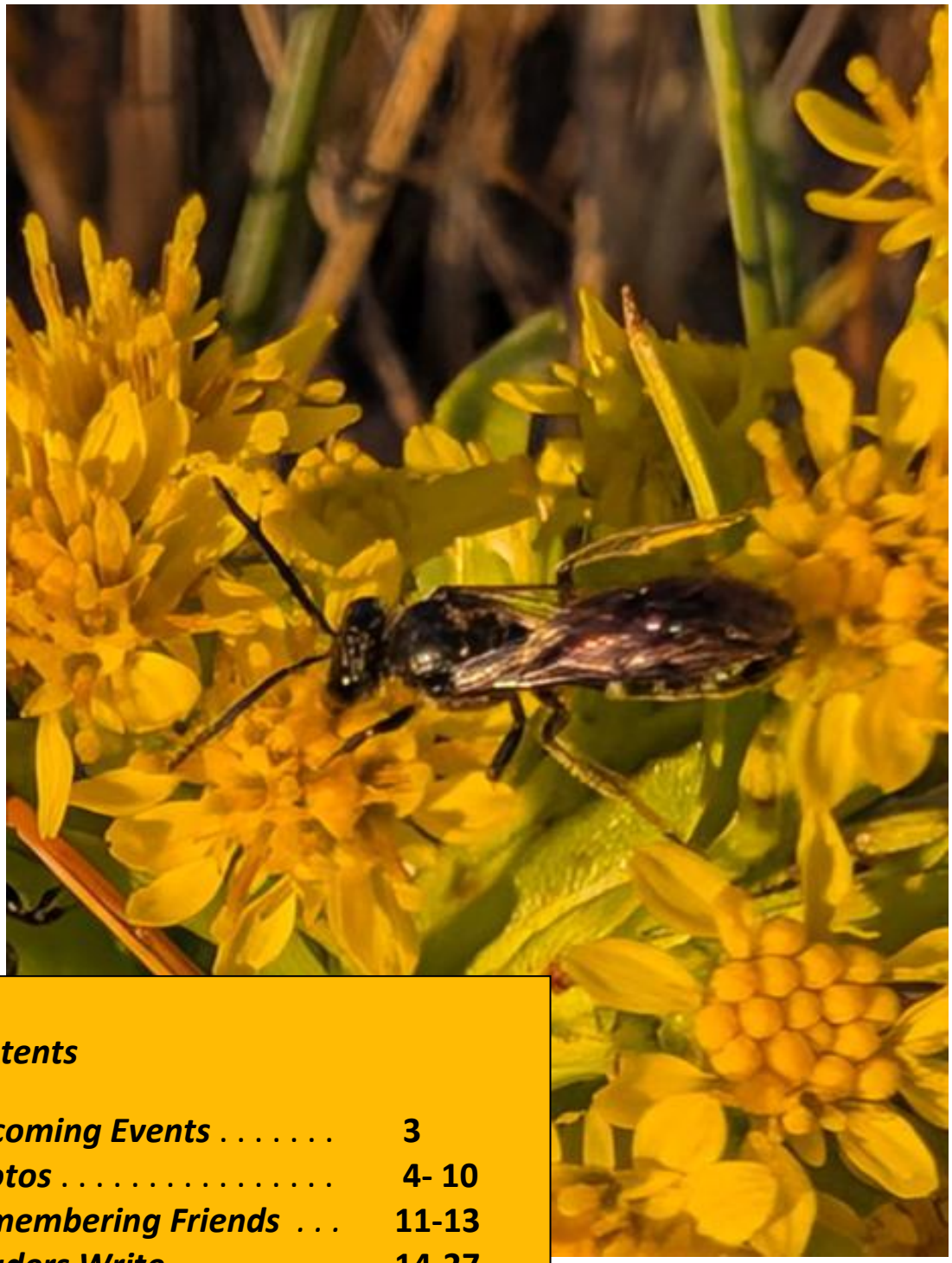
THE GAZETTE

Sandwich Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

NOVEMBER 2026



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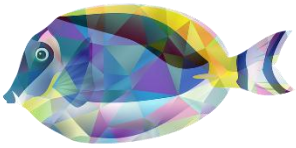
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Goldenrod
by Mary Oliver

