FOX TALES

Publication of United Society of Friends

Women

Western Yearly Meeting

March 2020

 **From Your President/Presiding Clerk: Lynn Mills**

It’s hard for me to even think about writing an article for *Fox Tales* since my mind is still engaged in saying good-bye to Mom, Florence Emma Peery. In fact, West Newton Meeting (and Western Yearly Meeting, too) has lost three good f/Friends in the past three weeks: Charles Alber, husband of faithful USFW worker, Ruth; Mom, another faithful USFW worker; and Doug Baker, husband of Wanda Coffin-Baker, faithful USFW worker and former yearly meeting General Superintendent. Isn’t it weird how deaths often come in threes?

 I want to thank those of you who came to Mom’s memorial service on February 22 and those who have sent cards, emails, etc., letting me know that you loved her, too, and that you’re thinking of my siblings and me as we adjust to life without her. Your thoughts, prayers, and friendship mean a lot to the four of us.

 Charles Alber’s memorial service took place on February 8, the same day as yearly meeting Executive Committee. Dinah kindly offered to attend for me and to write our USFW report. I’d like to quote a bit of her report.

“While Western Yearly Meeting USFW usually does not have any YM group activities over the winter, our Quaker women remain active in their own meetings. Some have had to lay down their USFW groups due to dwindling numbers. However, that doesn’t stop our faithful women who continue to do God’s work. Many of our women care for their Meeting members, and others in their communities, by taking meals to shut-ins or infirmed; sending cards and cheer baskets to those who need some extra care; sending cards and encouragement to our missionaries around the world; raising money for meeting appliances, carpet and needed items; hosting funeral dinners for Meeting members who have passed; helping local food pantries and schools; studying lessons from our USFWI *Blueprints* devotional; raising money for our USFWI budget; working on local projects through their Meetings and/or communities; and remaining active in efforts for peace and equality around the world. Whether connected to an active USFW group or working individually within their Meetings, our Quaker women remain busy.”

 Wow! Makes me both tired and proud to read that list of activities that you all are involved in in the name of USFW. What a wonderful ministry we carry on in a world which so desperately needs loving kindness.

 Mark your calendars for Spring Conference, April 28. I believe Peggy will have more information about that in her column of this issue of Fox Tales.

**From Your Vice President: Dinah Geiger**

Florence Emma Peery was a prime example of the selfless compassion that many of you demonstrate every day. Florence Emma would often “tell it like it is”, but always with kindness and concern for others. She has definitely been a role model and mentor for me for as long as I can remember. Having grown up with her daughter, Lynn Peery Mills, at Junior Yearly Meeting and camp, I observed Florence Emma. Her energy and way of getting things done were amazing. As an adult I was a counselor for several years for George Fox Camp when Florence Emma was the director. One year she was running late getting to camp. We were told she was out in the field on her farm plowing, planting or something, and needed to finish before coming to camp. This was after her husband had died and she was continuing the work that needed to be done. When Florence Emma faced a situation that needed to be attention, she did her best to get it done. Another example were the dresses and boys clothes for Haiti. She presented the need to our WYM USFW, gave us patterns for making these and many of you sewed dresses and pants for many years. She was an amazing woman who I will never forget and will miss a lot!

I wanted to update you on our WYM USFW Pad Project. For the past year and a half, some of us have been sewing feminine hygiene products for 50 kits for girls and women in Africa. Items for the kits will be carried by Friends going to the triennial in Kenya in July. Katrina McConaughey will receive the kits at the Africa Ministries Office and will assemble the kits and see that they are delivered. Each kit will include 5 pad sets, underwear, a washcloth, and soap. Forty of the kits will go to the 40 girls that we are sponsoring through the USFWI Girl Child Education Program in Turkana and Samburu. Those are two of the poorest counties in the country and there is much need there. Katrina said there are also some women pastors in those areas who could seriously benefit from kits, as well as some women at FTC. Katrina will determine where any extra kits will go.

