

Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Report Yearly Business Meeting 2017

Overview

This is a snapshot of the activities I've undertaken as the SEYM Field Secretary from 1 Tenth Month 2016 through 28 Second Month 2017. It also includes a number of planned activities. There have been a number of events that have moved what I felt to be urgent, our care for the Earth, to the immediate. I continue to be encouraged by the many collaborative activities, coalitions, and other actions taking place around the State, the country, and globally, including the support I have received from this Yearly Meeting. Individual Friends have reached out sharing their thoughts, photos, and other support. Your suggestions, thoughts, concerns, and support are always welcome.

Communication with the FSE Anchoring Committee

Communication with the Anchoring Committee has included email contact, efforts to schedule a telephone conference call, and individual contacts with Bill Carlie and Nancy Triscritti. Nancy Triscritti is the clerk for the committee. Support from other Friends has been provided in scheduling Monthly Meeting visits, information sharing, and otherwise holding the work in the Light.

Developing a Schedule for Meeting with Monthly Meetings (MMs), Worship Groups (WGs), and Others

The suggested visitation request process: "Meetings can issue invitations to the [SEYM] administrative secretary, FSE, or the Anchor Committee. We will all conference over the invitation and subsequent planning" (P. Andersen, 3 Tenth Month).

A Google calendar showing requests for visitation and FSE has been created and shared with the Anchoring Committee and the Co-Clerks of the Earthcare Committee. Upcoming visits are shown below. Several members of MMs and WGs have expressed interest in visits. To aid in scheduling, I will follow up with the MM/WG clerks and clerks of Peace and Social Concerns Committees of the MMs and WGs suggesting possible dates.

Half Yearly Meeting, 2016

I attended and participated Half Yearly Meeting, including a giving a talk on my vision as FSE and an excerpt from the SEYM vulnerability and risk white paper I am developing. This excerpt focused on the Sabal Trail Transmission pipeline, which is currently under construction. I also participated in the No-Talent Show with the Faith and No Practice Chorus.

Miami Monthly Meeting, Firstday, 4 Twelfth Month 2016

The first Monthly Meeting visit took place with Miami Monthly Meeting. This included visiting with Friends and a baby shower for Efe Yeboah and Luca Marazzi. The discussion

included water issues, Standing Rock, Sabal Trail/Florida Southeast Connection pipelines and other current issues. Miami Friends found me to be "...a hugger of trees, people, and [an embracer of] all of that spiritual leading that carries the heart through rough times."

Unitarian-Universalists of Clearwater Open Issues Forum, Scheduled 11 Twelfth Month 2016

This event was attended by a group of more than 40 church and community members. The talk included a slide presentation on vulnerable populations and the potential impacts anthropogenic and/or climate hazards in Pinellas County. Requests to follow up with additional discussions have been received.

Miami Monthly Meeting, Firstday, 4 Twelfth Month 2016

As I recounted in an oral report at WIBM, Miami MM hosted the first FSE visit. Carl and Kathy Hersh provided hospitality, which included a baby shower for Efe Yeboah and Luca Marazzi. Miami MM began a series of Firstday Meetings for Learning in early 2016 focusing on Earthcare and climate change. During this meeting, I introduced myself and shared my vision for the FSE position and work with other groups both faith and secular. We discussed the many facets of water issues in Florida, Standing Rock and the Dakota Access pipeline, Sabal Trail and Florida Southeast Connection pipeline. Brad Stocker, SEYM Earthcare Committee Co-Clerk provided anchor support. The visit also included Meeting for Worship and, of course, a wonderful potluck!

Unitarian-Universalists (UUs) of Clearwater Open Issues Forum, 11 Twelfth Month 2016

The UUs Clearwater Open Issues Forum was attended by more than 40 participants, which included members of the congregation and the public. The visit included a slideshow on the potential impacts of climate change and anthropogenic projects on vulnerable population groups followed by a question and answer session. The forum organizers have requested that a return visit within six-to-12 months.

Clearwater Monthly Meeting, 29 First Month 2017

The visit to Clearwater MM included Meeting for Worship and a talk where I combined information shared at Miami MM and the Open Issues Forum, without the slideshow. During the discussion, Friends expressed concerns regarding where to place their efforts, e.g. direct actions, lobbying, specific issues, etc. Mike Flanery, SEYM Earthcare Committee member, provided anchor support and helped participants understand the FSE role. I shared information on the work of Friends Committee on Legislation, Quaker Earthcare Witness, and local groups, such as the Tampa Bay Sierra Club. We ended with working to identify other opportunities to continue this work and, as mentioned in elsewhere, another wonderful potluck!

