

The Newsletter of *Western Quarterly Meeting*
Of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

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Our Community of Meetings

Centre Meeting
Crosslands Worship Group
Fallowfield Meeting
Hockessin Meeting
Kendal Meeting
Kennett Meeting

London Grove Meeting
Marlborough Meeting
Mill Creek Meeting
New Garden Meeting
Newark Meeting
West Grove Meeting

*For more information go to:
westernquarterquakers.org
and then click on
“Our Community.”*

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**Register Yourself and/or your child(ren) for the April Quarterly Meeting. WesternQuarterQuakers.org/RSVP
Go to pages two and three for more information.**

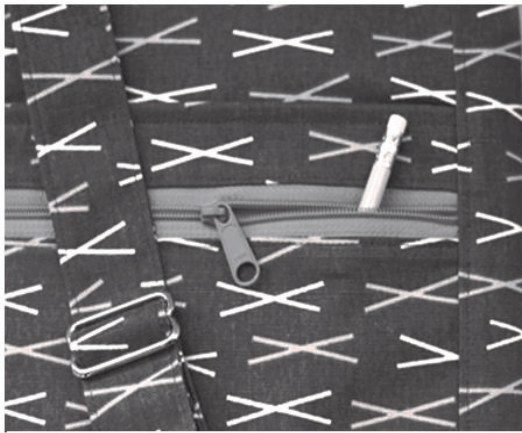
Are You Led to Help Enhance the Life in Our Quaker Community?

***We are currently in need of
Friends to serve in leadership.***
We are actively recruiting for the
positions of Quarterly Meeting
Clerk and Treasurer. Please
contact Shelley Hastings for more
info at [zeppychubby
@hotmail.com](mailto:zeppychubby@hotmail.com). You may also
email us at [coordinator
@westernquarterquakers.org](mailto:coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org).



Please send what you'd like to share in
future Newsletters (prose, poems,
pictures, announcements) to
[coordinator@
WesternQuarterQuakers.org](mailto:coordinator@WesternQuarterQuakers.org).

Tear this flyer out and post it in your Meeting and in public places!



April Sessions of Western Quarterly Meeting

The Schedule:

9:00 AM - Sign in
and Refreshments

9:30 AM - Worship

10:00 AM - Sharing
of the Second Query

10:15 AM - Break

10:30 AM - Program

11:55 AM - Youth
Present

12:00 PM - Lunch

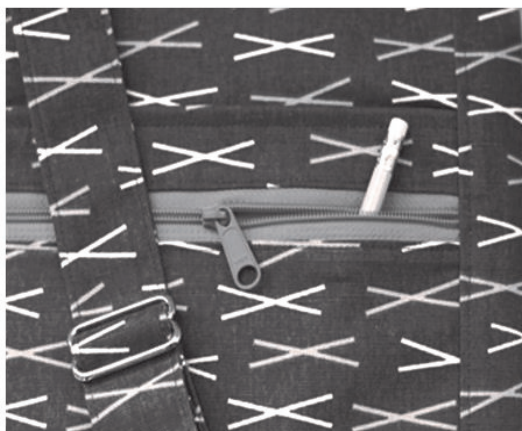
1:00 to 3:00 PM -
Business Meeting

Panelists
from
Friends
Schools in
the Area
will Speak
to the
Outreach
benefits of
the special
way we
educate
ourselves
and our
youth.

**The Value
Of
Friends
Education
and Its
Outreach
Benefits**

April 27

New Garden Meeting
875 Newark Road
Toughkenamon, PA
19374



Welcome!
Register
for the youth or
adult program at:

WesternQuarterQuakers.org/RSVP

Youth Program at Quarterly Meeting Hosted by New Garden Meeting (2nd Query)

Plus Events and Stories
In Our Meeting Community

April | 2014

27 April at New Garden Meeting

875 Newark Road, Toughkenamon, PA 19374

Western Quarterly Meeting Sessions Youth Program!

9:00 AM to 3:00 PM!

Travis Vitsorek will give his animal show, we'll make fun animal snacks, play fun out-door games, sing songs, and draw. There will be childcare for Friends who bring their children and want to stay for business meeting.

I SPY ANIMALS

Events at Our Meetings!

For locations and further information regarding
events go to:

WesternQuarterQuakers.org/events.

