



BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

A publication of the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

brooklynmeeting.org

October 2015

Minutes, Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business: First Day, Sixth of Ninth Month, 2015

The meeting began with the reading of this Advice:

From the beginnings of our Society, we have considered it necessary to assemble frequently for the purpose of public worship held in expectant waiting for divine guidance, thereby manifesting our belief in and dependence upon our creator. Meeting for worship is fundamental for us, and we should be diligent and punctual in our attendance. We seek, through communion with God, the strengthening influence of the Holy Spirit to enable us to discharge with fidelity the services we owe to God, to each other, and to all people.

Help for the Hard of Hearing

Brooklyn Meeting's microphones, speakers and headphones are introduced and used in the meeting for business. Friends offer praise, criticisms, and suggestions. Callie Janoff, on behalf of the ministry and counsel committee, assures Friends these concerns will be considered.

New Members and a Wedding in Brooklyn Meeting

Membership is approved for Robin Puskas and her son, Joseph Eisman (Robin's membership letter is excerpted elsewhere in this issue.)

The transfer of Patricia Frascatore from 15th Street Meeting into Brooklyn Meeting is approved.

The meeting approves the request from Colleen Cruz and Nadine Baldasare to

be married under the care of the meeting. The wedding will be held on October 24, 2015.

Disbursements from our Socially Responsible Donations/Activities Fund Approved

Over \$2,500 to **DREAM! / Safety With Dignity**, the project that Lyn Pyle has been associated with for many years. They go into Bronx high schools and teach students and teachers peer mediation as an alternative to violence. Their results can be quantified because schools are required to keep records of violence in the school. The schools they have worked in have seen a reduction of 30% - 60% in violent incidents.

\$2,500 in support of an **Anti-Nuclear Event** co-sponsored with Brooklyn For Peace to be held October 1st in this Meeting Room. The speakers will be Sister Megan Rice who was recently released from prison for civil disobedience in connection with a nuclear power plant in Tennessee; Joseph Gerson of the American Friends Service Committee speaking of nuclear weapons proliferation; and Tim Judson of the Nuclear Information Resource Service speaking about the danger of nuclear power. The emphasis of the forum will be what we can do as individuals and organizations (especially communities of faith) to eliminate nuclear weapons and close nuclear power plants.

\$1,000 to the **Touch Dinners** organized every Monday evening here in our social room by Ken Diamondstone, a long time attender, and his partner. They serve up to 25 people who have AIDS a home-cooked dinner every Monday. The warmth and fellowship serve a positive reinforcement in their daily struggle.

Interim Reports are received from the Treasurer and the Collections Committee

Excerpted elsewhere in this issue

LGBT Concern About Friends United Meeting Hiring Policy

Beth Kelly reports on concerns over the discriminatory hiring policy of Friends United Meeting and our relationship to FUM through New York Yearly Meeting.

We receive the report, and we ask the clerk to accept Colin Saxton's offer to visit our Meeting for worship and discussion with us.

Committee Nominations

Ella Frederick - Winter Holiday Festival
Miguel Herrera - Property committee
Benjamin Frisch -- Mary McDowell
Friends School Relationship committee

-- compiled by Lucy Sikes

Memorial Meeting for Larry Jaeger: Sunday, October 4, 2015

There will be a memorial meeting Larry Jaeger, beloved longtime Friend, at the meeting house on Sunday, October 4 at 1:00 p.m. Many of the older members of our meeting will remember his years of attendance, his leadership in various roles in the meeting and his welcoming presence to all of us, especially newcomers. He made a point of knowing the names of every one of us.

Larry and his wife, Ina, left Brooklyn and moved to Foxdale Village, a senior residence in State College,

Pennsylvania. A number of us made the long drive to visit them over the years; Larry came back every year to visit Friends at Brooklyn meeting and neighbors on his block in Prospect Heights. We have missed him these 12 years that he and Ina have been gone. He will be even more missed, now that he has passed away.

