



# Canadian Friends Service Committee

## E-Newsletter

March, 2014

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### Updates from CFSC Meeting held March 7 – 9<sup>th</sup>

CFSC members and staff from across Canada came together in Toronto last weekend to attend to our business. During the weekend there are many meetings – the board, personnel, program committees, and inevitable little side meetings on various issues. It is a dynamic and full time, punctuated by wonderful meals prepared for us by Ruth Pincoe of Toronto Meeting and times off site when we have time to socialize and get to know each other better. Below are some highlights related to our work:

#### ***Indigenous rights:***

- CFSC is providing \$800 to Ojibway Connections for the “Sacred Gathering of Woman” on Thunder Mountain in May. Funds will be used to help sponsor Indigenous women to attend this gathering which will include traditional ceremonies and teachings.
- As a part of the ad-hoc coalition that works on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, CFSC is about to release a joint response on resource development in western Canada, including the Northern Gateway Pipeline. This is partly in response to the environmental assessment of the pipeline.
- Once again, CFSC will be at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May in New York; the theme this year is “Principles of Good Governance consistent with the UN Declaration”. Friends can follow developments at the Forum by visiting our Facebook page and website and following our Twitter feed (links are at the bottom of this *E-Newsletter*).

#### ***Justice:***

- Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) – CFSC will write a letter of appreciation to Correctional Service of Canada and the Minister of Public Safety for the reversal of the decision to cut funding to the CoSA program (background: <http://bit.ly/1gn9XMU>)
- Grants - Grant of \$500 to Spring House in Nova Scotia which “provides hospitable and affordable accommodations for families and friends while visiting area penitentiaries.” To learn more, visit: [http://concilioprisonministry.org/spring\\_house.html](http://concilioprisonministry.org/spring_house.html)
- Relationship-building – QFJ is expanding and deepening its networks as a part of strengthening the “knowledge brokering” project (see Winter 2014 *Quaker Concern*) among other areas of work. This includes plans to participate in the International Conference on Penal Abolition in June (Ottawa), a seminar on violence and aggression (also in June, in Saskatoon), and an international Restorative Justice conference (also in June, <http://www.euforumrj.org/belfast>), as well as meetings of the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice and the Church Council on Justice and Corrections. The conference in Belfast, “Beyond crime: pathways to desistance, social justice, and peacebuilding” will broaden QFJ's scope of restorative justice, looking “beyond” its application to the criminal justice system. This conference will bring together diverse perspectives (the personal, the societal, the political) and will be inspired by a multitude of backgrounds and disciplines (such as criminology, social and political sciences, peace research, etc.).

#### ***Peace and sustainable communities:***

- Synthetic biology - Nine Monthly Meetings have reported. A document with quotes extracted from the Meetings' reports is being developed, which will be posted on the CFSC website once Meetings have given their permission. There is substantial unity among the Meetings that have reported. A draft statement and draft minute on synthetic biology is being prepared for documents in advance of Canadian Yearly Meeting's sessions in Winnipeg in August. Learn more about synthetic biology at: <http://quakerservice.ca/news/synthetic-biology/>
- Peacebuilding – CFSC's new book, *The Four Elements of Peacebuilding*, will be sent to each Meeting and Worship Group along with other materials to help in reflection and study. The book is also available online at: <http://bit.ly/4ElementsofPeace>
- Democratic Republic of Congo – Matt reported back on his recent trip to visit our partner in the DRC. Look for an article in the next Quaker Concern.
- Overseas volunteering – CFSC is working on a security policy (and plan) so that people who volunteer for overseas projects through CFSC, such as AGLI work camps, are better equipped for such service.
- Commemoration of World War I – There are a range of events planned by government, etc. and CFSC will also be encouraging the telling of "counter narratives" regarding the war and sharing them through the CFSC website, and other channels. Stay tuned for more information! If your Meeting is engaging in activities, please let us know – [matt@quakerservice.ca](mailto:matt@quakerservice.ca)

