

## **Background Reports to the 2010 FWCC Section of the Americas Annual Meeting**

### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee this past year consisted of fifteen persons plus the treasurer, ex officio. Its officers were Cathy Habschmidt, treasurer; Jeff Keith, assistant recording clerk; Paul Mitchell, recording clerk; Jane Snyder, assistant clerk; and Ray Treadway, clerk. In May 2009, it met in Tucson, Arizona, and was hosted by Pima Friends Meeting, meeting from Thursday evening through Saturday evening. In November 2009, the Executive Committee met at the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in Beech Grove, Indiana, near Indianapolis. This meeting was preceded by a strategic planning retreat (Wednesday through Friday), led by our consultant Tina Graf. Both meetings were followed by visitation at local Friends meetings on Sunday morning. The committee also met several times by conference call.

In our meetings, the members received reports from the Executive Secretary and the treasurer, as well as requests from the Finance Committee and individuals to consider various issues related to finances. We also responded to recommendations coming from the Fiscally Responsible Program Implementation Committee. We carried out actions required by the FWCC constitution, such as approving co-options and appointing persons to serve on the Naming Committee. We followed up on the changes in governance structure and procedures arising from the approval at the Annual Meeting, specifically that program groups, working groups and resource groups should now have a clearly defined mission and a job description with a list of program activities, determined jointly by members of each group and the Executive Committee.

At the November meeting the Executive Committee looked at the ideas generated at the preceding strategic planning retreat, including the results of an online survey. We approved bringing a proposal to the 2010 Annual Meeting that the Section focus its priority on local gatherings around the theme of the upcoming 2012 World Conference of Friends, "Salt and Light." These local events would be held throughout the Section of Americas starting in 2010 and continuing through 2011. This proposal might well involve temporary changes to the nature of the 2011 Annual Meeting. A working group, consisting of Ann Stever, Jane Snyder, David Brindle, Foote Lund, Bevar Moodie, Margaret Fraser, Louise Salinas, and Ray Treadway, will develop a proposal with background, details, and a name. A threshing session on Thursday afternoon at Annual Meeting will be held to present the proposal and to facilitate a full discussion by those who attend.

Ray Treadway, Clerk.

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### **Report of the Travel in the Ministry Subcommittee - 2009**

Friends World Committee for Consultation Section of the Americas offers scholarship assistance for Friends to follow leadings to travel in the ministry in ways that bridge yearly meeting boundaries, theological differences, varieties of worship style, and differences in language and culture. Early in 2009 the guidelines for assistance for Travel in the Ministry were revised, bringing together the process for asking for support from two separate sources: a bequest from Canadian Friend Susan Bax to assist women to travel in the ministry and a grant from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Chase

Granting Group during FWCC's 2005-2008 fund-raising campaign. A subcommittee, consisting of Jeff Keith, Marie Kirk Hawkins, Clemence Mershon, and William Medlin, of the Executive Committee was selected by the clerk to receive applications and approve funding. During the year eight requests for funding were received, considered, and approved, with additional information submitted if requested. Of these, two were for travel in the ministry in the United States, two in Kenya, and one each in Jordan and Syria, Bolivia and Peru, Iran, and Mexico. The trip to Iran was canceled. A total of \$10,340 was granted and \$8540 was used by six travelers. A summary follows with selected sentences from reports which have been received.

- Peggy Singer Parsons, March 26-29, 2009, travel to Pendle Hill Retreat Center – was a co-leader of a workshop on deepening one's spiritual life (entitled "Are We still a Dangerous People?") with ministry among Friends while at Pendle Hill.

