

Smithfield



Friends

Newsletter January 2006

**Smithfield Monthly Meeting of Friends
108 Smithfield Road Woonsocket, RI 02895**

Vol. 18

No. 175

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Clerk: Richard Frechette

Recording Clerk: Connie Bair-Thompson

Pastor: Marnie Miller-Gutsel

Treasurer: Cindy Keene

Ministry&Counsel: Diane Gauthier

Newsletter: Randy Oftedahl

CALENDAR FOR January/February

EVERY SUNDAY

**10:30 am: MEETING FOR WORSHIP
Child Care Available**

LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH: Unprogrammed Worship and Pot Luck Lunch

Other Events

Saturday Jan 21

9 AM--pot luck breakfast followed by discussion on the NEYM Faith & Practice Revision draft on worship.

Saturday, Jan 28

10 AM--Beth Collea, YM religious education coordinator will lead discussions on invigorating Smithfield's First Day School program. Pot luck lunch will follow. **Everyone Welcome**

Saturday, Feb 4

time TBA (early evening)--Mid-Winter All Meeting Celebration

Sunday, Feb. 5

Monthly Meeting for Business
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Invigorate Smithfield Meeting's First Day School Program!

The spiritual nurture of our children and youth is a joint responsibility of parents and community. To help us with reinvigorating our Meeting's first day school program, Beth Collea, Yearly Meeting's religious education coordinator, will come to Smithfield Meeting on **Saturday, Jan 28 at 10 AM** to talk with all interested Friends. Bring contributions for a **pot luck lunch**, after which discussion will continue as needed. It is important that as many as possible participate in this dialogue. **High Schoolers are also encouraged to attend.**

NEYM Faith & Practice Revision--Pot Luck Breakfast and Discussion

Come and discuss the **Draft Chapter on Worship!**

On **Saturday Jan 21**, all are invited to a **pot luck breakfast at 9 AM**, followed by **discussion** on the NEYM Faith & Practice Revision draft on worship. Copies of the draft are available in the meeting house lobby, and can be downloaded from the Yearly Meeting website (www.neym.org; click on "committees", then on "Faith & Practice Revision Committee").

Letter from Marnie

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year, everybody!

I had a very different Christmas this year. For the first time ever, my daughters Reeve and Sabina (who brought her boyfriend Simon) were at the parsonage for a bit of the holiday. We had a lovely Christmas Eve breakfast, and opened our stockings and presents by the tree. Reeve stayed over Christmas Eve night as well--some of you met her after the candlelight service at the Meeting House. Then for the first time in many years, I drove to Virginia, so that I could stop in NJ to pick up my elderly aunt who no longer drives long distances, and has a hard time keeping her balance in a train. (Well, she is ninety-two!)

I had an uneventful drive to New Jersey on Christmas Day, and stopped at my aunt's for the night. We set off next morning at a time I thought would get us to Virginia by six o'clock. There my brother had planned a full scale family Christmas dinner with turkey and all the trimmings.

Ah--the best laid plans.....All was fine down to the southern end of the Jersey Turnpike--where we got funneled into the worst traffic jam I have ever seen in all my years of driving. Every motorist in America seemed to be on I-95 trying to get from New Jersey to Washington DC. We proceeded at a glacial pace down into Delaware where I finally managed to work my way--along with a thousand other drivers--into a rest-stop parking lot. Cancel the family dinner! Traffic was so bad, I thought it must be some sort of record, and we'd see it on the news the next day. We didn't. (Is ninety miles of gridlock normal post-Christmas traffic here?) Fortunately at a small tourist office near the restaurant, a cheerful miracle-working lady was booking people into motels, or cheerfully giving them directions for various ways of escaping the mess. (Do you suppose I-95 gets assigned a guardian angel on nights like that?) She sent us three miles further to an exit which led us to another major road--which was nearly empty. Although she must have already repeated exactly the same directions several hundred times before we arrived at her desk, yet somehow she had retained an extraordinary degree of courtesy, patience, and good cheer. Once off I-95, we made good time, but nevertheless a trip which should have taken six hours took eleven; we finally pulled into the drive at 10 PM. The dinner was stored in the refrigerator and my mother was in



bed. My aunt and I dined on sandwiches and agreed it was an experience we never wanted to repeat. Yet it was made bearable along the way by our encounters with really nice, helpful, kind people of all ages and races, every where we stopped--gas stations, convenience stores, whatever. Just when reading the paper or watching television--or getting stuck in a ninety mile traffic jam--makes me want to give up on a lot of my fellow citizens, my cynicism gets foiled by small encounters like those, and I realize the Light is still shining out there through a whole invisible network of good people.

