



Iona House  
Calusa Nature Center

# FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

NEWSLETTER, TENTH MONTH, 2019

**Worship:** Iona House at the Calusa Nature Center, 3450 Ortiz Ave, FtM

**Mailing Address:** 117 East Mariana Ave. North Fort Myers FL 33927

**Telephone:** (239) 318-0538 ❖ **Website:** fortmyersquakers.org ❖ **e-mail:** ftmyers.quakers@gmail.com

**Clerk:** Joan Culver (joanculver@gmail.com)

**Recording Clerks:** Kathy Hale / Richard Frechette

**Treasurer:** Paul Davis

● 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month: Pot Luck Lunch

● 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Month: Meeting for Worship  
with Attention to Business

## **QUERIES & ADVICES** from Faith & Practice of Southeastern Yearly Meeting

### How do Friends meet our responsibilities to the community and the world?

#### 10. Social & Economic Justice

##### Queries:

- Do we seek to transform the world with our loving spirit?
- Do we take an active interest in the social and economic conditions of our community?
- Have we objectively considered the causes of discrimination, and are we ready to abandon old prejudices and think anew?
- Do we as individuals and as a Meeting do all in our power to end governmental, social, economic, and educational injustices in our community and to create equal opportunity for all?
- How do we as individuals and as a Meeting promote the welfare of those in need and work to secure a just distribution of the world's resources?
- What are we doing as individuals and as a Meeting to understand and remove the causes of war and violence and to develop the conditions and institutions of peace?

##### Advices:

- Seek to understand the causes of social ills, and work toward their removal.
- Be not content to accept things as they are, but keep an alert, sensitive, and questioning mind.
- Understand and maintain Friends' witness for truth, simplicity, and nonviolence, holding up your personal life to these testimonies.
- Encourage inclusiveness, and discourage discrimination.
- Friends' belief in that of God in everyone should lead to reverence for all life and to personal integrity.
- Cherish diversity.
- Aid and comfort those afflicted or in prison that they may rebuild their lives.
- Work for the abolition of the death penalty.
- Let the way that we live contribute to the realization of a peaceable kingdom on earth.

## MINUTES OF THE FORT MYERS MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS 10th Month 13, 2019

The Fort Myers Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends met in Iona House on 10 month 13 with 15 Friends present. The Meeting opened with a period of silent centering.

**Queries.** Clerk Joan Culver read from the October Queries and Advices from SEYM Faith and Practice.

“Do we as individuals and as a Meeting do all in our power to end governmental, social, economic, and educational injustices in our community and to create equal opportunity to all?”

“Understand and maintain Friends’ witness for truth, simplicity, and nonviolence, holding up your own life to these testimonies.”

**Clerk’s Message.** Joan Culver asked that Committee Clerks send agendas before each month’s Meeting for Business.

**Treasurer’s Report.** Joan Culver reported for Treasurer Paul Davis the following fund report. The total amount in our General Fund, including Checking, Savings, and General Fund Friends Fiduciary, is \$69,752. The total amount in the Meeting House Funds, including Savings, Meeting House Funds, and Friends Fiduciary, is \$90,586. Grand total is \$160,320. September income, minus some checks not yet deposited, was \$1,182. August expenses were \$266.

**Finance Committee.** Clerk Kathy Hale reminded committee clerks that the Finance Committee has requested their proposed budgets for 2020 by October 23.

Following a discussion of designated contributions and the issues they pose for the Meeting, the Meeting approved the following Minute:

- **19MM12:** *Friends affirm the current practice of the Meeting of accepting only contributions made to the General Fund or to the Meeting House Fund for discernment.*

### **Peace and Social Concerns.**

Helen Fox announced that there will be a meeting of Peace and Social Concerns at the home of Jim Koopman and Helen Fox on Saturday October 19, 10-12 for Peace and Social Concerns, followed by lunch and a meeting of the new Immigration Working Group. Everyone is invited.

**Hospitality.** Clerk Deb White reported that Richard and Suzanne Frechette will take over responsibilities for opening, closing, setting up for Meeting, and for seeing after “the comfort

and welcome of all, including especially visitors.” Deb and Bob White will act as “subs” when needed.

The committee has determined that the best air conditioning policy is to keep the AC at 78 and use fans for circulation. Deb will turn off the AC at the rise of meeting before after-thoughts, announcements, etc.

Deb reminded the Meeting that the committee appreciates volunteers to bring snacks following Meeting.

Deb reports that “The committee continues to testify through its choice of materials used (e.g. paper instead of plastic or styrofoam, fair trade coffee, etc.)” The committee expects a slight increase in budget request to accommodate costs of these choices.

The Meeting expressed appreciation for the work of Deb and Bob in caring for the hospitality needs of the Meeting over the past months.

**Nominating.** Nancy Howell announced that we are beginning the process of filling committees for the next year. Kathy Hale will be joining the Nominating Committee. Nancy will be sending requests to clerks for consideration of people to serve on those committees.

