

October, 2003

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of La Crosse Newsletter

Sunday Services: Program at **10:00 AM** followed by refreshments at **11:15 AM**, Southside Senior Center, 1220 Denton Street, La Crosse, WI

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

Message Center: 608-796-9993

Web site: www.uulacrosse.org

Upcoming Programs

October 5 – The Reverend Shelley Dugan, from St. Paul, Minnesota, will present a service titled “**Moving On.**” She describes her sermon topic as “getting signs and encouragement from the universe/God when you’re at the end of your rope.”

October 12 - "A Non-violent Response to 9-11." Vince Hatt will explore with our Fellowship some other options than the path our nation followed. *Choir Sunday.*

Vince Hatt is a retreat director, spiritual guide, teacher, and workshop presenter. He is currently Director of the Franciscan Spirituality Center. He holds a bachelor's degree in science from Notre Dame, a master's degree in religious education from Catholic University, and a master's degree in theology from Aquinas Institute. He enjoys running, biking, and watching movies with his wife Janice.

October 19 – “**Compassion Sabbath**” presented by Rev. Dean Staffanson. The weekend of October 17, 18, and 19 has been designated as a time when all places of worship and religious organizations in the La Crosse community proclaim a Compassion Sabbath. This program is a community-based interfaith initiative to assist clergy and other spiritual care providers, within their own faith traditions, to more effectively address the spiritual needs of the dying, their families and their communities. In my presentation time it is my hope to help our fellowship address the issues related to death and dying. Given the diversity within our tradition and fellowship, I hope to explore what might be ‘true’ for UUs. I also hope to challenge some of the public’s perceptions about death and dying, and provide information regarding support and resources for the seriously ill, dying and their families. *Choir Sunday.*

Rev. Dean Staffanson is a UU Community Minister serving as a Chaplain Resident at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center.

October 26 – Auroville, India resident Bhavana, will speak on the topic, “**Human Unity, Sustainable Development, and the City of the Future.**” She also has a short video that is a nice way to give people a picture of life in South India and the work Bhavana is involved in.

Bhavana has made contact with our Fellowship through her friend Paula Murphy. Bhavana last spoke to us in October 1998.

For those that are interested in hearing more about Auroville, Bhavana will give a public talk at UW-L on Saturday, October 25 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM, or visit this Web site: www.auroville.org/environment/avag/avag.htm



Music News

By Becky Post

The UU choir will sing on October 12th and October 19th.

We rehearse the Sunday mornings that we sing, from 9:15 until 9:50 at the Denton St. meeting place.

Our upcoming once-a-month evening rehearsals are:

- ◆ Wednesday, October 22nd
- ◆ Wednesday, November 19th



Evening rehearsals are at 7:00 PM at Becky's,

New singers are welcome to join us. For more information call Becky Post or Eric Kraemer at

Religious Education News

By Kim Cobb

There is a lot to report from RE this month. First, welcome to several new members of the committee: Ann Beechler, Lisa Metz-Belzer, and Mary Welch. They join Connie Long, Laurie Rogers, and Kim Cobb to make up this year's RE committee. If you have ideas or feedback to share about RE, please let anyone on the committee know.

Caring and Sharing Group

Please help welcome to Callie Sprague, a Viterbo junior in early childhood education who is our new teacher for this group. Callie has worked in day care since she was seventeen, including another part-time job she holds now. This group is in the smallest room upstairs, and we've added a few things to make more “friendly” to our infants and toddlers. Stop up and see the new foam mats!

Acquiring Group

This year the 2nd through 5th graders are participating in a test curriculum, "Holy Curiosity." This looks at the ways science ties in with spirituality, and the children are doing some very hands-on science activities. Watch for some animal skeletons sometime soon! Connie Long will be the lead teacher for this group, with Liz Spangler and Lisa Metz-Belzer also teaching.

