

Voices of Women

UU Women's Connection
logo is under
Construction...
Got ideas? See below.

Newsletter of the Central Midwest District UU Women's Connection

Winter 2006

Joy, Joy, Joy...Lake Geneva 2005

Thanks to the Goo Goos, the creative and fun planning committee from Woodstock, Illinois, the "how to create a joyful life" theme, and hilarious keynote speaker, the Lake Geneva Fall Retreat was an outstanding success. UU minister, author, songwriter and NC public radio Weekend Edition commentator, Meg Barnhouse expanded on "Bubba" sensibilities showcased in her radio program and books, The Best of Bubba Free Radio and Waking Up The Karma Fairy. To find out what "Bubba" sensibilities are and to obtain



further information about Meg's work as a UU minister, mother, councilor, author, singer-songwriter and radio commentator, check out her web site, www.megbarnhouse.org

Here is what Meg had to say about her weekend at Lake Geneva:

The moment when I caught my first glimpse of the Goo Goos by the airport baggage claim waiting for me draped in feather boas and shiny tiaras was a burst of joy. Meeting with the larger group of fascinating women by the lake, introducing you to my surly inner waitress and getting you in touch with yours, hearing you sing along with my TV preacher song and then ending with "All Will Be Well," all of it was a delight. I'm so glad to have been part of "Creating Joy."

Thanks to the ALUUC--Springfield Lake Geneva Fall Retreat Planning Committee headed by Rhiannon Gurley and Cecelia Haasis, who are already hard at work planning for November 10-12, 2006. Mark your calendar. Save the date.

Theme:

My Body: Live, Love, Laugh.

What's in a Name? Logo Wanted

UU Women's Connection is seeking a logo to be used on our website and newsletter. We're also thinking about T-shirts, bags, mugs?

We are looking for something that symbolizes women in connection, UU identity, something new and modern built on a solid foundation from the past. Thinking about our group, our past, and especially a vibrant future, might bring different images to your mind.

Send ideas or original drawings to Dorothy Brown-Brumbaugh's address listed on the back of this newsletter.

Spring Conference June 2-4, 2006

Spirit of Women

*Special showing and discussion of the video
Sisters of 77*

*Tells the story of a historical event that
revolutionized the women's movement.*

*Saturday evening entertainment
Oak Park UU singers: Band of Angels*

*King's House Retreat Center
Henry, Illinois*

*For more information contact: Pat Baker
tellinguu@mac.com
314-434-3314*

"A truly relaxing weekend."

UU Women's Connection Grant Awarded



Sara Carpenter, SIU Edwardsville coed was awarded a \$350 UU Women's Connection grant to continue work on **Project Dirty Laundry**, (PDL) a social outreach program for churches, civic organizations and schools. Sara, a dean's scholar Senior, majoring in Speech Communication and Spanish is studying in Mexico this semester. PDL is a program developed by Sara last spring through SIUE Campus Ministries. Upon graduation and a year as an intern with a social action organization or agency, Sara seeks to pursue employment with a Non-Profit working to bring social services to Hispanics.

PDL seeks to bring diverse local, national and global issues together in a one week long project. Participating congregations or organizations choose issues that are important to them. Quick facts about these issues are displayed on a clothesline to bring to the attention of passersby. *"I am constantly reminded how many issues need to be exposed, which is why I favor Project Dirty Laundry."* explains Sara. *"There is so much pain and injustice in our world...hence, PDL (seeks to) expose around 10 issues...there is something that hits home for everyone."* For information about the campus PDL carried out at UISE last spring check the web site for PDL at the right, which has pictures and schedule of varied activities, speakers and performers for the event.

A new website for PDL will be going up soon thanks to students Sara has enlisted to help carry out this project while she is studying in Mexico. For an informational packet about participating in PDL at General Assembly in June 2006, in your city or as a project for your congregation at another time, contact Laura Perkins at 618-692-6038 or Sara at SRCarpenter@gmail.com

Are you interested in obtaining a grant from UU Women's Connection? Contact Cheryl Springwood, Connection Program Councilor.

