



# Montana Gathering of Friends

Welcome to Summer MGOF 2023  
August 18-20 2023 in Luccock Park



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2023 Montana Gathering of Friends. We are excited to have you join us in the idyllic surroundings of Luccock Park from August 18th to 20th, 2023.

Situated in a pristine forested area, Luccock Park offers a tranquil environment where attendees can connect with nature, find solace, and rejuvenate their spirits. The camp is blessed with towering pine trees, gentle streams, and breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains, creating a truly awe-inspiring backdrop for contemplation and reflection.

## Finding Hope and Connection in a Time of Climate Disruption



We welcome this year's Friend-in Residence, Shelley Tanenbaum. Shelley combines her lifelong love of nature with many years of environmental advocacy and research. She has served as staff and a board member of Quaker Earthcare Witness, Quaker Institute for the Future, Earthlight Magazine and many other non-profit organizations. She is an environmental scientist with a focus on air quality. Shelley lives in the San Francisco area and is a member of Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting.

On Saturday morning, Shelley will lead a plenary session on the theme of this year's gathering, "Finding Hope and Connection in a Time of Climate Disruption".

I'm delighted to be part of MGOF this August, to share my journey and to see where we are led in our connected Earthcare witness. What are Friends called to do in this time of extreme weather, climate disruption and ecological collapse? My spiritual connection with the Living World inspires and empowers me to be bold and creative in my witness in the world. Let's explore where we all find guidance, sustenance and courage in these times.

While our focus is on finding hope and connection, we recognize the importance of self-care and personal reflection. Saturday afternoon will allow each of us to take time to explore the breathtaking natural beauty that surrounds us. You may also gather in interest groups,

rejuvenating your spirit and providing for a moment of respite in the midst of our collective mission.

We will hold a Meeting for Memorials late Saturday afternoon to honor those who have passed in the last year. This time honored tradition helps us share our grief at the loss of our beloved and serves to honor their impact upon us and how they have inspired us with their vibrant lives. You are also welcome to share remembrances of others lost this year whom we may not know.

As in years past, there is no fee for children to attend MGOF and our payment concept is “pay as you are led,” a remarkable method of demonstrating radical trust in Spirit. No one should hesitate to come for concern about cost.

We hope to have Quakers of all generations from Montana and Wyoming. North Pacific Yearly Meeting folks are also especially welcome to come to Luccock Park to share in a weekend of creativity, play, and worship.

We extend our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for joining us at the 2023 Montana Gathering of Friends.

“Let us be the ancestors our descendants will thank”  
Winona LaDuke

Scan this to read  
Shelly Tanenbaum's  
article in Friends  
Journal



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## COVID-19 Precautions

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COVID testing will not be required to attend Summer MGOF, but we are asking for Friends to exercise a high level of individual judgment. If you are not feeling well in any way please do test yourself within 12 hours before arrival at camp as a courtesy to other Friends and do not attend if you are positive. Masks will be optional for our indoor meetings, although it would be nice to have a mask available and to use it if asked by our more cautious attenders.



## Registration and Finances

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The Registration is now open at [www.montanafriends.org](http://www.montanafriends.org). Please note every adult needs to complete a separate registration. Children under 18 years old can be registered on the same form as their parent/guardian. The recommended fee for Summer MGOF 2022 is \$150/adult, but children under 18 do not pay anything, that is covered by MGOF. Over 70 percent of the regular adult registration fee goes directly to food and lodging services provided by Luccock. The remainder of the fee pays for kids under 18 to attend for free, for travel expenses of our Friend in Residence, to make sure all interested Friends and visitors can attend, regardless of means, for youth recreational activities, and for child care and similar expenses. **Please pay as you are led by Spirit.**



# Food and Lodging

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The camp will provide 5 meals, Saturday breakfast through Sunday Lunch. The potluck on Friday at 5:30 pm is the only meal we must bring. We are paying a small increase on the base food fee in order to get a menu which has more whole foods and vegetarian options. If you would like to bring fresh produce from your garden to offer to the Luccock kitchen staff, they are happy to try and incorporate that into their menus.

On Friday evening starting at 5:30pm we will enjoy a "Sustainable Potluck" dinner to help us connect to the earth and each other. Please bring a dish made with Montana-grown ingredients, and please provide brief, neatly written notation of key ingredients and their origin, e.g. "Beef-Oxbow Cattle, Missoula," or "Fresh greens, home garden, Bozeman."

Those who have been to Luccock know that the cabins are simple and rustic vintage structures with no heat. Sleeping bags and pillow are absolutely necessary, and the bunks have only simple "camp style" mattresses. We will have a variety of cabin options, and we have requested cabins as close to the common bathrooms as possible. Anyone who wants to arrive on Thursday and spend the whole day Friday at Luccock is welcome to do so for an additional \$30/person (be self-sufficient in food). Please let us know on the registration comment section if you are planning to arrive Thursday.

