

FIELD SECRETARY'S REPORT

JUNE 2013

My primary work continues—listening for what members and attenders identify as their own and their Meetings' needs, and how I, as field secretary, can be of service. In the past year, Friends have given me opportunities to present programs, to find and offer resources, and to support and mentor. I have continued to work on my goal of bringing individuals and meetings together.

During this year, I have encountered the gift of eldering in young and old. I continue to seek ways to nurture that gift for the good of the YM, our MMs and the broader community. I have begun to speak to our traditional elders, as well as others about possibilities for those gifted in this ministry to “walk alongside” others so that they can gain confidence in their own abilities to minister as elders.

Last year I learned about the challenges we face: “questions and concerns around conflict, lack of participation, lack of vocal ministry, sometimes a divide between young Friends and older Friends, the illness and loss of many of our Elders, and a sense of disconnection between our lives as Friends and our Meetings and our Faith in our Quaker Tradition.”

This year I've learned about the strengths of our meetings and Friends, and enumerated many of those strengths in my March report to CC. I hope to continue to find ways to encourage Meetings to identify and celebrate their strengths as we deal with the challenges we face.

Programs

Programs I have developed and am available to present include the following:

- Spiritual Genograms
- Discernment and Decision-Making in the Manner of Friends
- Clearness Committees (Process and Experience)
- Conflict Resolution
- Vocal Ministry
- The Journey of the Seeker
- Eldering: Nurturing, Celebrating and Passing It On

During the past year, I offered programs on Spiritual Genograms at DGFM and Rock Valley meeting and a recent two-day Spiritual Genogram retreat at Clear Creek. I also offered a program on Quaker Discernment and Decision Making at Evanston, and a program on Vocal Ministry at Macomb. I look forward to opportunities to offer the programs listed above, or to develop other programs to meet the specific needs of Meetings and individuals.

I have been asked to facilitate a program for the BRQM Spring Meeting. Wil Brant and I also have developed a workshop for these annual sessions that is a consultation around the work of MM Ministry Committees.

Travel and Visits

Once again, I have tried to attend gatherings that would allow me to meet folks from more than one meeting at a time. I attended the Chicago Friends Gathering (MCGM) meetings in

November, February and April. I attended Blue River Quarterly's Fall and Spring meetings. I also attended Women's Weekend in April. I attended the UFV Corn Roast in September.

During the year, I visited eighteen meetings, some more than once: Urbana-Champaign, Upper Fox Valley, Spoon River, Rockford, Downers Grove, 57th Street, Lake Forest, Evanston, Northside, St. Louis, Bloomington-Normal, Clear Creek, Oak Park, Duneland, Rolla and South Bend Meetings, as well as Macomb and Elkhart Worship Groups. I am heartened by the strength of the individuals in these meetings, and especially by the growth in the number of young children at some of these meetings. (How to attract young parents and children, how to nurture and support them is often identified as a primary need.)

I offered resources and support through phone and email conversations with members from Oak Park, Rock Valley, Spoon River, Bloomington-Normal, Macomb Worship Group, St Louis and Rolla Meetings.

As a member of the Property Use Committee, I participated in conference-call meetings and face-to-face meetings. I also attended M&A weekend retreats in September and April.

In January I attended FGC's New Meetings Project consultation where I met and had some deep conversations with members from 15 yearly meetings. While there, I also acquired pamphlets and books as resources for YM members and MMs.

Future Visits

As I mention in my report in March, I continue to wish I could bi-locate. My plans for future visits include the meetings I have not yet visited: Columbia, Oshkosh, Springfield and Southern Illinois Meetings. Plans also include more visits to small meetings, like Rockford and Spoon River, as well as Macomb and Elkhart Worship Groups.

I still love my work as Field Secretary. Friends continue to offer me their kindness, their guidance, their elderying their mentoring, and their wisdom. My thanks to YM members for the ways you nurture and guide me in this work.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Wolicki, Field Secretary