*The students were highly engaged, our times of worship were deep, and I feel that they each came away with application to their lives, work and ministry. I also came away with a sense of clarity as to where the Spirit was moving in my life at the present time. It was a very grounded and productive time. I think that some of the connections that were made will be lasting ones.*

- Sarah Hartzell, July and Aug 2009, visit with Friends in Jordan and Syria and support of the work of Alternatives to Violence Project with Iraqi and Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

*While the AVP training sessions were the instrumental part of my journey, and steeped in Quaker practice, the time in the Middle East was also a physical re-connection with the longer term work I still feel called to in the area. The greater issues and questions that came out of my time in Jordan are about Quaker place and community in the Middle East, and about peace witness in and for issues in the Middle East. I came away with a lot of questions about how Quakers can support each other in this peace witness. I began to see that individuals with peace witness are part of a larger and collective message that many of us carry pieces of. I'm also thinking about what raising a Quaker presence in the Middle East (if it's coming from western folks) means for local Quakers.*

- Cynthia Blumenthal, July 21-31, 2009, travel as part of a delegation of women of faith organized through AFSC to Iran, with a goal of building dialog and peace between the women of Iran and the US. The trip was canceled due to the unrest in Iran following the June elections.

- Brian Drayton, Nov 1-15, 2009, travel to INELA-Peru Center (2 days), home of the pastor at Puno, Young Friends of Peru (3 days), home visits (2 days), and La Paz, Bolivia, with leaders of four yearly meetings (4 days). Funds from FWCC were eventually not needed since other sources were found.

*We (Benigno Sanchez-Eppler and I) . . . found again that speaking from the point of view of the first Friends, we were able to open channels of communication and engagement — the early Friends have something to teach us all -- North and South America, Kenya, and beyond. We brought Fox (whom they know primarily through his journal), Nayler, Pennigton, Woolman, Barclay, and some others, plus news and practices from older parts of the Quaker world (e.g., New England). We were able to share this, I believe, in a way that did not condescend, but stimulated interest in more interaction. We spoke often of intervisitation, both within Bolivia & Peru, and around Latin America, and gave an impetus, perhaps to movements in that direction already rolling among the youth, especially. All in all, a time full of blessings, in which we sought to be as faithful as we could — friendly, compassionate, plain-speaking when difficult issues might arise, but loving throughout, and very lovingly welcomed by Friends of all kinds there.*

- Deborah Saunders, Dec. 7-21, 2009, travel in the ministry to the Young Quakers Christian Association Africa conference as a speaker (Dec 9-13) in Bungoma, Kenya and to the Malava Yearly Meeting Young Friends Conference at Shamberere High School, Kakamega (Dec. 16-20).

•Sarah Hoggatt, Dec 7-20, 2009, travel in the ministry to the Young Quakers Christian Association Africa as a speaker (Dec 9-13) in Bungoma, Kenya, and among Young Adult Friends afterward (Dec. 16-20).

•Emma Condori Mamni, Jan 1 - 19, 2010, travel to Valle Friends Meeting -- Mexico City (2 days), Ciudad Victoria (6 days), Casa de los Amigos – Mexico City (6 days).

•Ashley Wilcox, Aug. 2009 – July 2010, North Pacific Yearly Meeting (7/15-19/09), Northwest Yearly Meeting (7/16-20/09), Camus Friends (10/3-4/09), Bellingham Friends (pending), Eugene Friends Meeting (pending), Eugene Friends Church (pending), Pacific Northwest Quaker Women's Theology Conference (July 2010).

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### **Finance Committee**

This year the Finance Committee is able to see the fruits of the immense efforts the staff and Treasurer have made to re-organize our budget. In the past staff and office expenses were tracked in one place, in the General Fund. We are now charging each activity account for the staff time they use and a proportional allocation for other overhead expenses. The accounts that record the expenses and income for each of our activity areas are much closer to reflecting the actual costs of these efforts. This year's Budget included values for these charges, but these were guesses based on limited experience. The budgets we will be presenting to the Annual Sessions this year provide more realistic allocations. However, the budget bottom line is not affected by these changes since the total staff and office expenses are fixed.

We are continuing the struggle to keep our deficit as small as possible. The staff have been controlling expenses aggressively, but this is in the face of decreased investment income and decreased contributions. Among the efforts being made: the office in Philadelphia has cut its space in Friends Center by 40%, resulting in greatly reduced rental costs.

At the direction of the Executive Committee, this year we have prepared two budgets: one to reflect business as usual, and the other to reflect a change in our strategic direction which focuses on holding many local gatherings.