Get Connected! Try these LINKS!

www.uua.org/bookstore/ purchase Meg Barhouse's latest book: The Return of Radio Free Bubba or her CD, "July Blue."

www.uua.org/UUWF/Awards-Grants/conversations.html for information about Margaret Fuller Conversations project and other awards and other grants offered to women exploring religious feminisms.

www.cmwd-uua.org information on CMwD Annual Assembly in Madison, WI. April 21-23, 2006

www.uuwf.org/awards-about.html Margaret Fuller Awards--lifting up the creative work of diverse voices engaged in religious feminisms.

www.uusc.org UU Service Committee. Protecting human rights for 65 years.

www.womenandreligion.org Click "conferences" and then, "Winter 2006--photos" to view WS06 at Palatine, IL with keynote Selena Fox of Circle Sanctuary, an international nature resource center.

www.geocities.com/projectdirtylaundry/main.html information on Project Dirty Laundry held at ISUE in April.

Submit LINK ideas to:
Connections@rebuspress.com

"This is the time in history when women's voices must be heard, or forever be silenced. It's not because we think better than men, but we think differently. It's not women against men, but women and men. It's not that the world would have been better if women had run it, but that the world will be better when we as women, who bring our own perspective, share in running it."

Betty Bumpers
Speech at 1985 Conference

Margaret Fuller Conversations As UU women, what are we thinking about, reading about, hearing about, talking about, passionate about, angry about? What are the live, burning issues for UU women at the beginning of the 21st century?

Margaret Fuller Conversations Project began through the Continental UUWF as a way to discuss these questions and others like them and explore religious feminisms.

The Connection has supported this project by providing ideas, information and support for conducting MF Conversations at congregational women's group meetings. To date Springfield, Joliet and Oak Park women's groups have hosted a conversation as a way to "connect" local women to one another, the district and the greater world community. Some of these groups have chosen to host other conversations throughout the year as a way to explore and inspire program ideas.

Want to host a Margaret Fuller Conversation? See UUA/UUWF link on page two, OR contact Jennifer Evans, Connection Program Councilor listed on the back of this newsletter.

Women's Connection Contributions. Membership dues make it possible to have a line item in the budget for conference and retreat grants to eight individuals and two ministerial students, as well as some first-time participant and child care grants. Since Social Outreach is important to UU Women's Connection, we continue to make donations to RCRC in IL (Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice), UUSC (UU Service Committee), the UU Women's Federation Margaret Fuller Awards program and the Clara Barton Internship Endowment Fund.

2006 Margaret Fuller Awards Recipients

- Dr. M'ellen Kennedy, MDiv, for "Encountering Feminist Theologies: Small Group Ministry Demonstration Project." \$3,000 went to develop a series of sessions on feminist theologies and theologians.

- Lisa Pal Streitfeld, for "21st Century Theology: The Hieros Gamos." \$3,000 went for a short theology book on gender equality and contemporary mythology.
- Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER). \$2,000 went for continued work on their "Seasons of Survival: Rituals for Women with Breast Cancer."

What is the Clara Barton Intern program?

This program is part of the UUA's Social Justice Internship program, located at the Washington Office for Advocacy in Washington, DC. All of the Social Justice interns do advocacy work, direct service, and theological reflection. The Clara Barton Intern works on issues that have a significant or disproportionate impact on women, which includes reproductive freedom, sex education, and violence against women. An annual stipend is \$28,000 including benefits such as health insurance.



Recommended reading

<u>The Heidi Chronicles</u>	Wendy Wasserstein
<u>Team of Rivals</u>	Doris Kerns Goodwin
<u>The Pull of the Moon</u>	Elizabeth Berg
<u>The Long Haul</u>	Myles Horton
<u>The Year of Magical Thinking</u>	Joan Didion

"A woman is like a teabag—only in hot water do you realize how strong she is."

