

Intermountain Yearly Meeting Minutes and Proceedings of the Executive Committee held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, August 26 – 27, 2005

Present: At the table – Co-Clerks Rebecca Henderson and Cynthia Smith, Recording Clerk Judy Ray. Committee and others: Jonathan Cartland, Ted Church, Eric Dillon, Eileen Haney, Phyllis Hoge, Annette Kowal, Tom Kowal, John Kretzmann, Pelican Lee, Jim Mills, Jerry Peterson, Bob Schroeder, Barbara Stephens, David Wampler, Jennifer Wellington, Susan Wiley, Eric Wright.

At 4 p.m., with a short message on discernment by Eileen Flanagan from *Plain Living* read by Co-Clerk Rebecca Henderson, the meeting settled with quiet worship.

Continuing Committee Clerk Eric Wright provided a written summary and oral description of the evaluations and comments of the Annual Gathering received from 103 of those in attendance. Overall the responses, both from numerical tally and additional comments, were positive about Ghost Ranch and the Gathering. Considerable discussion on the survey responses and suggestions followed. Concerns are summarized in these minutes by topic.

Housing: Campers in particular had suggestions about improvement of facilities and communications, and almost everyone mentioned the no-see-ums and consequent bites.

Meals received divided assessment, with appreciation for the variety of offerings, and complaints about insufficiency of vegetarian and wheat-free offerings, etc. Clear signs are needed to indicate the vegetarian, wheat-free, lactose alternatives, and others.

Recommendations from the Executive Committee:

- a) That the Kitchen Liaison (Deb Stucklin) receive a copy of the 2005 surveys.
- b) That the Registrar put Friends with dietary restrictions in direct touch with the Kitchen Liaison to work out details, and that all parties confirm that their communications are received.

Junior Young Friends It has been difficult to maintain leaders for this group. Mark Holdaway did a great job in pulling the program together this year. It was noted that some Friends did not like the political nature of skits presented by the JYF, while others appreciate the spirit of free expression.

To consider: Should a Monthly Meeting take responsibility for planning and leading the JYF program for a year at a time?

Volunteers There was a list of volunteers. Some leaders contacted volunteers before the gathering; others waited and then were too busy to coordinate and delegate tasks.

Recommendation: That program leaders get a list of volunteers from the registrar and contact them before the gathering. The personal contact is very important.

Senior Young Friends There is a wish for more connection between groups, but deep appreciation for the leadership within the SYF.

Schedule and Communications issues have been improved and will continue to be refined. Despite a 15-minute extension of the breakfast period in 2005, many Friends still did not get to **Worship Sharing** on time, and that part of the daily schedule remains an issue. Children's Program caretakers would like to have a chance to participate, and also parents do not have enough time to drop off children and get to their groups. (Ghost Ranch has logistical problems with an earlier breakfast schedule.)

Perhaps better **Orientation** for newcomers is needed.

Talents displayed at Talent Night are much admired but many Friends find the program too long – could we find ways to tighten the evening schedule even if it is less inclusive?

Interest Groups are appreciated but there is always complaint that there are too many choices.

A concern was expressed that comments on the evaluation sheets are supposed to be confidential so the committee should not respond to individuals. However, a general “thank you” is in order to those who worked so hard to make the Gathering a success. Financial reimbursement or scholarships are available. Monthly Meetings can be aware of who might need assistance.

Ministry and Counsel. A report (written by Marilyn Hayes for the committee) was presented by Pelican Lee. Committee meets during the Gathering and requested that the Clerks introduce members of the M & C Committee at the Welcoming session so that Friends know whom to contact with concerns. Also, notice of the M & C meetings should be posted on bulletin boards. Continuing Committee members are reminded that they need both to represent their Monthly Meetings to IMYM and to report back to their Meetings from IMYM. It is hoped that the Continuing Committee minutes might be available for members more rapidly.

