

Southeastern Yearly Meeting (SEYM) Field Secretary for Earthcare (FSE) Report Winter Interim Business Meeting 2019

Overview

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

This report summarizes activities to provide focus and coordinate environmental work in the SEYM region and beyond since the 2018 Fall Interim Business Meeting. Also included are efforts undertaken within the wider Quaker world; faith-based, local, and other environmental groups; and, individuals. Planned activities beyond the Winter Interim Business Meeting also listed.

Communication with the Anchoring Committee

Continued communication with Anchoring Committee members took place throughout this period. As discussed below, included face-to-face meetings, collaborations, and other contacts with committee members. Monthly and Interim Business Meeting visits, Alternative Violence Project (AVP) workshops, and other activities provided additional opportunities for contact with committee members.

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.

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>.
- 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, the Co-Clerks of the Earthcare Committee, and the SEYM office. All prior and upcoming visits are shown below. MMs and WGs continue to request visits, particularly in conjunction with retreats, AVP workshops, and Bystander Training.

Miami Monthly Meeting, 29 Ninth Month

Cecilia Yocum and I provide Bystander Training as part of Friends' Miami Friends Retreat on Sanctuary, Accompaniment, and Witnessing. The Bystander Training offered combined information from Playback Theatre on addressing verbal attacks, everyday bigotry, and obliviousness and the American Friends Service Committee Bystander Intervention, <https://www.afsc.org/bystanderintervention>. A key connection between bystander work and Earthcare is the impact of climate degradation on displacement of people.

Fort Myers Monthly Meeting, 3 and 4 Eleventh Month

On the 3rd, I participated in an informal discussion at the home of Nancy Howell with about a dozen members and attenders of the Meeting. The purpose of this discussion was to introduce myself, the FSE work, and Friends concerns. A more structured meeting on the 4th included the Roots and Fruits of Earthcare exercise, actions underway within the Meeting, and some discernment of other actions within the community and beyond. Friends shared their concerns and the potential for accompaniment and collaboration with others. The work underway in the Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network which includes the Dunbar community in Fort Myers was discussed. (See also Earthcare Workshop Held at Fort Myers Meeting, <http://seymquakers.org/blog/2018/11/12/earthcare-workshop-held-fort-myers-meeting/>.)

Half Yearly Meeting, 22-25 Eleventh Month

As part of our environmental program at Wekiwa Springs State Park, I provided the following resources:

- A table containing Quaker Earthcare Witness pamphlets, Florida garden materials, information on Farmworkers, FCNL materials, and more;
- Aaron Carapella's tribal nation maps, <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2014/06/24/323665644/the-map-of-native-american-tribes-youve-never-seen-before> and <http://www.tribalnationsmaps.com/>;
- Two informal discussions on the Pendle Hill Truth and Healing workshop, the Doctrine of Discovery, Friends and "Indian" Boarding Schools, and recognizing the Indigenous lands where Friends meet and live;
- Participation in postcard wiring in support of Senate bill 2628 - Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation Reaffirmation Act. (Thank you, Pete Ackerman.); and
- Participation in the Lack of Talent Show: performance of the one-act play, *Homo Sapiens* by Chantal Bilodeau, Climate Change Theatre Action, <http://www.climatechangetheatreaction.com/> and leading the SEYM Earthcare Anthem. (Thank you, John Heimburg and the Faith and No Practice Chorus.)

Tampa Monthly Meeting, 26 First Month 2019

I am in the process of planning the Meeting's retreat. While the Earthcare will not dominate the retreat, we are in agreement that the work will include care for the Earth.

Sarasota Earthcare Fair, 27 First Month 2019

This visit to Sarasota is planned to provide an opportunity for Friends to share their Earthcare activities and is proposed to be an interactive learning experience.

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.

- John Heimburg and I provided an Earthcare/SEYM tent or two at Circus McGurkis, <http://seymquakers.org/blog/2018/10/29/circus-mcgurkis-2018-ride-peace-wave/>;
- The Ministry on Racism: I continue to work with the Committee particularly in the capacity of sharing resources and speaking on the connection between Earthcare and the impacts of racism.
- Earthcare: with the committee is interwoven with that of Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW). (More details are provided below.);
- Florida Council of Churches (FCC): I continue to work with FCC on follow-up activities from the fourth assembly of the Florida Interfaith Climate Actions Network, 29 through 30 Sixth Month. I also participated in FCC's Clergy Convening and the second gathering during Eleventh Month this year. (See the FCC report.);
- Peace and Social Concerns: I continue to remain in contact with members of SEYM Peace and Social Concerns Committee. As mentioned above, Cece Yocum and I provided participated in Miami Monthly Meetings Sanctuary Workshop. Orlando Meeting is interested in providing Bystander Training during 2019.
- 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 continue to work with the committee and included materials for youths during the Half Yearly Meeting Gathering. I am in the process of applying for a mini-grant from QEW to print more pocket guides to 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> and *Finding the Light in You*, <https://quakerbooks.org/products/finding-the-light-in-you>.

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.