Inquiring Group

The middle school group looked at descriptions of several of the curriculum from the UUA, and decided they wanted to try "Race to Justice." A strong message from the group this year is that they want to *do* something. Who knows what they'll accomplish with that energy! They'll also be viewing segments of the video series "Sacred Balance." Right now teachers for this group include Ingrid Iverson, Laurie Rogers, and Kim Cobb. We are looking to hire someone to teach this group-preferably someone in education with a focus on middle school. If you have any leads, please contact Lisa Metz-Belzer at

High School Group

This group is going to vary between joining the service and meeting downstairs this year. In their own group meeting, they'll get a couple things planned. They want to take a look at one of the UUA adult curriculums, "Conversations with the Bible," and also watch videos dealing with social/moral issues, then review them.

Religious Education Wish List...

By Kim Cobb

Still looking for large cans...

We're still looking for large cans (like coffee, or other "bulk" size) for a lesson for the Acquiring Group. Please bring your in and give them to Kim Cobb or Connie Long. Thanks!

In search of your cast-off electronics!

The RE committee would like to incorporate additional media options into our classes. That's a fancy way of saying we want another boom box or two and a combo TV/VCR! Before we buy new, we wondered if anyone has working units that could be loaned, donated, or purchased! Please contact Kim Cobb () if you have something that might work. Thanks!

Do you get the Sunday La Crosse Tribune?

If so, it may be that you could help out the RE program! Michael's Craft store has a coupon every week for a percentage off one item. That goes a long way towards stretching our budget. If you don't plan to use yours, just bring that day's Michael's flyer to the Sunday service and we'll put it to good use! (Sometimes they just run an ad - you might see it there.) Please give it to Connie Long. Thanks!

Religious Education Library Development

By Kim Cobb

Each year, our RE teachers spend time combing local libraries on a weekly basis, looking for books specified by the lesson plan or something "as close as possible." This year, we will make a more concerted effort to build up the library we have, either through purchases or donations. If you have books with UU themes that you or your family are no longer using, please consider donating them to our RE library. Liz Spangler will be spearheading this effort. We could also use a rolling book cart, if anyone happens to have an extra!

Updates from the Board

By Kathy Schnitzius



The Board of Trustees met on September 23, 2003 for a regular board meeting. We had quite a discussion about who should be paid in the fellowship. While we made some preliminary decisions, we feel that they may change as the canvass is completed. Other items discussed and/or decided upon were:

- i Our net worth is \$48, 290 of which \$37, 963 is in the Building Fund. \$40,000 will be placed in a 19 month CD.
- i We must begin paying Workman's Compensation for our employees.
- i The Ad Hoc Committee that was formed at the last meeting to discuss and make a recommendation to the Board regarding who should be paid in our Fellowship suggested that all members should be willing to give of their time as well as of their money. A suggested amount of volunteer time was 2-4 hours per month. After that, a person could apply for compensation. Much discussion was held regarding this concept. This may be a good way to track volunteer hours but is not workable as presented. Further input and discussion is needed.
- i We decided to create a Director of Religious Education position and a paid Music Director position. Salaries will be discussed further at our Budget Meeting.
- i Greg will collect the names of persons in our Fellowship who have building and office keys. The Board will decide later who should have keys.
- i Greg will keep a stock of Fellowship stationery in a drawer of the mailboxes above the RE cabinet.
- i We tabled two items to our Budget meeting including an allowance for lodging for conferences in the budget and acting on the endowment proposal.
- i Our Budget Meeting will be held at Connie Long's on October 2 at 7:00 PM.
- i Our next regular meeting will also be at Connie's on October 23 at 7:00 PM.

Monthly Caregiver

The Caregiver sends cards and flowers to Fellowship members and friends as needed, and helps pass on the word if someone needs cheer or support.

If you know of any member who is ill, has suffered a loss, or is having a rough time and could use cheering, please let the Caregiver know. Fellowship members don't always know of other members' difficulties, but we would like to extend a hand to any of our members and friends in need, so please let us know about your hardships, as well as the joys in your lives.