The Remarkable Solomon and Thamar Bayley The Quaker Hill Historic Preservation Foundation and the Delaware Humanities Forum present The Remarkable Solomon and Thamar Bayley, a talk by Dr. Peter Dalleo on March 29 at the Wilmington Meeting.

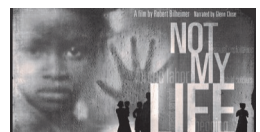
Workshop on Quaker Ministry! Ralph Green (senior minister/pastor in New England Yearly Meeting) will share his many years of experience working for spiritual renewal among Friends. 5 April 2014 10am to 1pm at Middletown Meeting, Lima PA.

Movie Night Double Feature! 5 April 2014 at Hockessin Meeting. Featuring at 5 PM *Monsters, Inc* (rated G) followed by Salad & Pizza and *Goodbye Lenin!* At 7 PM (rated R). This is a great time for inter-generational fun and fellowship. All are welcome!

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Interim Meeting 12 April (and 10 May) 2014 9 AM to 1 PM. Arch Street Meetinghouse. Be with Friends in service to our entire Yearly Meeting Community. To access the agenda and materials go to <http://www.pym.org/interim-meeting/>

Junior Interim Meeting 12 April (and 10 May) 2014 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Arch Street Meetinghouse. This is an opportunity for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's children (K-5) to take part in God's Big Idea for them, which is expressed every three years by the children's priority. This time it's about caring for the environment.

Newark Meeting Screening *Not My Life*. 13 April 2014, 12:00 PM at the Newark Center for Creative Learning. The film explores the tragedy of human trafficking and is only suitable for adults. Childcare is available. A short discussion will follow the screening.



Events at Our Meetings! Continued

For locations and further information regarding events go to:
WesternQuarterQuakers.org/events.

Stewardship of Financial Resources Thread Gathering! 19 April 2014, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM at Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting. This is an opportunity for grounding and skills development for Friends who are active in raising and stewarding money in our meetings.



Navigating the Challenges of Adolescent Parenting! 24 April 2014, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, 6 Stone Hill Road, Wilmington, DE 19803. Register by calling 302.594.0754. The 90-minute seminar presents important skills for parenting middle school and teen aged children.



Peace and Social Concerns Thread Gathering! 26 April 2014, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM, location TBD. This is an opportunity for grounding and skills development for Friends who are pursuing peace and justice with their meetings.



Energy Film Series: *Chasing Ice* 26 April 2014, 7 PM to 9:30 PM, Westtown Meeting. This is a story of one man's mission to change the tide of history by gathering undeniable evidence of our changing planet. The boldest expedition of this photographer's life.



Youth and Adult Programs at April Quarterly Meeting Sessions! 27 April 2014, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, New Garden Meeting. The youth will explore animals and all God's creatures while the adults explore the outreach benefits of Friends education. 2nd Query.



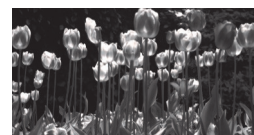
Yellow Fever in Philadelphia, 1793! 29 April 2014, 11:45 AM to 1:00 PM, Arch Street Meetinghouse. This will be a conversation about the history of the grounds during the Yellow Fever Epidemic with Nancy Gibbs, retired Director. Bring a brown bag for lunch!



Shuttle to Quaker Camp for Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers! 2 to 5 May 2014. Western Quarterly Meeting and Concord Quarterly meeting are collaborating to bus Middle School and Young Friends to Camp Swatara! A fun time with youth from across PYM.



London Grove Meeting Annual Plant Sale! 10 May 2014, 7:00 AM to 2:00 PM, London Grove Meeting, come early for best choices. For more information go to westernquarterquakers.org/events



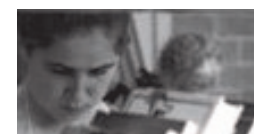
Are you are young adult? Between the ages of 18 and 35? This retreat may be just the thing for you or your family member. **The May Retreat** is happening between Friday May 16 and Sunday May 18 at Newtown Friends Meeting in Newtown, PA.



Spring Family Overnight! 17 to 18 May 2014 at Camp Dark Waters. Join us for a sleepover! Family overnight is a one-night sleepover for families with kids in grades K-5. There is multigenerational activity for the whole family, a dinner together, free time to play, bedtime stories, a chance for adults to spend time with others parents...



