The Friendly Line

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

February 2019 Vol. 8

"Jesus calls us to exhilarating adventure of dynamic discipleship. Thou He meets us where we are, He loves us too much to leave us as we have been." Lloyd Ogilvie The Other Jesus

AVP Support Committee Report

(The Des Moines Valley Friends Ministry & Counsel requested that this report be shared in the February Friendly Line, separate from its usual place within the M&C Report during Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.)

01/02/2019

Present: Gordon Bivens; Andrea Holveck (clerk); Bill Howard; Lynne Howard; Stan Sander; and Jordan Kauffman.

Stan [Sanders] reported that at the December workshop, he was informed that the Alter-

natives to Vio-[at the Newtional Facilihave to other month been meeting



lence Program ton Correcty] would meet every [They had monthly.] due

to the construction at the Newton facility. He and Cheryl [Sutton] feel that meeting every month is important to the momentum of their program. We discussed writing a letter that would state the success of the program and ask for the possibility of meeting at a different place in the facility. Stan will follow up with this and send the letter to the warden, as well as the volunteer coordinator and others who would be involved.

Cheryl has been asked to present at Drake [University] during the spring quarter. She will facilitate a 1 ½ hour class Tuesday and Thursday for two weeks. It is a required class concerning



community involvement. She is excited to have this opportunity.

We will continue to discuss ways to contact people and organizations who might be interested in becoming involved in holding AVP workshops in the community.

Hospitality Committee Seeks Acts for Upcoming "Got Talent Show"

By Ella Steinbach

We are having a talent show called *Des Moines Valley Friends Got Talent* on March 17. If you want to be in it sign up with Ella.

Friends Fascinated by Fred's Stories of Trek to Nepal & Tibet

Last August Fred Nelson had the opportunity to join other members of the organization *Above and Beyond Cancer* on a three-week jouney

(Fred's story cont'd on page 2)



Fred shows everything he carried on his journey with Above & Beyond Cancer. He decided to leave behind the walking stick (seen here) for fear it be seized at customs or by an airline. His instincts were good. He was given a beautiful walking stick after he arrived. When he tried to take it home it was seized by customs while he was still overseas.

(Fred's story cont'd from page 1)

to Nepal and Tibet, China. Some might be sursurprised that Fred purposely left his camera at home, but he says that he wanted to be able to be more fully present in each moment. This, of course, meant that Fred would have no photos of his memorable trek. Happily, several others in the group did take cameras and some were happy to send him copies via the internet.

When Fred was asked to share with Friends for a Second Hour about his trip he reached out to a fellow trekker for assistance. Fred had to borrow the equipment needed to make it possible for everyone to see photos on a screen or wall. A friend was more than happy to share a projector with him but circumstances arose that



Fred shows Marian Love the traditional farewell (and perhaps greeting too) he witnessed the Sherpas exchanging with each other.

made it impossible for him to get the equipment.

Fred offered to call it a day and perhaps share at a later date, but F/friends were eager to hear about his trip and encouraged him to go ahead. They suggested that he seek to be very descriptive as he shared. Friends were not disappointed!

Many F/friends were unaware of the work done through *Above and Beyond* until Fred began training several weeks before the trip. On First Day mornings he would leave his house early so he could join fellow trekkers to train for the trip by running up and down the stairwells of the Plaza Building in downtown Des Moines. The Plaza has 25 floors!

During "the circle" that follows meeting for worship somone almost always asked Fred if he'd been running the stairs just prior to meeting. The question was often followed by a query about his group, how many miles he'd be hiking, etc. Thus, many of us became vicariously invested in his trip. We were almost as excited for him as we would have been if going ourselves.

Before leaving Fred was asked to write up something about his trip and experiences for the *Friendly Line upon his return*. The following is what he submitted. We are especially grateful to receive it given all the things that have been happening in his family in recent weeks

Enjoy his outline of the trip and visit with Fred if you'd like to learn more.

<u>Submitted by Fred</u> – Above and Beyond Cancer is a public charity with a mission to elevate the lives of those touched by cancer. It was founded in 2011 by Des Moines Oncologist, Dr. Richard Deming. One goal of the trek was to circumambulate the sacred Mt. Kailash in the Tibetan Himalayas.

