 5p

Please send your newsletter contributions to Marin Clarkberg at clarkberg@cornell.edu, or 150 Giles Street, Ithaca NY 14850.

Anger and Forgiveness Workshop/Retreat Saturday, October 29, 10a-3p

ARCH is sponsoring this retreat facilitated by Anita Paul, ARCH Specialist. A simple lunch will be provided. The Anger and Forgiveness retreat is a spiritually grounded opportunity to explore the purpose of anger in our lives and how it differs from being mad. A forgiveness practice will be explained and experienced so that it can become an integral part of our lives. We will have time for worship, reflection, writing, and small group discussion. No one will be asked to share more than they are comfortable with, and we will address small issues that we want to let go off, not the big ones. We will laugh. We will be supportive of each other. We will grow in trust. We will learn a new skill. To forgive does not mean to forget or condone or to say, 'It doesn't matter.' Rather it is a movement of grace, a gift to ourselves, a healing of the heart.

Quaker Values and End of Life Decision-Making Sunday, October 30, Rise of Meeting

Using a workbook written by Anita Paul and Barbara Spring (similar to *Five Wishes*, but from a Quaker perspective) Friends can meet in small groups to support one another in working on the document before leaving that day. Workbooks will be available for \$10, which supports the ARCH program.

On Sundays

- 10:20a **First Day School** gathers upstairs at Third Street.
- 10:30a **Meeting for Worship** at the Third Street Meetinghouse
- 11:15a **First Day School** attenders enter the meetingroom for intergenerational Meeting for Worship.

Other Weekly IMM Events

- Wed 7:30p **Meeting for worship** at the Burt House, 227 N. Willard Way