

Info Sheet for Western Half Yearly Meeting (WHYM)

In an attempt to reduce the time spent in session explaining certain items and to assist those that are new to WHYM, Ministry & Counsel (M&C) recommended an info sheet be provided. The Fall gathering is typically smaller and more informal than the Spring gathering, and some of the items discussed below may not apply in the Fall.

So much to do... so little time

To help with the smooth flowing of our time together, please arrive promptly at the scheduled time. In most cases, there is about 15 mins of unscheduled time to allow for travel and settling at the next event.

Worship Fellowship groups

Worship Fellowship groups (also called Worship Sharing groups) are a time for Friends to share in a worshipful manor from their own experience. Each person is given the opportunity to share, and one usually waits until all have had a chance to do so before sharing again. Silence between the messages allows us to deeply listen. Facilitators are named to help the group gather, and help oversee its well being.

Children's Program

The children depend on the generosity of your time and talents. **Please sign up as early as possible in the weekend.** Parents are responsible for their children outside of the program times. Please pick your children up promptly so that the people who have volunteered to look after the children can get to the next event.

Balancing is a co-operative form of people-to-people gymnastics that has something for everyone.

Young Friends (13yrs to whenever)

Young Friends meet early in WHYM to decide what they wish to do during the weekend. They are included in Worship-Fellowship lists, but sometimes choose to form their own group. They report back to the last Business session. An adult provides a resource base for them and functions as an Elder. (This person is chosen by the Young Friends at a previous gathering.)

Travel Assistance to WHYM

Funds to help enable Friends to attend WHYM are available. Friends that are part of a Monthly Meeting are asked to go to their Monthly Meeting with requests for funds first. Requests to WHYM should be sent to the Registrar. Finance committee considers these requests at WHYM. (To date, no request has been turned down as Friends have always been most reasonable.)

Family Night

Sunday evening is your chance to share some talent in a fun gathering of all ages. Please consider what you might like to do and let the Family Night coordinator know. Because we want to have contributions from as many people as possible, please limit how much you share (eg. 1 or 2 pieces of music, 1 skit, 1 poem...).

Ministry & Counsel (M&C)

Ministry & Counsel looks after the spiritual well being of our Half-Yearly Meeting. They can provide a listening ear to individuals with a concern. They will be flagging their name tags to help us find them. (Friends new to WHYM may choose to be identified on their name-tags so that we all might assist them and help them feel a part of our Friends Family.)

Committees of Western Half-Yearly Meeting

Nominating Committee

This committee seeks Friends willing to serve in the on-going positions (e.g. Clerk, Recording Clerk, Treasurer, Registrar) of the Half-Yearly Meeting. These recommendations are brought to the last Business session for consideration.

Epistle

Friends have traditionally kept in touch with other Friends gatherings by writing letters of greeting which encapsulate the essence of their gathering. The Epistle committee serves for the duration of one gathering.

Gleanings

These are tidbits of our wit and wisdom gathered by the Gleanings Committee over the weekend, and shared at the last business session or at Family Night. If you are looking for a concise way to serve WHYM, Gleanings committee exists only for the long-weekend and its lot of fun.

Quaker Book Service

A service of Ottawa Monthly Meeting. See quaker.ca for more info.

Sorrento Potluck

Everyone is invited to the potluck suppers Saturday and Sunday, held at the picnic shelter (past the Cabanas). Bring your food contribution and your own dishes/cutlery.

Letters to Absent Friends

We like to keep in touch with Friends that usually attend WHYM but are unable to join us by sending them a note or card (often decorated by some of the younger Friends). The 'Absent Friends' committee coordinates this for us and serves for one WHYM gathering.

No-Interest Loans

WHYM has set up an arrangement whereby members of the Friends family help others who need loans for mortgages, student, loans or other needs. The No-Interest Loan(NIL) Committee attempts to evaluate the situation, asks the requester to go to the person's Monthly Meeting for a Committee of care. This committee of care will evaluate the ability and responsibility of the borrower, and report to the NIL Committee. If the NIL Committee is assured that this is as sound a risk as can be determined, it then canvasses Friends who believe in this process until pledges sufficient to cover the requested loan are gathered. Next, the NIL committee arranges a repayment schedule, promissory notes, and sees that the notes go to the lenders. Up to this point, the name of the borrower is known only to the NIL committee and the committee of care.

About Western Half-Yearly Meeting

WHYM was formed in the 1960s. It includes Friends from Northern Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, B.C., the Yukon, and N.W.T. It meets at the May long weekend in B.C. (at Sorrento) and the October long weekend in one of the Prairie Provinces (usually alternating between Alberta and Sask.).

Capital 'F' friends

Quakers have traditionally referred to themselves as capital 'F' friends. This refers to those that hold membership in the Religious Society of Friends. In WHYM, we encourage those active in the Society of Friends to consider membership, but we do not distinguish members from attenders when it comes to the gathering of WHYM. Where documents of WHYM refer to capital 'F' friends, please consider this to include all those attending WHYM, as we are all seekers together.