Quaker College Fair 17 May 2014, 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the Arch Street Meetinghouse. This is a Philadelphia-based fair that gathers students and Quaker youth to explore and invest in a values-based Quaker education.



Events at Our Meetings! Continued

For locations and further information regarding events go to: WesternQuarterQuakers.org/events. To continue reading blog posts go to WesternQuarterQuakers.org/blog

Property Summit! 31 May 2014, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Hockessin Meeting. This is an opportunity for Friends who serve their meetings in property management to share challenges and successes and discern a way forward together.



Save the Date! Increasing the Life of our Quarterly Meetings 7 June 2014 at Reading Monthly Meeting. For those passionate or curious about the life of our Quarterly Meetings, stay tuned for more details about a gathering of Friends to explore what lies ahead.



Stories In Our Community! ...to keep reading the below stories go to our blog at WesternQuarterQuakers.org/blog

London Grove Meeting is Spearheading a **Tour of Meetinghouses** in the Summer of 2014! What do you think? Want to help out? Become the liaison for your meeting to develop this



London Grove Meeting Celebrates! Check out the slide on the main page of our website, westernquarterquakers.org! A host of activities celebrating London Grove Meeting's 300th Anniversary is listed here, including a Piano Concert with Thomas Pandolfi on March 29.



New FGC Gathering Scholarships for PYM Young Adults! The FGC Gathering is more affordable than ever for young adults ages 18 to 35 from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) and the region, thanks to a generous grant from Friends Institute...



Friends Meeting at Cambridge Seeks New Staff Position! ...encourage one or more gifted Friends whom you may know (or a couple to share the position) to apply for the position of Resident Friend, an important spiritual and administrative position...



Worship and Pastoral Care Wisdom Sharing Success! Friends gathered to worship and discuss successes, challenges, and ideas about how we can work together in the pastoral care and care of worship...We made a big list and will meet again in September...



Compassion at the Core A Meditation Published in the West Grove Meeting Newsletter: The Law, the Prophets, the New Testament writers all say the same thing: what you do is important and pleasing to God. One can stand on the corner praying to God as the...



Western Quarterly Meeting Streamlines! This is an abridged version of the letter from our clerk. You can see the full letter and the full restructuring proposal on our website by clicking the slide on our main page or going to WesternQuarterQuakers.org/western-quarterly-meeting-streamlines/. As you know, we have held a number of conversations in the last 18 months about the structure of the Quarterly Meeting, exploring how we might re-organize ourselves to make things simpler and more inviting to Meeting members. This discussion built upon and extended the dialogue that was initiated in the spring of 2011 at a Quarterly-Meeting-wide visioning session...The re-organized structure...comes with the support from a task force organized to consider these matters...and has also been specifically considered at 3 separate Quarterly Meeting gatherings—one business meeting and two Quarterly Meetings...We requested that Monthly Meeting Clerks share the proposal with their Meeting and offer comments or questions by 15 March 2014. If approved, the proposed new structure of the leadership of Western Quarterly Meeting would combine all of Western Quarterly Meeting's committees into one "Support Committee", which will function as a Board of Trustees in managing the Quarterly Meeting's fiscal and physical assets, oversee the work of our staff, and immediately commence upon a discernment process to embrace only the projects we have the capacity to undertake.

Friends Sharing with Friends: Equal Love

This Article by Paul Hauser appeared in West
Grove's March Newsletter

April | 2014

To see this article on line go to:
WesternQuarterQuakers.org/blog

Dealing with the issue of same-sex relationships is complex. As I sit in my chair writing this it is not my intent to change anyone's beliefs regarding this matter but merely to reflect more thoughts on it. The only way we will realize consensus in our homes, Meetings and society is through an acceptance and understanding of God's Love.

Growing up, I had no understanding of same-sex relationships. To me, it seemed that folks were making a choice rather than being driven by internal feelings. I viewed them as outcasts—not to be welcomed into an inner circle of family or friends.

Yet as we age, we learn. First we had to learn to deal with it in our family; then our friends; and finally within the church I attended. Through this entire process the one underlying theme was that these folks were no different than you or me—they simply sought to fill their lives with love. I've learned that Love is love. Commitment is commitment regardless of the partners.