Below I have listed existing memberships, partnerships, or collaborations that have been a part of this outreach effort. These include, but are not limited to:

- Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP), Tampa Bay provided two advanced workshops in Gainesville (15-17 Sixth and 16-18 Eleventh Months) with Katie Green, Clearwater Meeting, Sean Bell, and I as facilitators. An AVP Basic Workshop is planned for 18-20 First Month, Orlando;
- American Friends Service Committee (AFSC): I have been accepted as an at-large member of the AFSC Corporation and will attend the 2018 Annual Meeting of the AFSC Corporation 13-14 Fourth 2018 Month. I will be working with the AFSC Third World Coalition which informs the SEYM Ministry on Racism work and vice versa. I also have been asked to consider work with AFSC's United Nations work. This will link with the QEW work discussed below;
- The Bridge of Tampa: I continue to work with the Bridge on various efforts;
- 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 look forward to working with FFAD during the 2019 Friends General Conference Gathering;
- Florida Interfaith Climate Action Network (FL-iCAN): I continue to work with FL-iCAN planning for the 2019 Assembly. Save the dates, 1-2 Second Month 2019 Fifth FL-iCAN Assembly, Dr. J. B. Callahan Neighborhood Center, 101 North Parramore Avenue, Orlando, <https://fl-ican.org/-events>;
- Friends Committee on National Legislation, Energy and Environment: I continue to maintain contact with several FCNL staff.
- Friends General Conference: I have been asked to participate as one of the evening plenary speakers during the 2019 Gathering; the topic, How I Get Over: My Journey towards Peace and Justice in Care for the Earth, <https://www.fgcquaker.org/events/beverly-ward>. I also plan to take part in informal discussions at the People of Color Center/FFAD and assisted in the Quaker Arts Center and the QEW Center;
- Friends Peace Teams (FPT): Face-to-face and email contact with members of FPT continues along with work to link FPT to the QEW UN Working Group, see below;
- Friends United Meeting: I continue to work with FUM through QEW Steering Committee Meeting contacts, notably Geeta McGahey and Bob McGahey;
- Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC): I continue to work to link FWCC to QEW UN Working Group. Susanna Mattingly, FWCC Sustainability and Communications Manager have ongoing contact;

- The Initiative on Coastal Adaptation and Resilience (ICAR): I work 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: I continue to link theater work, particularly Bystander Training, as mentioned above.
- National Academies of Sciences, Transportation Research Board (TRB), Environmental Justice Issues in Transportation and the Women's Issues in Transportation Committees: I am a "friend" of the Women's committee and the research coordinator for the Environmental Justice Committee;
- Organize NOW/F.I.R.E., Climate Justice Committee: I continue to assist the local committee in planning climate justice survey and have built a link with the Orlando office;
- The Pachamama Alliance: I continue to have contact with members through the FL-ICAN network;
- QEW: I participated in the biannual Steering Committee meeting of QEW in Federal Way, WA. The program included committee and working group meetings and presentations on Local Activism and Earthcare with Lynn Fitz-Hugh; Indigenous Communities and Earthcare with Jeff Smith and Jonathan Bezt-Zall; and Spiritual Unification discussion/worship sharing led by eric maya joy. I continue focus on the International Decade for People of African Descent and co-clerking the Water Circle of the Earthcare Coalition. I am the co-clerk of the QEW UN Working Group, which is a lead partner of the Earthcare Coalition.

I also continue to work with the Outreach Committee;

- Sierra Club, Tampa Bay: I remain in contact via email, snailmail, etc.;
- Sunshine State Interfaith Power and Light: I continue to work with this group through FL-iCAN;
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship: I continue to work with Jan Booher, board member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Boca Raton (UUFBR) and Unitarian Universalist Justice Florida, <http://www.uujusticefl.org/>, through FL-iCAN; Unitarian Universalist Fellowship;
- University of South Florida, Institute on Black Life (IBL), Advisory Committee and the Patel College of Global Sustainability (PCGS).

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 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 and others are included the signature of my emails. I also have been sending

out shorter pieces to the Monthly Meeting, Worship Groups, FWCC, and others on activities to use in newsletters, tweets, etc.

United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD), Earthcare Coalition

As mentioned earlier, I am co-clerking the Water Circle for the United Nations High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development side events. In 2019, food issues will be the focus of the Earthcare side event. The IDPAD is the focus of the QEW UN Working Group through 2024. (See QEW, <https://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/united-nations-international-decade-people-african-descent> and the Earthcare Coalition site, <https://undecadeforpeopleofafricandescent.wordpress.com/>.)

This work converged with that of AFSC and FGC with a recent Zoom interview of Vedisia “Dee Dee” Green, Area Program Director, AFSC and Peace by Piece New Orleans, Website, <http://www.afsc.org/office/new-orleans-la>, and Facebook, <http://www.facebook.com/peacebypiecenola>. This recording will be posted on YouTube, Earthcare Coalition - QEW UN Decade for People of African Descent, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_FPKV2XR4CMGUdqkDEJUVA. A piece will be provided to the SEYM newsletter when available.

Summary

The work has been busy since the 2018 Fall Interim Business Meeting. Thank you for your love, prayers, and other support!

Beverly Ward