Our journey started with flights from Des (Fred's story cont'd on page 3) (Fred's Story cont'd from page 2)

Moines to Chicago to Istanbul, Turkey, and then on to Kathmandu, Nepal. It was about 20 hours in the air. In Kathmandu we visited two cancer hospitals, as well as local sights such as the huge Buddhist Bouddhanath Stupa and Hindu Pashu)nathnath temple area.

Our trek started from the small village of Simikot in northwest Nepal (following an exciting flight through the mountains for a landing on a very small landing strip). From Simikot, we hiked five days in beautiful green mountains through high mountain villages. We hiked primarily along the Humla Karnali River to the village of Hilsa. We crossed the border into Tibet, China the next day. We camped alongside Lake Manasarovar at 14,950 feet above sea level. It was here that we flew prayer flags to honor people touched by cancer, both those still living and those gone. This was a very memorable event with a spectacular view of Mt. Kailash in the distance. We spent three days trekking around Mt. Kailash (13 miles, 13 miles and 6 miles). The high point of this trek was crossing Dolma La (pass) at over 18,000 feet. The pass area was draped with hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of pray flags. Mt Kailash is a pilgrimage site sacred to Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and Bonpo. The return trip to Kathmandu took us across the high Tibetan Plateau, back down through the Himalayan Mountains and foothills in an incredible ride. (Editor's note: Fred said they were the first group with Above and Beyond that got permission to cross into Tibet. He appreciates the privilege.)

Above and Beyond Cancer was founded in 2011 by Des Moines, Iowa oncologist, Dr. Richard Deming. The team takes cancer survivors on incredible adventures.

Minutes for January 2019 Business Meeting

Present: Pam Blackburn; Ann Robinson, coclerk (recording for the day); Fred Nelson, assistant clerk (presiding clerk for the day); Claire Cumbie-Drake; Deborah Fisch; Dorothy Lifka; DJ Newlin.

After a time of silent worship, the clerk offered a favorite quote from his meditation group saying he found it appropriate in light of the deep freeze the state was currently experiencing. From Shakespeare's Hamlet, "Nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

Approval of December 2018 Minutes

Ann Robinson (co-clerk) presented the December 2018 minutes for consideration of approval.

The treasurer (Pam Blackburn) noted she is not the only signatory on the meeting's signature card (allowing access to the meeting's bank account) as stated in the Ministry & Counsel's report (located on page three of the newsletter in the Support Committee section, paragraph two). Catherine Dietz-Kilen (who was assistant treasurer under George Welch) is also on the signature card. Meeting approved the minutes as corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Summary of Current State of the Budget – Pam Blackburn, treasurer, stated that at the end of December 2018, the meeting had no liabilities. All bills were paid. The General Fund had \$1,400+ in it. Revenues were running at 44% and expenses at 40%. However, she also pointed out that contributions are still running short for the fiscal year. The treasurer believes this is likely to continue, considering the status at the end of calendar year 2018 in comparison to that of 2017.

Meeting generally receives the highest contributions at the end of a calendar year when people are likely wanting to make sure they have their donations in place for tax purposes. In the December 2017 Financials, Revenues were running at 50%, six percent higher than the same month in 2018. So, revenues are definitely *(Meeting cont'd on page 3)*

(Minutes cont'd from page 3)

down from last year and DMVF is starting 2019 with less in the General Fund. This continues to reflect declines of recent years. This means Meeting will probably need to adjust the budget for FY 2020 (7/01/2019 to 6/30/2020). This will be one of the topics being considered by the Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee. The Committee will be leading a meeting discussion in March.

Utilities – It was noted that utilities have also been a little higher than usual. The treasurer suggested the meeting may want to take a look at this. She reminded Friends, however, that the winter started out with a cold snap and the December bill is for more than a 30-day period. The added days and cold snap would most likely be what is being reflected in the December bill. Utilities generally tend to be highest in the first calendar quarter. The treasurer said that utilities run \$70-80 most of the time, but that really cold weather requires the use of supplemental electricity. These last few weeks of bitter cold reminds us to be thankful for those who had the foresight to put in geothermal and persevered to make sure it works correctly.