## Daily Schedule

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### *THURSDAY, 17 August*

5pm Pre-MGOF begins

### *FRIDAY, 19 August:*

7 am. Hike to Pine Creek Lake\*  
3pm-5pm. Check-in, Welcome  
5:30pm Sustainable Pot Luck Dinner \*\*  
6:30pm-8pm. TBD

### *SATURDAY, 20 August:*

8:00am Breakfast  
8:45am-10:15 **Plenary Session with Shelley Tanenbaum, Friend-in-Residence**  
10:30-12 Worship Sharing  
12 noon-1pm Lunch.  
1pm-3:45 Interest groups /Free tune  
5pm-5:45pm Meeting for Memorials—  
6:00pm Dinner  
7pm Community Night (Talent)

### *SUNDAY, 21 August*

8:00am Breakfast  
9:00-10:30 am **Worship Sharing**  
10:30am-11am Singing  
11am to noon. **Meeting for Worship.**  
Noon. Lunch.  
1:00 pm Evaluations, Clean-up and Goodbye.

\*The hike is about 9 miles round trip, and gains almost 4,000 feet in elevation. Spectacular views, and the full gamut of wildflowers.

\*\*Join us for a delightful and environmentally conscious gathering at our Sustainable Food Potluck! We encourage using locally sourced, organic produce, and prioritizing plant-based options.



### ***What to Pack:***

- Bedding of your choice
- Towels and Personal Wash Gear (soap, toothbrush, shave, etc)
- Clothes for both warm and chilly (it can go either way)
- Flashlight
- If you are going to visit Chico, hike, or do a river float, bring the needed gear.

### ***Directions:***

- From wherever you are, get on I 90 heading toward Livingston, Montana;
- At Livingston, take Exit 333 for Route 89 south toward Yellowstone National Park.;
- At the bottom of the exit ramp, at the light, turn left (south) on US 89;
- Drive South toward Gardener and Yellowstone Park for 4.7 Miles;
- Turn left on East River Road. (If you miss East River Rd you can go down to Pine Creek Rd);
- Drive 7.7 miles and you will pass the Pine Creek in and the little white Methodist church;
- Turn left at the entrance road that will lead you to Pine Creek Campground and the Luccock Church camp;
- Wind up the hill, about 2 miles, and then into the forest until the road forks between the church camp entrance and the campground; and
- Go to the left, down into the Church camp.

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## **Meeting for Business Minutes**

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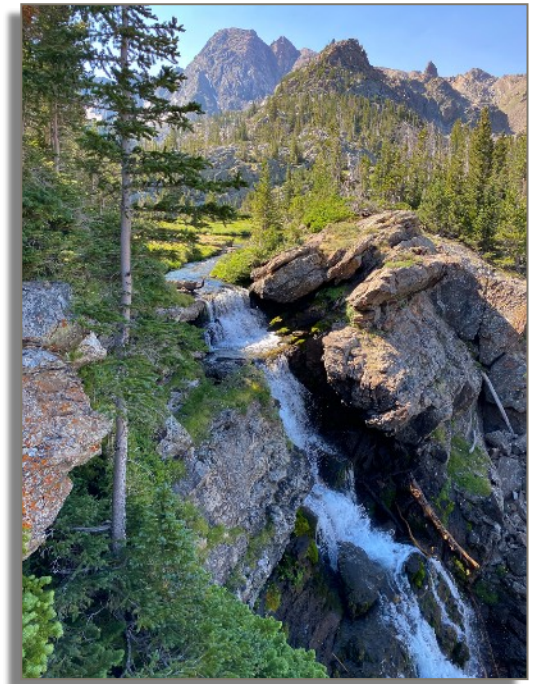
### **February 11, 2023**

The Business Meeting began with some moments of silent worship

Business Meeting was held via Zoom, with approximately 16 people in attendance. Larry Leonard served as Clerk of the meeting, and Jim Humphrey served as Recording Clerk. Also present were several visitors from North Pacific Yearly Meeting, including Yearly Meeting Clerk Jana Ostrom, and the NPYM representative to Quaker EarthCare Witness, Mary Ann Percy.

The Minutes of the previous business meeting, held September 18, 2022, were presented for consideration and approval. Jim proposed two changes to the minutes as written, namely, that the minutes reflect that the amount of funds in MGOF's bank account as of the time of the Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> business meeting was \$7,559.04, and that the Minutes be amended to report that the Sept. 2022 business meeting decided that future honorariums for Friends In Residence be set at a uniform amount of \$500 plus travel expenses. After discussion, the Meeting approved these changes and additions to the Minutes, and the Minutes as so changed were approved.

