

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting

FRIENDLY LINE

September 2023



International Day of Peace Observance, Sept. 21

“Making Peace Under Polluted Skies and Nuclear Clouds” is the theme of the International Day of Peace observance, Thursday, Sept. 21. The event will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Peace Garden at Cowles Commons, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines.

Dr. David Drake, immediate past president of Physicians for Social Responsibility and long-time DMV Friend, will be the keynote speaker. Music will be led by singer, songwriter, Bill Connet.

The service will explore the existential threats of nuclear war and climate change and will express a vision of peace shared by all faith traditions. We will renew our commitment to be instruments of God’s peace.

This event is one of a series organized over the last several years by the D.M. Faith Committee for Peace. The first was in November 2002, praying and urging: Don’t Attack Iraq.

This year it has been clearer than ever that we are not each other’s enemies, that war is not the answer, that all people are children of God, and that the urgent work of peace-making is essential to the survival and well-being of humanity.

Cosponsors include the Iowa Peace Network.

A Quaker Minute

Reflections on “Liberal” by contemporary Quaker author and educator, Parker Palmer.

“... Let me refer again to the liberal arts tradition – called ‘liberal’ because it was seen as the kind of education suited for a free or liberated people. The aim was to teach people to think on their feet in the midst of confusing situations, bringing both mind and heart to bear on the convoluted challenges of real life.

A liberal education helps people embrace complexity, contradiction and paradox for the sake of opening their hearts and minds to a better way. It helps them enter unmapped, alien territory – where fearful people say, “Warning! Do not enter! There be dragons!” – a [liberal orientation] helps us find the courage to explore “otherness” without being paralyzed by fear. Fear of that which is “other” than us is one of our biggest problems today.

At every level of life – from personal to political – our creativity is being shut down because we are so vulnerable to fear. And there are so many forces out there working hard to manipulate our fear to keep us shut down, in line, and under control.” -- From “Tension, Heartbreak and Vocation: Parker J. Palmer” an interview in *Reflections*, a magazine of the Yale Divinity School, Spring 2012. One in a series on *Quaker history and practice*, contributed by Pam Blackburn

Consider attending FCNL’s Annual Meeting, Nov. 15-19

Each year hundreds of Quakers and friends gather to worship and advocate for a more just and peaceful world at the annual meeting of the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

This year’s gathering, with a theme of “Justice Calls Us: Love Unites Us” will be Nov. 15-19 in Washington, D.C.

At this time, FCNL business is conducted and F(f)riends lobby

their federal officials to advance just public policies. DMVFriends have attended in the past and found the event worthwhile and inspiring.

Find more information or register at <https://www.fcnl.org/events/annual-meeting-quaker-public-policy-institute-2023>.

DMVF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, July 11, 2023

Attending: Peter Clay, Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Jim Dietz-Kilen, Dick Douglass, Jack Holveck, Dorothy Lifka, Michael Luick-Thrams, Kari Noble, Steve Shivvers, Virginia Smith, Billie Wade; Brock Wommack; z
Clerk: Carol Spaulding-Kruse;
Acting Recorder: Ann Robinson

Meeting opened with a few moments of silence.

Minutes were approved from July 23, 2023, Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

There were no announcements.

Committee Reports

Ministry and Counsel (Jim Dietz-Kilen, convener):

Ministry & Counsel Committee Report, Sunday, 6 August 2023
We gathered in silence via zoom at our scheduled 8:30 start time, with Billie Wade, Andrea Holveck, Dorothy Lifka, Peter Clay, Deborah Fisch and Jim Dietz-Kilen (convener) present. We began by sharing updates on Meeting members/attenders who are experiencing health issues or other concerns.

We then took up discussion of ideas for follow-up on how we might productively work, as a faith community, to address some of the concerns raised in the excellent session Billie presented during Yearly Meeting. Dorothy suggested discussing the book, *How the Word Is Passed*, by Clint Smith. Our committee liked this idea and, after conferring with Ann Robinson and Katie Jacoby, who are forming a Meeting book club, we are recommending that we read

and discuss this book as one of the selections for us to read and discuss. More information will follow.

We also asked Billie if she could adapt her presentation to a format suitable for a pamphlet, which she agreed to do.