It was suggested, following one request, that this Ministry and Counsel report be sent to a Monthly Meeting for publication in its newsletter. After discussion it was decided that the report is too detailed and not especially appropriate in its present form. The Executive Committee responded as follows to the individual request:

The Executive Committee is comfortable with Lisa Motz-Storey of Mountain View Meeting using the Ministry and Counsel report for a newsletter article. We suggest that she might include some more basic information about the function and role of Ministry and Counsel and know that she will use her discretion as she includes parts of the report.

Ghost Ranch: A letter was read from Rob Craig, Executive Director of Ghost Ranch, thanking IMYM for the Minute of support and concern approved at the Gathering.

Bookstore Co-clerk Cynthia Smith gave a report prepared by Marilyn Hayes. More than 60 people had volunteered help in the bookstore but many did not turn up. The AFSC goal was \$4,000, and this year sales realized \$2,938. Previously consignments were included in sales, and reimbursements made later; this year individuals took care of their own sales. A good supply of Quaker books was available. The “chat” area was set up and well used.

Operations Tom Kowal reported that things ran smoothly due in part to efficient registration by Eileen Haney; preparatory work by Ted Church and others; assistance from Ghost Ranch staff; and help from volunteers. The “designated drivers” of golf carts worked well. Next year Vance Marshall will work with Operations, and Tom will work with him.

Appreciation was expressed to Eleanor Dart for arranging for supplies of sheets, towels, soap, etc. at the information center.

Worship Groups Barb Stephens reported that there were 190 morning and 94 intergenerational assignments this year. Ghost Ranch needed to be informed a week ahead of locations required, number of chairs, etc. In previous years all those attending were assigned a group; this year only those who signed

up were assigned. The question was raised whether the worship sharing convener should have e-mail /contact information for everyone (IMYM use only). Jerry Peterson will work this out with the registrars.

Interest Groups and Seminars Co-Clerk Rebecca Henderson read a report from Mary Burton-Risely. Jim Baird of Ghost Ranch proposes that seminars on Quaker concerns be offered in the Early Days, open to the general public and listed in the Ghost Ranch catalogue. Topics suggested include: Death Penalty, Conscientious Objection, and Border Concerns. A \$5 or \$10 fee could be added so that presenters could be paid a small honorarium. This offering would be a joint venture of IMYM and Ghost Ranch and the presenters – of just these three seminars – would get free lodging for those days. Ghost Ranch is looking for ways to increase enrollment, and seminars on Quaker themes could be good outreach. Material for the GR catalogue will be needed by October 1st.

The Executive Committee understands that Mary Burton-Risely, with Tom Kowal as Ghost Ranch Liaison, will explore further with Ghost Ranch the collaborative approach to seminars.

The session closed after silent worship at 8 p.m.

Saturday, August 27, 2005

The meeting opened at 8:30 a.m. with silent worship.

Treasurer's Report, compiled by Chris Viavant, was presented by incoming Treasurer John Kretzmann. He estimated that when final expenses for the Gathering have been paid there will be a loss of about \$2,800. It is anticipated that increase in travel costs will affect the budget. The treasurer will look into higher investment income.

A correction to the report was noted: the Brinton Visitor program is under review, but has not been suspended. The balance of \$535 in the Brinton Visitor reserve account will be transferred to Pacific Yearly Meeting, since these funds were earmarked for that Visitor program. The treasurer reported that \$3,400 in restricted donations for the Joint Service Project has been received from individuals. The Tim Shaw Fund has been expended and is at \$0. It has been used at the discretion of Senior Young Friends to bring and send Young Friends to meetings and in the past has been a \$500 budget item. A commentary on the Tim Shaw Fund is now in the web page.

Finance Committee report was presented by Bob Schroeder. Housing rates for IMYM 2006 will probably increase by 7%. Executive Committee noted that the line item for "AFSC – Joint Service Project" should read \$17,000 (not \$12,000), according to Finance Minute IMYM 05.13 approved in June, 2005. The Committee recommended that line item be divided into two: "AFSC-JSP Assessments" and "AFSC-JSP Designated donations" since the donations are a pass-through item. 2006 information needs to be received by the JSP Oversight Committee by the end of September.