Jim presented the report of the MGOF Finance Committee as follows. The Document Dropbox contains both the final complete 2022 Income & Expense Statement (Document 5) and the proposed 2023 Budget (Document 6). Jim stated that the amount of funds in the MGOF checking account as of 12/31/22 was \$7,689.04. Jim concentrated his discussion on the proposed 2023 Budget (which



also features a line by line comparison with the actual 2022 income & expense amounts). Jim focused on the budgeted 2023 expenses, stating that he assumed his projected costs for the summer 2023 gathering would be paid in full by either cost payments or donations above cost. All other 2023 expenses were set at amounts reflecting 2022 actual expenses. The budget as so constructed would have ended year 2023 with a \$1,370 deficit. Jim therefore added to the income side of the budget an assumed increase of donations of \$1,370.

The Business Meeting then considered the request of MGOF's "Indigenous People's Minute Study Group" Committee that the 2023 budget include an additional budgeted amount for an indigenous consultant fee. After discussion, the Business Meeting approved a budgeted amount of \$1,000 for an Indigenous Consultant Fee. As a result Jim will also raise the needed increase of donations (compared to 2022) in order to balance the budget from \$1,370 to \$2,370. The Budget as so amended was approved by the Meeting. Jim will forward the 2023 budget as so amended to the Clerk for posting in the Google Dropbox website and will also forward a copy to Treasurer Cathy Weber.

During the course of the above discussions, Jim also commented that the purpose of a budget for a charitable organization or church included, among other things, both simple financial responsibility and also assurance that the charitable entity made spending decisions according to its established process. For MGOF this means that established committees not spend more funds than are budgeted for their mission without first seeking Steering Committee or Business Meeting approval for such excess expenditure as well as for any needed additional fundraising. Jim further stated that budgeted amounts resemble speed limits, in that you can spend less than the budgeted amount but should not spend more without approval of the charitable organization.

The Clerk also reported that a fee schedule sent to him by Luccock Park implies that the overall cost of Luccock Park will rise by roughly 7% compared to last year. The Luccock Park fee schedule is one of the documents in the Business Meeting's Dropbox library.

Tina Visscher, on behalf of the Bozeman Worship Group, proposed that MGOF officially endorse the proposed Montana legislation known as the Immigration Compact and set out as Document 14 in the Dropbox. After discussion and explanation of this Compact, the Meeting agreed to endorse this proposed legislation, as a result of which MGOF will be publicly identified as one of the supporters of this proposed legislation. Most of the endorsers are expected to be Bozeman area businesses.

Lucretia Humphrey gave the nominating committee report. To date none of the people contacted have yet agreed to take on the roll of summer MGOF coordinator. The search for someone to take on this roll will continue.

The Meeting decided that the spring meeting of Steering Committee and Ministry & Counsel should be held by way of Zoom. Clerk Larry will consult with the Steering Committee on what date to schedule this meeting for.

Linnea Wang, Ministry & Counsel Clerk, reported that M&C worked hard planning today's Winter MGOF gathering, and is already engaged in planning our in-person Summer MGOF gathering. A Friend in Residence has not yet been identified for summer MGOF. M&C is also considering how to increase the number of children participating in MGOF events, and also how best to stand by those grieving loss or suffering illness. Next Linnea spoke on behalf of MGOF's "Indigenous Peoples Minute Study Group" which has created a proposal for action in support of Indigenous people. Linnea asked that the Business Meeting accept this report, which at this time only asks the MGOF community to take steps to educate themselves on Indigenous issues. The report was accepted.

Jana Ostrom, Clerk of the NPYM Yearly Meeting Clerk and MGOF member Ted Etter reported that North Pacific Yearly Meeting (NPYM) will meet in early July as follows. The Friends General Conference (FGC) will hold its annual meeting in Monmouth, Oregon on the campus of Western Oregon University. The FGC meeting will be from July 2 to 8, to be followed immediately by the NPYM Yearly Meeting scheduled for the evening of July 8 through July 11. The NPYM Yearly Meeting theme is, "Connecting & Reconnecting – Building the Beloved Community". In years 2024 and 2025 NPYM hopes and expects to hold its Yearly Meeting in Missoula. The anticipated Friend in Residence at one of the Yearly Meetings to be held in Missoula will be Paula Palmer of Boulder, Colorado, and her theme will be "Towards Right Relationship with Native Peoples". Jana also reported that the Yearly Meeting's Quarterly Newsletter is being emailed to all members through the Yearly Meeting, including in Montana. MGOF members/attenders are also invited to post information and reports on Montana events in the Yearly Meeting newsletter.

Linnea reported that she, Jasmine Krotkov, and Patricia Hogan lobbied for environmental justice legislation at the Capitol



during the Quaker Public Policy Institute. Jasmine and Linnea then attended the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) annual meeting where the lobbying priorities were adopted for the next two years. One issue that aroused considerable concern at the meeting was the lack of policy on abortion. FCNL decided to seek guidance from all Friends on the issue before developing a policy. Montana Friends will be asked to consider the way forward on the issue of abortion and reproductive health in the next few months.

