

Steering Committee Report
Annual Session, NPYM, 2004
Beth Hunt, Steering Committee, clerk
July, 2004

It has been this green clerk's pleasure to change from the light green of spring to the dark green of summer over the past year and, as the seasons go, I have summer and winter before me for more growth in the upcoming year.

Steering Committee's pervasive challenge in 2003-04 was declining financial resources. The annual retreat last October undertook a value look at where we believe our resources should be spent. Number 1 on our priority list was support for our youth programs. Specifically that item referred to a "paid youth coordinator" for NPYM. This suggestion stemmed from Crie Anderson who during her plenary presentation here in Montana a year ago indicated that her travels to many Yearly Meetings and Monthly Meetings showed her that NPYM had a "large youth group." Her experience was that yearly meetings with paid staff believed this to be the way to go. This issue was referred to our Intergenerational Committee where it died for the moment with the comment that the problem needed to be better defined, that the cost of a Youth Coordinator which might reach \$4,000-\$8,000, was questionable in this year of budgetary constriction. I believe this may be an issue we will want to revisit in the future.

Declining budget resources from planned spending of reserves over the last three years forced Steering Committee to design a leaner budget for 2004-05 despite raising assessment to \$40/person two years ago. Excellent work was done by two committees made up of your Steering Committee Reps and clerked by Eugene Norcross Renner. This committee proposed that a Clerk's Workshop be held in Seattle in fall 2004 for 50-75 persons instead of sending 6 clerks to Pendle Hill for close to \$3,000(?). The other committee reviewed the cost of producing the directory and recommended that NPYM produce the directory on a CD instead of in paper copy beginning in 2005. Additionally, Directory Coordinator Don Goldstein agreed to accept an honorarium of \$1500 in 2005-06. These changes will result in a substantial cost savings. Finally Steering Committee reduced a \$5,000 unbudgeted spending item to \$350, allowing us to bring our proposed budget into line with our resources.

This budget process while taking into consideration shrinking resources, nevertheless reaffirmed its value of funding 2 Reps to our national organizations such as AFSC, FCNL, FWCC, and Friends Bulletin. Furthermore Steering Committee increased donations to national organizations from \$100-\$150 annually, approved a one time donation of \$1,000 to FWCC due to that organization's fiscal crisis, and approved scholarships to one Junior Friend and one Young Friend seeking support for attendance to this summer's FGC. Your Steering Committee Representatives worked hard for three hard and one particularly long session to bring you a budget they believe represents your values for 2004-05. They deserve your thanks.

Did Steering Committee spend the year on budgetary concerns? There were times when it felt that way! Moving on to other non-budgetary endeavors, this year the Discipline Committee, hereafter to be called Committee on the Discipline was reconstituted. This was approved as an outgrowth of many Friends concerns about whether or not we are following our Faith and Practice book. If not, is it our practice or our Faith In Practice book which needs to be changed? Our Committee on the Discipline has begun to define the initial scope of its endeavor. This is a potentially a monumental task. We are grateful to those who have stepped forward to serve and to those who may be called to assist this committee in the future. Their convenor is Tim ? They are expected to have a full committee shortly and to have their first meeting in October.

As of 2003-04, our Youth now define themselves and are defined into three distinct groups. Our Central Friends include those who extend from the inclusive period from the summer after 5th grade through the summer after 8th grade. This year Central Friends were approved and acknowledged with an increase in budget and advisors to be nominated by Nominating Committee and approved by Steering Committee. This action was at best timely. Many would say overdue!

Junior Friends took the best of what Intergenerational Committee had offered or recommended to a successful and enjoyable year for themselves and all who engaged with them. Two co-clerks were funded and attended a Clerk's Workshop at Pendle Hill in October of 2003. Their mid-term gathering, a ski trip was fun and productive. They are amongst us here at AS '04 (#?) strong! Junior Friend Walt Javins received a partial scholarship and is just back from FGC in Amherst sharing his experience with other Junior Friends prior to FGC's arrival in the North Pacific in 2006.