-- *Lucy Sikes*

Interim Reports from Two Meeting Finance Committees

Finance and Collections

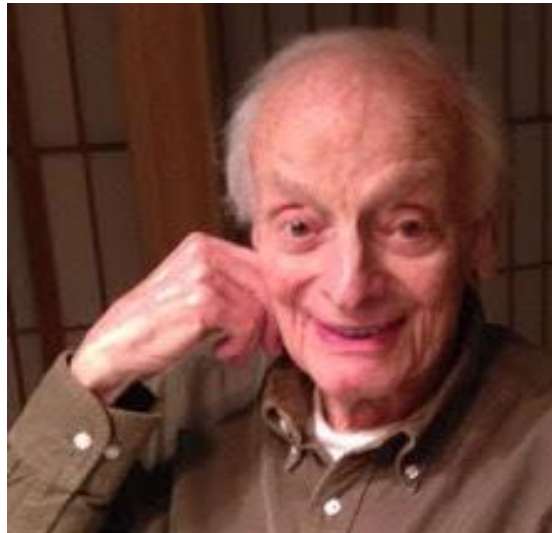
For the first eight months of the year 2015 our committee has collected \$28,971.43, less than 35% of the total required for the 2015 budget (line 36 of the second revised budget: \$83,016.) With one third of the year remaining to raise nearly two thirds of our budget, all Friends are urged to consider generous giving to the meeting before the end of the year.

Our current commitment to NYYM constitutes 48% of our total budget. Combined with other external (non-committee) commitments, fully two thirds of our annual budget consists of planned spending outside of our meeting's committee budgets.

Treasurer

As we begin the final quarter of Fiscal Year 2015, I'm sorry to report that our individual donations have not kept up with our committee spending and financial commitments. After consulting with a member of Finance and Collections, this report shows that we are about \$55,000 behind our fundraising goal for individual donations.

Also we have spent just over \$13,000 more than we have collected in donations so far this year. And we don't currently have enough in our checking account to risk sending the other half



of our budgeted covenant donation to New York Yearly Meeting. We have sent NYYM \$21,458 and still need \$21,458 more. We will continue monitoring our accounts so we can send the rest of our NYYM donation as soon as possible.

-- *compiled by Lucy Sikes*

An Interview with Joan Malin: Brooklyn Meeting Member and CEO of Planned Parenthood New York City

Planned Parenthood has been the subject of much debate in recent months, largely due to a series of politically-motivated online videos produced with the intent of smearing the organization's reputation.

With Planned Parenthood in the news, we reached out to Joan Malin, CEO of Planned Parenthood NYC and a longtime member of our meeting. In addition to providing an update on PPNYC, Joan spoke about the role that Brooklyn Meeting plays for her in negotiating the challenges of her work.

The anti-Planned Parenthood videos, made by a group called the Center for Medical Progress, suggest that PP sells fetal tissue for profit. First and foremost, Joan stresses that the

allegations made in the videos are completely false. Select PP affiliates do make donations of fetal tissue for medical research with consent from patients -- a legal practice, though not practiced by any PPNYC affiliates -- and are reimbursed for the cost of storage and transportation. However, certain Republican lawmakers have used the videos to justify arguments for stripping the organization of federal funding. As a presidential election approaches, abortion remains a primary topic of debate. Planned Parenthood is under intense scrutiny.

In her position at PPNYC, Joan often has the opportunity to listen to incredibly moving stories about peoples' sexual and reproductive health. This is one of the things she finds most gratifying about her work; she says such stories provide "context and texture." She is also very grateful for the many nuanced and respectful conversations she has had with meeting members who don't fully embrace PP's mission, but believe in the importance of the work that she does.

Brooklyn Meeting Newsletter: How does the meeting support your work?

Joan Malin: So many times in meeting, when they ask to hear requests to be held in the light, I've thought of standing up and saying how grateful I am for the support and love of the meeting, and how in many ways the meeting has embraced my work with PP as my calling.

Brooklyn Meeting Newsletter: Is there a word or a feeling you associate with that support?

Joan Malin: It feels like a buoyancy, or like being held. When you're the CEO, you're guiding the agency and working with staff and working with boards and your own role is a pivotal one, but it can feel very alone. To know that my community supports and embraces me both as Joan and as CEO of PP, just means the world to me.

Brooklyn Meeting Newsletter: Is there anything in particular that you want to report on?

