

Let the Living Water Flow!

MAY 2013 - APRIL 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The Friends World Committee is the association of Quaker yearly meetings across all the branches of Friends, around the world. Yearly meetings from Alaska to Bolivia affiliate through the Section of the Americas, and name their own representatives to the Section. The Section offices are located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. More information on all our work is available at www.fwccamericas.org.

Living Water Consultations

<http://fwccamericas.org/events/2014-Consultations.shtml>

“Let the Living Water Flow!” was the theme for our 2014 series of regional conferences for representatives and other interested Friends. All four conferences offered workshops in skills needed for thriving Quaker meetings in the 21st century. Over 400 Friends from over 40 yearly meetings participated in the four conferences in El Salvador, California, Bolivia, and North Carolina. One participant commented on the “unanticipated ways people can find their way to unity with each other across seemingly irreconcilable differences in theology and ‘conviction’. In some ways we accomplished this in spite of ourselves. This is wonderfully encouraging.” The new Living Water Study Book in English and Spanish is available online as a free download.

Workshops on *Intercultural Communications* explored the challenges when each party brings a different background to the conversation. They considered the significance of the Incarnation, conflict mediation tools, and the art of listening across social, ethnic or linguistic boundaries. They built practical skills for bilingual communication, grounded in self-awareness - a manner of listening and speaking that nourishes that of God in all of us.

Workshops on *Conflict Transformation* were led by members of the New York Yearly Meeting Committee on Conflict Transformation. Given that many monthly meetings are troubled by tensions among members, these workshops explored commonly-arising incidents and shared insights into how they can be acknowledged, how they can be addressed, and how the Meeting can use conflict as an opportunity for growth.

Two North American workshops on *Quaker Leadership for the 21st Century* were led by students in Quaker leadership programs at Guilford College and George Fox University. In Central and South America, Esteban Ajnota of INELA Bolivia led workshops on Quaker leadership and bi-vocational ministry, where Friends considered how our Quaker history informs our faith and practice today.

In North Carolina, Friends reviewed the 2012 Kabarak Call for Peace and Eco-Justice from the 6th World Conference of Friends and then learned about the efforts of the Friends Emergency Material Assistance Program (FEMAP) and how it helps in emergencies and issues relating to long term deprivation. They assembled hygiene, infant care and school supply kits while exploring how to join with North Carolina Friends Disaster Service or how to replicate FEMAP at home. In California, participants learned about Sacramento Friends Church's ministry of foot washing with the homeless and practiced foot washing with one another. They reflected on attitudes about giving and receiving such a personal service, a reminder of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. In Bolivia, Friends considered how the Kabarak Call connects to a Christian concern for the Earth.

Quaker Youth Pilgrimage

<http://fwccamericas.org/QYP-Andes.shtml>

In July and August 2014, 26 teens from the US, Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, and Hungary will travel through Peru and Bolivia in the traditional month-long spiritual and historical exploration. Five years ago young adult Friends in Bolivia and Peru invited the Quaker Youth Pilgrimage to come to South America for the first time. The QYP planning committee, composed of Friends older and younger, North and South American, pastoral, liberal, and evangelical, has been meeting by Skype biweekly for the last year, working bilingually in Spanish and English. Taking such a diverse group of Pilgrims and Leaders to the Andes, well beyond the traditional boundaries of the Pilgrimage, is a vivid example of how the Friends World Committee brings together the whole world of Friends.

Wider Quaker Fellowship/Voices of Friends

<http://www.voicesoffriends.org>

The website and pamphlet series are both a service to seekers and a resource for individual reading and group discussions for Friends meetings. www.fwccdirectory.org also offers a comprehensive directory of Quaker meetings and churches in North America for seekers and traveling Friends.

Staff Changes

Perhaps the most visible change in the Section of the Americas was the resignation of Louise Salinas, Associate Secretary, after 12 years of dedicated service. We miss her and wish her well in her new job. As a volunteer, she is still Assistant Clerk of the International Planning Committee for the 2016 FWCC International Representatives Meeting in Arequipa, Peru.

Future Planning

As part of a strategic planning process, the Section of the Americas staff and volunteers are asking, "What does the Religious Society of Friends need from a world committee?" Representatives have begun asking this important question and more input is welcome. New program directions will be presented this fall for approval by the Section Meeting of Representatives in March 2015 near Mexico City. All Friends are welcome to attend.

Officers of the Section of the Americas for 2013-2014

Clerk: Jane Snyder, *North Pacific YM*

Assistant Clerk: Kenya Casanova Sales, *Cuba YM*

Recording Clerk: James Anderson, *Pacific YM*

Treasurer: Gayle Matson, *North Pacific YM*

Clerks of Committees, Program Groups, Working Groups and Resource Groups

Executive Committee: Jane Snyder, *North Pacific YM*

Finance Committee: Lucy Fullerton, *North Pacific YM*

Nominating Committee: Cheryl Speir-Phillips, *Intermountain YM*

Naming Committee: Cynthia Ganung, *New England YM*

Quaker Youth Pilgrimage: Benigno Sanchez-Eppler, *New England YM*, Bill Schoder-Ehri, *Intermountain YM*

Section Meeting Planning: Roena Oesting, *Pacific YM*

Wider Quaker Fellowship: Barbara Gosney, *North Carolina YM (Conservative)*

Living Water Consultations Working Group: Dorothy Grannell, *New England YM*;

Karen Gregorio de Calderon, *Holiness Friends YM (Guatemala)*; Daniel Limachi, *INELA Bolivia*

Travel in the Ministry Scholarships Resource Group: Ray Treadway, *North Carolina YM (Conservative)*

Financial Report	
Total ordinary income:	\$415,943
Total expense:	\$447,520
Other income:	\$ 81,455
Net income:	\$ 49,878

