

Report of the Friends Home in Kennett for calendar year 2013 with 2014 updates for Western Quarter Meeting, April 26, 2014

The Board regularly refers the stated mission of the organization which is quoted below to also remind others what we are striving to provide:

Mission Statement: The Friends Home in Kennett is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality care in a homelike atmosphere for older men and women of modest means. We encourage independence and we respect the individuality and dignity of all in keeping with the values of the Religious Society of Friends.

Renna Van Oot, Executive Director continued to make changes in the infrastructure of the organization to create stronger and more efficient services with an emphasis on resident care. In 2013 she began to focus a bit more externally to rebuild bridges into the community. She has been supporting the board in its role to contend with the changes in the field of aging, and how the Home needs to strategically adapt to remain successful.

In 2013, Carol Bernard continued her strong leadership as Clerk, guiding the Home in a strategic visioning process. Ken Lomax served as Treasurer, and Shirley Annand remained Recording Clerk. The Board spent time in 2013 gathering information for future positioning, and in 2014 is looking to recruit based on needed skill sets. With the by-laws now requiring a 51% majority of Quakers, it affords non-Quakers the opportunity to experience a Quaker governance structure. In 2013, Carol Bernard (Hockessin Meeting), Karen Halstead, Shirley Annand (both of New Garden Meeting) and Bob Frye (London Grove Meeting) ended their service, and Anne O'Donnell (Fallowfield Meeting), and Richard Bernard (Hockessin Meeting) joined our board. Peggy Jones (London Grove) also rejoined the board in 2014.

A more formalized Resident Assistance Program was put into place in 2013, allowing residents to apply when their funds are running out. Residents in independent living and personal care who have lived in the Home for two years are eligible to apply, and specific financial information is requested. It is the hope of the Home to be able to support all residents so they do not have to leave for lack of ability to pay. This has unfortunately not always been the case.

Our investments, managed by Wells Fargo, have been increasing in value – which is good as our current financial model relies on a percentage of proceeds from this account to support operations. For 2013, the number of residents in the personal care side (Friends Home) was under budget for the year, as were the number of residents in skilled nursing. In 2013, we experienced an inordinately high number of deaths in the first quarter of the year.

Friends Home is considering the future trends in senior living. The rise in home health care, the decline of the market in 2008 are two factors which have influenced people to wait before moving into a community such as ours. Our building, while lovely and historic, has limited accessibility. As our residents are coming to us older and somewhat more frail, their safety is a growing concern. The board of the Home is considering what future planning may be required for us to continue our legacy of service to the community.

We encourage Quarterly Meeting attendees and readers of the newsletter to come by and visit the Friends Home. We enjoy visitors and there are plenty of opportunities for volunteering.