Joan Malin: Obviously our advocacy work is so critical. In addition to our clinical services, we are very strong advocates on behalf of access to sexual reproductive health care and what we call reproductive justice. Last year we came out in support of paid sick leave, because many women without paid sick leave can't get to a doctor. Our advocacy work is at the local level and at the state level, to make sure that funding is available and the legal framework is there to ensure our work.

The fact that, in a Republican primary debate, PP would be a topic of conversation, when there are so many issues that we as a country need to be thinking and talking about, is just wrong. It is settled law, and access to [abortion] should be available to all. PP is going into our 100th year providing contraceptive care, and we provide so much high quality, needed health care service in so many different communities around the country. The fact that we have to defend that is just wrong.

There's a real effort to defund PP. I don't think it will prevail, but I think it will take a lot of us saying that PP matters.

-- Catherine Despont

Excerpt from Robin Puskas' Membership Letter

I came to Brooklyn Monthly Meeting at a time when I was questioning goodness, in the world and in my own heart. Could sitting quietly for an hour nudge me toward being a better person? Could it help cure the ills of the world?

Four years and many silent hours later, I find that, for me, the answer to both of those questions is probably no. I haven't been remade into a different

person. The profound unrest in the world is no less pronounced.

But in that time I have learned a great deal. I've carved out a practice where I "center down" once a week and really listen. I find real peace and quietude, and in that quietude comes slow revelations about what matters to me most. My husband, my family, my community, my friends, my son. The powerful drive to bring integrity and meaning to the smallest acts in my life. To make the best dinner at home, bring care and attention to making spreadsheets at work, to bring the deeply found calm I cultivate during Meeting to any conflicts that surround or include me.

And through the experience of participating in the committees of the Meeting, I feel like I can start to bring something back to the community that is providing this sacred space and real support. It's not fixing the world, exactly, but it is affecting the small world directly around me, and for the opportunity to do those things I'm infinitely grateful.

In Friendship,
Robin Puskas

The Story of a U.S. Marine Corps Conscientious Objector

Jake Bridge, who recently attended our Meeting for Worship and hopes to be back soon, shares with us his first-hand account of applying for and receiving conscientious objector status from the United States Marine Corps.

Marine Corps Officers don't file for Conscientious Objector (CO) status. It's just "not done". But, as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Marines, I filed for Conscientious Objector status in June of 2014.

Why? On May 20, 2014 I woke up and remembered what it is to truly be alive. The feeling was wonderful and I felt connected to everyone and everything. The only hitch was I was two and a half years into a four year contract as an

officer in the Marines. All of a sudden I found myself an advocate for peace in an aggressive and violent military branch, with no easy way out; and I could no longer reconcile my role in the military with my own spiritual wellbeing.

The Conscientious Objector

Becoming an "enlightened" individual in the Marine Corps is quite a [bleeping] experience!

The U.S. Marines have a culture of psychological ill-health. The demonizing of other countries and militaries helps us to rationalize and moralize our own perceived need to make war and to kill, but the truth is, the soldier who maims or kills the enemy ultimately damages his own psyche. The suicide rate in the U.S. military is as high as it has ever been, sexual assault and harassment are a constant plague, and basic respect for human dignity is lost on far too many. Yet we pretend all the time that we are not only "okay", but that we are the biggest alpha dog on the block.

I decided I was going to join the Marines when I was still in high school. I didn't really know what I wanted to be. I was always trying to fit into the macho, American mold but it wasn't a good fit for me. I was always sensitive. But still, I was taken with the honorable military ideal. This was in 2004, when everyone wanted to "Go get the terrorists". I thought, "I'm protecting America and our freedom. And my mom and my dad. And I'm going to die for this country." Besides, what could be cooler than being a Marine officer?

By 2011, after many years of hard work, I was awarded as the top Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) graduate from the University of Colorado. But, by May 2014, I had already considered becoming a conscientious objector for almost a year. In that time I had spoken to a therapist, a Unitarian chaplain, and others that I trusted, but each time I knew that I wasn't ready. The question wasn't if I was going to file for CO

status, but when I would do it. Then, in the night from May 19 to May 20, I had a transformative dream about the finiteness of my life. I knew the time was now.

