

North Pacific Yearly Meeting of Friends

PO Box 5023, Bellingham WA 98227

7/20/2008

To Friends Everywhere

Friends from Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana gathered in loving worship July 17th – 20th 2008 on the campus of Oregon State University in Corvallis, OR. The 281 gathered Friends, including 31 children, 26 Junior Friends, and visitors from Friends' organizations and other Yearly Meetings, were welcomed by our Presiding Clerk Helen Dart. She told us "I look forward to the adventurous journey we will be taking together with the Divine over the next few days."

Our Friend in Residence Ruth Flower addressed us on our theme "Answering to that of God in Everyone." She creatively engaged our imaginations to include all people with no exceptions. In sharing with us her career as an activist and a lobbyist, she spoke of her journey from righteous anger to love. We were reminded that we are not called to see that of God in everyone but to answer to what our faith tells us is there. She gave examples of true sharing on a human level that come from expectant listening in our everyday interactions, parallel to our practice in worship.

In the ongoing effort to bring alive our Mission Statement to support and encourage Friends to deepen their spiritual centers and move into Spirit-lead action, we continued with our re-structuring. A goal is for NPYM to be an effective resource for all our Meetings and worshiping groups. During this session we increased our substantive discernment with a concern for business. We approved a three-year experiment of adding one day to our Annual Sessions. It was noted that our young people, and those who work with them, expressed the most joy at the idea of a longer Annual Session.

We welcomed Kathy Hyzy as the new Western Friend editor and minuted our gratitude to Anthony Manousos for his twelve years of faithful service in bringing us Friends Bulletin (the old name for Western Friend).

We approved two seasoned minutes: Minute on The War on Drugs, and Minute On Global Climate Change. The Minute on the War on Drugs calls for a change of national policy away from criminalization of drug use to a public health model. The Minute on Global Climate Change calls upon Friends to make a standing priority and corporate witness in the coming year to take all possible measures to reduce the devastation of global climate change and move us toward more sustainable lifestyles.

Our young people seemed open and connected among themselves and with the adults. Through their games and worship they developed a strong community in a short time.

One group mentioned with satisfaction how a game of capture the flag turned into a dispute and the dispute turned into an exercise in conflict resolution and reconciliation.

As we go out from this gathering, we carry with us gratitude for the vitality of the people, the renewal of our connections, the strengthening of our commitments and the openness to explore new possibilities for expression of our faith. We send our love to Friends everywhere, and invite you join us in speaking truth and love to ourselves and to each other.

Helen Dart, Presiding Clerk