On roadsides,
in fall fields,
in rumpy bunches,
saffron and orange and pale gold,
in little towers,
soft as mash,
sneeze-bringers and seed-bearers,
full of bees sand yellow beads and perfect flowerlets
and orange butterflies.
I don't suppose
much notice comes of it, except for honey,
and how it heartens the heart with its blank blaze.
I don't suppose anything loves it, except, perhaps,
the rocky voids
filled by its dumb dazzle.
For myself,
I was just passing by, when the wind flared
and the blossoms rustled,
and the glittering pandemonium
leaned on me.
I was just minding my own business
when I found myself on their straw hillsides,
citron and butter-colored,
and was happy, and why not?
Are not the difficult labors of our lives
full of dark hours?
And what has consciousness come to anyway, so far,
that is better than these light-filled bodies?
All day
on their airy backbones
they toss in the wind,
they bend as though it was natural and godly to bend,
they rise in a stiff sweetness,
in the pure peace of giving
one's gold away.

In *Blue Iris: Poems and Essays*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2004.

Upcoming Events


Wampanoag Food Pantry Grocery Certificate Program

Collection for the Wampanoag Food Pantry Grocery Certificate Program will continue through November 30. Checks should be made out to your preparative meeting with *SMM Wampanoag Food Pantry* on the memo line.



Alternative Gift Market

The 2026 **Alternative Gift Market** is coming! Saturday, **November 7** and Sunday, **November 8** at Saint Barnabas Church in Falmouth. Browse at Fair Trade tables and learn about local, national, and global charitable organizations. **Online shopping** from **November 9-16** at https://alternativegiftmarketcapecod.org/. West Falmouth Friends Meeting is a Supporting Congregation.

Photos

Falmouth Gun Safety Coalition members Nan Logan (president) and Molly Cornell at a pop-up stand out on the Davisville Road intersection in East Falmouth, October 7th



Sandwich Monthly Meeting Annual Picnic – September 20



West Falmouth
Friendship Garden
Mid-September through
Mid-October
Photos by Erica H. Adams















Photo of Sunny, October 15
by J. Gates.

Lewis Randa addresses East Sandwich Meeting September 13 as part of his court-ordered community service.







Refugee Deportation Memorial Stone Walk, October 3 – a 6-mile trek from Millis to Sherborn, MA





Remembering Friends

Elizabeth "Buffy" Curtis *Molly Cornell*

April 2, 1949 – September 16, 2026

We remember Buffy Curtis back in the days as a woman deeply engaged with managing a household full of children, small animals in various stages of rehabilitation, many pets (especially orphaned dogs) and innumerable other projects. There was a large kitchen garden that produced food for the family table year around. Buffy was an educator who started a homeschooling academy, bringing children and parents together in a structure that included traditional methods of education and lessons based on nature. She devoted time and energy supporting her own children in their passions: horses/horsemanship, baseball, and fishing were primary.

One day, with five growing children and a sixth one on the way, she confided to one of the moms how she wished she could *just have some moments of quiet*. The friend, a Quaker, said *why don't you try coming to meeting? You'll find a quiet place and, besides, there will be someone there to look after the children*. That is how Buffy found her way to West Falmouth Friends Meeting, where she discovered a spiritual home awaiting her arrival. Her formal welcoming into membership was recorded in 1989.

When Buffy came into our Quaker community we were blessed with many gifts. She was a spiritually inspiring presence, with a gift of deeply centered vocal ministry. We remember her wonderful sense of welcoming; she made each person feel they mattered and that they belonged. Buffy was instrumental in helping to establish a preparative meeting Ministry & Counsel committee in order to better address the needs of our growing membership. Under Buffy's care, the women of the meeting started gathering in a *circle of sharing* on a monthly basis. This cherished tradition continues to this day. Buffy was also a healer. She sought training in the art of Healing Touch, and carried a travel minute in Healing Ministry in support of her work at the FGC Gathering and NYYM Silver Bay Healing Centers.

Closer to home her healing ministry offered pastoral care in ways that were quietly felt.

In the early 2000s a search for a job took her to Powell House in Old Chatham, NY. After settling in the region, Buffy transferred her membership in 2008 to Mohawk Valley Friends Meeting (New York Yearly Meeting). However, the salt air and the beauty of her beloved Cape Cod brought her back many times to visit.