Some cost-saving proposals are included in both budgets. The staff will experience a pay freeze for the second time in three years and have changed to high-deductible health insurance coverage. We are also asking that a formal audit be delayed another year as a cost saving measure, with the expectation that a proposal for a new audit policy will be forwarded to the Executive Committee for their consideration by next fall. In addition, we are now seeing the full effects of the staffing cuts made over the last few years.

Budget A reflects what it will cost to continue business more or less as in the past. Executive Committee asked that it "be as tight as conceivable, envisioning some savings to be realized in FY11, but without cutting staff." This budget still has a large deficit. This deficit could be less if our conservative estimates of contributions turn out to be understated as the economy recovers.

Budget B has been prepared as an alternate budget that reflects a change in our strategic direction, as proposed by the Executive Committee. Business as usual is put aside to hold a series of local gatherings on the theme of the upcoming World Conference, "Salt and Light." Most regular activity, including much committee work and a normal Annual Session, is to be suspended or modified for a year, freeing staff to work on these events. This budget isn't intended as a model for the future, but reflects a short term experiment with new ways of doing our business. The results of some of these experiments may help us build a more sustainable model for business when the year is over. This is very close to a balanced budget because the regional events are being priced to cover all direct expenses.

We trust that the threshing session on the Executive Committee's strategic change proposal scheduled for Thursday afternoon will be spirit-led and will help us discern what action to undertake in the next year, and how to use our resources to reach these goals.

Foote Lund, Clerk

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### **Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee supports the organization by helping it to be a good employer. This year, the committee has been less active than some in the past. In keeping with the goal of reducing expenses, we held our committee meeting during the annual sessions. This meant, however, that it was not really feasible for us to conduct interviews with the staff, because this was the time that they were busiest. We did conduct exit interviews with the people who were laid off.

Health care has been a continuing area of concern. Last year, after consulting with the staff, the organization decided to switch to high deductible plans with Health Savings Accounts. This plan is under the same Friends Health Plan, staffed by Mennonite Mutual Aid. FWCC is funding the HSA with the amount that it is saving by switching to the new system. This change has made it possible for our health insurance costs to be the same in FY 2011 as in FY 2010.

We continue to be concerned for both the well being of our hired staff and the financial health of the organization.

jp lund, Clerk

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### **Quaker Youth Pilgrimage Program Group**

With deep gratitude for the love that surrounds us and the gifts emergent in young Quakers today, we ask for continued guidance, commitment and support for our accepted task.

The Quaker Youth Pilgrimage Program Group (QYP) currently consists of Bill Schoder-Ehri, clerk, Owen Javins, Martha Davis, Jeanette Hamby, Sharon Hayden and the newly appointed Deborah Lewis. Jane Snyder serves as the Executive committee liaison to the QYP Program. Nancy

McLauchlan offers significant support as FWCC contract staff. Krystin Schmidt has stepped down from the program group during the last year and we wish to acknowledge her service over the years.

The Quaker Youth Pilgrimage Program Group (QYP) has been busy in the last year actively organizing for the 2010 Pilgrimage to be held in the Pacific Northwest from July 12 to August 13.

In alignment with the intent of the restructuring of FWCC activities at our last Annual Meeting in Portland OR, the QYP Program Group has worked towards reducing dependence on the Philadelphia office for tasks which can be accomplished by QYP group members. This process is an evolving one as both the program group and office staff are in the process of re-training ourselves from previous patterns.

While the group has taken on tasks formerly done by paid staff, we have also utilized the contract services of Nancy McLauchlan to follow through on certain local contacts and process when needed. This has proven valuable to accomplish specific tasks related to planning as the program group members are located in settings less central to the upcoming pilgrimage.

Planning a 30 day traveling program with 28 youth and 4 leaders from 2 FWCC sections and many countries is a formidable task. There have been changes in the last decade resulting in pilgrimages being hosted in the Section of Americas every 4 years rather than every 6 years as has been the case historically. This increases demand on Program group and FWCC staff time as a result. With the implementation of the 2010 pilgrimage, the QYP Program Group will be evaluating the practicality and functionality of such an endeavor. It is apparent that a shift in how we do things and what we do is needed. We are asking the Section of Americas, through the QYP Program Group, to consider what will be the best form for QYP in the future.

