

*The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
of La Crosse Newsletter  
June-July, 2004*

**Sunday Services:** Program at 10:00 AM Refreshments at 11:15 AM

**Services Site: The Pump House 119 King Street**

**Fellowship Mailing Address:** PO Box 2676, La Crosse, WI 54602-2676

**Message Center:** 608-796-9993

**Web site:** [www.uulacrosse.org](http://www.uulacrosse.org)

Summer Programs:

\* All begin at 10:00 AM

\* June 13 and July 11 have special meeting places (see below); all other services are at the Pump House

**June 13: “La Crosse River Marsh Walk”**

Come celebrate the interdependent web of life at the La Crosse River. The Fellowship will meet at the **Myrick Park trailhead** at 10 AM for a guided walk through the marsh by biologist and UUF member **Melinda Knutson**. We will see how life in the marsh has responded to weather conditions this season and we'll learn to identify some birds by their songs. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy following the walk.

**June 27: “Rivers of Stories & Songs”**

Singer/songwriter and social activist **Larry Long** will share life stories from his thirty years of travel. After working with folk legend Pete Seeger along the Hudson River, Larry returned home to Minnesota to organize river cleanups and celebrations along the upper Mississippi throughout the 1980's. His dedicated performance for our Fellowship in 2003 at UW-L, in conjunction with the Great River Folk Fest, was enthusiastically received!

Following the service, at 11:30 AM, Larry Long will lead a workshop titled “Organizing for Social Justice”. Larry is a gifted organizer, and he will share his enthusiasm while teaching organizing methods. Food arrangements will be made for this workshop, which is expected to last 2-3 hours. A \$10 workshop donation is requested--lunch costs paid individually. To register, or for more info, contact Ron Malzer at \_\_\_\_\_, or Cindy Ericksen at \_\_\_\_\_.

**July 11: “Music That Inspires Us”.** Please join us at the home of **Kim & Mikel Cobb, 902 Orchid Place, Onalaska**. You are invited to bring a piece of recorded music that inspires you—CD, cassette, LP, (even a '45 with a center)—sorry, no 8-track tapes. You will have an opportunity to introduce and play your selection—jazz, rock, classical, folk, blues, whatever. Please also bring one fruit to go into a communally-prepared fruit salad that we will share. Children are welcome. For more information, call the Cobbs at \_\_\_\_\_

**July 25: "In Praise of Poetry and Reverential Language".**

**The Reverend Dean Staffanson**, UU Community Minister, will lead the service. Dean writes: “Sometimes a poem is all I need-- or is all I have-- to get me through the night, or over some obstacle. I plan to share some poems with you, and how they impacted me. I believe some poems qualify as 'reverential' and I would like to encourage the use of more reverential language in our Fellowship through this presentation. I hope you can make it, and if you have a poem that lifts your spirits-- please bring it. I expect we can take time to share some of these with each other.”

**August 8: “A Remembrance of Malvina Reynolds”**

**Becky Post** will lead this service. Malvina Reynolds is a UU songwriter. She is known for "Little Boxes," "What Have They Done to the Rain?" and many more. We'll take a look at her life, and sing or listen to several of her songs.

**August 22: “The Revolution Will Not Be Televised”.** Video presentation on the political crisis in Venezuela—further details will appear in the next Newsletter.

## Music News

### **Becky Post**

The first choir rehearsal of the season will be Wednesday, Aug. 25, at the Pump House, in the basement conference room at 7:00 PM We'll begin to rehearse for September services. Hope to see everyone there.



## Membership News

### **Madeline Kepner**

Our Fellowship welcomed three new members in May: Alice Mack, Will George, and Chris Meisenheimer. We are happy to have you join us.

The Membership Committee will meet Tuesday, June 8th, 7:00 PM at Madeline Kepner's apartment, 801 Main St. #307.

## Board of Trustees Notes

### **Kathy Schnitzius**

#### **A Board Meeting was held on May 6, 2004.**

\*New members-elect, Eric Severson and Joyce Starrett, were welcomed. They will take office on June 1.

\*A discussion was held regarding our liability for children who attend a Fellowship-sponsored field trip. Our insurance policy does not address this specifically. Margaret will call the insurer to obtain a sample packet of their forms. We need to find the field trip permission form and create a medical emergency form.

\*We agreed to employ Dean Staffanson as our Fellowship representative to the local ministerial association and to pay him \$25 per meeting.

\*A discussion by the Long Range Planning Committee resulted in a decision to cancel the retreat which had been planned for June 2004 and to plan a fun camping outing for next spring instead. There will be a committee chair and board meeting later this summer.