A friend wrote: "Buffy had an extraordinary capacity to be present in people's lives. She showed up. She cared for people. She listened. She talked about the ordinary things that make up life. She was generous with herself and her time and kept looking forward, making plans, imagining what was still to come."

A typical closing to an e-mail or note from Buffy was: "Make a wish!" We will miss her.

In Remembrance of Ken Brynildsen *Theresa Packard*

In worship is where I most miss our Friend Ken. He was my bench mate. A fellow traveler who oriented me to my preferred seat in the meetinghouse. One morning he was under a crooked hurricane lamp and I worried the glass would slip out onto him.

It feels like Ken and I were on a seesaw going gently up and down. Smiling, winking, sharing cough drops. My seesaw is on the ground now with me looking up at the empty seat.

I don't know if any of us could even pronounce his last name but it didn't matter. He was a gentle kind man who left crumbs under his chair in fellowship each week. He shared thoughtful conversations and deeply loved his family. He is missed.

For Ken Brynildsen *Ken Jacobsen*

Your passing leaves an empty place in our times of worship and fellowship.
I know what a dedicated bodybuilder you were back in the day;
I came to know what a tender, caring, and searching soul you are,
seeking so earnestly to meet and know, face to face, the universal Source of Love.

Now you have done so as you continue to inspire us to do the same in our earthly walk, especially in our meetings for worship which became a spiritual home for you in these latter years.

Thank you, Ken Brynildsen, for all you have brought to us,
we are with you in the Spirit of Love.





Readers Write

Seeing "That of God" in a Weed *Kathleen Henderson*

It all started with George Fox, of course, the idea of seeing "that of God in all men." Probably a reaction to the spiritual elitism of Calvinism where some people were "chosen" and most were not but, still, it was revolutionary. Can you see the essential, the universal, the - yes, the *beauty* - in… a beggar? …a thief? …a non-believer? Yes, Fox said, we can and we should – we are interconnected, just a skin's sliver away from each other. Like many of the things that George Fox said, I have a hard time figuring out what it meant to him, having to parse it through all the 17th century language and mores, but I certainly seek that of God every time I'm in meeting for worship.

I'm not sure when the patriarchal "…*men*" changed to "seeing that of God in all *people*" since I'm not an historian. I Imagine it was when Friends were working with women's voting rights. Then it became "…all *Beings*" after Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and the growing environmental movement and our understanding of how interconnected the fate of the animals is to us. I was around when it turned into "…all *Creation*" because how can we leave out the (seemingly) nonsentient parts of our world – the plants and the rocks and minerals that support them?

But can we see that of God in something we think is worthless -- like a weed? A weed is a human categorization, not a scientific one, and it changes with every human that surveys land that they begin to steward. A weed is something we don't want. For me - one of my least favorite "weeds" had been the goldenrod. Why did I dislike it? First of all, it's gold. I *hate* the color gold -- maybe because my mother went on a gold decorating streak in my childhood home and our entire living room was gold from carpet to curtains. The goldenrod flower itself is underwhelming -- a messy collection of tiny buds, not one of those beautiful well-defined forms like a geranium or a rose.

Why then do my husband and I have 6 different species of goldenrods in our Cotuit demonstration native plant garden which we call The Little Wildlife Sanctuary?

Well, it has to do with our garden's name and intention. We hope to provide sanctuary -- a resting place and nourishment -- to our animal neighbors. We want to try to stop the terrible decline of our birds (studies show that about 3 billion birds in the U.S. have disappeared since 1970) by offering natural resources, seeds, and nectar for their survival. In order to do this, we have to provide them with insects – insects that pollinate our flowers to produce seeds; and insects that produce the larva/caterpillars that provide the extra protein that birds require during nesting season (scientists have determined that birds like chickadees need from 6,000 to 9,000 caterpillars to raise one clutch of eggs). Goldenrods are a little bit on the later side to help with the nesting birds although they do support almost 200 species of butterflies, moths, and other insects. However, they are just the ticket for nectar and pollen for the late season pollinators -- the native bees, wasps, and flies that are still out there when many of the other flowers have gone by, and those larva in turn provide that extra bit of nourishment to birds for the long migration south. Their seeds, if left in the garden, provide food for the winter birds that have to scrape a poor living from our Cape Cod landscape that has been taken over by lawns, which to hungry animals appear as wasteland. Goldenrods and their late-blooming sisters, the beautiful purple asters, are also sanctuary in another way -- their stems provide a protected overwintering place for native bees, who drill into their stems and spend the winter. That's why we'll keep them in place and not cut them down like I used to in my former life as a tidy gardener of nonnative plants.

