Annual Session Site Committee Report to NPYM Virtual Annual Session 2020

Prior to Annual Session 2019, Site Committee recommended that we return to the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana, for our July 2021 and 2022 annual gatherings; that recommendation was approved. The University is holding space for us on next summer’s conference calendar, and the committee is hopeful that circumstances will allow us to return.

At our Linfield College gathering last year, the committee – through an interest group session, our presence at Quaker Fair, and a standing poster at the entrance to the dining hall – sought input from Friends present around the question of considering a “permanent” site for our annual gathering. A wide range of opinions, experiences, concerns and recommendations were expressed, with no clear endorsement of moving toward a fixed, long-term venue for annual session from participants. Three broad options for future in-person annual gatherings emerged:

- Keep our current pattern of cycling among western Washington, western Oregon, and “east of the Cascades” every two years, but aim to find and contract with venues that we can return to consistently. (The “3 fixed sites” option.)
- Move to a pattern of cycling between two fixed “longer-term” sites (one west of the Cascades, the other east) every 3 years. (The “2 fixed longer-term sites” option.)
- Find a geographically-central venue that meets the wide range of AS attendees’ needs and that we can contract with on an extended basis. (The “unicorn” option.)

Site Committee does not have a recommendation or proposal to present at this time. We intended to follow up on the input gathered at Linfield with a pan-NPYM online survey, originally slated for the spring of 2020, but delayed due to the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic. We now plan on sending out the survey in the early fall of 2020, and look forward to hearing from F/friends from all corners of our diverse yearly meeting. Although we have entered an age of uncertainty regarding when large, in-person, residential gatherings can resume, we want to be prepared for 2023 and beyond. Based on the augmented feedback from the survey, and guided by Spirit, by next year we hope to find clarity on a proposal for keeping or changing our current pattern of where our annual gatherings take place.

For Annual Session Site Committee,

Lyn Gordon, Clerk

The current Annual Session Site Committee membership includes: Lyn Gordon, Clerk (Multnomah); Bev Young (Missoula); Don Goldstein (Bellingham); Johanna MacNee (Pullman-Moscow); and Margaret Coahran (Pullman-Moscow).