

# *Friendly Notes* . . . . . *June 2014*

Monthly newsletter of the Santa Monica Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
**1440 Harvard Street** **Tel: (310) 828-4069**  
**Santa Monica, CA 90404-3105** **www.santamonicafriends.org**

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## ADVICES AND QUERIES

### Unity With Nature

“The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.” John Woolman 1772

“I was early convinced in my mind that true religion consisted in an inward life wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator and learns to exercise true justice and goodness not only toward all men but also toward the brute creation; that as the mind was moved on an inward principle to love God as an invisible, incomprehensible being, on the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the visible world...”  
John Woolman, 1772

“All species and the Earth itself have interdependent roles within Creation. Humankind is not the species, to whom all others are subservient, but one among many. All parts, all issues are inextricably intertwined. Indeed the web of creation could be described as of three-ply thread: wherever we touch it we affect justice and peace and the health of all everywhere.”  
Audrey Urry, 1994

Have you sensed a presence of the Spirit in nonhuman species (plants and animals) and the workings of Nature?

How do we exercise our respect for the balance of nature?

As Friends, what might be our role in sustaining and healing the planet?

Draft Notes from the Meeting on the Occasion  
of Business  
Santa Monica Monthly Meeting of the  
Religious Society of Friends  
5/11/2014

Attending: Kate Watkins-Shaw, Rebecca Searl, Rachel Fretz, Maggie Hutchinson, Brent Shelton, Brian Johnston, Tim Vreeland, Judith Searle, Shelley Blank, Donna Buell, Tanna Moontaro, Bob Janes, Donna Cooper, Simon Simonian, Fred Buell, Henry Yang, Cindy Waite, Grant Ramey, Jamie McCormick, Debbie, Richard Chamberlain

Meeting for Worship on the occasion of Business began in silent worship.

Minutes from the April meeting for business were read and approved with several corrections: Reference to Pacific Yearly Meeting should be “the annual gathering of Pacific Yearly Meeting”, in two places. In discussion of the Meetinghouse sign after the first sentence, add sentence “Friends were unable to come to unity.” Clarence Griffen will speak on May 18, not June 14. Tanna Moontaro was assisted by Nina Shaw in preparation of the mural.

**Finance Committee** – Richard Chamberlain provided Meeting with a quarterly report on the financial status of Meeting. He shared details of the budgets on dues and contributions, and the House Committee, including expenses and income. Several questions about budget income and expenditures were answered and clarified. The overall budget sheet summarizes income and expenditures. The largest quarterly deficit occurs in Contributions from Members & Attenders, with a deficit of \$913. Automatic contributions via Vanco would help

smooth out the annual income and facilitate planning. Overall, on a quarterly basis, expenditures are \$4,260 below what would be expected, largely due to the delay in paying Meeting dues and contributions to other organizations.

**Worship and Ministry.** Brian Johnston presented a proposal responding to a recurring theme: that our Meeting needs to reach out to a larger community. Worship and Ministry proposes changes in the composition and function of Peace and Social Action Committee: augment the membership of PSA to include representatives of PYM, and Quaker organizations like AFSC, FCNL, and FCLC. Following a brief period of worship, (f)Friends spoke to the issue, asking for clarification about what the acronyms stand for and whether or not Meeting already has representatives to each. This PSA membership would represent a connection between Meeting and the wider Quaker organizations. Enthusiastic support for the proposal was broadly expressed. Due to the significance of this change, the proposal will be held over for final approval. The implication of the change includes a change in the description of the roles of each of the representatives that Nominating Committee will incorporate into their process. Brian will send out the proposal on the listserve so that all may reflect on it.

**House Committee.** Grant Ramey reported that there will be a work day following Meeting for Worship on June 22. They hope to organize quarterly work days in order to build community and save financial resources. Those who can't work outside could help with the Library. Grant

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will send out an announcement on the listserv.

**Peace and Social Action Committee.** Simon reported on programs for the coming three months sponsored by Peace and Social Action Committee. Clarence Griffen, a professor at Loyola Marymount University, will speak on May 18 at Meeting. On June 15, members of CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Employment) will have some events at Meeting. On July 20, the speaker will be Greg Wendt, an expert on economic justice.