But still, could I see that of God in this weed? Can I see something inspiring, something that makes me identify, honor, and even admire it? The first goldenrod to break through to my heart was the Seaside Goldenrod. We who live on the Cape and walk beaches may have seen them there at the edge, big and imposing in the autumn chill. They've figured out how to battle salt water, brisk winds, and tidal floods by making their leaves and stems thick and protective like desert

succulents. They wave their golden flowers in the salt air and invite pollinators to their flowers. They are so brave or, as scientists have determined, so *adapted* to life on the hard side. I think they are sassy and courageous, and I love their determination. But beyond this, I see through them to the interplay -- the way we are all connected -- from late plant to buzzing pollinators to flower nectar to seed to bird to food to appreciative human. I see that of God.

Kathleen and her husband, Dake Henderson, are building a native demonstration garden featuring plants that grow on the Cape. Visitors are always welcome, as are questions about suitable plants for your garden.



Photo: D. Henderson, Cotuit, October 2026.

I Don't Know *Paul Denoncourt*

I don't know how to use my cell phone beyond making calls, sending a text or email, and taking
& storing photographs.
Ditto for this computer on which I am working.
I don't understand Quantum Mechanics, even though the universe is built upon it.
I don't know why people can be so mean, and why the world has become so polarized.

I don't know what I am: Just a body? A body and a soul? A manifestation of Divinity?
I don't know what my purpose is for being here.
I don't know whether I have been here before or will be here again.
I don't know what will happen after death. Will I have fulfilled my purpose?

I don't know what God is.
I don't know what it means to be a Child of God.
I don't know how to pray.
I don't know whether God wants to be invited into me or is God already within and wants to
come out into the world through me?

Am I God having a human experience?
Are you God also?
Is every plant and animal God as well?
When we swat a mosquito do we kill God?

Compared to what I don't know, what I do know is miniscule.
I exist in a Cloud of Unknowing.
Someone ought to write a book about that. Wait! Someone did.
I don't know the author's name.



*The basis for this poem came as I was walking and meditating during a September 2026 backpacking trip, a 50-mile solo sojourn in the North Maine Woods. The photo is of Upper South Branch Pond in Baxter State Park, taken during that trip.

Meeting the Neighbors, Human and Mushroom *Gail Melix*

Ken and I have spent quite a bit of time looking for a free mushroom identifier (for a Mac) that would allow us to identify the amazing variety of mushrooms we've found in our neighborhood. We were not successful, apparently because it is often difficult to differentiate the poisonous from the nonpoisonous. So, might there be a Quaker among us who knows mushrooms and can identify some of these? *[Editor's note: These two pages show a small sample of Gail's mushroom photos. Many more can be found in an attachment to this mailing.]*



All these mushrooms were found on either side of our road in our neighbors' yards from July to mid-October of this year. Ken and I take a half-mile daily walk on our street and, in addition to producing an incredible variety of mushrooms, these walks have also helped us get to know our neighbors and their dogs. The conversations have been telling and friendly. For some reason, at our age it's often easier to remember the dogs' names than the humans'. But no one minds, everyone is fond of their dogs, and there's lots to learn about folks when they talk about their family pets.

Ken has had two knee replacements this year. Our neighbors the full length of our street have been most encouraging as they've seen Ken go from wheelchair to walker to cane, and often come out of their houses or yards to offer cheer and encouragement. We're not sure why but a few call, "How are you kids doing?" as we pass by. I do know that each time we've made it to the cane-stage of walking, post-knee surgery, our hand holding seems to have an effect. Hand waving from cars is at an all-time high in our lives in this sweet neighborhood we are a part of.