Co-Clerk Cynthia Smith reported that a summary of Minutes approved at IMYM has been sent to Monthly Meetings, who could be urged to publish the information in newsletters.

Finance Committee is looking at line items to see where the 2007 budget might be trimmed. There was discussion about numbers of representatives to other organizations and increasing cost of travel.

The Executive Committee approved the following Minute on assessments:

We will forward the proposed 2007 Budget to the Monthly Meetings for discussion and dialogue. We encourage Meetings to let us know if the assessment proposal of \$45 per member can go

forward. If this were to be the assessment, would your Meeting be able to meet this obligation? If not, what would be an appropriate level for you? We expect background information to be forwarded with the Budget.

Ghost Ranch Liaison Ted Church provided information about responsibilities and tasks of various IMYM personnel working with Ghost Ranch, together with a list of contact information. Registration fee structure is being changed. A “Partnership Congregation” with Ghost Ranch concept was introduced, based on our common peace and justice work and Ghost Ranch’s need to fill a funding gap.

Children’s Program General good response from the 2005 program, with Julie Wigton receiving praise. It was noted that we do not have the budget to make this a paid position. Follow-up evaluations need to go to Susan Wiley and Eric Dillon. More preliminary contact with Ghost Ranch liaisons is recommended. There is a concern that volunteers and staff of the program be able to participate in Worship Sharing, which means scheduling help and more volunteers.

Junior Young Friends There has been discussion with the Senior Young Friends about age levels of those almost in transition between the two groups. Cynthia Smith has an e-mail from Mark Holdaway which she will forward to the FAPs and SYFs and program coordinators.

Senior Young Friends were represented by David Wampler who reported that there was good discussion between the JYFs and SYFs on age limits, since the “going into 10th grade” designation may not work for everyone. A committee of SYF, maybe with adults, will hear proposals from JYFs and consider readiness. It was noted that adults need to be involved in JYF decisions. There has been a suggestion, and discussion in Continuing Committee, that the JYFs group might split into two. A proposal regarding gender issues is being discussed and will be brought to Continuing Committee later.

Registrar’s Report presented orally by Eileen Haney (and later provided in written form) indicates that things ran smoothly in 2005, which she attributes to pre-planning, pre-registration, and plenty of volunteers. She has prepared a detailed document for the new registrars, Phyllis Hoge and Jonathan Cartland, with many recommendations for timetable and computer needs, etc. She detailed some areas needing improvement, such as double booking of rooms (synchronize with Ghost Ranch), use of the copier, etc. She also tallied hours for registrar and volunteers assisting: an estimated total of 300 to 350 hours. Appreciation was expressed for the efficiency of the registrar and the process this year.

Some Friends recommend that the size of the registration packets be cut. Monthly Meeting representatives are urged to make sure packets are available to all who want them. Particular attention needs to be given to getting IMYM registration information to isolated friends in outlying areas.

A Personal Minute of Appreciation. Barb Stephens noted that she would like to send a minute of appreciation to Peggy Giltrow for help during this day when Barb broke a bone in her foot and Peggy took her to the hospital.

Co-Clerk Cynthia Smith noted that there have been some e-mails circulated regarding “Bush-bashing” at IMYM, particularly in the skits presented on talent night. Anthony Manousos might be printing

something about this in *Friends Bulletin*. Please be aware there are different opinions – some see censorship, others are concerned that our listening to others gets limited.

Faith and Practice Committee report provided by Claire Leonard and read by Co-Clerk Cynthia Smith said the committee is working hard to prepare the draft for June 2006. The last chapters are being circulated. Eventually a spiral-bound copy will be sent to each Meeting and each officer of IMYM with other copies available at cost. The Treasurer will ask Claire Leonard when and how to send \$100 donation to Polly Metz who is editing the document.

Minute from Albuquerque Monthly Meeting:

“The Albuquerque Monthly Meeting joins other meetings within Intermountain Yearly Meeting in supporting an annual census of members and attenders.”