\*The electric piano will be put up for rent to members of the fellowship. Any money realized from this rental will go into the music account. [See Piano for Rent, page 4].

\*Jean Novack reported to the Board on her attendance at the PSD Annual Meeting. Jean will also attend the first week of the Midwest Leadership School in Beloit.

\*The fire drill has been postponed. Jean will meet with the R.E. teachers to train them in safety procedures.

\*A discussion took place about assuring first floor security while we are having our service upstairs. It was decided that we would bring this up at the upcoming Board and Committee Chair Meeting.

\*We are able to use a desk near the women's bathroom in the Pump House. We may want to put a computer there with our Power Church software and records. This is a topic for further discussion.

Next meeting: Thursday, June 3, 7:00 PM the Pump House.

#### **Caregiver of the Month in June will be Wendy Mattison, 781-3507. Liz Spangler and Madeline Kepner will be caregivers in July and August.**

If you know of joys or sorrows, please let them know. We will have the following Caregiver Slips available at the Fellowship, but in the meantime, please inform us of members/friends we need to keep in touch with.

To Caregiver:

Member/friend joy or concern

Send card \_\_\_\_\_ Call \_\_\_\_\_

Visit \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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## Member News

### **Liz Spangler**

**Becky Post** is a first-time grandmother with the birth of her daughter's baby girl in Colorado. **Phil Sandberg** is one year cancer-free this month. **Francine Klein** reports that her doctoral dissertation has been completed. **Andy & Nancy Matchett** share the good news of their son's graduation from NYU medical school in New York City.

{ continues on page 3 }

## Member News {continued from page 2}

He is doing an internship in San Francisco. Nancy is a newly-appointed principal. **Thea Schnitzius** is a new grad of the University of Wisconsin in Madison. **Keith Belzer** is working through some back pain. Ouch! **Liz Bonnett** lost a brother-in-law. **Jeff Bernardy's** mother passed away. **Dave Long's sister, Mary**, passed away. Please extend your sympathy to these folks. **Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer's** mom is out of the hospital and back in her nursing home.

Keep us up to date with your good/bad news this summer. Let us know how the Fellowship may be helpful to you.

## Notice: Director of Religious Education Wanted

**Kim Cobb**

The Religious Education Committee is accepting applications for the position of Director of Religious Education for the Fellowship. We are posting the opportunity internally first, and then opening it to the general public. The following job description and qualifications still need final Board approval, but we don't expect any major changes. All applications will be confidential. If you are interested in this position, please submit a letter of application and resume to Ann Beechler, or, by e-mail, to

### Director of Religious Education *Job Responsibilities* 5/31/04 Working Copy

- \* Evaluate the R. E. Program and the R. E. Teachers once per semester;
- \* Prepare weekly announcements for the Order of Service;
- \* Orient volunteers to teaching;
- \* Provide ongoing support for volunteer and teachers;
- \* Schedule volunteers and teachers;
- \* Support and coordinate the planning of special events and celebrations, e.g., intergenerational services and farewell to seniors;
- \* Purchase and maintain supplies and equipment;
- \* Keep registration records up-to-date;
- \* Assure reimbursement of volunteers and teachers for supplies purchased;
- \* Keep up-to-date attendance information;
- \* Maintain ongoing communication with the Fellowship and Board Chair;

- \* Be present on Sunday mornings twice per month-- responsibilities these Sundays will include:
  - Serve as RE greeter and welcome members and visitors to the RE program; provide tours as needed;
  - Teach one group of RE students;
- \* Other jobs which may be required by the Religious Education Committee:
  - Write a monthly newsletter article;
  - Attend R.E. Committee meetings.

### Director of Religious Education *Qualifications*

#### 5/30/04 Working Copy

- Experience and degree and education, human services, etc. preferred
- Knowledge of UU religious education philosophy and curricula preferred
- Comfort with a wide variety of religious views
- Relational, organizational, administrative, communication, and volunteer management skills
- Initiative, self-direction, and ability to encourage and motivate others
- Demonstrated commitment to the growth and development of children
- Basic knowledge of computers, e-mail and general office software
- Personal computer resources required.

The "Organizing for Social Justice" Workshop led by singer/songwriter and activist Larry Long will meet immediately following services on June 27<sup>th</sup>. We will assemble at the coffee room of the Pump House at 11:30 AM; a \$10 donation plus food cost share is requested.

Those planning to attend, as well as those seeking more information, are encouraged to call in advance to make a reservation, so that we can adequately plan space and food, as well as notify all about where we will meet.