Designated Fund - There has not been a lot of activity in Designated Funds, except for general contribution to the Sharing Fund and \$1,525 to the Property Management Fund from the General Fund to cover budgeted commitments. Meeting has decided to make sure Property Management has \$6,000 a year for building upkeep and maintenance.

Sharing Fund – A F/friend asked why we keep putting money into the Sharing Fund. She noted the fund hasn't been used for a while. Given that, she went on to ask if the meeting still needs to have the Sharing Fund. The treasurer said the meeting only puts \$10 a month, for a total cost of \$120 for a year into the Sharing Fund. It is administered by Ministry & Counsel on behalf of Meeting members. There are IRS restrictions on giving money to the meeting's own members because it has nonprofit status.

M&C has an application process for members who find themselves needing some emergency financial assistance. However, Friends were unsure who has the written procedures if someone is in need of assistance through the Sharing Fund. The treasurer thinks Jim Dietz-Kilen has a copy. Others might also have copies. It is believed that when the procedure was approved it was printed in the minutes in the Friendly Line, but no one know which issue that would have been. It was agreed that Friends need to locate a copy of the procedures and make sure it is kept in a logical place. It was suggested that it be placed in folder/notebook and be kept by the M&C Committee. The procedure also needs to (Minutes cont'd on page 5)



This year's annual winter book sale sponsored by the Des Moines Valley Friends Library Committee was held Second Hour on 01/27. Because of the low attendance (likely due to wintry weather) the sale was extended to 02/03 Second Hour as well. This sale brought in \$240 to be split between Library Committee and Meeting.

(Minutes cont'd from page 4)

be shared widely with F/friends once it is located. Friends agreed that they are happy the meeting has been sure to maintain the fund. The treasurer also pointed out the Quaker Educational Enrichment Fund doesn't have much in it.

Monthly Spread Sheet – Deborah Fisch, (*Friendly Line (FL)* editor) asked if Friends want the monthly expenditures and income spread sheets (that the treasurer prints out to accompany her oral report) included in the *Friendly Line*, or if the recording clerk's summary of the treasurer's oral report is sufficient. Friends indicated the summary was sufficient. The treasurer said that putting the spreadsheets in the newsletter was stopped because the newsletter's and spreadsheet's formatting were not compatible.

The FL editor said she believed that the spreadsheets should be archived in some way if they are not included in the newsletter. It was decided that from now on copies of the spreadsheets will be placed with each new FL in the three-ring binders in the basement. The FL collection is maintained by the FL editor. There are several large notebooks with three copies of each FL published since it began. It was also pointed out that when the meeting's new webpage is up and running the Friendly Line, which includes the monthly minutes, could be made available on a password protected portion of the site. The treasurer's spreadsheet could then be included with the treasurer's report. Access to the password protected portion of the meeting's website would only be given to members and attenders who are currently active in Meeting. The clerks would be responsible for giving the password out. Friends do not want the treasurer's report on the Web at this time.

(Editor's note – The new website is active. The web manager continues to expand and update the site with new information. Go to <u>www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org</u> to reach the site.) The treasurer said it is good to have transparency concerning our financial records and the business of Meeting. She said that since there have been issues/concerns about putting the financial records in the *Friendly Line* it probably needs to be discussed at future business sessions.

Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee Report

Treasurer (Pam Blackburn), Ann Robinson, Claire Cumbie-Drake, Jim Dietz-Kilen and Owen Newlin make up the Ad Hoc Fundraising Committee. They plan to get a notice in February and/or March *Friendly Line*.

Library Committee

There was no prepared report. It was noted that the annual book sale is scheduled for end of January. They are still looking for book donations and ask they receive them before January 27.

Ministry & Counsel Committee Report

Dorothy Lifka, clerk of the committee gave this report.

Ministry & Counsel Committee met on 01/06/2019. Those present included: Dorothy Lifka, clerk; Jim Dietz-Kilen; Deborah Fisch; Ann Robinson; Jean Sandstrom; and DJ Newlin.

The Day of Remembrance – The annual Day of Remembrance will be 01/20/2019. Jean Sandstrom will speak from Spirit to transition worshippers mid-way through meeting for worship. Details will be discussed at upcoming M&C meetings.

Alternative to Violence Project (AVP) Support Committee Report – See front page story.

