

Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Report Fifth Month 2018

Overview

Provide focus and coordinate efforts on environmental work in the Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) region.

This report summarizes activities since the Documents in Advance for the 2018 Yearly Meeting through Fourth Month 2018. It includes work with the wider Quaker world; faith-based, local, and other environmental groups; and, individuals.

Communication with the Anchoring Committee

Regular communication with the Anchoring Committee has included email contact, face-to-face meetings, and other contacts with committee members. Numerous face-to-face and other contacts have been made in planning for the Yearly Meeting, Alternatives to Violence Project, Monthly Meeting retreats, work on projects with the wider Quaker world, e.g., Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts (FQA), Friends General Conference (FCG) 2018 Gathering, etc.

Meeting with Monthly Meetings (MMs), Worship Groups (WGs), and Others

Perform visits to Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups within SEYM to help them discern their leadings in care of the Earth, and to provide information and coordination among Meetings.

As a reminder, 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" (Phoebe Andersen, 3 Tenth Month 2016).

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.
- Skype: phdant.
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/7545638812>.
- appear.in: <https://appear.in/fsearthcare>.
- Telephone number: 813.928.8823.
- Snailmail: 13705 Lazy Oak Drive, Tampa, FL, 33613.4923.

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. All prior and upcoming visits are shown below. MMs and WGs continue to request visits, particularly in conjunction with retreats and AVP workshops.

Palm Beach Monthly Meeting, 16-18 Second Month 2018

Friends gathered to reflect on the query, "Unity with Nature: How am I Called to Care for the Earth?" Many thanks to Barb Letsch, Sandra Heys, Ellie Caldwell and the Meeting for hospitality and work to make the retreat happen. The retreat was facilitated somewhat like a workshop with the sharing of skills of listening, discernment, and worship sharing. We reflected on the Draft SEYM Statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection, The Eleventh Month SEYM Queries and Advices: Care of the Natural World, and other information from the wider Quaker world. Palm Beach Friends will continue to work on individual and Meeting actions in their care for the Earth.

Tallahassee Monthly Meeting, 23-24 Second Month 2018

The Meeting read the QEW pamphlets, *Contemplative Action in a Time of Climate Change*, and *Water is Life*. On the first night of the retreat, we watched the film, *The Wisdom to Survive*. *Friends Journal* described the film as "

...a short, visually beautiful, and philosophically warm and uplifting movie. Yes, on the topic of global warming, this movie touches the place where, as the poet Emily Dickinson said, 'I dwell in possibility.' And in possibility, this movie gives excellent company.

We also reflected on the Draft SEYM Statement on Climate Change and Environmental Protection, The Eleventh Month SEYM Queries and Advices: Care of the Natural World, and other information from the wider Quaker world.

St. Petersburg Monthly Meeting, 19 Fifth Month 2018

I will facilitate a discussion on "Sea Level Rise in the Time of Climate Change" at the Meetinghouse. We will view two short films, "*Major Sea Level Rise in Near Future*", a TED talk by Jason Briner, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7sEhuSbQo8>; and "Life in a Sea-Level Hotspot" a newscast of interviews with local Miami residents, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ne41XSZKTuA>.

One of my goals in sharing common materials with the Monthly Meetings is to listen for emerging themes, concerns, and possible actions within the Yearly Meeting. I am synthesizing this information and sharing what emerges in various formats.

Interactions or Collaborations between and among other SEYM committees

These interactions between and among SEYM committees help to facilitate communication and collaboration of our regional concerns with national organizations and to be a Quaker Presence at specific events.