**Clerk’s Report.** Clerk Joan Culver reported that Lara Alqasem, who was detained at an Israeli airport because of her perceived support for BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) will be in town soon. Her partner, Cory O’Rourke would like to meet with the Meeting if possible. They would like to bring us up to date with what they are doing now. The Meeting provided some financial help to her during that time.

Joan called attention to a recent broadly-distributed message from Friends Committee on National Legislation regarding the need for repeal of the 2001 and 2002 Authorizations for Use of Military Force (AUMF.) Partly through FCNL’s work over the past 18 years, two bills are before the House to repeal AUFM. FCNL requests support with representatives and senators. Contact information will be in the newsletter.

**CNCP.** Joan reported for CNCP that October is a fund-raising month and the “Haunted Walk” is running every weekend.

**New Business.** Richard Frechette attended SEYM’s fall interim business meeting on Saturday October 5 at the Tampa Meeting House. Richard reports:

“The Jacksonville Monthly Meeting, which was close to being laid down, is being reformed as a worship group under the care of Gainesville Meeting.

SEYM’S Peace and Social Concerns Committee urges Monthly Meetings to connect up with local chapters of the Rights Restoration Coalition, which works to end disenfranchisement and discrimination against formerly convicted persons, but also to create a more comprehensive and humane reentry system that would enhance successful reentry and reduce recidivism.

The Committee for Ministry on Racism asked our Meetings to discern how to go beyond non-racism and become an actively anti-racist organization.”

Minutes were read and approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Hale

## FMMM Funds Report 9/30/2019

**General Funds**

Checking	5,768
Gen Fund Savings	40,327
Gen Fund Friends Fiduciary	23,657
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>\$69,752</b>

**September 2019 Income vs Expense**

September Income	\$1,182
September Expenses	\$266

**Meeting House Funds**

Savings	79,560
MH Funds Fr Fiduciary	11,008
<b>Total Meeting House Funds</b>	<b>\$90,568</b>

**FMMM Total Funds** **\$160,320**

## Quaker Process



The Meeting’s Religious Education Committee invites you to attend a retreat on Saturday, October 26 at Iona House from 9AM to 4PM. The retreat will be led by our own **Nancy Fennell**.

The topic - in spite of the tongue-in-cheek title - is a most important one for Friends both new and old. Bring an item for a pot-luck lunch.

### USEFUL WEBSITES FOR FRIENDS

- www.seymquakers.org ..... Southeastern Yearly Meeting
- www.fcnl.org ..... Friends Committee for National Legislation
- www.fgcquaker.org ..... Friends General Conference
- www.afsc.org ..... American Friends Service Committee
- www.fwcc.world ..... Friends World Committee on Consultation
- www.quakerspeak.com ..... QuakerSpeak: A Quaker YouTube Channel.
- www.quakerhouse.org ..... Quaker House, Fayetteville
- www.quakervoluntaryservice.org.... Quaker Voluntary Service
- www.quno.org ..... Quaker United Nations Office



As people of faith, we are committed to peace—and our commitment tells us it's time to end endless war.

Since 9/11, three different administrations have used the 2001 and 2002 Authorizations for Use of Military Force (AUMF) to bypass the constitutional power of Congress and wage war across the world. To bring about the peaceful world we seek, we must repeal the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs.

More than 400 Friends will be visiting their members of Congress in Washington, D.C. during FCNL's Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute (Nov. 14-17). They will be calling for an end to endless war, and your testimonies can significantly amplify their face-to-face advocacy efforts. Friends, please ask your members of Congress to chart a new course towards peace.

With Friends' help, we had two critical successes this year. We must ensure these provisions remain in the final bills:

- The House approved an amendment in the annual defense spending bill to repeal the 2001 AUMF, which has been used to justify 41 military operations in 19 countries.
- The House version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) includes a provision to repeal the 2002 Iraq AUMF.

Nearly two decades of war hasn't brought more peace. As Friends, we feel called to transform our approach to foreign policy.

Please consider writing a letter and/or making a call to your US Congressional Representative and Senators. Below is a sample call script. For more details and for a letter sample, click on this [hyperlink](#), or ask Richard Frechette for a paper copy. Leave a message if they do not answer, or if you are calling after office hours.

### ***Call Script***

*Hello, I am calling for Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_ . I am a resident in [city, state] in district [number]. As a person of faith, I believe that peacemaking should be the highest goal of good foreign policy. The Authorizations for Use of Military Force (AUMFs) strip Congress of their authority over issues of war and peace. Please ensure that the House provisions to repeal the 2001 and 2002 AUMFs remain in the final defense spending bill and the final National Defense Authorization Act. These AUMFs have become a blank check for war and they must be repealed, as a matter of sound governance and guidance for a U.S. foreign policy committed to peace.*

*(My story)*

*Thank you for voting to bring peace back to our foreign policy.*

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## FtMMM Friends Observations on Peace Day Celebration

On Sunday, September 22, 2019, there was a remarkably successful Peace Day Celebration at the Alliance for the Arts in Fort Myers, organized by Swfl4peace. Representatives from the Fort Myers Friends Meeting (Quakers) were there, sharing information and gathering signatures for a World Beyond War peace pledge. We also conducted a “bean poll” survey, asking 6 yes/no questions, 3 on gun control and 3 on U.S. military policies. At least 282 visitors answered our survey. We would like to share the results.