Lucretia Humphrey reported that Georgia Walker-Keleher will be attending the upcoming FCNL youth conference in Washington, DC. Georgia's transportation costs plus some other minor costs were paid for from non-deductible donations given several years ago at the funeral of deceased MGOF member Alice Miller to support projects endorsed by Alice. Such travel and gatherings were not possible during the Covid era.

Peter Husby reported that the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is still struggling with divisions between leadership and supporters but appears to be moving towards a resolution of those issues. Peter says he was unable to follow or understand all the details of the disagreements.

Tina Visscher gave a brief report on the efforts of the non-Quaker charitable group known as Bienvenidos, which acts on behalf of migrants in the wider Bozeman region.

There being no further business to come before the Business Meeting, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Humphrey, Recording Clerk

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## Ministry and Counsel

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### May 2023

Between meetings, M and C has supported MGOF Friends and attenders in various ways. Beautiful ceramic birds made by Cathy Weber have been delivered to persons in need of cheer. Cards are sent to those suffering difficulty. We worked with Jo Ann Kidder to develop a form which would summarize each gathering. We hold in light beloved members of our community as well as those we know less well who may become our beloveds.



2-19-23 We met by zoom to discuss Winter MGOF (Steve Running, FIR). Attendance was excellent, over 50 people. We hoped that evaluations would provide crucial feedback. Will reported on plans for the men's group. Julia is beginning to organize an elder zoom group. We started thinking about topics for summer MGOF. We also did our annual worship sharing around M and C work.

3-9-23 We met by zoom to discuss possible themes and speakers for Summer MGOF. We moved toward the idea of a focus on sustainability as a logical follow up from the scientific presentation from Steve Running. We were influenced by Will's reading of **Sanctuary for all Life** by Jim Corbett.

3-19-23 We met by zoom to focus on possible speakers for summer MGOF. We considered factors like expertise, speaking ability and what might appeal to MGOF folks. We also started discussion of a possible retreat prior to MGOF, the last such event was in 2019. We are aware that the "extra dose" of MGOF is often well received.

4-22-23 No surprise, we met by zoom. By now we had secured Shelly Tanenbaum, General Secretary of Quaker Earthcare Witness to be our FIR. There was strong energy in the direction of helping us move out of our "rugged individualism" to awareness of how we could move forward collectively. We like the idea, the how is not so clear. We set the theme: *Finding Hope and Connection in a time of Climate Disruption* (Shelley's words). We also imagined a Friday night potluck that could focus on locally sourced food and began work updating the mailing list, reaching out to folks who have disappeared from us.

5-26-22 We met just before the holiday weekend to consider ideas and offers to help with a retreat prior to MGOF. We acknowledged two huge losses to our community, John Hooten and Starshine. We will need a volunteer or two to be present at the retreat. Two of us expressed concern that Steering Committee was not actively involved in the planning for Summer MGOF, thus leaving a lot more work for the coordinator, clerk of MGOF and M and C.

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## Report to MGOF from FCNL

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The Montana FCNL advocacy team contacted Reps Rosendale and Zinke to request support for programs that are currently funded under the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPs) Appropriations bill. Having pertinent, timely information about such complex matters from FCNL has made the group extra effective.

In Helena, State Senator Andrea Olsen introduced SR69 Resolution to include Montana in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, which has bipartisan support. The hearing was on April 17 at 3 PM. Quakers from Billings and Great Falls testified in support of the bill, which was tabled in committee.



Yemen update: There have been positive signs for diplomacy in Yemen since the China-brokered Saudi-Iran deal was announced. A resolution that Senators Murphy and Lee introduced to require State Department examination of Saudi Arabia's human rights record.

AUMF repeal update: FCNL is celebrating the bipartisan victory in the Senate to repeal the 2002 Iraq AUMF. But now the focus is on the House – specifically to pressure Speaker McCarthy (CA-20) to bring the House version (HR 932) to the House floor.

Georgia Walker Kelleher went to Washington DC for Spring Lobby Weekend (see page 8)

On the Federal level, FCNL has set its legislative priorities for the 118th congress, with lots of input from Montana Quakers. See [fcnl.org/priorities](https://fcnl.org/priorities) for the approved statement. In addition, the FCNL Policy Committee is requesting input around how FCNL's policy statement should address issues of reproductive health care, including abortion. Billings Monthly Meeting took the lead in FCNL's request for input from meetings on reproductive issues, providing a well written statement. Several worship groups and one individual added material or wrote their own input to FCNL on this important issue.

Through the Dismantling Racism and Militarism in US Foreign Policy project, FCNL's Diana Ohlbaum and Salih Booker from the Center for International Policy took apart the "racism-militarism paradigm" that sees the world in a rigid racial hierarchy and embraces militarism as the most effective way to maintain social order. Through expert consultations and community discussions (including a robust discussion here in Montana!) FCNL is advancing efforts to dismantle those systems. Read the report and find out more at [fcnl.org/drm](https://fcnl.org/drm).