Ron Malzer:

Cindy Ericksen:

## UU Social Justice Column

### Heifer International

**Bill Katra**

The publicity for a fund raiser in early May by St. John's Episcopal Church near Market and West Avenue reminded me – once again—about one of the most successful projects aimed at improving the lives of less fortunate people in less fortunate countries: Heifer International.

Take into consideration the context of my praise: over the past forty years I have participated in many do-good projects and have observed in operation a vast many more. Most projects involve the construction of a relationship between a person who gives and a person who receives. In the short run this can lead to needed material improvement, which is applauded. But there are also concerns: in striving for material betterment other important spheres of activity are ignored; the recipient's enhanced life-style often leads to greater rather than less dependency; gratitude, after a time, is inevitably flavored by growing doses of resentment and humiliation.

I have also suffered deception and disillusionment in working with other programs when, time after time, I re-learn the hard lesson that in many, if not most cases, poor people—even the recipients of altruistic aid—are perhaps as susceptible as the wealthy of envy, greed, and self interest. Also, poor people are more likely to be ignorant of many things we here take for granted, are slow to learn and change behaviors, and frequently practice vices (a drinking problem, for example) that thwart their upward advancement. The hard lesson I have learned is that a successful program to help the impoverished to truly better their lives has to take these negative factors into account.

I had heard of the Heifer Program over the years, but it wasn't until about five years ago that I actually saw it in operation. With some Viterbo students I accompanied the Franciscan Sisters to an impoverished rural community called Ixmiquilpan, in the State of Hidalgo, just a few hundred miles north of Mexico City. There I saw the humble level of a family's initiation into the program: Heifer would provide a dozen chicks and weekly classes. The individual or family would have to raise the chicks to maturity and months later repay Heifer with a dozen of the offspring chicks. The successful completion of this first stage would qualify the individual for a Heifer grant of a matched pair of pig sucklings. Again, the mandatory classes, and again, after a year, the repayment to Heifer of two newborn sucklings. Only after completing successfully this second stage would the individual qualify to receive a heifer. Then again, mandatory classes, supported by the availability of inoculations, feed supplements, and impregnation services. And after a year, the participant would be required to return to the Program

a healthy heifer born from the mature milk-giving cow that he or she now possessed.

The Program works and its strengths are obvious: The skills and work practices of the recipient are enhanced; the family enjoys improved nutrition and health. The community as a whole also benefits, with invigorated economy, increased collaboration, and promotion of leadership.

Heifer International would welcome donations: call 1-800-422-0474 for more information. In perusing their pamphlet on project profiles, I see that they collaborate with the United Nations, the Peace Corps, and other worthwhile organizations. They have a variety of projects, some quite different from what I observed in Mexico. But the goals are constant: to put poor people on the road to self-reliance by helping them build productive businesses. Heifer is active across the world, Guatemala to China, Tanzania to the Philippines. *Newsletter Editor Christopher Townsend adds: Along with calling the phone number Bill provided, you might want to view this Web site:*

<http://www.heifer.org/>

#### **Digital Piano for Rent**

**Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer**

The Fellowship purchased a Kawai digital piano in March of 1996, and used it regularly until our move to the Pump House. Since we have the use of two other pianos at the Pump House, our digital piano is now sitting unused in the storage room in the basement. We do not want to sell it at this time, so we are offering it for rent to interested Fellowship members. It has a full 88-key piano keyboard with weighted keys so that it feels more like playing a regular piano. It would be ideal for a beginning piano student. We will rent it to a voting member of the Fellowship at the rate of \$5.00/month, with the agreement that the member will pay for repairs if it is damaged. Non-voting members would pay a rental of \$10.00/month. Contact Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer at \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ if interested in renting the piano.

#### **Building Fund Donation**

**Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer**

In March, we received a \$3,000 donation to the Building Fund by a member who wishes to remain anonymous. Thanks you to that member. This extremely generous gift helped raise the current balance in the Building Fund to \$43,024.84. While we are happily settled in the Pump House for the foreseeable future, we do not expect it to be our permanent home. We continue to put all unspecified cash collected in Sunday offerings in the Building Fund. The proceeds from the **upcoming rummage sale to be held on June 26th [see page 5]** will support the Building Fund. Continued gifts to the Building Fund will help us move closer to the day when we have our own building.

## UU RUMMAGE SALE SCHEDULED!

**Connie Long**

Time again to get rid of excess junk (treasures) and raise money for the building fund. The Dihlmann-Malzers have generously agreed to host the sale Saturday June 26th. Sale will run from 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM Items can be delivered Friday from noon until 8:00 PM. **YOU MUST PRICE EACH ITEM--** masking tapes works well for most clothing. If you want to keep an item that doesn't sell you must pick it/them up at 3 p.m. All remaining merchandise will be donated to New Horizons, Salvation Army, or Goodwill. We will need three to four volunteers working at all times and extra volunteers at the end for cleanup and transportation. Please contact Connie Long to schedule a 3- hour shift ASAP! Times will be 7:00(ish) AM to 10:00 AM, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM., and 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Donation of cookies (for the workers and) to sell would be greatly appreciated.