On gun control, we asked, “Should a background check and permit be required to own a firearm?” On this question, 97% agreed with the statement. The next, “Should assault rifles (such as AK 47’s) be banned in the United States?” was agreed to by 76% of those taking part. But only 30% agreed with the question, “Do you support “a right to carry” firearms in public places, including campuses and churches?”

On military policy, we also found a range of opinions. When we asked, “Do you support using military force against Iran without authorization from Congress?” only 10% answered yes. We asked, “Should the United States military continue to spend tax dollars maintaining about 800 military bases around the world?”, and 35% said “yes”. We also asked “Should the citizens of Venezuela determine the governance of their country without (uninvited) United States intervention?” and 85% of the respondents chose “yes”.

Our goal for the survey was to learn more about the opinions of the peace-loving people of Southwest Florida, and to encourage us all to think about gun regulation and military actions.



*Carolyn Stanley and Nancy Howell*

The Quaker booth was in a good location for traffic flow and shade. The Bean Poll had 282 participants and the Peace Pledge received 94 signatories. One man with a Vietnam Vet cap said he was a veteran. I said "War is Hell." He said yes and signed the peace pledge. We had enough staff to take breaks and answer queries. It was successful.

*Tom Miller*



Thanks to Benji and Xander we had some awesome Quaker style-shirts.

Once we figured out we needed to invite passersby to take the "bean poll" we had a surprising number of takers -- and some good conversations.

*Helen Fox*

My allergies were really bothering me that day, so I was a bit preoccupied, but I think our booth was exceptional. When I stumbled, lugging the banner, onto the grounds with eyes that could hardly see properly with tears, I had on my Quaker shirt. I entered the grounds at the south side of the building, trying to keep upright and not bump into anyone, and a woman spotted my shirt and called out “Are you looking for the Quakers?” I nodded and she told me where the booth was. I concluded that the booth must be standing out in people’s minds, and I think I was right.

The bean poll was a huge success, and I joked with people about the beans not having any names on them, thereby being anonymous. People stopped and read the Peace testimony, too. Also people signed the Peace Pledge, too which was not anonymous. Miko and the boys made the shirts that Hugh donated and some people remarked on them favorably. And we didn’t stop kids from the bean poll either. Which I think was good for them. The kids, that is. Some kids were from Central America and were reticent, but I encouraged them. And they had an opinion about the US influencing their country. Carolyn said the banner made a big difference, but I think our booth stood out from the crowd even without it. We sold 12 bumper stickers, which surprised me. That was a lot.



Around noon a woman with a large zither chose to sit close to the booth in the shade of the building and started to play nonstop for two hours using drumsticks of a kind and it interfered with talking and listening. I wished she’d have gone elsewhere and was happy when she left.

Unusual for me, I have no other complaints

*Susan Oehl*

I am very pleased that we were able to participate in this year’s Southwest Florida Peace Day Celebration at The Alliance for the Arts. It was great to join together with so many peace loving people! We had enough volunteers for each of us to have time to visit other activities and displays. It was good to see friends from L.I.F.E., my postcard writing group and the ACMA music group who stopped by our Quaker booth. Many thanks to those who worked to plan this event and those who spent time at the booth on September 22.

*Carolyn Stanley*

## SEYM’s Half Yearly Meeting

November 28 – December 1, 2019 at Wekiwa Springs State Park, Florida

Half Yearly Meeting is a family-friendly, serendipitous 4 days over Thanksgiving weekend when Friends come together for good food and good friends in [Wekiwa Springs State Park](#) in Apopka, FL. We have exclusive use of the Youth Camp, a natural setting with rustic cabins, accessible lodging, dining hall, kitchen, and conference hall. For more information, go to [SEYMQuakers.org](http://SEYMQuakers.org)



**Friends Meeting of Fort Myers  
Religious Society of Friends  
c/o Richard Frechette, Editor  
138 Pinebrook Dr.  
Fort Myers, FL 33907-5988**

Address Correction Requested

## **MEETING CALENDAR**

1st Days (Sundays)	Pre-Worship Singing (most 1st days)	10:00 am
	Meeting for Worship	10:30 am
Sat 10/26	Meeting Retreat led by Nancy Fennell	9 am – 4 pm
Sun 11/3	Pot luck lunch	At rise of Worship
Sun 11/10	Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business	At Rise of Worship
11/28-12/1	SEYM's Half-Yearly Meeting	