I've been fortunate to have had a wonderful loving marriage for the last 36 years. Everything about our relationship is considered 'normal'. My marriage is accepted by society. Yet as I look at society I see marriages composed of inter-racial couples, couples of different nationalities, couples with huge age differences. All of these relationships were fermented by the love they shared and all, if not considered illegal, were certainly frowned upon by families and society. Now all are considered normal and accepted by society. Remember, there was a time not long ago that you were put out—demonized—for marrying outside of your religious faith. Yet the love these folks sought and shared overrode all else. Why shouldn't we let the love couples want and share be the determining factor

rather than imposing our barriers on their right to pursue happiness?

My wife and I discuss this issue frequently. One factor that always enters our discussion is the role the Bible plays in this issue. For some the Bible's disapproval of these relationships is the determining factor in their mind. Yet there are many facets of the Bible that have evolved with time, changing opinions substantially. For example, slavery is rampant in the Bible as a valid part of that society yet today we find the practice repulsive.

The Ten Commandments specifically condemn the practice of adultery yet we have as a society turned our backs on this and through our silence have given it approval.

I would rather believe that the lessons of Jesus—love and compassion for all—should prevail when our opinions are formed.

I'd like to relate an experience, an absolutely true story, from here on the farm. Every year I buy 17 week old pullets, young hens, that are just entering their laying age. Two springs ago I had a pen full and for the first eight months they all looked the same. Then one started to develop male characteristics: grew larger, developed a heavier comb and tail feathers. Suddenly this chicken was no longer a hen, yet nor was it a true male: it never crowed, wasn't aggressive like other males and did not dominate the hens. This chicken, not by its own choice, was different—neither a true male or a true female. Unfortunately that chicken died within a year—maybe out of loneliness for its inability to find a mate.

I'm not trying to trivialize the situation but rather merely trying to illustrate that we are who we are created to be. Surely in life we should all have the right to seek out a loving relationship and enjoy the same benefits society has given so many of us.

Paul Hauser

Announcing a Property
Summit at Hockessin
Meeting on Saturday, 31
May, 11 AM to 3 PM. 1501
Old Wilmington Road,
Hockessin, DE 19707. It's
time to reconnect around the



care of our properties,
share successes and
challenges, and seek ways
to work together. We will
also explore new ways to
care for our inactive
meeting properties.

Coordinator's Report

This Report Will be Presented
At April Quarterly Meeting Sessions

April | 2014

*This is an abridged version. To view this report in full, go to:
WesternQuarterQuakers.org/blog.*

Friends:

In this report, I will write briefly about our progress, our continued difficulties in some areas, and I will propose a few steps toward addressing these difficulties. Firstly, our use of the web to communicate and to build networks has fascinating potential. We have experienced growing attendance at Quarterly Meetings, and we are working more closely together. Secondly, while overall involvement has steadied and begun to increase, participation in leadership continues to lag. Finally, I believe there are a few easy steps we can take to relieve some of the burdens that our officers shoulder, to make the business we conduct together more rewarding, and to make leadership more attractive.

We have made a great deal of progress in the area of relationship building. We have started to get to know each other better. With the uptick in the number of youth who attend Quarterly Meetings, parents and our youth have met each other and begun to forge relationships. My hope is that these relationships will continue to bloom as we anticipate a new program called First Day School Convergences. The idea is simple: the first day school programs at our different monthly meetings take their youth on a "field trip" to one meeting. We join in one big first day school experience three or four times per year. Alongside this program, a new Religious Education Network has been created that allows for folks who work with youth at the different Monthly Meetings to spread informal and organic invitations with immediate reception. If you are interested in joining the network, email me at coordinator@westernquarterquakers.org. We are a stronger community when we are "networked" precisely because it allows us to maintain the strength of our relationships between meetings.

Aside from the support of Religious Education, I am currently working to revitalize programs for young Friends in Middle School and High School. A newly constituted Youth Meeting is emerging confidently. I am also coordinating with Concord Quarterly Meeting and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to bring the active resources for older youth that are already available more closely in touch with those in our community who seek them.