The Caregiver for October is Liz Spangler

If you are unable to contact the monthly Caregiver please contact the Caregiver Coordinator, Liz Spangler at

Member News

By Liz Spangler

Welcome to those of you visiting us in September. We hope you will continue to join us Sunday mornings and maybe even make our UU Fellowship your church home.

We had the pleasure of a children's naming ceremony on Sunday, September 14th. Celine Donofrio and Phillip Johnson presented their children Jacob and Luke for this special event. Congratulations!

Ron Malzer's mother Lucy passed away this month. We extend our sympathy to the family.

AdventUurers News

By Liz Spangler

The next AdventUurers' outing will be *Metamorphoses*; a play by Mary Zimmerman performed at the UW-L Toland Theatre. We will be attending on Sunday afternoon, October 12th at 2:00 PM. Call Madeline Kepner at _____ or Liz Spangler at _____ to have a ticket purchased for you. Set entirely in a pool of water, *Metamorphoses* blends Roman tales with contemporary storytelling. This is a regional premier of a Tony Award winning play, straight from Broadway. Come and join your UU friends for this event.

This month's movie at the Franciscan Spirituality Center will be "Devils Playground." An Amish coming of age tale, youth at the age of 16 are released to explore another way of life. The video will be shown Thursday, October 16th. Soup and sandwich at 5:30 PM, movie at 6:00 PM. Remember to call the center (608-791-5295) if you are coming for supper.

During the year the "AdventUurers" gather for events and outings. New people are always welcome. New ideas are also welcome. So if you want some fun, fellowship and friendship come with us!

News from the Membership Committee

By Madeline Kepner

We hope to have a new directory printed by October 15th. If you have any changes in your address, please fill out a change form at the Membership Table.

UUs at Involvement Fest

By Madeline Kepner

The UU Fellowship was represented at the UW La Crosse Involvement Fair with a display and information about us. Christopher Townsend prepared an attractive display and we had information about UUism and our Fellowship. Christopher also staffed the table together with Liz Spangler, Diane and Red Haines and Madeline Kepner.

CROP Walk

Please mark October 12 at 12:45 PM on your calendar for the annual Crop Walk to raise money for hunger. 25% of the money raised is given to local organizations: Women/Infants/Children, The Hmong Mutual Assistance Center, and WAFER. Al Townsend's band will kick off the walk and Eddy and the Mosquitoes will greet returning walkers. Please join us in this effort.

Keeping in Touch

By Margaret Dihlmann-Malzer

There are now many mailboxes for staff and volunteers at the Fellowship meeting place at the Senior Center. They can be found on top of the rolling RE cabinet that is stored in the small RE room during the week, and is out in the upstairs hall during Sunday services. There are mailboxes for every committee chair, for the President, President-elect, Secretary & Treasurer of the Fellowship, and for the Coordinator and Business Manager. All of these people are encouraged to check their mailboxes regularly. If you leave something for someone and time is of the essence, please let her or him know it is there.

Heart to Heart: A Couple's Enrichment Weekend

Heart to Heart is a program designed to enrich communication and intimacy in your relationship. The weekend emphasizes personal reflection and couple dialogue. Heart to Heart welcomes all couples committed to their relationships, without regard to marital status or sexual or affectional preferences. Heart to Heart's presentations are from a UU perspective and is sponsored by Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul.

Heart to Heart's next weekend retreat is Friday, October 24 through Sunday October 26 at the Koinonia Retreat Center, northwest of the Twin Cities. For information visit their Web site at <http://heart.mn.cx>, or ask Kathy Schnitzius for info that was sent to the Fellowship.

Our Fellowship's Social Justice Committee provides this series of newsletter articles highlighting various social justice issues. These articles are intended to raise awareness and stimulate thought and discussion. Opinions expressed are those of the author, not necessarily of the Fellowship or of the Social Justice Committee. Bill Katra provides this month's article.