Gainesville Friends Meeting, Scheduled 5 Second Month 2017

Gainesville Friends coordinated to have a shared presentation with Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson, Florida Sierra Club Organizer. We were joined by a Water Protector, Laurie Sans, who has been working with the sites seeking to protect communities from the potential impacts of the Sabal Trail Transmission and Florida Southeast Connection pipelines that may impact 15 counties in Florida.

Orlando Friends Meeting, Scheduled 26 Second Month 2017

This visit originally was planned to coincide with the Third Annual Florida Interfaith Climate Action Network (FL-ICAN) Assembly, which was postponed until 28-29 Fourth Month 2017. Orlando Friends worked with me to keep the original commitment. For more than an hour, we discussed a number of environmental issues including the natural gas pipelines, water quality, air quality, and Friends testimonies.

Tampa Monthly Meeting, Scheduled 19 Third Month 2017

I plan to lead an Adult First Dayschool on "Earthcare and Friends Testimonies."

Sarasota Monthly Meeting, Scheduled 26 Third Month 2017

Building on Earthcare work underway in Sarasota MM, I will continue the discussion with Friends to help discern individual and Meeting activities to further Earthcare.

Yearly Meeting Planning

I have proposed a workshop based on the Pendle Hill Powerful Faith-Based Organizing for Climate Justice conference convened Spring 2016 and will share information collected to date by the SEYM Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) regarding vulnerable populations and climate change risks in the SEYM counties or county equivalents. The workshop will explore opportunities for collaboration with faith-based and other organizations; strategies to minimize adverse impacts; and, potential actions toward transition. Workshop participants are encouraged to bring local Earthcare concerns.

I will table at YM providing information from Quaker Earthcare Witness and coordinate with Peterson Toscano

Contact Information

- The SEYM Administrative Secretary established an email account: fsEarthcare@seymquaker.org.
- A free conference calling number has been established, 1-712-770-8055. The conference code is 662814.
- I Skype as phdant.
- I Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/7545638812>.
- My telephone number is 813.928.8823.
- Snailmail: 13705 Lazy Oak Drive, Tampa, FL, 33613.4923.

Interactions or Collaborations between and among other SEYM committees

- The Ministry on Racism: met with committee members during WIBM;
- Earthcare: meet with committee members during WIBM and continue to maintain telephone and email contact with the co-clerks and other committee members;
- FCC: continue to work with the Board (See also Florida Interfaith Climate Action Network below);
- Peace and Social Concerns: participated in the SEYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee retreat prior to WIBM;
- ProNica: no report to date;
- Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW): working with Jack Braden on the United Nations Working Group (UNWG) on the International Decade for People of African Descent. (More details below.);
- Quaker United Nations Office: working with Warren Hoskins to build links.
- Right Sharing of World Resources: working with Nilufer Wilkins to build links, including QEW UNWG;
- Youth Committee: working to develop activities at Yearly Meeting Gathering.

The Wider Quaker World, Interfaith Groups, Other Environmental Organizations

In the wider Quaker World, interfaith groups, and other environmental organizations, I have listed existing memberships, partnerships, or collaborations that may be part of an outreach effort. These include, but are not limited to:

- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Tampa Bay: The planning for a Gainesville workshop has been postponed. Will participate in Basic workshop in Jacksonville, 3 through 5 Third Month 2017;
- The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI): No report to date;
- The Bridge of Tampa: Panelist in a community exploration, "The Heart of Activism", 28 First Month 2017. More than 60 local activists attended the event. Tampa MM was a co-sponsor;
- Clark Atlanta University, Department of Political Science: teamed faculty and others on an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Small grant, see below;
- The Fellowship of Friends of African Descent: No report to date;
- Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), Center for Environmental Equity and Justice (CEEJ): No report to date;
- Florida Climate Institute: No report to date;
- Florida Interfaith Climate Action Network (FL-ICAN): continue to work with the 2017 Assembly Design Team. Working to populate the online platform, Qiqochat, <http://seymquakers.qiqochat.com/> as another communications and information-sharing resource;
- Friends Committee on National Legislation, Energy and Environment: continue email and other contacts with several FCNL staff. Visited the FCNL office 10 First Month 2017 and spent more than three hours with several FCNL staff members discussing the FSE position and ways to collaborate;
- Friends General Conference: working with Gerry O'Sullivan;
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT): Face-to-face and email contact with members of FPT. Working to link FPT to QEW UN Working Group, see below;
- Friends United Meeting: No report to date. Will seek to link FUM to QEW UN Working Group;
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC): No report to date. Will seek to link FWCC to QEW UN Working Group;
- The Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (ICAR): Working with ICAR through the Florida Council of Churches;
- Living Mirror Playback Theatre, Tampa: working to develop Bystander Training to offer to local groups;
- National Academies of Sciences, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Environmental Justice Issues in Transportation (The FSE is the Research Coordinator for this committee.): Provided a presentation on the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) and environmental justice issues at the annual meeting of the committee. This presentation will be the basis for a "blog" during 2017;
- Organize NOW/F.I.R.E., Climate Justice Committee: Continue to assist the committee in planning climate justice survey;
- The Pachamama Alliance: meet with several local members of the Alliance on 28 First Month;
- People Against D.O.T. Discrimination (P.A.D.D.), Tampa: continue to work with group on identifying potentially adverse impacts and finding ways to avoid, mitigate, or minimize the same. P.A.D.D. members submitted an application to EPA through the Tampa Heights Junior