We are also recommending Meetings actions on two other social issues:

- Send a letter from Meeting to Brenna Bird, Iowa Attorney General, in opposition to her decision to stop providing morning after pills to rape victims. We suggest also sending a version of this letter to the Register and to post it on our website and Facebook page.
- Form an ad hoc committee to consider action(s) we might take in opposition to legislation banning books from school libraries.

We also discussed attempts to revive Meeting's Peace & Social Concerns committee. We suggest that a new committee meeting schedule be adopted that will work for the potential new members of the committee. Specifically, we recommend they meet once per month, right after Meeting for Worship.

Discussion re the Committee's Report:

Those gathered expressed appreciation for the Committee's work.

Members supported the idea to have a table at the Banned Book Festival, Oct. 7, at Franklin Jr. High Events Center, 4801 Franklin Ave., in support of libraries and freedom-to-read. [Information provided later: the

festival will be at Franklin Jr High Events Center 4801 Franklin Ave, and include authors, civic leaders and educators. They will have activities for children. They plan to offer tabling for nonprofits and are also accepting sponsorships.]

Ad Hoc Committee (Dorothy Lifka, convener): No report. The Ad Hoc Committee has laid down its work for now.

Finance Committee (Catherine Dietz-Kilen, convener)

**DMVF Finance Committee
Minutes, July 25, 2023**

Attendees: Catherine Dietz-Kilen, Katie Jacoby, Dorothy Lifka and Dick Douglass

1. Financial Statements for June 2023. The Finance Committee was unable to review the statements for June 2023 because they were not yet available.
2. EBank. In order to add Dorothy, Katie and Randy to our bank account, the EBank requires a written minute. Catherine will prepare a minute based on the previous approval of the Business Meeting to hire Randy as our bookkeeper and to appoint Katie and Dorothy as our new Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Catherine will deliver a copy of this minute to the EBank branch on SW 9th Street and initiate the process by which the other individuals are added to the account and then we will let Katie, Dorothy and Randy know when this task has been accomplished. Each of them will need to go to the branch and sign the new account paperwork with their identification.

3. Lawncare. Katie noticed that the bill for our share of the costs for Friends House lawncare included spraying the lawn for a third time. Katie reviewed the contract with the lawncare folks and saw that it contained a provision to spray the lawn two times. Katie will communicate with the Friends House manager that the third spraying should not have occurred, and it should not be paid for and that it is our preference that the lawn not be sprayed in the future.
4. Action Item. Dorothy reported that at the Business Meeting in July, it was approved to restore the funds to the budget for our contribution to Iowa Yearly Meeting because we had unexpectedly received a donation from the Peace Charlie Fund from the Des Moines Community Foundation. We will bring a revised budget to the Business Meeting in August for approval.
5. Catherine will contact the Des Moines Community Foundation to see if we can get names and contact information for those persons who make the decisions for distributions from the Peace Charlie Fund in order to both send a thank you and also to determine, if possible, whether or not there are plans to make additional contributions from the Peace Charlie Fund to our Meeting.
6. We began a discussion regarding the current reserves

and designated funds that the Meeting holds, with the intent to develop a statement to inform future budgeting discussions. Finance Committee will keep in mind that it is necessary to have ample reserves for the changing circumstances of the Meeting, without accumulating funds solely to have those funds held in reserve.

7. Our next scheduled meeting will be September 26, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

Discussion

It was agreed that DMV Friends do not want to pay for spraying herbicides. Friends serving on the Friends House Board will take this concern to the board and house manager.

Jim Dietz-Kilen pointed out that, thanks to the generosity of members, the Meeting now has three to six months of operating budget. We do now have that and more. This gives us some freedom to think about new possibilities, even if there is always uncertainty about future needs for building upkeep.

With this in mind, Carol Spaulding-Kruse suggested as the Finance Committee does planning and consulting with committees on projected expenses, it would be good to encourage committees to think about bigger ideas and projects they might want to undertake.

Appreciation was expressed for the work of the Committee.

Minute: Friends agreed to accept the generous contribution from the Peace Charlie Fund and approved the proposed amendment to the budget to

increase the budget line to reflect the gift and also to restore the previous level of funding for IYMC apportionment. Committee.

Peace and Social Concerns (no convener at the current time, Billie Wade presented a short report)

The committee met on Tuesday, August 1, at noon. Present: David Drake, Logan Jimenez, Billie Wade. Absent: Jack Holveck—medical appointment; Patty Wengert, Jon Krieg. Inactive: Peter Clay; has asked to be removed from the committee's email list.