Executive Committee agreed that an annual census, as of January 1, will be more efficient, and it will be helpful for Finance Committee to have a more accurate expectation of assessments. Executive Committee will forward this minute to Continuing Committee asking them to forward it to Yearly Meeting for considering. The census form should go to Monthly Meetings with the Treasurer’s request for assessments.

Nominating Committee report was presented by Annette Kowal, who provided a new list of IMYM Appointments and requested that contact corrections be sent to her by e-mail.

Recommendations: 1) That a central place might be set up for database lists and updates. 2) That some positions, such as Doll Project coordinator, be filled by volunteers rather than through Nominating. 3) That there be reorganization, perhaps by having Regional representatives gather information from Monthly Meeting representatives so the Nominating Committee would be comprised of Regional conveners to whom Monthly Meeting representatives report.

Committee to Revise the Guide report, presented by Jim Mills, describes the Guide as a “procedural manual,” while matters of principle are taken up by Faith and Practice. The imym.org site has a home page for the Guide with opportunity for questions and comments. This year the committee expects to work on revisions and report to the Annual Gathering in 2006, with a more detailed report to Executive Committee. Links on the web can provide details as thought necessary.

Executive Committee affirmed that it oversees the Guide Committee, as minuted at IMYM in June 2005. Ted Church thanked Jim Mills and Jonathan Cartland for all their work in pulling together the web page.

Website Management Proposal Jonathan Cartland is at present hosting the site and providing technical support. The goal is for the site to be durable, easy of access, sustainable, and managed at least weekly. Contact information for committee clerks, co-ordinators, representatives, etc. needs to be centralized but there are issues of privacy and protection to be worked out.

Executive Committee approved:

IMYM requested that the Executive Committee be the overseeing body for the website. We see that a Web Clerk to manage that site is necessary, with the assistance of a Web Master. We approve the proposal for website management in the report from the Web Group and ask them to

go forward as planned. We note that a Web Master will assist the Web Clerk with technical aspects. A Web Team is also working on website development. Executive Committee will appoint a Web Clerk to be approved at Yearly Meeting. This process will be tested for three years. In the interim we ask Ted Church and Jim Mills to act as Web Co-Clerks to the rise of Annual Gathering, 2006.

Ministry and Counsel report presented by Pelican Lee took up the question of Intervisitation between Meetings. Discussion ensued to determine whether Friends wish to encourage simple visitation of individuals between Monthly and Regional Meetings or to look further into a more organized program of supporting people traveling in the ministry and being available for program presentations. FGC has much information about travel programs. Several Friends expressed a desire for intervisitation to be kept simple, but with a little planning ahead people's gifts can be shared with other Meetings. Pelican Lee will report back to Ministry and Counsel on this discussion.

Guest Speaker: Theme and Support Committee Joe Volk, Executive Director of FCNL, has been invited to be the speaker for 2006. He has been asked to speak personally and experientially, not as a representative of FCNL, and perhaps to address such themes as: Translating Faith Into Action, How to make way open? How to live life in faith? How to come from a place of love in the face of so much negativism? How to be harmless? How to deal with fear? Keeping the faith. Keeping inspiration. What is the wellspring of strength? Sanity through Love in the face of chaos.

Ministry and Counsel is asked to provide a support group from IMYM for the speaker.

A Friend's Concern for Meeting for Sufferings Co-Clerk Cynthia Smith reported that Ross Flanagan of Pima Meeting wishes to encourage Meetings to create Meetings for Sufferings. It is noted that the website includes a page about Committees for Sufferings. Yearly Meeting laid down its Committee for Sufferings, details of which should be in Continuing Committee minutes, but could revive it. Guide Committee will look up the status.

Advocate for Persons of Differing Abilities and Kitchen Liaison Job descriptions for these roles are being revised.

Executive Committee suggests to Continuing Committee that we add the following paragraph to the registration packet.