We have made a lot of progress, but we still have over 70 pads to cut, assemble, and sew. Recently Indiana USFW completed 40 sets for us which may allow us. I just talked to a lady in Iowa Yearly Meeting today whose group wants to sew pads as well. This is welcome news. Fairfield USFW has hosted several sewing days. The next one will be Sunday, March 15th, at 12:30PM. If you receive this prior to that date, we would love to have your help. Bring your own lunch, snacks, and drink. Depending on what we get done that day, we may also work on the pads during, or after, our next Fairfield USFW meeting on Monday, March 23rd at 10AM. We would really appreciate any extra help and you are always welcome at any of our meetings. If you plan to attend, please let me know. Also, **please let me know if you are going to the triennial and would be willing to take some kits with you.**

Whether or not you are a member of a USFW group, we always welcome all our WYM women to join us at our conferences, retreats, and in our efforts. If you do not have a group/circle, but would like to attend one, please contact any of us on the WYM USFW Board and we can help you find a group.

Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Dinah

(317-752-5306 or dinageiger@att.net)

**iterature/Children and Youth Secretary – Betty Heshelman**

If you have not finished reading books from the Reading List this year here are a three more that might be of interest to you. Remember: New books will be coming out at Spring Conference for next year.

***Bus to Corinth***

 By Ladine Housholder

In this novel, five women decide to retrace Paul’s footsteps through Athens and Corinth as a memorial to their friend, Norma. While on the trip each woman is searching for answers to problems that she is facing in her own life.

Can Ruth lead the group now that Norma is no longer with them? Can she organize and direct this trip? Should Najila, A Samaritan woman, marry the man she is dating? If she does will she be allowed to manage her travel business? Will Vicky finally finish her book about Theodora, the last Empress of the Eastern Roman Empire? What about Beth’s troubled marriage?

As they travel through Greece, they study I and II Corinthians and learn about Paul’s problems and how he deals with his own issues. Encouraged by his example, each woman hopes to solve her won issue.

***Minding the Light***

By Suzanne Woods Fisher

This historical fiction novel takes place on Nantucket Island as part of a series on Quakers. The book is based upon facts from 19th Century.

When Ren Macy, captain of a whaling ship, returns to the island, he finds that his wife, Jane, is gravely ill and dies soon after his return leaving him with a set of twins that he did not know he had. Jane’s sister, Daphne, along with a Wampanoag maidservant is taking care of the twins.

As he tries to figure out his new life on the island, he is faced with several difficulties. His partner has ordered a new ship and wiped out all of the families money; his mother-in-law still does not like him; and, he discovers that a run-away slave was joined his crew.

At the same time Daphne although engaged with Ren’s partner discovers that she is falling in love with Ren. Daphne also realizes that the Quakers seem to have two different practices on the island. On one hand, the Quakers say that all men are created equal but they do not seem to practice this. She must work her way through these beliefs to see where she stands.

There are many twists and turns (and surprises) throughout the story.

 ***I’ll Push You***

By Patrick Gray and Justin Skeesuck

   The book, I'll Push You, A Journey of 500 Miles, Two Best Friends, and One Wheelchair, is the moving story of Patrick Gray and Justin Skeesuck.  Patrick and Justin alternate chapters to tell the story.  They were born two days apart in the same hospital.  They grew up in the same hometown and were best friends.  As adults they lived many miles apart but kept in touch often and enjoyed visits with their families.

    Justin developed a debilitating disease, multifocal acquired motor aronopathy.  He gradually lost the ability to care for himself.  He sees a TV program about the pilgrimage route, the Camino de Santiago in Spain.  He shows it to Patrick who says, "I'll push you."

    The story tells about their challenges and Patrick's care for Justin.  They receive help from other pilgrims along the way.  Many experience God's leadings as they help.  The love shown is a very powerful message.

Thank you, Marilynn Bell for your contribution.

## **Peace & Social Concerns Secretary: Jan McVay**

Are we following the leadings of Fox? He lived his life with the aim to take away the occasion of all wars and challenges us to do the same. In Cuba one way this is being done is at the Cuban Quaker Institute of Peace. Pastors, community leaders and citizens both in Cuba and other Latin Americans get guidance in creating a community of peacemakers. This is a lofty goal for each of us. I applaud all who work toward this, in Cuba, in the U.S., in Kenya, in all the world. The Cuban Quaker Institute of Peace is designed to develop skills for understanding and analyzing the causes of conflict and to teach practical tools for addressing the conflicts. The institute, under the care of Cuba Yearly Meeting, aims to reduce violence both in Cuba and throughout Latin America

Some instructors are Quaker professors from the United States and some are local from Cuba Yearly Meeting.