Friends General Conference Gathering – There will be an announcement about the Gathering being in Grinnell this year in the 01/2019 (Minutes cont'd on page 6)

(Minutes cont'd from page 5)

Friendly Line. We have asked that it be followed up by printing information about applying for financial aid/scholarships from Meeting in the February *Friendly Line*. Registration for the Gathering begins 04/01. DMVF has some funds available to support attendance. Those interested getting financial assistance should write a brief request and send it to M & C.

Down the Road – The schedule for Hosting and Child Care will appear in future *Friendly Lines*, as well as on the chalk board in the lobby. A list of the rotation (without dates) will be posted on the bulletin board in the lobby.

Outreach – A Second Hour on outreach will be scheduled. Details will be discussed at upcoming M&C meetings.

Alternative to Violence Project (AVP) Support Committee Report – See front page story.

Meeting Address List – In the past, DJ Newlin has updated the meeting's list of members and attenders. Sherry Hutchinson used to do it, and then when she no longer could, DJ took over unofficially. We asked ourselves, "When and how does this list get so out of date?" We know several e-mails and some street addresses have changed, as well as people moving in and out of the meeting. [So, some new names need to be added and some others taken off.]

The committee concluded that it probably needs to be done again and that it really should be updated every year. This should be added to the committee's job description. We will put the current list out after worship for a couple of Sundays and ask members and attenders to check their listing and correct as necessary. We will ask those who have no changes to check off their names, so we know their listing correct.

Religious Educ./Child Care Committee No report.

Peace and Social Concerns Committee No report.

Buildings and Grounds Committee

Entryway Window Replacement – Dick Douglass (convener) reported the good news that the west entryway window frames should be delivered and installed soon. Installation will depend on the weather. -

Property Management Committee No report.

Hospitality Committee Report

DJ Newlin, Ella Steinbach, Charlie Brown, Susan Myers, and Cindy Winchell are currently on (Minutes cont'd on page 7)



The clear glassed new windows on the west side of the meeting's entryway let a lot more light come in than the old tinted ones they replace. We always appreciate when more Light can enter the meeting. Thanks to Buildings & Grounds for their service.

(Minutes cont'd from page 6)

the committee. Hospitality Committee will probably not meet until they have a convener. Dorothy Lifka said Nominating Committee will contact Hospitality Committee members to see about recruiting a convener.

(Notice – It was incorrectly reported in a prior minute that D J Newlin would step in to clerk the committee until someone was appointed.)

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Outreach

The need for Meeting to do outreach in the wider community was discussed.

Meeting has had an ongoing page on *Facebook*. After some discussion it was decided that the group that has been supervising the Facebook page be on an Ad Hoc Committee on Outreach

Website

The new website being developed by Katie Jacoby represents an important opportunity for outreach these days. It likely provides more opportunities for outreach than either *Friendly Line* or Facebook, since both of those are intended for current members and attenders only.

Meeting encourages those working on the webpage to reach out to coordinate with Bob Henderson and Jan Falb, Meeting's Facebook page managers. Meeting asks these Friends to explore how they can work together, coordinate content when it would seem helpful and support each other in general. The meeting is not suggesting they necessarily form one committee, but it could be possible if this group thinks it would be in the best interest of Meeting.

Friends wondered if members of those two groups might initiate an Outreach Committee. It would not necessarily mean that all members of those two committees were expected to be a part of the new committee. Other than the request that members of both Facebook and the Web group meet to arrive at a joint agreement on how to work together since they are often dealing with the same materials, these ideas were merely suggestions that arose in the discussion only.

Midyear Meeting

A Friend asked for the dates of IYMC's Midyear Meeting (3/30 & 31) to be included in *Friendly Line*. Deborah Fisch, editor of *FL*, reported that there is already information in the January issue, and she is planning to run the information in the February issue as well.

Debbie Humphries, author and traveling minister from New England Yearly Meeting, will be the main speaker.

Hosting Schedule

A member asked who's in charge of the hosting schedule and if we are short of hosts. We can always use more hosts. We have lost several over the last year or so. The rotation schedule for hosts is now in *Friendly Line*. It will also be posted on the bulletin board in the entryway of the meetinghouse. Dick and Chris Douglass (Hosting cont'd on page8)



(Hosting cont'd from page 7) have agreed to help host. They have been added to the rotation and their first hosting duties will begin 3/24 & 31.

