

PROPOSAL FOR A YEARLY MEETING 5 DAY SILENT RETREAT

For at least the past 16 years, there has been a weekend silent retreat in Washington. It was originally sponsored by Friends Center and University Friends Meeting, but as it was open to other Friends, and drew people from around, after 5 years it was taken under the care of the quarterly meeting. It always meets at the end of January (it met last weekend), and the planners for the following year come from those who attended. It has been very meaningful for many, and although there are some people who only come once, many will attend faithfully.

I was one of the people who got it going in the first place. I have wanted to see a longer retreat happen, but have not been sure of how or when. I think an extended 5 day retreat would be better if it were under the yearly meeting, for there are friends from Oregon who may be interested, as well as those from Washington. It would be possible to do it in Washington in the years that yearly meeting is in Washington, and in Oregon when we meet there. Possible locations have been thought of as well—Quaker Cove in Washington, and a cabin in Oregon. When we meet again east of the mountains we can find a location there as well. There are four or five people who are willing to help plan it for this year—and like the weekend retreat, we will be able to run the retreats each year so nominating committee will not need to do anything at all.

What does the yearly meeting need to do for this to happen? Send out the registration forms along with other steering committee business--especially now that we e-mail most things. The treasurer would need to write some checks. The weekend silent retreat has almost always had some money left, so I am sure it would not be a money drain on the yearly meeting.

This has been seasoned by the clerk of M & O. (She also attends the winter weekend retreat.) Our past clerk of annual session, Jon Prescott, was very interested in the thought of a 5 day retreat.

I know that when our Meeting talked about what we wanted from our yearly meeting—one thing that was mentioned was opportunities for spiritual growth. I hope that the steering committee will be able to season this request. It would add spiritual depth to Friends, which in turn would strengthen our yearly meeting.

Deborah Lewis