

- Phil Tomson, Central, 1st, 09
- Barb Wood, East, 2nd, 05 bwoody@onlyinternet.net
- David Doudt, Treasurer, XA ddke@mchsi.com
- Stan Miller, Financial Scty., XA stan@abresist.com
- Jay Carter, General Board Rep., 1st, 05 jacarter@adamswells.com
- Mike Cassidy, Standing. Cmte., 1st, 07 mjancass@hotmail.com
- Bruce Hostetler, Standing. Cmte., 1st, 06 bahostetler@juno.com
- Ed Jackson, Moderator, 05
- Pam Princell, Mod.-Elect, 06 pprincipell@onlyinternet.net
- Sally Schrock, Conference Coord., 1st, 06 schrock04@aol.com
- Helen Wenger, Secretary, 1st, 06 hwwenger@aol.com
- Allen Kahler, District Executive akahler_ds@brethren.org

Denominational News – Keeping Informed

Church Staff meet with Selective Service.

Three staff directors of the General Board met with staff of Selective Service at the agency's office in Arlington, Va., Dec. 2. The meeting followed up on an unannounced visit to the Brethren Service Center in New Windsor, Md., on Oct. 8 by Cassandra Costley, director of the Alternative Service Division of Selective Service. New Windsor has a long history of being a site where Brethren have organized and gathered around issues of conscience and military service, most notably hosting Civilian Public Service workers from 1944-46. Selective Service is the federal agency that registers and maintains a database of young men as they reach their eighteenth birthday in order to maintain an accounting of those available for military service in the event of a military draft. "We went into this meeting with a clear agenda of opening a conversation with Selective Service in an effort to better understand why this visit to New Windsor occurred, and how we as a church could make clear our historic and active voice as a people of peace and nonviolence," reported Phil Jones, director of Brethren Witness/Washington Office. Also in the meeting were Brethren Volunteer Service director Dan McFadden and Brethren Service Center executive director Roy Winter.

The meeting lasted well into three hours, Jones reported. Was the New Windsor visit an indication that Selective Service was gearing up for a military conscription program, the group asked. "The answer is no, according to Costley, and her immediate supervisor, Richard Flahavan," Jones said. Costley, Flahavan, and the newly installed Director of Selective Service William Chatfield, who joined the meeting briefly, all indicated that their work was in regards to preparedness only. The New Windsor visit was made because Costley was in the area for other business and took the opportunity to make an outreach visit.



Flahavan went on to explain that **there is no draft and that none is coming as indicated by statements from the White House and Pentagon in recent months**, Jones reported. "He also pointed to the late October vote of Congress that overwhelmingly defeated a proposed draft bill" (HR 163), Jones said. "The gearing up for a draft and the sheer amount of funding and staff increases that would be necessary are reasons enough to indicate there will be no draft," Flahavan stated, indicating that a draft would cost in excess of one half billion dollars to initiate. Most of the meeting was spent in learning more about Selective Service and how its Alternative Service program would operate if there were a draft. "The fact that they were asking us a lot of questions shows that one of the things we have developed as a **peace church** is a lot of respect for our position," commented Stan Noffsinger, general secretary of the General Board. Within a week of the meeting with Selective Service, Noffsinger and Annual Conference moderator Jim Hardenbrook reported on the meeting to the Council of Moderators and Secretaries of the Anabaptist Churches. The council also includes officers of the Mennonite Church US, the Brethren in Christ, the Conservative Mennonite Church, Mennonite Central Committee US, and the Mennonite Brethren USA. Planning is underway for an Anabaptist churches' Consultation on Alternative Service, to be held at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill. Details will be announced after