Chicken Watch *Ann Prentice*



Golden Laced Cochin rooster

I have said that when I get old I'm going to spend my days sitting in the chicken yard watching the flock. That time is getting close. This was a difficult summer. One way I coped was to spend any spare minutes among the chickens, just watching. We have a flock of about 40 chickens of a variety of breeds: we have Arauccana (lay blue eggs), Sptizhauben (official chicken of Switzerland), Polish (a tuft of feathers on their heads), Chochin (feathers on their legs), Mystic Onyx (have 5 toes instead of the usual 4) . . . and many more. Now that most of the garden is done for the season I let the birds out in the afternoons. They wander the yard and field, scratching for bugs and grass seeds. I'll sit in a chair among them, reading or just watching the birds' behavior. It's a much-needed peaceful time. There is even a red squirrel (see back cover) that will bring a leaf over to sit near me to nibble it; when done it'll go get another leaf to eat. (I've become an eccentric old crone who lunches with squirrels.) The chickens are a friendly flock. The three roosters even co-exist, for now. The hens will often have friendships with each other. They'll roost together in the coop then spend the days looking for food and dust bathing together. At times there is a true 'pecking order'; a clique of 'mean girls' will intimidate and peck the younger hens. This nastiness seldom lasts long, too many grubs to scratch up. The hens are so accustomed to me that they will eat from my hand and some will even sit on my lap.

The more I watch the birds, the more I realize that they are also carefully watching me. I'll look up from my book and see a cluster of chickens staring at me. They'll cock their heads, stare, then cock their heads the other way. Sometimes a hen will watch me then go get a friend to come over and join the vigil. I push away the thought that chickens are basically tame dinosaurs and they do eat meat. I choose to believe that they are not waiting for a time to attack, but that they are just curious about a fellow creature. With that in mind I start to look at the trees differently. I wonder if they are also watching and learning about me. Do they get their sister trees to join the watch?





Readings and Organizations on Immigration *Miriam Davidson*

Thank you to those who attended my presentation on sanctuary and the border at the East Sandwich Meetinghouse on October 25. The discussion was informative and lively, and I enjoyed being with you. One attendee suggested it would be helpful to provide a list of organizations mentioned in the talk, as well as other groups working to help migrants both on the border and locally. Some of these are listed below, along with a suggested reading list for those interested in learning more about the border and immigration.

Recent Nonfiction Books:

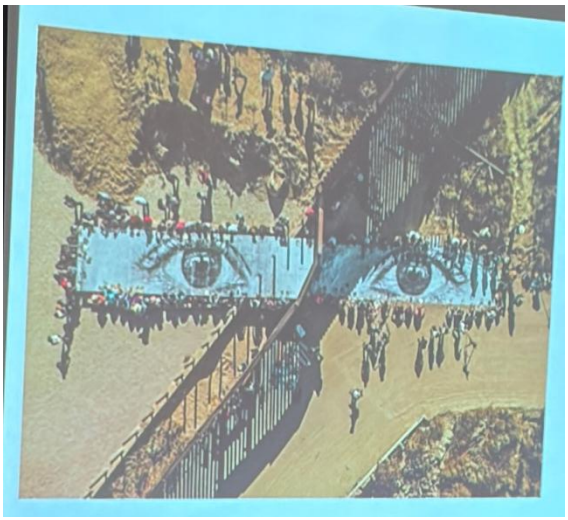
Jonathan Blitzer, *Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here: The United States, Central America and the Making of a Crisis,* Penguin, 2024.

Miriam Davidson, *The Beloved Border: Humanity and Hope in a Contested Land*, University of Arizona Press, 2021. See also: About this Guide/ Sobre Esta Guia - Sanctuary: Who Belongs Here? The Search for Homeland on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1848-Today - LibGuides at University of Arizona.



Jason De León, *Soldiers and Kings: Survival and Hope in the World of Human Smuggling*, Viking, 2024 (also *The Land of Open Graves*).

Reyna Grande and Sonia Guiñansaca, eds., *Somewhere We are Human: Authentic Voices on Migration, Survival and New Beginnings*, HarperVia, 2023.



Jacob Soboroff, *Separated: Inside an American Tragedy*, Mariner Books, 2020.

John Washington, *The Case for Open Borders*, Haymarket Books, 2024.