Requests for Friendly Line

Child Care – It was requested that dates be included in the Child Care rotation list in the *Friendly Line*. The editor said it will be done.

Conservative vs Modern Language – It was requested that the *Friendly Line* return to using modern names of the months and days (Monday...January...) rather than the traditional Conservative practice of using First Month, Second Month and First Day, Second Day, etc. The editor indicated she would, of course, follow the request of the meeting.

Meeting Closes

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business closed with a period of silent worship.

Answering Second Query Leads to Start of Bible Study Group

Friends who decided to stay for the monthly Second Hour for reading and then answering the IYMC Advices and Queries couldn't have expected they would be leaving with a plan for a Bible study group well on its way to becoming a reality.

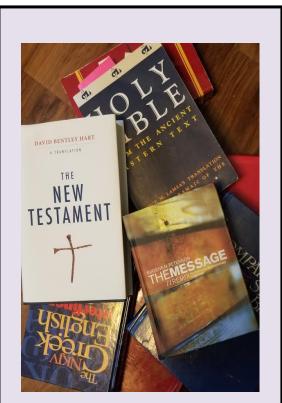
The section for January was number six, Education. (p. 37 in *Faith & Practice:* The *Discipline of IYMC*)

The second query reads, "What effort are we making to become better acquainted with the Bible, the teachings of Jesus, our Judeo-Christian heritage, the history and principles of Friends, and the contributions of other religions and philosophies to our spiritual heritage?"

Friends considered what they as individuals, and we as a meeting, do to "...become better acquainted with the Bible." It was noted that other than Pam Blackburn's periodic offering of *Quakerism 101,* and an occasional Second Hour presentation that would fit that description. Meeting has very few scheduled educational programs on the Bible or Quaker history and practices.

One Friend shared s/he wished that Meeting would offer a Bible Study. Others said they also had similar thoughts. As the sharing continued, someone suggested that if there was this much interest, they could certainly begin a Bible study and invite others from Meeting to join the group.

It was agreed they would meet again to better discern if this was something they really (Bible study cont'd page 9)



By using different translations of the Christian Bible Friends are seeing what a difference just a few words translated differently (all by Biblical scholars of their time) can make a difference in how we understand what is being said.

(Bible study cont'd from page 9) wanted to do. And if so – when would they meet? What would they study? Who would lead it? And, how long would it last?

A time for more deliberation was set for 01/ 15 and it was announced after Meeting on the next First Day.

Several Friends attended that meeting, including some who heard about it in the announcement on First Day. They were able to decide the following:

1) They did indeed want to have a Bible study.

2) They will meet at 7:30 p.m. at the meetinghouse on the second Monday of each month for six months. (Someone had checked about availability of the meetinghouse ahead of time.)

3) They decided to start with The Gospel According to Mark (the shortest and first written of the four gospels).

4) They would use the Joanne & Larry Spears' *Friendly Bible Study Method*.

5) Pam Blackburn agreed to facilitate.

6) The first of the six meetings on was scheduled for 01/21/19.

A group of about six F/friends attended the first Bible study session, and at least eight were at the second on 02/18.

Just like Meeting, spiritual beliefs and experiences within the group are wide ranging. There is one thing those attending the Bible study seem to have in common, an interest (or some might say a longing) to learn more about the Christian Bible – how to read it with an eye to both what was being said to the people of Jesus time and what it is saying to us today.

The next study is scheduled for 03/18/2019 at 7:30 at the meetinghouse.

Financial Assistance Available for Attending FGC Gathering

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting has approved a small fund to assist members/attenders of the Meeting to attend all or part of the FGC Gathering at Grinnell, Iowa this coming summer. Realizing that even without having to pay for expensive cross-country air fare, the registration, room & board for the Gathering is still costly, enough so that it is likely some DMV F/friends will not be able to attend. The hope is with some help from the fund more will be able to attend.