QYP is grateful for all of the volunteer energy that has been offered to date in the planning of the 2010 experience. Former pilgrims and excited members of Meetings and Churches have stepped forward to help make the upcoming pilgrimage possible. This “ownership” of the QYP experience is essential to its future.

Bill Schoder-Ehri, Clerk

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### **Wider Quaker Fellowship Program Group**

Our big news is that the Section office has obtained a grant of \$15,000 to set up our proposed new Voices of Friends website, which will replace the existing WQF site, and which we hope will be a “welcome mat” for seekers to encounter the Religious Society of Friends. We are in the process of writing the text, which is to be addressed to people who know little or nothing about Friends. We want it to offer a global vision and provide pertinent links.

We have had three mailings this year. The summer one consisted of two talks that were given to yearly meetings: “Learning to Go in Peace”, by Colin Saxton, and “Be prepared to give reasons for the hope that is within you”, by Peggy Senger Parsons. The December mailing was made up of Richard Holden’s “Bringing Business into the Light”, reprinted from *The Earlhamite*, and Katherine Coon’s “Workplace as Spiritual Classroom”, reprinted from “What Canst Thou Say?” This mailing was accompanied by the Motto calendar and appeal letter, which were mailed separately to Friends

who get the publications on line. The mailing in Spanish featured, under the title of “Writing as Ministry”, two products of the ministry of writing workshops for Latin American Friends sponsored by FWCC’s Committee of Latin American Friends and Earlham College. These were written by Friends from Honduras and Guatemala. Also part of this mailing were two contributions from this year’s annual meeting: Jan Wood’s “A Vision for the Appointed Time,” and Cuban Friend Jorge Luis Peña Reyes’ “The Invisible Vision of God.”

We had a productive face to face session at the annual meeting. Progress has been made with the archive/catalog of WQF publications, thanks to Jeff Keith, a dedicated volunteer.

We are aware that a program group is encouraged to use a minimum of staff support time, and while we attempt to do this, we do need (and value) the help of our skilled staff members.

Judith Inskeep, clerk

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### **Lower Great Lakes Region**

Our main activity in 2009 was a very successful Fall Gathering, co-sponsored with the Mid-West Region and hosted by Ann Arbor, Michigan Friends in their beautiful meeting house near the end of October. The theme, "In the Manner of Friends: Living my Faith Today" was chosen by the keynote speaker, Patricia Thomas (Wilmington YM), and provided material for fruitful sharing and discussion Friday evening on how the Spirit is working through our meeting communities, and then on Saturday morning on a more personal level.

Patricia’s keynote talk on Saturday was followed by contributions from a panel of 3 Friends from Nairobi, Indiana and Lake Erie YMs. Patricia spoke of particularly Quakerly characteristics of living our Faith. Elizabeth Muganzi, a Nairobi Friend who is sojourning with Ann Arbor Friends told of the Ngong Road Friends community gathering together to build a 3,500-seat meetinghouse; then gave an impassioned plea for Western Friends to become more involved in Kenyan Quaker development. John Lawson-Myers (Indiana YM) told of his work as a student in the Wilmington College Quaker Leadership Program; and Bob Fisher (Ann Arbor) told of the spiritual ground for faithful work. Friends then broke into worship-sharing groups to tell their own stories of living faith.

Following lunch on Saturday, several Friends enjoyed a walking tour of the University of Michigan Central Campus to see some rare treasures (a papyrus letter of Paul, a letter of Galileo, etc.), and then a show of photography and impressionism at the U of M Art Museum

The place of Joy and Creativity in our spiritual lives was explored on Saturday afternoon with workshops on Singing, Folk Dance, Writing and Art, first by experience and then by worship-sharing in small groups. This merged into a time of quiet conversation and rest, followed by a programmed meeting for worship in which Patricia led us in consideration of Integrity. We sang three hymns on the theme and Steve Deasy (Ann Arbor) sang an original song, "Let me make Peace", which Friends felt opened them to the workings of the Spirit. At the close of this worship session, Mike Hinshaw, Elizabeth Mertic and Thomas Taylor gave brief talks about the purposes and programs of FWCC.