This systemic focus extends throughout the organization. FCNL's recommitment to anti-racism, anti-bias, justice, diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work is reflected in our statement, available at [fcnl.org/ajedi](https://fcnl.org/ajedi). It guides our internal systems and practices as well as our lobbying and other activities.

In February 2023, Friends Place on Capitol Hill, formerly known as William Penn House, marked its first anniversary of welcoming overnight guests. The Quaker learning Center and guesthouse has hosted 90 groups and more than 1,600 guests. As part of the local migrant solidarity mutual aid network, Friends Place has also hosted more than 600 migrants bussed from the southern border. More at [friendsplacedc.org](https://friendsplacedc.org).

## A Weekend in Washington: Learning to Lobby with the Friends Committee on National Legislation

By Georgia Walker Keleher



My name is Georgia Walker-Keleher and I am a Quaker from Montana and a freshman in college. I was lucky enough to receive funding from the Great Falls Worship Group to attend the Friends Committee on National Legislation's Spring Lobby Weekend over my spring break this year. The weekend is advertised as an event where "students, recent grads, Quakers, and young adults gather to learn and lobby Congress."

There were over 300 attendees, almost all under the age of 30, from more than 30 states. I was attending alone, but the majority of participants were there in a group with their college. While there were many historically Quaker colleges represented, very few people seemed to identify as Quaker, but the people I met shared a common interest in advocacy and the values of peace and justice.

The theme of the weekend was justice reform and, specifically, violence interruption programs. For those who do not know (like myself before the weekend), violence interruption programs are community-led efforts to mitigate violence before it happens. "Violence interrupters" are people who connect others to social services, build community connections by visiting school grounds and potential hotspots for violence, and host events to spread the message of nonviolence. Violence interrupters live in the communities they are working in and have often had personal experiences with the criminal justice

system which makes them more effective advocates for non-violence. These programs work because they address root causes of violence; economic disinvestment and historical trauma stemming from systemic racism. Our lobbying "ask" for the weekend was for Congressmembers to "Provide at least \$20 million in federal funding for violence interrupters in the upcoming year's spending bill." Click [here](#) to learn more about violence interruption programs and the legislative ask.

Participants got to hear moving stories from a panel of current violence interrupters working for *Safe Streets* in Baltimore, from Marcus Ellis, a board member of Cities United which is working with city mayors to implement "a holistic public health approach to reducing gun violence and creating better lives for young Black men and boys, their families, and their communities" and from Representative McGovern, who emphasized the power in sharing stories with Congress members. We also got to practice and workshop exactly how we were going to make the ask to our representatives. The process we practiced was guided by Quaker principles and emphasized mutual respect, storytelling, and gratitude. Click [here](#) for the "Lobby Visit Roadmap" received by participants. There was one other Montanan at the Lobby Weekend, Meryl, and on our last day, we met with staffers at both our senators' offices (see above).

While violence interruption programs are not particularly applicable to Montana given our lack of urban spaces, the goals of reducing gun violence, addressing the harms of systemic racism, and using community knowledge to create solutions all apply to our community and state.

I am excited that FCNL is bringing people together to address pressing issues in a way that is guided by Quaker values. I am grateful they provided times for optional Worship over the weekend, that they attracted a diverse participant group that included people personally affected by gun violence, and that they worked to make the (intentionally) complicated legislative domain accessible to all. And I appreciate that the Spring Lobby Weekend coincided perfectly with the cherry blossoms blooming!

If you are interested in learning more about FCNL or its programming, click [here](#).

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### State of Society Reports

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#### Great Falls Worship Group - 2023

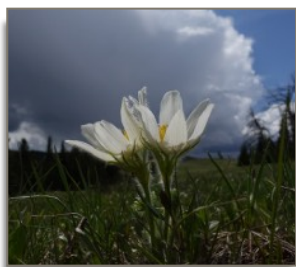
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Great Falls Worship Group continues to meet via zoom. We have several attendees who volunteer to lead the group. We look forward to our weekly gatherings. They are thoughtful and respectful of all who participate. At the present time we plan to continue with the format.

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## MISSOULA FRIENDS MEETING

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Missoula Monthly Meeting has faced some difficult challenges this year. Though we welcomed several new Friends during the COVID lockdown period who worshiped with us via Zoom, our numbers have now dwindled and have continued to remain relatively small. Some Friends have had health challenges or life issues which took them away.

Others have moved away from Missoula. Several have been tending to aging and dying loved ones. As our former Clerk was recently diagnosed with a terminal illness this winter, we have joined those who have rallied around him and continue to be inspired by his deep faith, gratitude, and abundant enthusiasm for life.

The circle of Friends remaining active in maintaining the life and business of the Meeting seems at times small, however we have joyously welcomed a handful of new younger Friends and returning Friends.