Our website also continues to improve as we work to give it both an outreach and in-reach function. Friends, now, can go to westernquarterquakers.org to learn about coming events and to read about the goings-on in our community. Friends will soon be able to view a slightly improved presentation of our constituent Monthly Meetings; their worship times and locations. You can also use the website to get [logistical and business-related support for yourself and your Monthly Meetings].

While fellowship grows and worship deepens everywhere, our Quarterly Meeting's administrative operations could use a tune up. Friends had identified this need approximately one year ago, and so the Committee and Leadership Reevaluation Advisory Group (a.k.a CLR) commenced to streamline the operations of the Quarterly Meeting. A proposal has been made to consolidate almost all of the committees in our Quarterly Meeting into one Support Committee. I believe this plan can work to ease inefficiencies because it encourages connection. Our committees operate largely isolated from one another except where members of our committees attend business meeting. Many of our committees are populated by as few as one person, others by no one at all. This separation prevents us from enjoying each other's presence and from being reminded of the meaningful work we do on behalf of our Monthly

Meetings and worship groups.

However, the consolidation of all our committees into one committee, the Support Committee, won't do us any good if we cannot also find the strength within ourselves to let go of what we must (even if this means finding some of our fiscal and physical assets new homes). There is much more discernment to follow, which is the harder work of identifying exactly what inspires us, creating processes that work to carry out this inspiration, and releasing all the rest. This discernment is easier the more we can truly claim we are people who know each other well and who believe that the work we do together has a meaningful impact. This, in turn, attracts others into participation and into leadership...

...After the new Support Committee has been established, if Friends approve it, I suggest we initiate a priorities process in the development of a strategic plan. The strategic plan would identify a few inspiring projects and processes for carrying these out. For example, Bucks Quarterly Meeting conducted a priorities process and settled on three things—only three things.

I also suggest that we take a look at the job descriptions of our leadership positions. Especially Clerk, Treasurer, and Recording Clerk are begging for demystification. We have had to be flexible in this time of ebbing participation, but such flexibility has often meant that much of the operational responsibility of the Quarterly Meeting rests squarely on the shoulders of our Clerk and Treasurer without much support...Narrowly defined job descriptions coupled with a significant reduction in annual operational responsibilities, as a result of a strategic planning process, will make it easier for everyone to focus on what is important.

I would lastly suggest the use of a decision making grid. This is a technique...wherein we identify all the tasks that need to be completed over the course of a year. We write them up on a spreadsheet and then divide the tasks among us...The decision-making grid allows us to delegate tasks to one person or to a group of people, and every year there may be a different configuration of folks who are led to carry out certain tasks. This approach allows for organized flexibility (rather than the disorganized sort we have now) such that too many tasks aren't saddled upon one person or group of people. ...everyone has a very clear idea of what they are supposed to do and how it is meaningfully connected to the broader Quarterly Meeting community.

...In 1 Corinthians 12:27, [Apostle Paul] writes, "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." Ever heard of Friends referring to, "the body?" This is the passage from whence the term comes, but now when we say, "the body," we usually just mean those who are gathered for business meeting. It really means that even as we are individual people, we are united as a whole by our shared spiritual search (where Christ is our head)...Each of us with different positions and gifts are important for the vitality of the whole community. Yet, in chapter 13 verses 1 through 3 he writes: "If I speak in the tongues of mortals, and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing." I take from this the reminder that everything we do from worship, business meeting, on out must happen in the context of relationship. In a world where love is all that matters, letting go of everything else seems a cinch. I join Friends in creating a world where love is all that matters.

The Friendly News
Western Quarterly Meeting
Religious Society of Friends
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Phone - 610.444.1012 or
443.929.0687. Send content at
any time to us via email or
call us, we'll add it to our
blog, and publish it in our
electronic and
print newsletters.

*Don't be surprised if we
call or email you!*

We are investing in our web-site!!

Check it out !!

You will find ... Contacts, a blog updated daily with
vibrant news about all the communities that make up
our Quarterly Meeting ... our newsletters in PDF
format ... a list of meetings (with information on
Meeting activities) ... resources for Monthly
Meeting leaders ... various publications for your
enjoyment ... bumper stickers for purchase ... an
invitation to join our mailing list ... resources for
folks in search of grants ... a summary of events
happening in our region ... and a Google Calendar
link to upload your activities in our calendar so you'll
NEVER be out of the loop!

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