The Saturday evening program consisted of 3 choices. A film and discussion on Earthcare were led by Jim Crowfoot (Ann Arbor). A sharing about Service work to individuals with a variety of needs (in the meeting community, with the mentally ill, in inner city Detroit and through the AFSC Michigan Area Office program in aid to prisoners) was led by Cassie Cammann, AA Monthly meeting clerk. The third choice, Peace work, was a general discussion on how each Friend was led to this work and ways of staying connected to the meeting community.

We had an attendance of 71 Friends from nine Yearly Meetings. Comments of the participants were favorable, especially with regard to the music. A list of nearby meetings was made available and many Friends were able to worship in other nearby meetings on Sunday morning.

Thomas Taylor, Program & Local Arrangements with edits by Mike Hinshaw, Clerk LGL Region

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### **Midwest Region**

Following the suggestion for a joint regional meeting with Lower Great Lakes, discussion happened with all the reps from each region attending Annual Meeting. The joint Gathering did happen in Ann Arbor, Michigan in October. Please refer to the Lower Great Lakes region report to learn about this event. There was really good attendance, and the presentation of and about FWCC was well received.

However, attendance of Friends from the Midwest Region was disappointing. There were ten, I believe. It was quite a distance for many, and there were schedule conflicts as well. The brochure for advance publicity was quite good.

The reps from both regions will need to meet together at the 2010 Annual Meeting to evaluate and consider our future planning. We look forward to continuing presenting FWCC as opportunities arise.

Vaughn Peebles, Clerk

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### **Northeast Region**

Two cultures and two languages characterized the Northeast Regional Gathering May 15-17 at Deer Park Camp near New Hope, PA. The Gathering was jointly planned and sponsored by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and the two Hispanic churches in Philadelphia. Language interpretation was provided for all facets of the program. About 60 people attended, including children, and there was valuable interchange. Adding to our diversity was the presence of two members of Ohio Yearly Meeting (Conservative).

Our theme was “Peace within Us, Peace with God, Peace with Our Neighbor;” plenary speakers were Mary Lord of Baltimore Yearly Meeting and César Nufio, a pastor from the National Friends Church of Guatemala. There were also small groups for discussing the plenary talks, lots of singing

in both languages, and worship in both traditions. It was discovered that our Section office staff, in addition to their many other abilities, are wonderfully experienced at catering and dishwasher-running.

The 2010 Regional Gathering will be May 21-24 at the University of New Brunswick in Canada.

At the annual meeting representatives of the Region met. Visa restrictions for Quaker representatives from foreign countries were a topic of concern to those present. Our ideas were to find out whether FCNL, New England YM's Puente de Amigos, and/or other faith communities have an interest in the matter; how to get comments into the Public Comment period if President Obama suggests changes to our present visa regulations; and conferring with the Section office about writing a letter to public officials to support a general change or the granting of visas to specific Friends representatives..

Judith Inskeep, Clerk

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### **Northwest Region**

The Northwest Region was pleased to host Annual Meeting in 2009. We were able to have good participation from all branches of Friends in the Northwest. We are aware that this broad of participation would not have been possible ten years ago. Thanks to the NW Quaker Women's Conferences and FWCC there are many in the NW who will come together from Evangelical and unprogrammed Friends.

We endeavor to have a regional gathering every other year. Annual Meeting took the place of our regional gathering for 2009. We will begin planning our 2011 Regional Gathering at Annual Meeting this year.

Anna Baker, Clerk

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### **Southeast Region**

Representatives from the Southeast Region met at the FWCC Section of the Americas (SoA) annual meeting in Canby, OR, last March. There were two significant outcomes of that meeting.

First, we decided to pursue the idea of creating a fund to assist Jamaican Friends in attending FWCC events, including SE regional gatherings. Our proposal was sent to the SoA finance committee on March 24 for review before going to the Executive Committee. North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative) has agreed to host the fund.