- Civic Association for small grant funding to train community members for outreach, education and environmental data collection. I am included in the grant as a trainer;
- QEW United Nations Working Group (UNWG) member – International Decade for People of African Descent: Continue to assist in planning for 2017 activities, including bi-monthly telephone conference calls. Linking the Working Group with wider Quaker Community and other groups. Added to the QEW Steering Committee as a Member-at-Large and plan to participate in the 20-23 Fourth Month 2017 meeting;
 - Sierra Club, Tampa Bay: Remain in contact via email, snailmail, etc. Added to the Sierra Club Speakers' Bureau. Made a presentation at Hillsborough County Community College, Undergraduate Science Seminar, 31 First Month 2017. Dustin Lemke provided anchor support;
 - Society for Applied Anthropology, Risk and Disasters Topical Interest Group (TIG): No report to date. Seeking to link TIG to QEW UN Working Group;
 - Sunshine Citizens, Tampa: part of the outreach effort with P.A.D.D.;
 - Sunshine State Interfaith Power and Light: working with this group through FL-CAN;
 - University of South Florida, Institute on Black Life (IBL), Advisory Committee: Continue to participate in activities for 30th Anniversary, 9 Second Month 2017. Abstract submitted on food sovereignty and people of African Descent in Florida. The paper will build on the framework proposed by QEW UNWG regarding the 2017 focus for UN activities.
 - University of South Florida, Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS): The proposed lecture "Urban Displacement in Major Public Works Projects", has been rescheduled for 6 Fourth Month 2017. Continue to have contact with PCGS staff.

Social Media

I blog, fsEarthcare Processing, on the SEYM website, see <http://seymquakers.org/faith-in-action/field-secretary-for-earthcare/>. Currently, the page contains the blog, the job description, and other links. I am in contact with the secretary on how best to populate this page, e.g., calendars, social media, etc. I tweet @fsesecretary; FB, <fb.me/FsEarthcare>. These links are included the signature of my emails.

Qiqochat

The Qiqochat subcircle for SEYM can be found at <http://seymquakers.qiqochat.com/>. In addition to a communication platform, this site also can be a repository of documents, e.g., white papers, presentations, etc. I am in the process of populating the circle.

Other Issues

I will have the white paper on vulnerable populations and the potential impacts of climate change for the counties and other areas of the Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups, etc., of SEYM, including Managua and Havana, where data is available at YM. The focus has been intensified with consideration of the impacts of the Sabal Trail Pipeline Transmission. In addition to the Sabal Trail Pipeline, the potential impacts of the Florida Southeast Connection Pipeline, <http://www.floridasoutheastconnection.com/>, has been added.

Ongoing contact regarding the pipelines and related concerns has been maintained with Peter Ackerman, Lake Worth Monthly Meeting, Panagioti Tsolkas who co-led sessions at the 2016 Yearly Meeting, and others. Both Pete and Panagioti have been actively in actions regarding the Sabal Trail Pipeline.

Summary

Thank you for prayers, thoughts, and other support. The activities over the past five months have included outreach and visits to several MMs and others. A synergy is developing that generates opportunities to carry out the work effort. During this period, some members of the Anchoring Committee expressed concerns regarding the level of support. I shared, then, and repeat, I feel well anchored! The work that has taken place could not have been possible with the care and support of the FSE-AC and other Friends along the way. Thank you and continue to hold us in the Light! Please, please continue to share your ideas, concerns, contacts, etc. But, most of all, continue to hold me in the Light!

Beverly Ward