Wonderings

World events over the past six months have been a study of contrast and contradictions. In Europe we are witnessing major change in how the people there will live for many decades. In eastern Europe, especially, where changes are most dramatic, what each political entity (country) will look like is still in the formation stage; and the changes have come primarily through non-violent movements.

Contrast this with the developments in Central America. In Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama, Guatemala, and other countries, the peoples' struggle to stand up to oppression has been met with the ultimate violence, the destruction and killing of people, most of which is caused and suggested by our own government.

Though perhaps not recognized, a philosophical conflict exists within our own country, especially in our government, regarding these events. On one hand, there is praise for changes the people of Europe are bringing to themselves through peaceful means. The other is our government's support for violence with men, munitions and money to Central American governments that violate human rights, that kill and torture those that stand up for change.

Much has gone unsaid about the changes taking place in Europe. Media and governments attribute these changes to the leadership of a few men who made a decision to bring change. This notion is grossly simplistic and ill-informed.

Substantive change does not come from leadership. It comes from one or two persons growing to thousands demanding change by their non-violent resistance to end the oppression. This has taken many forms, each in its own way saying no. It takes patience and time—for the people of Europe over forty years.

John E. Martinson

Program Director

Friends for a Non-Violent World publishes this newsletter four times a year in January, April, July and October. FNVW has its roots in the Quaker faith and has been shaped by a belief in the power of non-violence as a way of effecting change.

Newsletter committee:
Jim Bruener, Jean Egbert, D. Perry Kidder,
Emily Knight, John Martinson, Kim Hill Smith

For additional information or comments, contact FNVW at:
2025 Nicollet Avenue South #203
Minneapolis, MN 55404
(612) 870-1501

Children's Creative Response to Conflict Workshop Planned

Remember the cover article in our last fall FNVW newsletter? Well, a three hour Children's Creative Response to Conflict introductory workshop is now scheduled for Saturday, February 10th, 1990, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Minneapolis Friends Meeting House, corner of West 44th and York Avenue South, Minneapolis.

The agenda will consist of the philosophy and concepts of the program and activities from each of the four themes—cooperation, communication, affirmation and conflict resolution. You will leave with a few exercises you can use, plus further ideas and enough of a "taste" to decide whether you want more in-depth training.

Who is this workshop designed for? It's for those who work with groups of elementary-aged children in some way (although the ideas and activities have been adapted for older and younger), including parents who are seeking creative approaches to helping children manage conflicts.

The facilitators will be Nancy and Doug Helfrich, Minneapolis CCRC trainers and Paula Conner, CCRC trainer from Nyack, New York.

The fee is $10.00 if registered by February 5th, after which it is $12.00. Registration is limited to 30.

To register by mail, send your name, address and phone number to the following address and state whether you are a school teacher, church school teacher, parent, or do other work with children.

Nancy Helfrich
1112 Sheridan Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411
Attn: CCRC

To register by phone call Nancy or Doug at 588-6205. The best times to call are evenings 7–9:30, weekends, or during the day on Thursdays or Fridays.

If you have questions about the workshop, please call Nancy or Doug at 588-6205.

Betty Firth: Creating and Nurturing Visions

by Kim Hill Smith

When one thinks of Betty Firth, several images come to mind—artist, sailor, Quaker, teacher, weaver, seeker, photographer, desktop publisher, musician, healer and all, of course, clothed in her trademark, the color purple.

Betty moved to Minneapolis in 1981 from Chicago, where she taught first grade for seven years and sold real estate. Her continued work in real estate here in the Twin Cities led her to her own business, Communique, in desktop publishing and marketing. The flexibility of her work schedule, coupled with her many diverse interests, enables Betty to surround herself with a variety of activities including sailing, photography, water color art, weaving, knitting, crocheting, needlepoint, reading, being with friends, and playing the autoharp, guitar and piano.

Betty became acquainted with FNVW through a talk given by Jeannette Raymond at the Minneapolis Friends Meeting, where she is a member. Hearing Jeannette describe the work of FNVW, Betty became more aware of a desire to increase her involvement in Quaker-based peace and justice work and offered to serve on the FNVW board as the Minneapolis Friends Meeting liaison. She now begins her third year of service on the board and has become one of the key organizers of both the Craft Sale and the Evening With the Arts.

As a board member, Betty has many hopes and visions for FNVW. With the help of a computer, she hopes that more time will be available to expand FNVW programs, particularly the Youth Against Militarism Project and involvement in local issues (i.e. violence in neighborhoods). In broadening such programs, Betty hopes to attract and utilize more interested persons.

Betty's commitment to working actively for peace and justice does not end with FNVW. She helps to coordinate the Minneapolis Friends Meeting's participation in Loaves and Fishes (meals prepared and served to hungry, low-income persons at a local church). She also volunteers in the aquatic program of the MS society, publishes the Minneapolis Friends Meeting newsletter, and creates flyers for Peace is Possible Now.

What keeps her going? Rather than becoming immobilized by problems that need to be solved, Betty allows herself to dream about the future. She has a vision—a vision which she creates and nurtures daily, a vision of transforming human minds and working together toward wholeness and peaceful co-existence with one another and with the planet.

Meeting the Challenges: Youth Against Militarism

by Whitney Clark

As we enter a new decade the world is in dramatic transition. From El Salvador to Poland people are demonstrating the invincibility of their struggle for justice and peace. At home this provides challenges to a new generation of activists who must carry on that struggle. In this new era the Youth Against Militarism Project is busy helping young people meet these challenges.

Having formed a newspaper collective of students from five area high schools, the project has published the first issue of *Free Association: A Rag for Alternative Youth.* In the new year the collective plans more issues of all original student work.

Another priority for the project this winter is a skills training workshop for high school age youth to be held on a Saturday, probably late in February or March. The workshop will be designed to provide young activists with skills, information and analysis necessary to carry out social change work in their schools and communities. Young people interested in participating in the workshop should contact Whitney Clark at 870-1501.