A participant from several years ago, Julio Cuestas, wrote the following for the AFSC ~ American Friends Service Committee. “As a Quaker, I am called to take action to help my neighbors to get involved in peace culture and conflict transformation. I feel that the Cuban Quaker Institute for Peace is a door God opened to fulfill the purpose He has for my life. … Cuba is an extremely institutionalized country…. However, I feel great satisfaction from this kind of work because conflict transformation is not only about filling our lives with light as Quaker peace testimony, but it`s also about engaging community members in different activities to show that when people work joined by love, changes are possible. … It is through projects of love such as this one that many of us stop being like *Saul of Tarsus* and we become like *Paul* for God`s salvation purposes, because out testimony of love and peace in Jesus Christ allows other community members to know their value as human beings.”

Some of our funds help support this Peace Institute and instructors that travel from the U.S.

**Adult Missionary Education: Rachel Hedges**

 The New London Friends USFW Faith Circle is suffering with the same situation with which other meetings are afflicted.. This year we decided to meet when the weather was not too wintery. Snow & cold are not good for those who are in their later years. All our members are plus seventy.

 We are lucky to have our oldest & wisest member still with us at One Hundred & Seven. She hosts our meeting twice a year with the help of her two daughters. We meet at her place of residence for a wonderful lunch in April. Her hearing & sight are not the best, but her heart is strong & her prayer in the Last Coin circle is always for the missionaries.

 All the rest of our meetings are held in the meetinghouse at New London. Each member takes a turn at hostess duties & four members take a turn at teaching the lesson.

 When I was a child, both my grandmothers took part in Circle meetings. At one time there were two circle meetings, one for the ladies who had time during the day & one for the working ladies who could only meet in the evenings. This was the center on their social time as well as their study time.

 Now we have one circle which meets from April through November. We also have five regular members & the occasional visitor. With continuing strong faith and the desire to meet in Christian fellowship, we persist. I believe the pioneer spirit that brought our ancestors to this country keeps us going forward.

 We will continue to meet as long as health, the desire for Christian comradery, and faith allow. The lessons we study are from the USFWI ***Blueprints.*.**

 Please keep Faith Circle at New London Meeting & all the local circles in your prayers. Pray is strong, healing & comforting. This is what we are all about.

**Christian Service: Susan Felix**

Grieving takes many forms. It is never static but always new. In so many ways it is a solitary event, a walk taken alone but for Christ. I could not have survived the loss of my husband without the constant presence of Christ walking with me. When you think the grieving, or at least the most intense of it is over because time has passed, you find it is still just as sharp but in new ways. Then comes comfort from an unexpected source.

A handwritten note arrived several months after his passing and the writer had listed three Bible verses that would bring comfort. The note read:

*Dear Susan,*

 *I know you are going through difficult times right now. I want you to know I care. (Then she listed the following three Bible verses.) The first, Philippians 4:4-7 “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all, The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and you minds in Christ Jesus.”*

 *The second was Ephesians 6:10 “Finally be strong in the Lord and His mighty power.” And the last, Colossians 3:17 “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”*

 *These are some verses that can give you strength when you feel you have too big a mountain to climb. I’m so glad God is our strength and refuge.*

*Your friend,*

*Florence (Emma Peery)*

I have kept this card because it still brings me comfort. After I’m gone, my children will find it in my Bible. They will find that each of those verses were underlined in my Bible and I know it will bring them comfort. Those simple words, “I want you to know I care” meant that I wasn’t forgotten, that my husband wasn’t forgotten. This small kind act is what Christian Service is about for me. It is those simplest of acts that touch us the most. It is a hug, telling someone that you love them, praying with them, talking with them, and remembering and caring for them.

For the family and friends that loved Florence Emma so much, our hearts go out to you. She will not be forgotten. I thank her for teaching me through this simple act, “I want you to know I care.”

Christian service is “a simple act of kindness.”

**Stewardship Secretary: Kristi Uitts**

**CHANGED LIVES CHANGE LIVES**

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come.”

