

Western Friend Annual Report – FY2020 with reflections from early 2021

SUMMARY

In early 2020, as SARS-CoV-2 began sweeping across the U.S., *Western Friend* found itself well positioned to help Friends find each other online. We made our videoconferencing accounts available to dozens of Quaker meetings for several months, while they worked through processes of setting up their own accounts. (A few meetings still rely on *Western Friend* for videoconferencing, which remains available to all meetings in IMYM, NPYM, and PacYM.) Near the start of the pandemic, additionally, *Western Friend* transformed our “occasional” email newsletter into a “weekly” email newsletter. Since March 14, 2020, *Extra Extra Western Friend* has been published every Saturday, providing valuable connections among otherwise isolated Friends. Along with these new offerings in 2020, *Western Friend* continued to publish our long-standing magazine six times a year, to publish books, and to host topical online conversations among Friends.

REPORT

FY 2020 Financials

Western Friend continues to remain financially strong and aspires to additional financial growth. A summary of our FY2020 financial standing is included at the end of this document. Throughout FY2020, we adhered to a new board policy (approved September 2020) of holding a sum equal to six months of essential operating expenses in a board-restricted reserve fund, as well as following a practice of keeping a sufficient balance in our liquid accounts to cover two magazine production cycles (four months). Furthermore, we are solidly on a path towards providing our editor with a “competitive” salary package by FY2024, defined as the mean average of “editor” salaries in seven Western states, measured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The board continues to develop new fund-raising strategies to support these plans over the long term. Additionally, after nine years of unchanged subscription rates, we plan raise those rates in FY2022, although our “low-income rate” will remain unchanged – \$20 per year. “Cover prices” will rise in FY2022 from \$6.00 to \$7.50 per issue for print delivery, from \$5.00 to \$6.50 for PDF delivery, and from \$8.00 to \$9.50 for both. Our rates for group subscriptions, which are discounted from our cover prices, will increase somewhat less.

In early 2021, *Western Friend* received the benefit of a pro bono, professionally conducted financial review from Laura Arcidiacono of Bridge City Friends Meeting (Portland, OR) and Gayle Matson of Chico Friends Meeting (Chico, CA). These Friends submitted their final report to the *Western Friend* board on March 22, 2021. During their review, our two Friends examined accounting and policy documents from *Western Friend*’s FY2020 and FY2021. Here are the “summary” paragraphs of their report:

Western Friend’s handling and processing of income, payments and payroll reflect sound financial procedures. Many of these procedures have already been documented but should be consolidated and expanded in a single and complete set of “Financial Procedures.” More complete documentation will enhance financial transparency and benefit the organization in the event of personnel transitions, including change of Treasurer, ED or contract bookkeeping.

All financial records and supporting documentation requested by the reviewers were provided in an exceptionally timely manner and in good order. Implementing the internal controls described above will add additional checks and balances necessary for a small organization.

Western Friend’s board and executive director are now working to implement these recommendations.

Magazine

Western Friend (westernfriend.org/magazine) continues to produce and distribute a magazine six times a year, which reflects the deep conversations and reflections of Friends in the West about topics that concern us today. From July 2020 through June 2021, we published 79 articles, commentaries, poems, and reviews in our print publication – as well as dozens of “letters to the editor” and 23 new additions to our Online Library (westernfriend.org/library). During the year ahead, Friends are invited to contribute works concerning any of the following themes: Cliques, Words, Freedom, Alternatives, Place, Normality, Cooperation, and Science.

The vast majority of subscriptions to *Western Friend* are set up through “group subscriptions,” organized within individual monthly meetings. Merely five subscribers are enough to count as a “group,” which provides a huge assist to *Western Friend’s* operations, and earns for the group’s members a small discount on the prices of their magazines. Please, if you can help organize a “group subscription” in your own meeting, contact: editor@westernfriend.org.

Books

Western Friend continues to fulfill orders for the books that we publish, most notably the three books of *Faith and Practice* written by “our three” yearly meetings – Intermountain, North Pacific, and Pacific. We provide bulk discounts to Quaker meetings. Go to our website to learn more and to watch for news of audio productions of chapters of *Faith and Practice* by Friends in NPYM (westernfriend.org/books).