Since lower COVID cases allowed us to return to using the Meeting House for worship in the spring of 2022, some Friends have felt alienated by decisions around whether to continue offering shared worship via Zoom as well as in person or in-person only worship. For nearly a year, we have struggled with this divisive issue and have lost several Friends as a result of not finding unity around an acceptable arrangement. Our Ministry and Oversight committee has considered this issue at length, we have had many informal discussions with individual Friends, and we have considered various options in several of our Meetings for Worship with Concern for Business.

At our April Meeting for Business, we did find unity around a trial of a two-part resolution to support the spirit of our Meeting in a welcoming manner. First, we are offering a shared Meeting for Worship each Sunday at our regular time welcoming Friends to gather in person or join our circle via Zoom. Second, we offered to convene a meeting of those for whom technology-free worship is essential, to determine their desired day, time and length for an in-person only Meeting for Worship. However, those who voice discomfort with shared worship have declined to participate, and sadly, have stepped away from our Meeting. We hope with time, we are able to find ways to welcome them back to our community. We will review our experiences with this two-part trial in June and make a decision in September.

April marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Missoula Friends Meeting's purchase of our Meeting House. To celebrate, we invited Friends from throughout the state to gather for a weekend of activities and offered home-stays for those from out of town. We watched the film *Friendly Persuasion*; hosted the Montana Gathering of Friends Quarterly Meeting; had great fun chopping and dicing vegetables to prepare dinner together for 35 people; enjoyed singing worship; came to know one another better via meaningful worship sharing; gathered with Friends in-person and via Zoom for Silent Worship; then had more fellowship over a farewell simple lunch. As we reflect on our conversations and meaningful

experiences, we will consider other opportunities to welcome Friends from afar to join us more often in Montana's only Friends Meeting House.

Several of the traditions which brought us together in the past were put on hold during COVID and have been slow to resume. However, we now gather for soup and fellowship following worship, an important social time which strengthens our bonds. And, though less frequent, we have had holiday celebrations, a few potlucks, a paddling adventure, and outings to support the involvement of Friends in community activities. Additionally, we continue to have a monthly discussion of articles from *Western Friend*. One Friend led a series of thoughtful meetings around the issue of retirement and another initiated a death and dying group for deep sharing.

Many Missoula Friends are deeply involved in other community efforts supporting refugee resettlement, relations with our Indigenous neighbors, advocacy for mental illness education and treatment, the Montana Gathering of Friends and the North Pacific Yearly Meeting. This in turn enriches our Meeting.

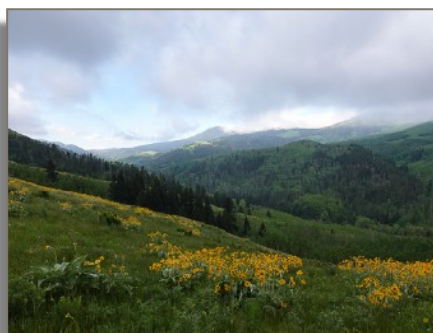
We look toward deepening of our understanding of ourselves and each other as we find our path through this time of difficulty. We look toward increasing mutual care and respect as we find our way between the shared worship made possible by technology and the longing some of us feel for the possibility of in-person-only Meetings for Worship. We are seeking to trust in the Light and in the gift of Guidance.

We trust that this process can lead to the continued growth of our Meeting in spiritual depth and fellowship.

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## Bozeman Friends Worship Group

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Bozeman Worship Group gathers every Sunday morning in a hybrid format. We alternate every other week between silent worship and worship sharing. There are typically about eight members in attendance each week, with a range

from 2 to 10 or 12. In all, our community includes about 15 people. We share "joys and concerns" after meeting and gather for potlucks several times a year. We met recently to share thoughts and feelings about the state of our worship group. Friends described it as a "vibrant, infused, sacred space for connecting with Spirit...a sanctuary for a healing journey...a place to seek direction from Spirit without imposed external expectations."

For us, combining meeting for worship with regular worship sharing deepens our intimacy and trust and the spiritual experience we share. *Bienvenidos*, a project we started helping



recent immigrants in our community, has grown into a non-profit with 70 volunteers assisting 35 families. It also facilitates cooperation and coordination between local organizations to improve access and equity.

We combine in-person participation and remote attendance in ways that best deepen our connection with the Spirit and each other. Zoom has made it possible for some of us to attend regularly who cannot travel to Bozeman every week. Several of us have continued attending remotely when they were away for extended periods. We are grateful for the OWL device that simultaneously shows a view of the whole group and the person who is speaking. However, one Friend described feelings of loneliness, isolation, and lack of spiritual growth while attending regularly via Zoom and only occasionally in person. We continue working to find ways for each person grow in the Spirit and the fellowship of our community.

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## Billings Monthly Meeting

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The Billings Monthly Meeting continues healthy and active. We continue to meet every Sunday at 10:00 AM. We also encourage people to join us by Zoom every Sunday.



