

Draft State of the Meeting Report for 2006:

Meetinghouse Care and Use

Two work days were held, one in fall and one in spring. In addition to ongoing cleaning and maintenance, many upkeep projects kept our buildings and grounds committee busy – new mini-blinds, new toilet, new breaker box, fixing the sprinkler system, graffiti clean-up and more. In a special sharing session on how the Meeting spends money it has determined that 50% of the Reno Friends budget goes to building upkeep and administrative costs, but that this is appropriate for our group. The building is important to us as our home base for worship, first day school activities, potlucks, family nights and classes. In addition, the Meetinghouse continues to be a community resource in that it provides a place for several groups we consider to be in general accord with Friends' testimonies such as Sierra Interfaith Action for Peace, Zen Group, Qi Gong and Art of Living. Our cottage has also been useful in housing out-of-town visitors.

First Day School

Much effort and discussion has centered around First Day School activities. First Day School was again active in outreach, raising \$320 for the Heifer Project and making a comforter to send to the Mennonite Disaster Relief. A class on conflict resolution was taught through the year once a month to our older children. A leading to establish a paid position to help create a strong first Day School program for the older children was followed and it was agreed to try this for a trial period. Meeting has explored but not come to agreement on the question of how and what to teach children of the Bible and of Jesus.

Ministry

Our ministry committee was not active. Despite this we enjoyed many ministries from individuals who offered: Light meditation, a class on Friends theology in relation to social action, a book/prayer/potluck group, a talk on China and a sharing session on Meeting use of money.

Care for our Family of Friends and Attenders Near and Far.

We experienced the full spectrum of life events in our family of friends and attenders. There were deaths, births, a Friend who left meeting under new spiritual leadings, a new member, many varied health concerns, graduations, healing, spiritual concerns, Friends and attenders who moved to Reno and dear friends and regular attenders who left Reno. Oversight Committee as well as individual friends and the Meeting as a whole responded to these life events with a Memorial service, donations in memory, phone calls, Meeting minutes, a letter of introduction, visits to the hospital, e-mails, prayer, clearness committees, welcome lunch, cards, food, money and more. On occasion, worship meeting is held at one Friend's house in Carson City to help those who live farther away and cannot easily travel to meeting in Reno. There is much love and caring in this work. There is always more that could be done, but we try to be there for each other.

Outreach, Community and Wider Friends.

An important subject for Reno Friends to wrestle with this year was "what do we stand for?" and "what is our social role"? There were some searching discussions held at business meeting and at a special session regarding these questions. A consensus was reached that Meeting should test

whether we are ready to turn outward again after a period of inwardness. One result has been more readiness to adopt minutes regarding peace and social concerns. Another result was a series of classes on Quaker theology regarding social action.

Connections to Family Promise, a group that helps house homeless families in houses of worship, were continued through a friend who delivered toiletries and other donations to them. One Friend provided a community connection e-mail to people in the meeting who wanted it. The e-mails kept some of us abreast of community peace and social events. Meeting supported Sierra Friends Center with the second donation of \$500. We continued our purchases of Palestinian olive oil. Friends participated in a multi-faith panel on Palestine at the university. We finished making a brochure specifically about Reno Friends Meeting that is available to hand out to newcomers. Several minutes were composed or letters written to congress to respond to minutes other Meetings sent to Reno Meeting on freedom of speech and assembly, on treatment of detainees under U. S. government control and on Israel's wall building and U.S. support of Israel. Meeting continued with donations to a number of local community organizations, wider Quaker organizations, and some non-Quaker organizations.

Finances.

The Meeting is on solid financial ground. Year end income was \$1000 over year-end expenses. A special sharing session was held which used an article from Friend Journal "Quakers and Money" issue to look at how we spend meeting money. It was decided that our current budget is about right for us in proportions spent on upkeep and administration, contributions to wider Quaker organizations and nurturing our meeting. The main change to come out of this meeting was a decision to increase our funds for witness and outreach which might focus on 1 or 2 projects.

Tom Fox.

Meeting was especially moved by the death of Tom Fox, member of Langley Hill Friends Meeting who was doing work with Christian Peacemakers Teams when kidnapped and killed in Iraq. He gives us courage and hope that others will step forward to keep peace alive in the darkest of places.