Social Justice Committee Endorses CROP Walk, and Urges Fellowship Support

By Bill Katra

In our meeting after the service on Sunday, September 21, the Social Justice Committee unanimously endorsed the Coulee Region CROP WALK and made plans for a massive participation of UUs. So let's join together on the afternoon of Sunday, October 12.

Participants from over 2,000 towns and cities in the US will participate, and enthusiasm is even higher in scores of European cities. In the past 15 years alone, CROP Walks have raised over \$200 million to bring help and hope to people in need. This activity, that brings together people of different faiths, diverse cultures, and all age groups, is sponsored by Church World Services. Twenty-five percent of all monies raised in La Crosse will go directly to local agencies such as the Onalaska Food Basket, WIC (Women & Infant Children), and WAFER (or the La Crosse Food Pantry), while the remaining funds go to provide relief and development assistance in more than 80 countries including the US. Over the past five years, on average just 18.5% of every dollar raised went to management and fund raising. Last year UUs donated \$356. Our goal this year is \$500! Last year about 20 UUs walked. This year our goal is 50!

The mini-scandal last year was the local Bishop's announcement that because the list of recipients for Church World Service funds includes several agencies in different countries that--in addition to other worthy services--promote family planning, the local Catholic Church would no longer participate in CROP Walk activities. Imagine! To oppose such a worthy cause simply because agencies in developing countries, where overpopulation is a burden, council poor women about how to limit the number of their offspring! Pardon my own outrage. But add this slap to the list of reasons why I am proud to call myself a UU. We in our Fellowship promote the idea of empowerment, especially of poor women in less favorable circumstances, to take control of their own destinies. Regardless of official Church doctrines--and sometimes in spite of them--poor women across the globe more and more are seeking the means to improve their own economic circumstances and enhance the opportunities of their children by rationally deciding how many children their families can and will bring into the world. So the reasons accumulate as to why the CROP Walk is and should be a major event for UUs this year.

On Sunday, October 12, go home after service and eat a good lunch, change into comfortable walking shoes, put a sweater and windbreaker into your backpack. You don't have to walk the entire 10 kilometers--or 6.2 miles. This should double as an anti-pudge activity for all of us--choose the distance you and your kids might be comfortable in walking. Assemble at the Myrick Park shelter at 12:45 PM, wearing your UU T-shirt or sweatshirt. We'll have our UU banner there. We'll begin walking at about 1:00 PM. The route zigzags from there, so if you choose to walk only 3 or 6 kilometers, you simply will complete a loop and head back to Myrick Park. At about 3:00 PM the walkers of the entire 10 kilometers will begin finishing. So let's meet back at Myrick for a UU picnic--we'll have our own grill there. Pack in the car a few daugs or brats or vegiburgers and bring them to the grill. Get your Frisbees out. Those few UUs who cannot join in the walking, come to the picnic anyway! If it is chilly, then we'll find a space for our gathering inside the shelter.

Let's be there in force.

Alternative Holiday Shopping

By Christopher Townsend

You may not be ready to think about holiday shopping, but if you are like me, the catalogues are already starting to pile up on the end table. One alternative shopping option is to order your gifts from SERRV.

SERRV International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Fair Trade and promoting social and economic justice for developing nations throughout the world by marketing their handicrafts and food products in a just and direct manner.

You can shop the SERRV catalogue on line at www.serrv.org, or you can also order more paper catalogues to cover your end tables there.

Send your other alternative holiday shopping ideas to the editor, and I will publish as many as possible over the next few months.

Upcoming Meetings

The **Board Budget Meeting** will be on October 2, at 7:00 PM at Connie Long's house. The next regular **Board Meeting** will be on October 23 at 7:00 PM at Connie Long's

The **Theology Discussion Group** will meet on Sunday October 26, after the service.

The **UU choir** will sing on October 12th and 19th. The next evening rehearsal will be Wednesday, October 22nd, 7:00 PM at Becky Post's house.

Note: Daylight Savings Time ends on October 26.

Set your clocks back one hour.