- The Ministry on Racism: During the 2018 SEYM Gathering, I was added to the Ministry of Racism Committee. I hope to facilitate meetings of the committee using Zoom, the online video application;
- Earthcare: I continue maintain telephone and email contact with the co-clerks and other committee members and participated in the Committee meeting during this

year's annual gathering. This includes continued work with Jack Braden and Brad Stocker, SEYM's representatives to Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW). (More details are provided below.);

- Florida Council of Churches (FCC): I attended a meeting of the Councils Board of Directors on 19 Third Month in Gainesville. In addition to convening the fourth assembly of the Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network, see below, FCC will have a second gathering during Eleventh Month this year;
- Peace and Social Concerns: I continue to remain in contact with members of SEYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee. Cecilia Yocum and I provided two sessions on Bystander Training during the 2018 SEYM Yearly Meeting Gathering. About 10 youths and Youth Workers attended one session. Approximately 20 more seasoned Friends attended the second session. In addition to discussions on verbal attacks, everyday bigotry, and unintentional obliviousness to biases, Friends participated in role-plays and explored ways to be allies to persons being attacked.
- Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO): In addition to working with Warren Hoskins to build links, I also am working with QUNO through QEW and the American Friends Service Committee;
- Right Sharing of World Resources: I continue to share information with Nilufer Wilkins to build links, including QEW United Nations Working Group, particularly the Earthcare Coalition (See below.).
- Youth Committee: I worked with the Youth during the annual gathering to assemble about 60 "pocket guides." I also plan to apply for a mini-grant from QEW to print more guides and share with other Yearly Meetings through QEW. I continue to share resources and information with individual Meetings, such as *Earthcare for Children*, <https://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/earthcare-children>.

The Wider Quaker World, Interfaith Groups, Other Environmental Organizations

To communicate and collaborate our regional concerns with national organizations including Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW), Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT), Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), and Friends General Conference (FGC). To be a Quaker Presence at specific events, including those arranged by others.

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

- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), I participated in the volunteers' luncheon at Coleman Federal Correctional Center on 26 Fourth Month. Planning continues for an advanced workshop for Gainesville, 15 – 17 Sixth Month 2018;
- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC): I have been accepted as an at-large member of the AFSC Corporation and attended the 2018 Annual Meeting the AFSC Corporation 13-14 Fourth 2018 Month. I have shared the queries from our worship sharing on the AFSC's strategic plan. I also have been asked to with AFSC's Third

World Coalition. This is will be linked with the QEW UN Working Group detailed below.

- The Bridge of Tampa: I continue to work with the Bridge through Tampa Monthly Meeting and other affiliations in the bay area, including FCC;
- Buddhist Climate Action Network, on 29 Fourth Month, I participated in a panel on “Transforming Climate Consciousness and Behavior” along with Russell Meyer, FCC Executive Director, and Heather Lyn Mann, a writer, mindfulness teacher, environmental advocate, and a student of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh;
- Clark Atlanta University, Department of Political Science: Dr. Kurt Young, Lena Young Green, and I continue to work on social justice issues, particularly in regard to transportation projects;
- The Fellowship of Friends of African Descent (FFAD): I continue to work with FFAD and am working to strengthen linkages with QEW UN Working Group. I plan to participate in informal gatherings of FFAD at the People of Color Center during the 2019 Friends General Conference (FGC) Gathering;
- First Unity, Saint Petersburg (FL), is a member of the spiritual community of Unity Worldwide Ministries. I continue to work with First Unity through the Interfaith Climate Action Network and other activities, including plans to participate in Hands Across The Sand, <http://www.handsacrossthesand.com/>, on 19 Fifth Month at Bilmar Beach.
- Florida Interfaith Climate Action Network (FL-ICAN): Members of the FL-ICAN Design Team, including me, continue to plan for the fourth assembly to be convened 29 – 30 Sixth Month at the J.B. Callahan Neighborhood Center, 101 North Parramore Avenue, Orlando FL 32801. More information is available at Florida InterFaith Climate Actions Network, <https://fl-ican.org/>;
- Friends Committee on National Legislation, Energy and Environment: I continue to maintain contact with FCNL staff. FCNL has begun video streaming of meetings of members of the Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus via Facebook. See “videos” at this website, <https://www.facebook.com/quakerlobby/>;
- Friends General Conference: Preparing to assist with the 2018 Gathering. This will include a presentation in the QEW Center and performing two one-act plays in collaboration with the Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts;
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT): I continue to work with members of FPT, including linking FPT to QEW UN Working Group, see below;
- Friends United Meeting: I continue to work with Geeta and Bob McGahey through the QEW Outreach Committee;
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC): I continue to work to link to FWCC through QEW. This includes seeking opportunities to collaborate with Susanna Mattingly, Sustainability Communications Officer;
- The Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (ICAR): I with ICAR through the Florida Council of Churches and Jan Booher, board member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Boca Raton (UUFBR);