On June 16, 2014, I submitted an application for CO status to my commanding officer. The entire deliberation process – filled with investigations, rebuttals, and long waits – took just under 10 months.

Every week was harder than the one before, and I cried often before going to work. I was overwhelmed by the beauty of everything. The wind rustling through bushes, pink sunlight on the clouds, and the smell of fresh ground coffee reduced me to sobs. Driving to work I wanted to stop at every single house, hug the people inside, and tell them how happy I was to be alive with them.

I cried because going to work meant leaving all that beauty behind.

Many people told me not to file for CO status, that doing so would make it harder for me to get a job on the outside. I was even offered an opportunity to rescind my application in exchange for a better position in my battalion. I never doubted my decision though, because my conscience left me no choice in the matter. If I had doubts about my new path, they disappeared in April when the Marine Corps approved my application and set my discharge date for May 15, 2015 — which incidentally, also happened to be International Conscientious Objectors Day.

— *Jake Bridge*

Rise Up Singing Sequel Concert at 1st Unitarian Church, Brooklyn Friday Evening October 23rd

Friends who have been at Yearly Meeting at Silver Bay each year will remember the pleasures of gathering on the porch of the inn with Annie and Peter Blood-Patterson and singing favorite folk songs, protest tunes and a wide variety of other music from the book: Rise Up Singing. Now they have created a sequel, Rise Again.

Annie & Peter Blood-Patterson, members of Mt. Toby Meeting in New England Yearly Meeting and creators of the songbook Rise Up Singing will

perform a concert at the First Unitarian Church (50 Monroe Place, Brooklyn) on Friday evening, Oct. 23rd. The concert is in celebration of the release of the long-awaited new songbook. They will be joined by several other terrific artists who share Annie &

Peter's commitment to peace & social justice: Magpie, Bev Grant and the Brooklyn Women's

Chorus - and Emma's Revolution! (Pat Humphries & Sandy O).

Details, online ticket sales and flyer: <https://www.riseupandsing.org/events/rise-again-brooklyn>

Book Worms, Take Note

Dear Book Lovers,

The book sale will take place on Sunday October 18th and Sunday October 25th in the social room.

Donations of books will be accepted on Sunday, October 4th and Sunday,

October 11th, as well as Tuesday evenings October 13th and October 20th from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

-- *Senta Romasco*

The Brooklyn Monthly Meeting Library, An Introduction

The Brooklyn Monthly Meeting Library is located on the left side of the social hour room as you descend the stairs. It is a rich resource where you can learn about Quaker history and Quaker organizations and read biographies of historical individuals (such as William Penn and George Fox) as well as contemporary figures doing important work around the world.

Are you thinking about writing a letter requesting membership? Our pamphlet, "Thinking About Membership", can help guide you through the process.

Do you want to know what friends are doing in today's world to eliminate the causes of war? You might want to check out "Friends Journal."

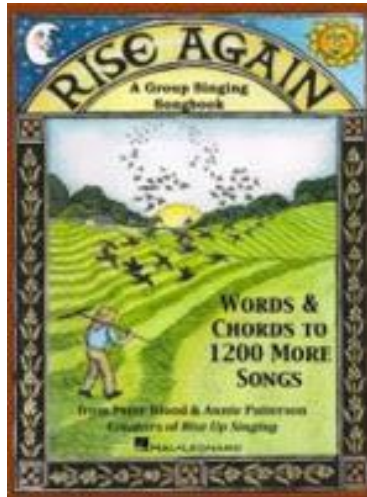
Perhaps you wish to explore Quaker or other religious thought? If so, the library offers many resources to speed you on your way.

You can also learn about the New York Quarterly Meeting and the New York Yearly Meeting, the regional and state meetings that Brooklyn meetings to which Brooklyn Meeting belongs.

Books are available for lending from the library. Fill out the card in the inside cover of the book you want to sign out and put it in the card catalog. When you return the book, sign it in on the catalog card.

The library is available to members and attenders. It is open during meetings and when the meeting house is not being used by commercial clients or internal committees.

-- *Naceo Giles*



What Can White People Do About Racism?

Do you feel uncomfortable about what you have done or are doing to help heal racism?