(Ezekiel 36:26) “And I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”

“Changes Lives Change Lives” is a motto that chimes in my head and pounds in my heart daily! God has blessed me with a wonderful teaching career of 30 years, and now retired. I just dabble in education as a teacher’s aide for elementary preschool in Kokomo, Indiana. This remains a rather intense job, even in this advanced age of technology where we might think our lives to be at a more progressive functioning level. Many students that come in to my care are from broken homes, dysfunctional homes, or have no home at all! Many parents in our small city battle various forms of addiction, criminal behavior, personal crises joblessness, illnesses, and outrageous situations that are unimaginable. Some parents lose custody of their children due to unacceptable lifestyles and the devastation is severe!

Thank the Lord that I work with a team of teachers and other aides who are Scripturally driven. We embrace the teachings of Jesus and apply His wisdom in order to be agents of change rather than enemies in criticism and judgement. Prayer is a sacred tool of ours and we boldly enlighten parents that they are on our lips. We have been able to direct them to unique faith-based community assistance sites in our city. By the Hand of God, many places have been developing in our county this past year in 2019, and not just at church sites…in regular buildings downtown! Praise God!

Here is the really blessed news: We have seen and heard other parents helping OTHER parents get the help they need. Miracle! These people are helping each other after they themselves have been transformed. (Romans 12:2) “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind…” One of our community faith-based assistant sites has a program that allows those who have been delivered from addiction, criminal lifestyles, and other unacceptable behavior to be trained and certified as coaches to assist with various life crisis. They are on site at places such as emergency rooms, jails, and mobile units. It is an amazing work of God to see CHANGED LIVES CHANGING LIVES! (Galatians 6:2) “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

Our deepest struggles, along with the Scripture or experience the Holy Spirit used to deliver us, could be exactly how we are to help another person break their chains of sinful captivity. Hallelujah! Changed Lives Change Lives! We no longer are slaves to sin because we are God’s children. Who the Son makes free, is free indeed. Be a blessing to one another through Jesus Christ, our Living Hope.

**Programming: Peggy Hollingsworth**

Some kids are SMARTER than you.

Some kids have COOLER CLOTHES than you.

Some kids are BETTER AT SPORTS than you.

It doesn’t matter. YOU have YOUR thing too.

Be the kid who can GET ALONG.

Be the kid who is GENEROUS.

Be the kid who is HAPPY for other people.

Be the kid who does the RIGHT THING.

Be the NICE kid.

These words, in interesting scripts, accompanied by colorful pictures, including the school mascot, adorned one large wall in the cafeteria of the K-12 Indiana school where I attended the annual Community Breakfast this morning hosted by the local FFA Chapter in celebration of FFA Week. I hope that this message filters into the minds of students frequenting this space regularly. Given that the local morning paper carried headlines of episodes of bullying among students in another school district as young as grades 1-2, these instructions seemed very timely. A nearby poster carried another thought: “It’s never your fault. Bullying can happen to anyone.”

We as adults, in contact with youngsters of all ages and backgrounds, whether through work, teaching, mentoring, family relationships, church contacts, etc. are compelled to be good models for others when it comes to “getting along” in today’s world. It’s not ever easy for anyone, but our upbringing and our faith behooves each and every one of us to try our best to be good patterns for others, showing those who may be watching us carefully how best to live joyfully and successfully in family and community.

The words from the second verse of the hymn “O Brother Man” penned by Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892) seem apropos in considering ways of “Living for Jesus.”

Follow with reverent steps the great example
Of Him whose holy work was " doing good " ;
So shall the wide earth seem our Father's temple,
Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.

Recently we have had occasions to celebrate several Friends whose lives have shown us and others beyond Quaker circles how to quietly and confidently be examples. We appreciate the service given by Charles Alber, Doug Baker, Helen Hollingsworth and Florence Emma Peery to USFW, Western YM, their own monthly meetings, and their families, friends and communities.

**UPCOMING SPRING CONFERNCE**

Although it seems that we were just “gathered together” with our Friends from Indiana USFW on the fourth Tuesday in September at Cross America in Kokomo, it is now time to think about attending our Western YM USFW Spring Conference on the fourth Tuesday of April. On the 28th, West Newton USFW has graciously agreed to be our host location. That means that getting to the southwest side of Indianapolis will make it easier for many of us to travel in both distance and time.