- Living Mirror Playback Theatre (LMPT), Tampa: Several members of LMPT performed with members of True Story Theatre and Ignite Applied Theatre in Gainesville, 27 Second Month. In addition to local shows, Cece Yocum, two other members of LMPT, and I provided Bystander Training 17 Third Month 2018, Temple Crest Association, Temple Terrace, FL. The training was attended by about 15 participants;
- National Academies of Sciences, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Environmental Justice Issues in Transportation and the Women's Issues in Transportation Committees: I have been reappointed to the Environmental Justice Committee and am a "friend" of the Women's Issues committee;
- Organize NOW/F.I.R.E., Climate Justice Committee: I continue to assist the local committee in planning climate justice survey and related issues;
- The Pachamama Alliance: I continue to have contact with members through the FL-ICAN network. Cher Tanner, Pachamama Alliance, and Sharon Joy Kleitsch also host a radio show, Spotlight on Game Changers, on WMNF <https://www.wmnf.org/events/spotlight-on-game-changers/>;
- Pendle Hill, I attended the Truth and Healing: Quakers Seeking Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples conference, 3 – 6 Fifth Month. In addition to working on an epistle from the conference, Jane Westberg, Miami Monthly Meeting and Boulder (CO) Monthly Meeting, and I agreed to explore ways to heighten awareness of indigenous peoples in Florida.
- People Against D.O.T. Discrimination (P.A.D.D.), Tampa: I continue to work with group on identifying potentially adverse impacts and finding ways to avoid, mitigate, or minimize the same as related to the proposed toll roads in Tampa and other areas of Florida;
- QEW: As a member of United Nations Working Group (UNWG), I have been focusing on the International Decade for People of African Descent for the last two years. I am co-clerking the Water Circle, which will be the focus of the 2018 UNWG IDPAD event on 11 Seventh Month 2018, Salvation Army International Social Justice Commission in New York. I am reaching out to Friends to help with this work. We have been soliciting funds at <https://www.crowdrise.com/reconnectingafrican descent>. We also are populating a YouTube channel, Earthcare Coalition - QEW UN Decade for People of African Descent, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_FPKV2XR4CMGUDqkDEJUVA.

The UNWG also has several subgroups including Indigenous and Women's Issues, UN Permanent Indigenous Forum, African Diaspora Coalition, Diaspora Where You Are, UN Misinformation Clarification Campaign, and Quakers Holding Space.

I continue to serve on the QEW Outreach Committee.

The Steering Committee met at the Cenacle Center in Chicago, 19 – 22 Fourth Month;

- Sierra Club, Tampa Bay: Remain in contact via email, snailmail, etc. Am a member of the local Sierra Club Speakers' Bureau;
- Society for Applied Anthropology, Risk and Disasters Topical Interest Group (TIG): Linking 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;
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship: I continue to work with Jan Booher, board member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Boca Raton (UUFBR) through FL-ICAN;
- University of South Florida, Institute on Black Life (IBL), Advisory Committee and the Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS): I continue to work with the University, primarily through these two units.

Social Media

I continue to blog, "fsEarthcare Processing", for the SEYM website. The SEYM Administrative Secretary also has created a webpage, <http://seymquakers.org/faith-in-action/field-secretary-for-earthcare/>. Currently, the page contains the blog, the job description, and other links. I also have been sharing "Field Notes", short pieces on activities, with SEYM Monthly Meetings and Working Groups. I am in contact with the secretary on how best to populate this page, e.g., calendars, social media, etc. I tweet @fsese secretary; FB, <fb.me/FsEarthcare>. These links and others are included the signature of my emails.

Summary

Thank you, Friends, for holding this work and me in the Light.

Beverly Ward