\* \* \*

**Attention:** While going through Dave's sister's possessions, we discovered many items of expensive clothing, coats and shoes that had never (or hardly ever) been worn in women's sizes small and medium and shoe sizes 7 1/2 & 8. These items, mostly suitable for work but some casual, will be available Friday June 25th at the Dihlmann-Malzer's for you to view and try on. We are offering all the items for a donation to the UU Building Fund, **YOU DETERMINE THE PRICE!** Even if you don't have items to drop off for the UU sale, please come and look through these fantastic bargains. --**Connie and Dave Long.**

## UU Fellowship Community Outreach

**Ron Malzer**

Thanks to the generosity of our members, a new initiative for community outreach was a success. Special Collection Sundays were held on April 25<sup>th</sup>—for the Hunger Task Force, and on May 9<sup>th</sup>—for New Horizons. Our collections raised \$317 for La Crosse's Hunger Task Force, and \$363 for New Horizons. By acting in concert, we increase our impact on our community.

The Social Justice Committee, in conjunction with Program Committee and our Board, is working to extend our Community Outreach in the coming year. Social Justice Committee will be finalizing a policy drafted by Ray Starrett and Liz Bonnett, that will create a structure for fund-raising and distribution.

Again, thanks to all who helped out in this effort.

## UUA News

**Deborah Weiner**

**Director of Electronic Communication  
Unitarian Universalist Association**

## Texas Tax Dispute Against UU Congregation Resolved

(Boston, MA - May 26, 2004) The Comptroller's Office of the State of Texas has reversed a September, 2003 ruling that denied tax exempt status to the Denison, Texas (Red River) UU church. At the time, the Comptroller of Public Accounts for the state, Carole Keeton Strayhorn, determined that the church was not eligible for exemption from taxes, citing her finding that the congregation “does not have one system of belief.”

In his May 24 letter to congregational president Dan Althoff, Jesse Ancira Jr., General Counsel for the Tax Policy Division of the State of Texas stated, “After reviewing the submitted application, file material, as well as correspondence between yourself and staff from our Tax Policy Division, it is my opinion that the Red River Unitarian Universalist Church is an organization created for religious purposes and should be granted the requested tax exemption.”

Complete information on the ruling and background material is available on the Southwest UUA District Web site, at <http://www.swuuc.org/events/taxexempt2.html>

## Notable American Unitarians Web Site

**Herbert Vetter**

**Harvard University**

Unitarians have been at the center of religion in North America in the twentieth century. Where's the evidence? Check the facts now online—150 illustrated biographies of the twentieth century notable American Unitarians—both women and men in the arts and sciences, education and literature, government and business, religion and philanthropy.... American Unitarians are a creative minority whose heritage is now being celebrated world wide in a series titled **Notable American Unitarians 1740-1900**, <http://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org> ...

Despite the charges of our friendly detractors, when you look at the life stories on this Web site you may be happily astonished to behold the long established substantial contribution made by Unitarians to the creation and advance of civilization in North America.

## New Horizon Update

Our fellowship has had a long relationship with New Horizons, a local shelter for women and children who are fleeing domestic abuse and constructing healthier paths through their lives. A donation box is available each Sunday at the front of the meeting room.

This month, please consider contributing one or more of the following items that are especially needed: crayons; deodorant; digital thermometers; dish cloths; dish soap; dishwasher soap; nonperishable food; disposable diapers; child and family videos; shower curtains; and Dry Erase markers. If you have questions, please contact Ellen Severson at

## Pride Along the Mississippi

The Fellowship communications committee will again sponsor an information booth at the Pride Along the Mississippi Festival this summer. This year the Fest will be held on Saturday, July 31. The information table allows the Fellowship to show it's support for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people and gives us the opportunity to let others know about UUism and to be more visible in the community. Watch for sign-up sheets for volunteers to help staff our info booth coming soon. Your help in staffing our table will be greatly appreciated. Please mark your calendars now

← Important Schedule notes:

*On Sunday June 13, meet at 10:00 AM at Myrick Park for Marsh Walk.*

*“Organizing for Social Justice” workshop with Larry Long follows the service on June 27.*

*Our July 11 program, “Music that Inspires us,” will be held at the Cobb’s house this year.*

The next newsletter will be out in late July/early August.