

October 2020

Dear Friends in SEYM,

What a year it has been—and continues to be.



On September 21, 2019, we commemorated 50 years of peace and healing work here in Fayetteville! This was a culmination of much work by our incredible board and committees (Planning Committee chaired by Lynn Newsom) and included the creation of a special DVD. Our historical overview video (one of the two videos on the DVD) is now available on our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/HVxSlkejIJM>. We are moving forward with faith and purpose into the next 50 years. We have our work cut out for us!



*Fifty years' worth of directors, staff, and special guests who returned to help us commemorate this important landmark. Photo by Michele Falls, September 21, 2019.*

**GI Rights Hotline:** Steve and Lenore, our two counselors to the GI Rights Network, each have 19 years of experience taking calls from anywhere service members are stationed in the world. This past year, we had started having monthly “cases collaboration calls” each month with the entire network in order to share information, trends, and support for the hotline counselors more effectively. As COVID-19 began to add more stress, uncertainty, and problems for service members, we increased these helpful conference calls to twice a month. Then, as National Guard units and even the 82nd Airborne began being called up in response to the Black Lives Matter protests sweeping the nation, these collaboration calls continued twice a month. In 2019, Steve and Lenore answered an average of **249 unique calls/month for a total 2,992 calls**. We have also begun a series of nine Zoom sessions training new volunteers to help with the work. So far, we have had five of the sessions and we are so pleased with the caliber and dedication of the group. Our deepest thanks to Lenore and Steve for creating this training course, maximizing the use of Zoom, and leading the sessions.

**Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Moral Injury Counseling:** We continue our one-on-one mental health counseling program at Quaker House with Joanna, a licensed clinical social worker. When COVID-19 became an issue, she was able to continue seeing clients over a HIPAA-compliant platform for teletherapy. This counseling program has become an important resource as some of our clients, already dealing with significant stress, have suddenly found themselves isolated due to stay-at-home directives and curfews. Joanna has been wonderful and increased the frequency of sessions with some of our clients to twice a week during this time. Joanna has spent **2,347 hours with clients** over the past six years, all at no cost to them, thanks to your support. We continue to receive referrals from the GI Rights Hotline, community organizations, and Ft. Bragg victim advocates.

In addition to our work that reaches out across the globe, Quaker House has been an integral part of



the Fayetteville community for the last 50 years. This past year, we organized a protest against the escalation of tensions with Iran and the killing of General Soleimani and we have continued to be active with several community groups. Since the first Black Lives Matter protests in Fayetteville a few months ago, Quaker House has been there in a supportive role and I continue to be there (with masks and distancing!). We feel that this is an important part of our work in the community and a part of the peace testimony.

*National Guard activated in Fayetteville June 5, 2020, to protect the Market House, also having been known by some as the Old Slave Market, which is a focal point of tension. Photo taken by Fayetteville Friends Meeting Clerk, Michelle Downey.*

We are thrilled that Lynn Newsom is continuing to help us stay connected with Friends near and far and thank her for sharing our report with you. We look forward to continuing to work together with you towards peace and healing in the coming year!

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