The week did improve, and culminated with an unusually nice New Year's Eve part at my brothers, where there were several people I've known since I was about four years old. And our return trip provided something very special--something I have only seen about four times in my entire life, and never so close. Perched about thirty feet up in a tree quite near to the road was a bald eagle. I know that Ben Franklin thought the national symbol ought to be a wild turkey, but face it--compared to an eagle, a turkey is pretty dowdy. I do wonder about having a bird of prey in that role, but boy, are they spectacular. All I could think was "Golly gee whiz! It looks exactly like all the pictures!" It felt like a blessing.

And I thought of those beautiful words from Isaiah 40:31: *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.*

Blessings for a New Year of Renewal to you all,

Marnie

Deadline Coming Up Soon For Quaker Youth Pilgrimage

January 15 is the last day to register for this year's Quaker Youth Pilgrimage through the the rich historical sites of the mid-western US. Friends of many traditions and nationalities aged 16-18 will join July 14-August 10 to travel, live, work, and worship together. For more info and applications, contact www.fwccamerica.org/whatwedo/youth.html.

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Young Friends Retreats

Plan ahead now for the Young Friends retreats in the upcoming months. On February 10-12, there will be the **Cultural Bonanza Retreat** at Wellesley. That will be followed on March 17-19 by the **Sexuality and Relationships Retreat** at Hanover, NH. For more info on these and other retreats, see the flier on the bulletin board, and or contact www.neym.org/youngfriends, or phone 617-922-7095.

Deadline for registering for these and other Spring Retreats--**Thursday, January 26**. Young Friends Retreats are open to all Friends of High School age, but you **must register in advance** and late registrants may find themselves on a wait list.

National and International Youth Programs

Check out the **Summer and Semester Opportunities** flier for addresses to contact re work camp and other volunteer, paid, and internship programs for teens in the US and abroad.

Pendle Hill Winter Offerings

The **Pendle Hill Quaker Center** outside of Philadelphia offers many exciting winter term weekend workshops on everything from the Bible to Gandhi. See the bulletin board!

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Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business: January 8, 2006

2006-1 Opening Minute

Smithfield Monthly Meeting met for a regularly scheduled meeting for worship with attention to business at 12 Noon on January 8, 2006. Richard Frechette served as clerk, Connie Bair-Thompson as recording clerk, and there were four other Friends present. We began with a period of waiting worship.

2006-2 Sponsorship advertisement for the Woonsocket Citizen of the Year awards ceremony

The Rev. Sammy Vaughn of St. James Baptist church has been named as the Woonsocket Kiwanis Club Citizen of the Year. Friends agreed to purchase an advertisement in the brochure for the awards program as a way to show our support for Rev. Vaughn and a way to let the community know about our meeting.

2006-3 Disposition of old hymnals

The clerk reminded us that we have boxes of old hymnals in the meetinghouse that we are not using and asked us if we would like to empower someone to dispose of these in the best way, perhaps donating them to another church. Richard Frechette volunteered, and Friends approved, to find an organization that can use these hymnals.

2006-4 Clarification of Nominating Committee report (Minute 2005-69)

Eunice Strobel informed the clerk that the nominating committee report last month was in error in that Cindy Keene has agreed only to continue until a new Treasurer can be found, rather than agreeing to serve for another full year. Also, Cathy Sleeth will no longer be able to serve on the nominating committee, leaving just two people on that committee: Eunice Strobel and Suzanne Frechette. Connie Bair-Thompson offered to replace Cathy Sleeth on the nominating committee and Friends approved. Friends agreed to rescind minute 2005-69 and asked the nominating committee to report to meeting for business when it is prepared to re-present its list of nominations.

2006-5 RI-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting in April 2006

Smithfield Monthly Meeting has responsibility to host the next Quarterly Meeting in April 2006. The clerk asked us what we wish to do for food and for program for that meeting. Quarterly Meeting was originally scheduled for April 16, which is Easter Sunday. Ministry and Counsel committee recommends that we move Quarterly Meeting to a different Sunday in April. Friends agreed to try to schedule Quarterly Meeting on April 23, 2006, instead. Friends also agreed that Smithfield monthly meeting should provide the food, possibly suggesting other meetings bring a desert.

Friends ask Ministry and Counsel to discuss what type of worship would be best for this Quarterly Meeting and report back to meeting for business.

Friends discussed what should be done for the program portion of Quarterly meeting (the time after lunch and before business meeting), including having a guest speaker, simply having extra time to socialize among Friends, or talking about the chapter on worship in the new Faith and Practice revision. Friends agreed to use the chapter on worship in the new Faith and Practice as something to begin discussion on during this portion of Quarterly Meeting. Friends asked Marnie Miller-Gutsell to ask one or more people on the Faith and Practice revision committee to join us in this discussion.

2006-6 Regular fellowship time after worship

Friends wish to begin having a regular time for fellowship following meeting for worship, serving coffee and refreshments. Sara Minsk has agreed to act as coordinator for this and we will seek additional volunteers via the newsletter.

2006-7 Closing Minute No further business arising, Friends closed with a period of waiting worship, intending to meet again for business on February 5, 2006, God willing.



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