Membership participation seems to be lower than it used to be. However, on special occasions and when we have a Meeting for Learning we have a much larger participation.

We have had several meetings for special attention. We had a meeting for learning in which we went through the FCNL priorities and submitted our opinions as to what we thought their priorities should be. The FCNL actually requested our opinion.

Second, one of our regular attender's, Gayla Bradberry, brought our attention to a matter that the FCNL was supporting in Congress. They were bills currently before Congress regarding radiation exposure compensation, S. 2798 and H.R. 5338 (RECA). While the Federal Government had passed the original radiation exposure compensation act to help some of the people in Nevada and others close by the atomic tests for the atomic bomb during World War II, the Act fell short of taking care of all persons who were damaged by those tests. Gayla's parents were living in New Mexico at the time and were fairly close to one of the tests. Both parents died early because of cancer. The new bill in Congress would add people like Gayla and her family as well as other people in Montana and States who were downwind of the atomic tests. With volunteer help from FCNL we made a presentation to one of the staff members of Sen. Daines. Also, when a Resolution to support the passage of

the RECA Act was introduced into the Montana legislature as SR 69, the Meeting supported Gayla in presenting testimony before the Montana Senate committee. Co-Clerk Tom Towe also gave testimony by Zoom. The resolution passed.

When MGOF requested our position on abortion, we called a Meeting for Learning to discuss the matter. As a result of that meeting a number of statements regarding abortion were adopted. After some refining of the language and a second meeting to further refine the language, we adopted a Minute indicating the Billings Monthly Meeting position on abortion. We sent that to MGOF and to North Pacific Yearly Meeting. After some members joined a Zoom meeting featuring Dr. Steve Running, a University of Montana professor who was one of the chief scientists that prepared a report for an agency of the United Nations which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, speak on climate change, a number of Billings monthly meeting members and attender's joined others in inviting Dr. Running to Billings for a public appearance. This soon evolved into what now is called the Billings Climate Week in which Dr. Running's will be featured in a number of public presentations on climate change in Billings and Columbus. The week is June 5 - 8, 2023.

Finally, the Billings Monthly Meeting undertook a series of Meetings for Learning on the Phillip Gulley book, *Unlearning God*. The meeting found it very interesting and the meetings were well attended and appreciated.

The next thing the meeting needs to do is to figure out how to get more people to come to the Meeting for Worship on Sunday mornings. We had previously 8 to 10 people at every meeting. Now at the Meetings for Learning we still have the same amount but some Meetings for Worship are only 4 to 6 attenders.

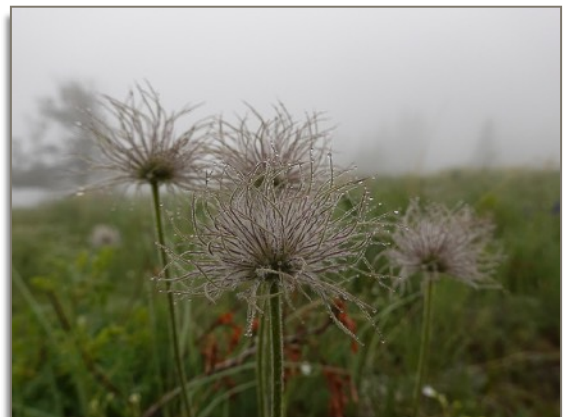
Respectfully submitted, Thomas E Towe, Co-Clerk

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## Dillon Worship Group

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Friends from the Dillon area hope to get regular meetings going again after a long time apart due to covid.



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# Memorial Minute

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## Starshine

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Starshine passed away May 14, 2023, Mother's Day in Monroe, Utah in the presence of two of her four children. She was born to Anna Fields and James Matchett in Tulsa, Oklahoma on July 31, 1928. The family moved to Seagraves, Texas where Starshine had a horse named Traveler who taught her how to rope calves and barrel race in rodeos.

During WWII, she initiated a scrap metal drive, grew a Victory Garden and won a sharpshooter's medal from the American Rifle Association.

In 1950, she earned a B.S. in chemistry and physics from the University of Texas in Austin, TX. In the same year she married Bob Stockton, also a Southern Baptist. They had four children—Lois Gilge, Havre, MT, Susan Nelson, Monroe, UT, Clifford Stockton, Hagerman, ID, and Thomas Stockton, Helena, MT.

In 1954, the family moved to Kalispell, MT where Glacier Park became a playground for hiking and camping in the summer and sledding in the winter. Sometime while raising a young family Starshine read The Christian's Secret to a Happy Life by Hannah Whitall Smith. Although Smith was not a Quaker, it opened the door for Starshine to Christian mysticism. At the age of 35, Starshine was invited to a Quaker Meeting by Claire Sinclare. It was a powerful experience for her, and her spiritual life became real. She felt that she now walked with God as a steady companion. A move to Helena, MT in 1965 allowed Starshine to obtain a teacher certificate from Carroll College. Sometime in the 1970's she divorced her husband and began attending the small Quaker worship group in Helena. In 1982 she obtained a Masters Degree in Education and in 1984 a PHD in Reading Education, both from the University of Georgia, after which she taught reading in the Helena Public School System.