Website

Western Friend’s website serves as an information hub for all our activities (westernfriend.org). In addition to the website’s role in promoting our magazine and books, it is also our platform for publishing a broad range of web-only content:

Extra Extra Western Friend

Browse our archive of news items published since March 2020. This year’s items are sorted by Yearly Meeting, by Type of News, and by Topic of News. Older news items are sorted only by Topic. (westernfriend.org/extra-extra-western-friend).

Online Worship

Explore a long list of Quaker meetings throughout the West that invite “Friends Everywhere” to join them in online worship (westernfriend.org/quaker-worship-and-fellowship-online).

Community Directory

Turn to our listing of key contact information for “every” monthly meeting and worship group affiliated with IMYM, NPYM, and PacYM. (We do our best to keep this current.) Let us know if you see anything in this list that needs correcting: (<https://westernfriend.org/community>).

Memorial Minutes

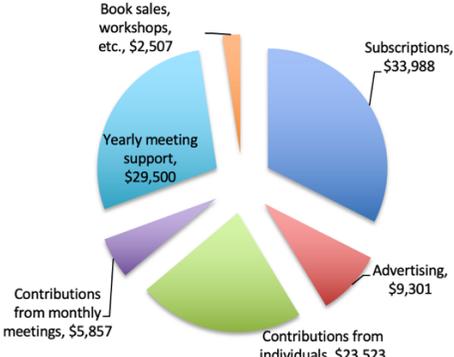
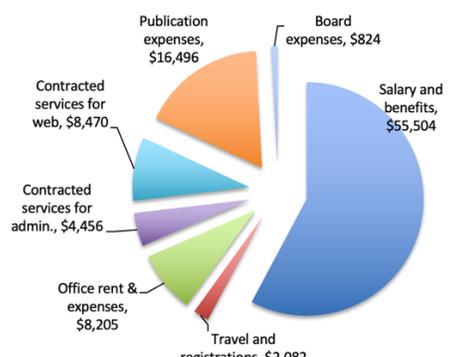
After each summer’s set of annual sessions, we collect all the memorial minutes that monthly meetings have shared with their yearly meetings that summer, and we publish all those memorials on our website (<https://westernfriend.org/memorials>). These minutes are searchable by name, date of death, and meeting. All monthly meetings in IMYM, NPYM, and PacYM are invited to submit memorial minutes directly to *Western Friend* for online publication.

Governance

The Board of Directors of *Western Friend* consists of three members appointed by each of three yearly meetings, resulting in a board of nine members. As of June 2021, those members are:

Lucretia Humphrey, Great Falls Worship Group, (Clerk)
 Nancy Wilkinson, Strawberry Creek Meeting, PacYM (Recording Clerk)
 Steve Finger, Flagstaff Meeting (Treasurer)
 Jim Anderson, Chico Meeting, PacYM
 Kate Connell, Santa Barbara Meeting, PacYM
 Sakre Edson, Eugene Meeting, NPYM
 Mary Hansen, Bellingham Meeting, NPYM
 Nancy Marshall, Phoenix Meeting, IMYM
 Molly Wingate, Colorado Springs Meeting, IMYM

Western Friend Financial Report Summary – FY2020

Western Friend – FY2020 Financial Statement		FY2020 Income	
Balance Sheet			
Equity - Operations	\$55,954		
Equity - Reserves (Friends Fiduciary)	\$64,178		
Liabilities (asseste set aside for)	\$11,174		
Net Assets	\$131,306		
Profit and Loss Statement		FY2020 Expenses	
Income			
Subscriptions	\$33,988		
Advertising	\$9,301		
Contributions from individuals	\$23,523		
Contributions from monthly meetings	\$5,857		
Yearly meeting support	\$29,500		
Book sales, workshops, etc.	\$2,507		
Total Income	\$104,676		
Expenses			
Salary and benefits	\$55,504		
Travel and registrations	\$2,082		
Office rent & expenses	\$8,205		
Contracted services for admin.	\$4,456		
Contracted services for web	\$8,470		
Publication expenses	\$16,496		
Board expenses	\$824		
Total expenses	\$96,037		
Net Ordinary income	\$8,639		
Unrealized gain (loss)	\$5,686		
Net income	\$14,325		