

## **Kennan Garvey Memorial Minute**

*Still waters run deep.* That is the thought that comes to mind in remembering Kennan Garvey. This gentle man exuded a special kind of quiet leadership at Friends Meeting of Washington. He modeled the kind of contemplative listening that is the ideal of Quaker living, not so much because he tried to be an example, but rather because this quiet, open warmth defined Kennan

Kennan Garvey was serving as Clerk of Trustees when he died suddenly on January 19, 2008. He was Presiding Clerk of the Meeting from January 2004 to December 2006. He was serving on the Finance and Property Committee when he and his wife, Libby, became Members.

Kennan had been brought up Catholic. He discovered Quakers with Libby while still in college. After college he and Libby spent two years in the Peace Corps in the Central African republic. When they returned to Arlington to live, they found Friends Meeting of Washington and chose it their home meeting to raise their two daughters, Shannon and Ruth.

Early on, Kennan became Clerk of the Personnel Committee. Riley Robinson was hired to be Administrative Secretary during that time. Riley recalls that raising his family, developing a career and supporting his wife, while she accepted her calling as educator and school board member took precedence over committee work at FMW for some time. But when all was taken care of, Kennan began to pursue a leadership role within the FMW community.

In time, Kennan became Alternate Clerk of the Meeting, and eventually, Clerk of the Meeting. He is remembered as a quiet helper, advisor and friend. As Clerk of the Meeting he brought a well-honed respect for detail to the questions facing the community, ever keeping in mind the overriding, long term goals of our Meeting. He listened to everyone and had a sympathetic ear for all. He was able to synthesize and state the Sense of the Meeting in a way that envisioned a durable way forward, always nurturing the community while providing substantive information and advice.

Kennan's work for the Federal Environmental Protection Agency spilled over into the daily choices he made in his life. He commuted daily on bicycle from Arlington to his job in Washington, DC. During annual trips to Nicaragua, he worked to build earthquake-safe houses. In his upcoming retirement, Kennan intended to work as a volunteer with Phoenix Bikes, a program which helps children own and care for bicycles.

Kennan kept taped to his computer a quote from Albert Einstein. These thoughts reflect the kind of man, the kind of husband and father, the kind of Friend that Kennan Garvey was:

*“One cannot but be in awe when (one) contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries to merely comprehend a little of this mystery each day. Never lose a holy curiosity.”*

— Minute written by Lib Segal and Beth Cogswell.