### ***Changes - Clerks and board membership***

We have changes in our program committee clerks: Sarah Chandler (Vernon MM, BC) is now co-clerking Quakers Fostering Justice with Philip Smith (Yonge St. MM, ON); Paul Dekar (Hamilton MM, ON) is now the Associate Clerk of Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities, with Trevor Chandler, Clerk (Vernon MM, BC). Lana Robinson (Vancouver Island MM, BC) is now the Associate Clerk of CFSC, and will become Clerk of CFSC at the rise of Yearly Meeting sessions in August, when Lesley Robertson (Vernon MM, BC) completes her term of service. Pete Cross (Hamilton MM, ON) will become Treasurer of CFSC at the rise of YM, when Don Alexander (Pelham EM, ON) completes his service. Dereck Collins-Thompson (Coldstream MM, ON), Associate Clerk, and Jeremy Hinzman (Toronto MM, ON) stepped down from the board this winter, and Jessica Tellez (Halifax MM, NS) began her service at this past meeting. We thank these Friends for their service.

## **Canada Post loses CFSC year-end donations**

It has come to our attention that at least three cheques mailed to us in December using our business return envelopes never arrived and were never returned to their senders! Most donations sent in the business return envelopes did arrive OK, but several of our donors contacted us as their cheques never cleared their bank accounts. If you attempted to make a year-end donation and the cheque has not yet been cashed by CFSC, please let us know (416-920-5213 or [matt@quakerservice.ca](mailto:matt@quakerservice.ca)) so we can continue to follow up with Canada Post. Thank you and we apologize for this!

## **It's Peace Tax season once again!**

A reminder to Friends - please consider submitting a Peace Tax Return when doing your taxes this year. This will show your conscientious objection to paying for military spending. You'll find the Peace Tax Return link on Conscience Canada's website at [www.consciencecanada.ca](http://www.consciencecanada.ca)



## **QUONO Geneva is hiring (two positions)**

CFSC partners with the Quaker United Nations Office Geneva. They have two positions open:

### 1. Programme Assistant in Food & Sustainability and Climate Change (one year appointment)

This is an excellent opportunity for someone with an interest in international affairs and in international organizations to experience a range of international work, while working primarily as an assistant to QUNO's Representative for Food & Sustainability in her work relating to agricultural trade and investment and on intellectual property of plants. **Application deadline: March 16th.** Visit: <http://bit.ly/1i38aAm>

### 2. Human Rights and Refugees Representative (permanent position)

QUNO is seeking a committed and motivated person with considerable knowledge and experience in international human rights work, who is a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers) or in close sympathy with Quaker approaches and who has excellent leadership, analytical, visioning and inter-personal skills. QUNO's current thematic human rights priorities include:

- the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty, in particular women prisoners and children of prisoners, including children whose parent has been sentenced to death or executed;
- conscientious objection to military service, including refugee protection for unrecognised conscientious objectors; and
- supporting the Quaker work on the rights of Indigenous peoples.

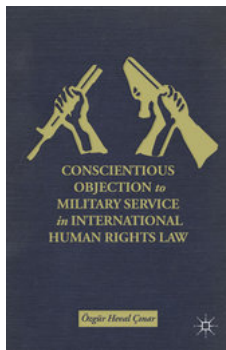
**Closing date for completed applications: 21 April 2014.** Visit: <http://www.quno.org/opportunities>

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## New hope to ban nuclear weapons

Canadian Yearly Meeting is a founding member of Project Ploughshares, an ecumenical agency focusing on peace and disarmament. Ploughshares has recently written about hopeful developments in an international process to finally achieve a legal ban on nuclear weapons. Read about it at: <http://ploughshares.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Briefing-14.1.pdf>



## New book on Conscientious Objection

Friends with a concern around conscientious objection may be interested in "*Conscientious Objection to Military Service in International Human Rights Law*". This new book explores the concept of conscience and its evolution with a view toward understanding the meaning and potential scope of the legal right to conscientious objection. It also describes the different categories into which conscientious objectors can be divided and how these differences are interpreted at the national and international levels. At \$100, it is a bit pricey, but may be of interest to Friends' Meetings with libraries, and those passionate about the concern. To learn more, or purchase, visit: <http://bit.ly/PtNE2u>



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