Regarding Young Friends, those over 18 years of age, last year Annual Session approved funds for Young Interim Coordinators to begin outreach to our Young Friends over the age of 18. A small mid-year gathering was held in Portland in December, 2003. Recently Young Friends Clerks have been nominated and approved by Steering Committee. This Annual Session we feel the presence of NPYM's Young Friends as they educate other Young Friends and the rest of us about the exciting possibilities that await when FGC comes to Tacoma, WA in 2006. Meghann Willard has just returned from FGC '04 in Amherst, MA as has previously mentioned Junior Friend, Walt Javins. Please take time to hear of their experiences. Additionally there has been much excitement among Young Friends following the announcement that there is to be a second World Gathering of Young Friends, ages 18-35, in England in the summer of '05. And this group is busy educating itself and other potential delegates as to the application procedure and funding raising possibilities.

The World Gathering of Young Friends next summer and FGC in Tacoma in '06 caused SC to pause and consider how we might help fund our youth in pursuit of their goals. As regards attendance at the World Gathering of Young Friends, Ann Stever and Meghann Willard volunteered to co-clerk a committee to educate about the conference, shepherd individuals through the application process and consult on fundraising of an

estimated \$2,500 per attendee. Incidentally NPYM is invited to consider funding a third world attendee to the World Gathering. Chris Willard, treasurer, agreed to clerk a Youth Opportunities Fund to receive requests for financial assistance and to develop a policy for the use of Youth Scholarship funds.

A process for encouraging, receiving and processing applications for the World Gathering having been approved, Steering Committee Reps' eyes turn immediately to thoughts of how to support not only individuals, but also entire families wishing to attend a week of FGC in '06. Steering Committee does not have a special fund for assisting adults towards their goals like the special fund for youth scholarships and the \$5,000 unbudgeted line item was reduced to \$350 this upcoming fiscal year. While Steering Committee is aware of the need to consider budgeting for 2004-05, this clerk would like to encourage Monthly Meeting to start early to give additional thoughts to financial needs of families wishing to attend FGC in '06

I have been speaking of what Steering Committee did accomplish in the last year. I feel I would be remiss if I did not question some of what remains to be undertaken. Close to home I was astounded to learn just recently that Junior Friend advisors have paid out of their pockets for vans to help transport to Junior Friends Camp. Think about this now. Junior Friend Advisors take time off from work, travel long distances to Camp, and then we allow them to pay for the transport van, the gas, or both! This year by Executive decision between Steering Committee meetings, it was decided that "No advisor should be responsible for the cost of renting or running the transport van." A per person charge for transportation to Camp, on to Annual Session, and back was established with the Advisors able to award scholarships as needed. This was done on a one time basis. A policy will need to be set by Steering Committee before the next Camp. If Children's programs are our top priority, this needs to be reflected in our budget. And let's not forget the middle school Central Friends and perhaps the Young Friends on occasion.

Other issues: Have we followed our leanings regarding Gay and Lesbian marriages- personally, in our Monthly Meetings, through Annual Session? Have we followed, or even discussed our leanings on making war abroad, in Central America? In Iraq? In Afganistan? How are we led on a whole groups of peace and justice issues: health care, public education, affordable housing?

A year ago a very green clerk accepted the position as Steering Committee clerk. I stand before you today a lot greener, not yet burnt brown. It's been an opportunity for growth. I've made some mistakes. Steering Committee individuals and the whole have given me the opportunity to think things over once or twice. I appreciate the confidence you have shown in me this yearing. I look forward to working with you as we move from beautiful Missoula to the exciting possibilities of PLU in Tacoma in '05.

Peace Be With Us and With Our Spirits as we continue to basque in NPYM 2004.

Beth Hunt
Steering Committee clerk, 2003-04