**New Business.** Pacific Yearly Meeting's Ministry and Oversight Committee is meeting at Santa Monica Meetinghouse on May 16-17. Overnight hospitality is requested for several visiting M&O Committee members.

Clerk reminded Nominating Committee that the next slate of nominations would ideally be proposed at Business Meeting in June, held over until the next Business Meeting in July for final approval. This schedule accommodates August when there is no scheduled Business Meeting, with committee members ready to begin work in September.

AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project). Tanna Moontaro provided a brief history of AVP in Santa Monica Meeting, which began, together with Orange Grove Meeting, in 1998. Currently, there are very few committed, though burned-out, volunteers working on AVP. Tanna has reached out to other churches, and has found that their social justice groups are very political. She reported that AVP is planning another Basic Training for Santa Monica Meeting at some time in the future. Several suggestions were offered in support of AVP. AVP could be folded into Peace and Social Action Committee. A

presentation about AVP could be offered at Meeting.

Business Meeting closed in silent worship

Respectfully submitted,  
Kate Watkins Shaw, Clerk  
Rebecca Searl, Acting Recording Clerk

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*Excerpt from*  
**Leadings to and Through Nature\***  
by Tom Ewell

I remember the first time nature spoke to the Light within me. I was sitting on the edge of a small creek in the foothills of the Manastash. It was a spring gathering of Pacific Northwest Quarterly Meeting, my first year of college was nearly behind me, and I felt far from where I wanted to be both physically and mentally. I wept and prayed for dreams, guidance, and strength as I sat near the babbling creek. I knew deep down what I wanted, but didn't know how to get there.

As I sat and sobbed a wren flew down and perched on a branch just above my head. Lulling me with her sweet song she brought Light to my heart, assuring me that I had been heard. After that moment I moved towards my dream. ... Doors began to open, and little did I know my journey had just begun.

*Published in Western Friend, June 2010, p.18.*

## Opening to the Inner Teacher

By Stanford Searl

“How is the Inward Teacher known? In joy and health, but also in loneliness and alienation; in the deepest encounters with other people and in dialogue with great ideas and works; in love but also in emptiness; in hunger but also in plenitude; in solitude but also in community.” (Paul A. Lacey, *Education and the Inward Teacher*, Pendle Hill Pamphlet 278)

Outside my office window in Culver City,  
The California laurel bush,  
*Laurus nobilis*,  
Spreads out above the white wooden railing  
In the afternoon light,  
A darker, deeper green  
Than the avocado leaves  
Behind it.  
Covered with tiny late-January inedible  
berries,  
These aromatic bay leaves  
Provide a pathway  
To the Inner Teacher,  
Fecund and  
Pungent in the warmish January air,  
Shiny green leaves  
Wafting  
Astringently into the present.

These heart-shaped bay leaves,  
Almost brittle,  
Invite me  
To follow  
What Donald Hall  
Called  
A vatic voice,  
All wrapped up  
Within a wreath of these shiny green-  
infused laurel leaves,  
Opening to an Inner Teacher,  
Become the blind seer Tiresias,

Yet low and humble,  
Filling up  
Teachers and students  
Together,  
Bay-infested,  
Breaking open bay leaves  
To cook together  
A soulful,  
Bay infused stew,  
Crushing  
The bay leaves together  
To imbibe the Inner Teacher.

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*For monthly calendar and Alice Herman grant information, see May Friendly Notes, available in the library.*

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Santa Monica Friends Meeting  
 1440 Harvard Street  
 Santa Monica, CA 90404

*Address Correction Requested*

# ***FRIENDLY NOTES***

## *June 2014*

### **Contributions to the Meeting**

While the Meeting values everyone's contributions of time and energy, we also depend on financial contributions to support our many activities. Please give what you can. Mail to: Santa Monica Meeting, 1440 Harvard St., Santa Monica, CA 90404, or drop checks in the contributions box in the library. Automatic deposit is also available; please contact Richard Chamberlain, Clerk of Finance Committee for details.

### **Contributions to Friendly Notes**

Friendly Notes welcomes submissions by Friends. A quotation, poem or short essay that speaks to you in your spiritual journey, or something that you have written yourself, can enrich others seeking the Light.

Please give Ann Fuller a copy, by email ([afuller@wefu.org](mailto:afuller@wefu.org)) or in written form at meeting.

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