Ministry & Counsel Committee is in charge of distributing funds. They ask those seeking assistance to write a letter explaining: 1) Why they would like to attend and how many the fund would be assisting; 2) An estimated cost to attend, as well as how many days that funding would cover; 3) How much of that estimated cost they will be able to provide and how much they would need from the fund. Please keep the request to one page if possible. Registration for the Gathering begins on 4/01, so please have requests to Dorothy Lifka, clerk of M&C no later than 3/22. The FGC Gathering registration form and materials are on the FGC website at https://www.fgcquaker.org/connect/gathering

Advice and Queries for March #9 Civic Responsibility

Because Friends believe there is that of God in all people, we strive for a world of freedom, justice and equality for everyone. Believing that progress toward these ideals is advanced by those who devote themselves to the shaping of a just society, we urge Friends to be active and conscientious citizens. This means staying informed on social issues, and on the opinions and activities of our elected representatives and of those seeking office. It is important that Friends speak truth to those in power. We recognize that, in our world, power in government and private sectors lies disproportionately with those of economic means. Speaking out on a personal level in our communities may be

difficult, even dangerous, yet by doing so we may encourage others to work for justice.

Our first allegiance is to the Holy Spirit. In general, Friends support the laws of the State, but if those laws directly violate our religious convictions, we may be led to oppose them. When contemplating civil disobedience or unpopular personal testimony, we must carefully consider the spiritual basis for, and honestly face the consequences of our actions.

QUERIES

What conflicts do we perceive between the laws of the State and our religious convictions?

How do we resolve those conflicts in our lives?

In what ways do we assume responsibility for the government of our community, state, nation and world?

How do we share our convictions with others?

Do we express our opinions with courage, yet with love, mindful of the Divine Spirit within everyone?

How do we maintain our integrity when we find ourselves in a position of power?

How do we respond when we feel powerless?

Do we really respect and help those we seek to serve?

Are we careful to reach our decisions through prayer and strengthen our actions with worship?

Are we open to Divine leadings?

Child Care

02/24	P. Reynold & B Henderson
03/03	D. Lifka & C. Winchell
03/10	F. Nelson & V. Smith
03/17	J. Sandstrom & ?
03/24	K. & J. Dietz-Kilen
03/31	P. Reynold & B. Henderson
04/07	D. Lifka & C. Winchell
04/14	F. Nelson & V. Smith
04/21	J. Sandstrom & D. Fisch
04/28	K. & J. Dietz-Kilen



Blast from the Past: Bob playing improvised game of "Who Can Toss the Most Walnuts into the Bucket?" at a past Midyear.



First Day/Sunday Schedule

Meeting for Worship – Each Sunday, 10 - 11 AM Meeting for Query Responses – First Sunday of each month, 11:30 a.m.

Meeting for Worship/Business – Second Sunday/First Day of each month, 11:30 a.m. Meeting for Music – Third Sunday/First Day of each month, 9:15 a.m.

Winter/Spring Second Hours

(Contact person in parentheses} 03/13 DMVF's "Got Talent" (Ella Steinbach/Dorothy Lifka) 03/24 Business of the Meeting (Ann Robinson) 03/31 Business of the Meeting (Ann Robinson) 04/28 AVP (Andrea Holveck)) 05/26 Climate Change (Steve Shivvers) 02/24 & 03/3 –J. & C. Dietz-Kilen 3/10 & 17 – C. Cumbie-Drake & A. Holveck

Meeting Hosts

3/24 & 31 – C. & D. Douglass 4/7 & 14 – B. Henderson & P. Reynolds 4/21 & 28 – E. Munro & J. Falb 5/5 & 12 – D. Lifka & P. McKee 5/19 & 26 – D. Shivvers & J. Sandstrom 6/2 & 9 – C. Spaulding-Kruse & A. Robinson 6/16 & 23 – F. & S. Nelson 6/30 & 7/7 – V. Smith & P. Blackburn 7/14 & 21 – D. Fisch & K. Jacoby 7/28 & 8/4 – C. Winchell & P. Wingert 8/11 & 18 – K. Bragg & D.J. Newlin

Hospitality Committee

If we are running low on kitchen or bathroom supplies or you see a housekeeping problem that needs attention, please contact the Hospitality Committee member on duty or Ella Steinbach or Dorothy Lifka at 991-2991.

www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org

The Friendly Line Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting 4211 Grand Avenue Des Moines, Iowa 50312