It is recommended that the Monthly Meeting seek an appropriate role in assisting attenders with their differing abilities needs. This may include consulting with the Advocate about specific needs and how they are being addressed, and identifying attenders from the local Meeting to provide assistance at the annual gathering. It has been noted that individuals from the person's own Meeting are often better able to provide unobtrusive support. There may be times when Monthly Meetings will need assistance from the wider group.

Monthly Meetings are encouraged to find transportation for those who might not otherwise be able to travel.

Executive Committee suggests to Continuing Committee that we add the following paragraph to the registration packet, along with contact information for the Kitchen Liaison:

The Ghost Ranch kitchen provides a variety of buffet options intended to accommodate vegetarian, vegan, wheat-free and dairy-free diets. If you are concerned that your dietary needs

may not be met by these options, contact the IMYM Kitchen Liaison as soon as possible after registering for the annual gathering.

Feedback and confirmation of receipt of messages is important to avoid problems. Ghost Ranch cannot handle very specialized diets. The registrar should furnish an estimate of how many registrants choose each of the options.

Response of Monthly Meetings to Questions from Yearly Meeting Communication between the Monthly and Yearly Meetings is sometimes a problem. Monthly Meetings may not feel heard by Yearly Meeting if there is no feedback or action taken. But for Monthly Meetings to send a Minute to YM offers an inflexible situation which doesn't permit discernment evolving from the larger gathering.

Executive Committee recommends that Continuing Committee advise its representatives more specifically on the importance of reporting both to their Monthly Meetings and to Yearly Meeting for seasoning and action.

Faith and Practice Committee is anxious to resolve this question of whether those in attendance at Yearly Meeting represent their Meetings or participate as individuals.

Responses to the Fall Queries need to be sifted before the January Continuing Committee meeting. The Clerks' letter to Monthly Meetings will propose that a minute is not expected but that responses are part of a dialogue to be taken up in further consideration.

Fall Queries for Monthly Meetings

1) Budget for 2007 Send the proposed budget with background information regarding the Joint Service Project and include relevant Minutes from the 2005 IMYM Record. The preamble to the proposed increase in assessments to \$45 should point out that IMYM has agreed to meet the financial commitment to JSP and add: "Pursuant to that commitment and increasing costs, the proposal is to make the 2007 assessment at \$45, and we ask your Monthly Meeting to consider."

2) Meeting Intervisitation Include a preamble to explain the Brinton program and suggestion for encouraging simple visitation. Ask for suggestions about visiting between regions.

Tom Kowal suggested that information about IMYM being a **Partnership Congregation** with Ghost Ranch be included in the Fall Queries. After discussion, the Executive Committee decided that more footwork on this issue is necessary at IMYM and by Continuing Committee before it is brought to Monthly Meetings. More thoughts on this may be brought to Eric Wright.

3) Decision Making by Yearly Meeting and Continuing Committee Monthly Meetings are asked to examine the statements from *Faith and Practice* of North Pacific Yearly Meeting regarding the role of representatives to Continuing Committee and decision-making at Yearly Meeting. It may be noted that there are Meeting representatives to Continuing Committee but all members of a Meeting are members of Yearly Meeting. [Note that North Pacific YM has a Steering Committee instead of Continuing Committee.]

"Representatives have an important role in this process. Although they bring the thoughts, feelings and convictions of their Meeting to matters under consideration by the Steering Committee, they also come to listen to other representatives and to join with them in seeking Divine guidance for the corporate sense of the meeting. When there are differences of opinion

and it is not possible to reach unity, further consultation with the Meetings precedes any action by the Steering Committee. When, during the corporate search, Light is received which brings about unity that transcends differences, the members of the Steering Committee unite in a decision. If this decision differs significantly from views expressed by a Meeting, representatives may ask the Steering Committee to postpone final action on a proposal until they have shared the new insights with their Meetings.” *Faith and Practice*, North Pacific Yearly Meeting

Cynthia Smith, Rebecca Henderson and Eric Wright will draft the specific queries for Monthly Meetings.

Continuing Committee will meet in Denver on January 20 – 22, 2006.

The meeting closed at about 6 p.m. in worship.