Second, we decided not to hold a regional gathering in 2009. According to our rotation scheme, Baltimore Yearly Meeting would have been the host, but representatives from BYM foresaw that they would be occupied with planning the SoA annual meeting for 2010 and could not also plan a regional gathering. The current plan is to hold a regional gathering in fall of 2010 within SAYMA. West Knoxville Friends Meeting has agreed to provide the facilities for this. We are hoping that Friends from all over the SE region will attend, as well as Friends from the churches in Wilmington

Yearly Meeting that are located in east Tennessee. Further planning will take place at the SoA annual meeting in March.

Tim Lamm, Clerk

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### **Southwest Region**

The fifteen of us who gathered in March 2009 acknowledged that our region had not been active aside from the annual gatherings, though we much appreciated the communication work carried on by Nancy McLauchlan as Western Field staff. The large distances make face-to-face gatherings difficult for our region, but we resolved to work individually within our own communities to seek out and make contact with Friends communities we do not normally interact with. This would mean crossing the local boundaries that yearly meeting affiliation constructs, exploring our larger Friends community “in the neighborhood.” We hope in doing so to identify some common areas of concern and work that might draw us together. We planned to be in touch with one another electronically, and to gather to discuss what progress we have made, at the annual meeting in March 2010.

Jim Anderson, clerk

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*Friends Committee on Scouting*  
*Affiliated with Friends World Committee for Consultation*  
*Section of the Americas*

### **REPORT TO FWCC ANNUAL MEETING 2010**

The Friends Committee on Scouting held its annual meeting electronically this past year by using the system called “Skype.” There were a few glitches, but it worked well enough that we intend to use it whenever we have a major issue we need to discuss or for our annual meeting when we don’t meet when FWCC holds its annual meeting. It was generally agreed that we would meet face to face at the FWCC annual meeting approximately every other year depending upon where that meeting is being held.

We were dismayed to learn that a federal law “Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act” has been passed requiring that all children’s jewelry be tested for compliance against strict standards. P.R.A.Y., the group which handles all the various religious awards for scouting groups, has asked us to have our medals tested. This is an expensive process and we haven’t decided on the best path forward. We have been exploring various options, but it’s not an easy decision. That is the biggest hurdle we will be facing this year. The other religious groups don’t have the problem we do because they have large numbers of youth earning their awards so that they can absorb the testing cost with a high volume of sales. There simply are not that many Quaker scouts on the books. so the cost per medal for the testing is higher for us since we don’t have a high volume of medal sales. We’d like

for that to change, but so far there has been no large increase in the numbers of youth interested in earning the awards.

Other issues which are always on our plate: searching for new members, figuring out how to do big things with little money, how to be more supportive of Quaker youth who are involved with scouts and the ever-present challenge of communicating our mission with the larger Quaker world. Our outreach depends mostly on word of mouth to let people know about our awards because advertising is too costly. We hope that any Friends reading this will send a Quaker adult in our direction if it is learned that that Quaker is involved with scouting.

Several of our members will be going to the upcoming Boy Scout Jamboree as Quaker presences and one member has been designated as a Quaker chaplain. At the last Jamboree, a Friends Meeting/Service was held, attracting a large number of boys. Our display will be erected in the religious relationships area and there are plans afoot to have it attended at all times by one of us so that any questions viewers might have could be answered on the spot.

Betsy Wenny, Clerk  
Friends Committee on Scouting

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### **Quaker United Nations Committee—New York**

I continue to be challenged and rewarded by serving on the Quaker United Nations Committee (QUNC). After four years of service on the committee, I realize how much I have learned about Quaker work with the UN and related international groups. I have also learned more about how to be a part of an advisory committee that can give helpful input, but cannot manage the day-to-day work of the staff.

It was sobering to approach the last meetings in October, knowing something about the severity of the spending cuts that the leaders of the American Friends Service Committee had to make in response to dramatically lower revenues. QUNO-New York does little direct fund raising and inevitably is affected when giving to the parent group, AFSC, is down. Members of our committee were relieved to learn that cuts in QUNO programs for the coming year were going to be relatively modest. Yet we knew that the unpaid leaves that QUNO staff members were not easy for them and for the work of QUNO. So we look forward to the day when support levels have recovered.