Theology Discussion Group

By Christopher Townsend

The Theology Discussion Group will meet on Sunday October 26, after the service. This month we will discuss questions such as: What are the central values in your life? How do you determine right and wrong? Where do your values or beliefs about right and wrong come from? The Theology Discussion group offers casual discussions based on sharing personal opinions and experiences. Everyone is welcome to attend.

News from the UUA

UUSC Names New President

(Boston, MA - August 12, 2003) After nearly a year of searching for new leadership and reorganizing for more effective implementation of our mission, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Board of Trustees has announced the appointment of a new president and chief executive officer to lead the UUSC. Dr. Charlie Clements, a human rights and public health advocate with over 20 years experience in developing and leading mission-driven service and advocacy organizations, has been appointed to lead the Service Committee. Clements is well known and respected both internationally and in UU leadership circles as an ethical, inspiring, and effective leader.

Charlie Clements is familiar with the UUSC and Unitarian Universalist mission and culture. He served as director of human rights education at UUSC from 1986-88, during which time he spoke in more than 40 congregations, led several UUSC human rights delegations to Central America, and provided congressional testimony on several occasions. For the past seven years he has been the CEO and President of Border WaterWorks, which assists southwestern communities without running water and sewers to construct such desperately needed infrastructure.

He has served on the boards of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) and Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), and during his tenure with the latter organization, Clements represented the organization at both the Treaty to Ban Landmines signing and the Nobel prize ceremonies for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which PHR helped found and lead.

Clements is the recipient of numerous human rights awards, including the NewEngland Circle Catherine A. Dunfey Award for demonstrated leadership in a pressing human or social condition and the Letelier Moffitt Human Rights Award. He and his wife, Gigi Wizowaty, have two young children, Eric and Jesse. A biography of Clements can be found at <http://www.uusc.org/info/presbio.html>.

In making the announcement of Clements' appointment, the UUSC said, "The search committee had a number of excellent candidates and a difficult choice to

make. It sought a leader with a commitment to Unitarian Universalist principles and values as well as UUSC's mission; demonstrated experience in public policy advocacy at local and international levels; strategic planning experience and a track record of building successful organizations. Equally important is the ability to communicate effectively with all of UUSC's audiences, including Service Committee members and supporters, ministers and congregation members, our association's leadership, Service Committee staff and leadership, other social justice leaders, political leadership and the philanthropic community.

"We felt that Charlie has the best combination of skills, experience and passion for our work, with a strong international background, hands-on organizational leadership skills, a solid track record of meeting goals, and a lifelong commitment to helping people to help themselves."

Further information on Charlie Clements' appointment can be found on the UUSC Web site at www.uusc.org and an open letter from Clements is posted at <http://www.uusc.org/info/presletter.html>.

UU Storytellers Help Women's Resource Center Celebrate

By Paula Murphy

On Monday, October 27 the Houston County Women's Resource Center is hosting a Lasagna Dinner to thank the community for its support of their shelter and domestic abuse prevention programs. Storytellers Paula Murphy and Lisa Metz-Belzer of the UU La Crosse Fellowship will be providing the evening's entertainment. Dinner and program will be held at the Hokah Town Hall. For more information call the Resource Center at 1-800-362-2855.

Prairie Star District Info Online

Flyers and registration forms for most PSD fall conferences have been posted on the PSD Web site: <http://www.unitarian.org/pstar/workshops>

A preliminary Annual Conference flyer and an application form for conference workshops (to be held in Kansas City, April 2004) have been posted on the PSD Web site. (<http://www.unitarian.org/pstar/conf>) The deadline for conference workshop applications is October 3, 2003

The new issue of the Prairie Star (#26, September 2003) is now online: <http://www.unitarian.org/pstar/newsletter.html>



We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- ◆ The inherent dignity and worth of every person;
- ◆ Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;
- ◆ Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- ◆ A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- ◆ The rights of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- ◆ The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- ◆ Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;

Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;

Wisdom from the world's religions which inspire us in our ethical and spiritual life;

Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

Humanistic teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;

Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