Do you feel that you would like to do something but don't know what you can do? Some people feel overwhelmed at the enormity of the very idea. Some feel threatened by the specter of white guilt or fearful about being "called out" for being insensitive or unaware. And many feel that there are other more compelling social injustices to deal with. But it is plain that racism is a sickness which is deeply embedded in our culture and one that is becoming more critical every day.

Opportunities to learn more exist, in workshops which are sensitive and

respectful to the impact racism has on all of us. There are many opportunities, but I have recently attended workshops that I can recommend to you without reservation:

The Center for the Study of White American Culture, Inc. (CSWAC) is offering several workshops this fall:

What White People Can Do About Racism, Fundamentals 1, on November 14 (Beacon, NY).

What White People Can Do About Racism, Fundamentals 2, on October 17 (Manhattan)

White Accountability and Organizing on October 10 (Westchester) and December 5 (Brooklyn) (Note that What White People Can Do About Racism Fundamentals 1 and 2 are prerequisites for this workshop.) For

more information, contact me or go to

www.euroamerican.org

-- Linda Clarke

Submission Guidelines

The Communications Committee welcomes Brooklyn Meeting News contributions from all Meeting members and attenders. Our newsletter includes a variety of content which may be of interest to our community, including but not limited to:

- Recaps of recent Meeting events
- Previews of upcoming events
- Issues pertaining to our Quaker faith and history

The newsletter is published on the first Sunday of each month, and we request that submissions for the next issue be submitted by **October 19th**.
General Guidelines:

- Please send an email to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org so that we may briefly discuss your contribution, as regards its timeliness, appropriateness, and length.
- Contributions should

- generally be brief, between 150-450 words in length.
- Please send your newsletter submission as an attached Word document.
- Keep in mind that contributions will be copy edited, and may not appear in the newsletter in exactly the same form as how they were submitted.

Thank you for your interest - we look forward to your input!

Regularly Scheduled Activities

Meetings for Worship

9:00–9:50 AM and
11:00 AM–NOON on Sundays,
in the meeting room
6:30 PM Tuesdays,
in the meeting room

Childcare

Sundays during 11:00 AM worship, for
children of 3 months to 3 years, in the care
of an early childhood teacher and dedicated
volunteers

First Day School

10:45 AM – 11:45 AM, Sundays, September to
June. Three classes, roughly related to age:
Bodies (4-6), Minds (7-9) and Spirits (10-12).

Social Hour

12:00 PM Sundays,
Ground-level dining room

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

1:00 PM, first Sundays, in the meeting
room

Hymn Singing around the Piano

10:00 AM, first Sundays, in the meeting
room

Readings of Spiritual Texts

10:00 AM, second Sundays, in the meeting
room

Worship Sharing

10:00 AM, third Sundays, on the third
floor

Community Dinner

1:00 PM-3:00 PM SET-UP
3:00 PM-4:00 PM MEAL/SERVING
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM CLEAN-UP, COME FOR
SOME OR ALL!
Last Sunday of every month, ground-level
dining room; volunteers appreciated for
this monthly dinner for anyone who wishes
a free hot meal. Children encouraged to
volunteer.
Contact: Andres Colapinto,
acolabus@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Ongoing additions to upcoming Meeting events are regularly added to the Meeting website at <http://www.brooklynmeeting.org/calendar>.

To submit an event, email events@brooklynmeeting.org

*Member Kate Rapoport also maintains an
email event announcement list; send a request to brooklyn.kittens@gmail.com to join.*

October

October 23:

Rise Up singing Concert at First Unitarian
Church. See flyer:
<https://www.riseupandsing.org/events/rise-again-brooklyn>.

October 23-25:

“Deep Quiet, Body & Mind with John Calvi”

This weekend workshop will be a time of resting
the whole body so that sleep is longer and deeper.

Powell House.
http://www.powellhouse.org/index.php/our-calendar?task=view_event&event_id=299

Send additions to Regularly Scheduled Activities or Upcoming Events to events@brooklynmeeting.org.

Send inquiries or suggestions about the newsletter to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

*The Monthly Meeting Newsletter is published by the Communications Committee of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.
Current members: Catherine Despont, Eli Gwynn (clerk), Ben Hill, Molly Rusnak, Lucy Sikes, and Anna White.*