Starshine Memorial Brunch with (L to R) Jim , Kat, Jon, Paula, Arnica, Linnea, Donna, Jasmine, Galya and Lucretia behind the camera!

For many years she wrote an astronomy column for the Independent Record, "Helena's Heavens" and led star viewings. Many called her the "Star Lady" which led to her name change, Starshine, following her divorce. At the Montana Gathering of Friends there was not one community night that went by without Starshine sharing with all a story about the stars. Usually, these stories were from Native American traditions. She brought her telescope and showed many of us the rings of Saturn for the first time. Upon retiring from being a public- school teacher she came out as a lesbian, and shortly after that in 1995 she moved to Great Falls to be near her partner, Alice Miller.

The move to Great Falls was life saving for a small Quaker group struggling for vitality. Starshine was the "third log on the fire", and with her presence the group has persisted over the last 25 years. She was always present, gave deep vocal ministry during unprogrammed worship, and pushed us all on to doing better and seeing what love could do. She represented the Quaker community at the ministerial association in Great Falls. She reached out to the community with her pithy, short letters to the editor on peace and equality for all. She brought people together and invited them to join our Quaker worship and she was supportive of our individual gifts to our Quaker witness. She stood weekly on the Civic Center steps for 7 years protesting the war in Iraq.

Starshine loved adventure and challenge. To celebrate her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, she ran in the Governor's cup marathon. She hiked to Phantom Ranch in the bottom of the Grand Canyon to celebrate her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. With her mother she traveled around the world followed by hiking up Granite Peak, the highest natural point in Montana. She rode her bike everywhere well into her 90's and her yoga balance was a challenge to all of us in the class.

With her partner of 20 years, Alice, she joined Wild Women, and canoed the Yukon, saw the polar bears near Churchill, Manitoba, traveled along the coast of Turkey and more.

She was a loving involved grandmother to her many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Many sought her out for support over the years.

She was always reaching out to know more about her faith, her growth with Spirit, and her relationship with others, no matter who they were. Her mantra was LOVE IS ALL THERE IS





### *RR Rachel builds compost*

Right Relationship Rachel turns almost all of her kitchen scraps into soil amendments. How? Compost of course! Now Rachel lives out in the country so she can have a large compost pile, even more than one. Here is how she does that. Dry leaves (saved from last October) get layered with green material (some but not all weeds) with grass clippings to really heat things up. The temperature of the pile gets to 160 degrees! Vegetable material disappears in days. After the pile cools way down, the resulting compost can be used for mulch to prevent weeds from taking over the garden.

Now, let's say you don't live where 5 foot compost piles would be welcomed by your neighbors. You can build a smaller pile in out of the way spots or use a rotating compost container. There are even indoor compost containers. We can reduce the amount of trash that goes to the landfill and help build organic material for our soil at the same time. Win! Win!







Montana Gathering of Friends

Montana Gathering of Friends  
PO Box 1  
Neihart, MT 59465

Looking to connect to Quakers in the west, and engage in a discussion group? Here's where you can:  
<https://westernfriend.discussion.community/>



Welcome to the Western Friend Discussion Community.

## Categories

NEW TOPIC

### News

Community News & Announcements

4 13

Tech Note re: Western Friend Discussion Community  
Nov 25, 2020 by maryddlein

### General

Topics in the "general" category might move later to more specific categories.

7 189

Daily Inspirational Messages  
Dec 19, 2022 by Nancy Marshall

### About Quaker Meetings

Conversations about ways to foster communities of spiritual growth.

About Quaker Meetings Online, About Children's Programs Online

8 75

Ways to make Business Meeting more spiritual and less administrative  
Mar 16, 2021 by NancyW

### Varieties of Quaker Faith

Listening beyond the words

3 34

Bridges  
Oct 13, 2020 by Nancy Marshall

### Quaker Faith in Action

Experiences, thoughts, and questions about acting as Quakers in the world.

15 124

A history of John Woolman School is in the works, please support  
Apr 09, 2022 by LisaFrankel

### Yearly Meeting Conversations

Topics of specific concern to each yearly meeting -- IMYM, NPYM, and PacYM

Intermountain YM, North Pacific YM, Pacific YM, Sierra Cascades YMF

3 9

Year-Round YM?  
Dec 21, 2020 by Barbara Babin

### Quarterly / Regional Meeting Conversations

Matters pertaining specifically to individual quarterly or regional meetings.

College Park Quarterly Meeting, Southern California Quarterly Meeting

11 17

Sierra Friends Center - 10/17/2020  
Mar 07, 2021 by BishQuake