My recent reports have invariably talked about QUNO staff changes and in our last meeting we could readily see the benefits of greater continuity and seasoning among QUNO staff members. We are delighted to be able to affirm the excellent work of the staff and the program assistants (who each serve for one year) and to note how well their efforts complement one another.

On a personal note, I recently had the opportunity to experience the effectiveness of our QUNO staff in working with their contacts “in the field” to inform their daily work in addressing global issues. I had just returned from visits to Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in my ongoing role in helping with leadership training in the three Friends yearly meetings there. Veteran staff member Sarah Clarke and Francesca Riddy-O’Dowd (a veteran in UN work, but relatively new on the QUNO staff) joined in a telephone discussion about some of the ways they

could work more effectively with the Quaker leaders there in assessing problems and opportunities in the region. Particularly in Congo I had learned about clashes among the various armed factions in South Kivu province and then learned from Sarah and Francesca that there are pressing concerns in assessing the role of the world's largest UN peacekeeping operation. As is often the case, the question is whether that operation is really keeping peace or contributing to ongoing conflict.

Finally, my main disappointment in representing the Section of the Americas on this committee is the difficulty I have in knowing how to speak for Friends in this huge section. Fortunately, Margaret Frasier meets regularly with QUNC, as does Nancy Irving and among the three of us we hope we can at least reflect some of the concerns of Friends in the Americas. We would be pleased to hear from Friends who have suggestions regarding QUNO's work.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve on this committee. Please be thinking about bringing forward names for consideration as my term on the committee in 2011.

Lon Fendall

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### Quaker United Nations Office – Geneva

**The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)** in Geneva works along with its sister office in New York to represent Friends and carry forward Quaker concerns at the United Nations. Like the QUNO New York office, QUNO Geneva has consultative status at the UN through FWCC. It is historically connected to and continues to be supported financially and administratively by Britain Yearly Meeting.

**The Quaker UN Committee (QUNC)** for QUNO Geneva is comprised of 10 representatives drawn from Britain Yearly Meeting and FWCC. FWCC's five representatives include one from each of the four FWCC sections, plus Nancy Irving from the world office. Bridget Moix of Baltimore Yearly Meeting currently serves as the Section of the Americas representative and prepared this report.

**QUNO Geneva works in three program** areas relevant to the UN bodies located in Geneva: 1) Disarmament and Peace (D&P), 2) Human Rights and Refugees (HR&R), and 3) Global Economic Issues (GEI).

In 2009, the **Disarmament and Peace** program, led by David Atwood, continued its work to address the scourge of weapons of all sizes, from small arms to nuclear weapons. QUNO Geneva is helping pioneer an initiative called the Geneva Declaration that seeks to increase attention to the links between armed violence and development. The two QUNO offices have been working together to support and strengthen the UN's new Peacebuilding Commission, and are collaborating with other Quaker work in Burundi where the Peacebuilding Commission has been active.

QUNO Geneva's **Human Rights and Refugees** program, led by Rachel Brett, offered significant expertise and direct input to UN bodies and processes on the issues of women in prison, children of prisoners, conscientious objection, and the rights of the child in the context of migration. The HR&R program is now beginning new work in 2010 on the mental health of children of prisoners. The HR&R program also collaborated with QUNO's Global Economic Issues program to hold

events on the right to food, displacement and climate change, and government responses to irregular migration.

In 2009, QUNO Geneva hired a new staff person, Caroline Dommen, to take over the **Global Economic Issues** program and consider new directions for it. Work continues to identify QUNO Geneva's unique niche for this program in the future, with particular attention to addressing environmental linkages as well. Food security may be one area of focus.

QUNO Geneva continued its annual **Summer School**, which brings young people to Geneva to learn about the UN and its work. Much needed electrical work on **Quaker House** was also completed this year. Finally, QUNC Geneva has begun an exciting strategic visioning process in preparation for the **transition to a new director in 2011** when David Atwood will retire.

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