Javier Zamora, *Solito: A Memoir*, Hogarth Press, New York, NY, 2022.

Groups Helping Migrants and Refugees

Arizona-based:

Asylum Program of Arizona |

Coalición de Derechos Humanos | Ningún ser humano es ilegal

Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project:
Providing Free Legal and Social Services for Immigrants Facing Removal in AZ

Humane Borders: Home

Home - Kino Border Initiative

No More Deaths • No Más Muertes

Tucson Samaritans | Humanitarian Aid in the Desert

Salvavision

California- and Texas-based:

Southern Border Communities Coalition (SBCC)

South Texas Human Rights Center: southtexashumanrights.org

Massachusetts-based:

HOME | Falmouth Immigrants' Rights Coalition Home Page - MIRA Coalition

Groups Working on Other Border Issues:

Stop US Arms to Mexico – www.stopusarmstomexico.org

Center for Biological Diversity

Shadow of Shame *Lewis Randa*

Located at Peace Abbey Memorial Park in Sherborn, MA, the Immigrant Deportation Memorial Stone casts its shadow of remorse and regret, mirroring the grief of those torn from their families. This solemn granite marker stands alongside monuments to peace and conscience, physically anchoring the sudden silence of empty homes and the deep wounds of forced deportation. Yet, standing among the park's sacred memorials, it remains a fierce call to action, urging us to transform past pain into an unyielding and unrelenting commitment to justice so that no family is ever divided again.

This plaque commemorates those whose lives have been affected or lost in connection with our immigration system. Prominent recent examples, of course, are Renée Nicole Good, a mother and U.S. citizen who was killed by an ICE officer in Minneapolis, and Alex Pretti, a 37-year-old ICU nurse and U.S. citizen who was fatally shot by federal immigration officers less than three weeks later.



A lesser-known figure was Nghia Van Vy. Nghia was originally from Vietnam. He came to this country, built a life here, and became part of our community. He worked at Hope Chest in Millis, MA for 15 years, where students with special needs from the Peace Abbey's Life Experience School found meaning and purpose in their lives through their volunteer efforts.

Nghia was deported by ICE on September 2025 back to Vietnam, a country he'd fled decades earlier. Separated from the people, work, and community he loved, he experienced profound isolation and despair. He later died by suicide. The Immigration Deportation Memorial Plaque was underwritten in memory of him.

It reads:

IN HONOR OF
The countless men, women and children who sought refuge in the United States in search of safety, opportunity and a better life, only to be torn from their families, homes and communities through deportation. May this tribute bear witness to their humanity, affirm the dignity of every person, and call us to uphold compassion, justice, and the bonds of family that unite us all

May this plaque remind us that every person is on a pilgrimage. And may we choose to make that pilgrimage safer, more welcoming, and more humane for everyone who makes their journey to be among us.

On October 3 a group of walkers pulled the 450-pound Deportation Memorial stone and plaque on a 6-mile pilgrimage from the Bethany Hope Chest Ministry in Millis to the Peace Abbey Memorial Park in Sherborn. The walk concluded with a memorial service and placement of the plaque next to the civilian casualty-of-war monument. You can see photos from the walk on page 11 of this issue.

Photo credits: Front cover – D. Henderson, Cotuit, October 2026; Back cover – A. Prentice, Plymouth, October, 2026.

The Gazette is a publication of Sandwich Monthly Meeting
Rita O'Donnell, Editor
Alta Mae Stevens, Founding Editor
Stephen Gates, Photographer
Brenda Nolan, Transmitter

The next *Gazette* will be the January 2027 issue. Deadline is Saturday, December 19. For past issues of *The Gazette s*ee https://Capecodquakers.org/previous-issues-of-the-gazette/.

Clerks

Sandwich Monthly Meeting
Fran Lightsom
Capecodquakers.org

East Sandwich Preparative Meeting
Barbara Goodman
Sandwichquakers.org

West Falmouth Preparative Meeting
Molly Cornell and Cynthia Rankin
Westfalmouthquakers.com

Yarmouth Preparative Meeting
Pat Harvey
Yarmouthquakers.org

Gourds discuss the imperative to "walk cheerfully over the world answering that of gourd in everyone." Attributed to George Faux, 1656.