Betty Heshelman of Mooresville, our WYM USFW Literature Secretary, will be bringing highlights to us from the FUM Living Letters venture that she and John participated in during the summer of 2019. Ramallah Friends Schools and the Holy Land were their destinations under the leadership of Max and Jane Carter of North Carolina. As you may recall, we were scheduled a year ago to hear from Norma Wallman (Indianapolis First Friends) about her similar trip in summer 2018 to Ramallah. But sudden illness that day prevented Norma from sharing with us.

Updates from Ramallah seem timely, since the Friends Schools there have just completed the yearlong celebration of their 150th year of existence and are looking eagerly to what the future may hold. Max Carter has been going to and coming from the Middle East for the past 50 years. So, in commemoration of this half century milestone, his written memoir is being published in spring 2020 by Barclay Press (the main source of our USFWI Reading Course books). Max, inspired by the example of his great-aunt Annice Carter, is just one of many Friends with roots in Western YM and USFW who have served faithfully in Ramallah. Our own Lynn Peery Mills and Wanda Coffin Baker come to mind immediately as they both did some years of teaching there. Others, including Marilynn Bell and the late Florence Emma Peery joined work trips at some point. My own brief visit there with an FUM visitation team in 2005 remains a highlight of my years on the USFWI board. Come prepared to learn new insights and share from past ones.

The cost for lunch that day will be $10, with details of menu to follow. That day’s recipient(s) for the offering have yet to be determined by our WYM USFW board. Mark your calendars now to reserve time for joining in fellowship with others from throughout our area. The date for our meal together at the annual sessions of WYM in Plainfield is Saturday, July 25. This event will immediately follow the triennial gathering in Kenya for FUM, USFWI, and QMI. The speaker(s) for that week are yet to be determined. Stay tuned for details, but we are counting on seeing each and every one of you who can come to these events to be there!!

**USFW – Western Meeting Officers 2020-2021**

**Please fill in the information below for your USFW Circle if you haven’t already. Return to**

**Lynn Mills at 7722 Reynolds Road, Camby, IN 46113 or lynnpmills@gmail.com. Thanks!**

 **President/Presiding Clerk**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Secretary/Recording Clerk**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Treasurer**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Peace & Christian Social Concerns**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Adult Missionary Education**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Stewardship**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Children & Youth**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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 **Christian Service**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Literature**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**2019-2020 Western Yearly Meeting USFW Officers**

**President/Presiding Clerk: Peace & Social Concerns:**

Lynn Mills Jan McVay

7722 Reynolds Road 3663 West – 1050 North

Camby, IN 46113 Tangier, IN 47952

Phone: (317) 339-2896 Phone: (765) 498-8225

Email: lynnpmills@gmail.com Email: njmcvay@bloomingsdaletel.com

**Vice President/Ass’t Presiding Clerk: Literature/Children & Youth:**

Dinah Geiger Betty Heshelman

5200 Orange Grove Road 1070 West State Road 42

Gosport, IN 47433 Mooresville, IN 46158

Phone: (317) 752-5306 Phone: (317) 996-3653

Email: dinageiger@att.net Email: heshelman121@rocketmail.com

**Secretary Adult Missionary Education:**

Barbara Darnell Rachel Hedges

10909 West – 450 North 2209 Anjou Court

Thorntown, IN 46071 Kokomo, IN 46902

Phone: (765) 436-8644 Phone: (765) 864-9006

Email: mbdarnell@mcremc.net Email: Lnielander@aol.com

**Treasurer: Christian Servoice:**

Brenda Irelan Susan Felix

96 West – 460 North 5744 Hickory Woods Drive

Bloomingdale, IN 47832 Plainfield, IN 46468

Phone: (765) 498-8644 Phone: (317) 839-0420

Email: jirelan@bloomingdaletel.com Email: susi914@aol.com

**Stewardship: Publications:**

Kristi Uitts Liz Nielander

P.O. Box 94 1503 S. Union Street

Russiaville, IN 46979 Kokomo, IN 46902

Phone: (765) 431-1559 Phone: (765) 513-7439

Email: kriswalkslabs@aol.com Email: Lnielander@aol.com

**Programming: Quaker Haven Camp Board USFW Rep:**

Peggy Hollingsworth Carolyn Kuhns

P.O. Box 275 2164 South – 757 West

Russiaville, IN 46979 Russiaville, IN 46979

Phone: (765) 309-5445 Phone: (765) 883-7253

Email: hollypeg@hotmail.com