David posited whether we still need the committee. The three of us discussed making the committee ad hoc and meeting only when deemed necessary. Any of us can bring up a matter during Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

Both David and Logan left the meeting early because of other obligations. The meeting closed at 12:20.

Discussion

There was discussion on the potential to revive the committee. Billie said there has not been a decision about laying down the committee, but for now, the members plan to work as an ad hoc committee unless/until a regular convener is identified. For example, to consider requests for donations and sponsorships that come up. She said that scheduling has become a barrier.

There was a suggestion that committees return to DMVF's traditional practice of meeting once/month after worship. Billie liked that idea and thought P&SC Committee would be likely to

meet regularly at that time. Some other committees including Outreach would also potentially meet at that time. A question was asked whether this would also include a soup lunch, as we have done in the past. That was not resolved and for now, we would continue to rely on light food brought by hosts to sustain us through second hours.

Minute: Friends recommend going back to meeting once/month during second hour as a regular time when committees can meet if they choose to do so.

Outreach Committee (no formal report). The Outreach Committee plans to schedule the proposed book discussion. Several had expressed interest in reading the book proposed earlier, Graceland at Last: Notes on Hope and Heartache From the American South by Margaret Renkl. See [PBS interview](#) about the book. If that interest continues, we will plan to read Ministry and Counsel's suggested book next, How the Word Is Passed, by Clint Smith.

There were no other committee reports.

New Business

Topics for education: Clerk Carol will be sending out a request for input on topics for upcoming Quaker education. She will put it on the agenda for the next business meeting.

Journey to Friends: Regarding second hours, should we revive Journey to Friends presentations? This is a way to get to know each other better, which may be especially valuable for new attenders. There was support for this.

Holding hands in the circle at close of meeting: The meeting has slowly slipped back into this traditional practice, but friends expressed discomfort with the practice. Several said they feel like it is not a good idea with new Covid infections going around and flu season coming on. Several expressed that they like holding hands, and even just standing in the circle. It was agreed, though, it is probably best not to hold hands for now. The Clerk will draft an instruction for hosts to share at the close of meeting, encouraging people to join in a circle, but not to hold hands.

Meeting for Worship for Business closed with a moment of silence.

NEWS OF OUR FRIENDS

Many DMV Friends have known **Birdie Kisling**, who passed away Sept. 12 after a long decline. Birdie and her husband Burt were stalwarts of the Bear Creek Meeting and active in IYM(C) and FCNL. A sharing service is planned Sunday, Sept. 17, at 10 a.m., and a memorial service, Sunday, Sept. 24, at 11 a.m., at the Bear Creek Meeting House and via Zoom at the link below, For either/both, connect to the Zoom meeting at <https://bit.ly/2023BearCreekMeetingZoom>

Upcoming Hosting List

Sept. 17 – Deborah & Katie
Sept. 24 – Claire & David
Oct. 1 – Jim & Catherine
Oct. 8 – Charlie Brown
Oct. 15 – Ann & Linaja

Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting for Worship: Sundays at 10 a.m., at the Meeting House and by Zoom via email invitation from clerk, Carol Spaulding-Kruse, at

carol.spaulding@drake.edu

Meeting for Worship/Business: Regularly held on the second First Day each month at 1 p.m.

Upcoming Second Hours & Events:

Sept. 17: Committee meetings

Sept. 24: Journey to Friends with Linaja Mikalonis (may be rescheduled due to Birdie Kisling memorial service)

Query Discussions: First Sundays, 11:45 a.m. - Online & in person. Billie Wade, facilitator.

Child Care: If you have a child who would like to be included in Zoom childcare or first day school for older youth, contact Dorothy at dmlifka@yahoo.com.

Building & Grounds: Questions about the building or grounds of the Meetinghouse to Building & Grounds Committee Convenor, Dick Douglass, 515-864-1119.

Hospitality Committee:

Questions about housekeeping at the Meeting House to Hospitality Committee convenor Charlie Brown, 515-689-6470.

Friendly Line: Send info for FL to Ann Robinson at anny@mediacombb.net.

Find us online at:

<https://www.desmoinesvalleyfriends.org/>

Check out our Facebook group for members/attenders. To be added, email Jan Falb, at jfalb0326@yahoo.com.