Nancy Reagan, Observer, 1981

Why Pay Dues? Our registrars often hear that question. What is the benefit of belonging to UU Women's Connection? What do you get by joining?

The first answer is obvious by looking at a registration form. UU Women's Connection is listed as the sponsoring group. That means it provides seed money for program, facility deposits and guarantees of payment of charges for events. It also gives support services to planning committees, maintains and provides a mailing list.

Membership dues also make possible a newsletter, other communications, and a website, all designed to keep us informed and connected. We'll be glad to have you join us.

We are older women who may never go to a single retreat, yet know their value, want them to continue and help keep them going. We are activists of all ages, who seek support, continued interest and a shared wisdom. We are younger women of all kinds who need a chance to network. We are new UUs who need to make new connections and learn. Join us to help keep those connections going.

Membership Payment Due? Address Correction Needed?

If the date on your mailing label is missing or earlier than January, 2006 send a \$10 check payable to CMwD-UUWF to the treasurer, Betty Jachim. Also send her any corrected address information.*

Temporary address through April:
277 North Cobalt Drive, Green Valley, AZ 85614

Home address: 6341 Blackhawk Trail, Indian Head Park, IL 60525

*Account name change is in process.

Welcome to the WEB

With seven of the eight recommendations made to membership at our Annual Meeting in 2005 falling into place we turn to the final big hurdle: The UU Women's Connection Web Site creation. This is an exciting first for our organization and connects us with our many members and friends who use the World Wide Web daily. Watch for site info in the Spring VOW.

Don't have a computer or Internet service? Don't worry! Though the newsletter will be on our website you can continue to receive a hard copy of the Connection newsletter, if you prefer, as well as other brochures and program notices.

Watch for a preview of our web site at the Spring Conference. Look for the VOW in June. Connect with us! Send articles or story and LINK or Web ideas to

Connections@rebuspress.com

Eight Recommendations Check Off

- ✓ Reorganize with new purposes, name and bylaws, using a council and consensus.
- ✓ Incorporate as nonprofit organization with Kathryn Vanden Berk's legal assistance.
- Initiate and maintain a website. UNDER CONSTRUCTION.
- ✓ Update/modernize the VOW newsletter. IT'S IN TRANSITION NOW. FEEDBACK?
- ✓ Continue to provide accessible, affordable retreats and conferences.
- ✓ Continue to provide activist information, educational and advocacy programming.
- ✓ Continue donations to affiliate organizations
- ✓ Increase scholarship, incentive and other grants.

Book Review

Twenty Days with Julian and Little Bunny
Nathaniel Hawthorne
New York Review Books

In the summer of 1851, Nathaniel Hawthorne spent three weeks alone with his 5-year-old son and their pet rabbit. This slim daily diary, never intended for publication and previously buried in his posthumously published 800-page *American Notebooks*, reveals a new Hawthorne. Instead of the melancholy literary figure, we find an amiable father who tends to bed-wetting, bad dreams, and wasp stings with tenderness and good humor.

Sociologically, *Twenty Days* is a surprisingly relevant male look at the daily challenges of parenthood. Given the recent deluge of pop and quasi-feminist literature demanding acknowledgment of the trials of household responsibility, it's refreshing when Hawthorne, on his first day as a "single" father, remarks, "It is impossible to write, read, think, or even sleep...so constant are his appeals to me." He ungrudgingly observes that the role of mother is an exhausting job, and he doesn't even have to cook dinner. As a meditation on the ways of children, *Twenty Days* is often touching and downright hilarious, but it's never sentimental. When he puts Julian to bed after a long day, Hawthorne admits, "I was glad to get rid of him." Both contemporary and nostalgic, this ambling portrait of long summer days, simple suppers and occasional picnics with Herman Melville earns itself a big scarlet A+.

--Angela Watrous, *Bitch Magazine*

It is a holy thing to be heard, to be touched, to laugh and plot mischief and tell awful jokes, to show up morning after morning until you are known. It is a holy thing to sit with friends, stirring milk into coffee, giving stirring speeches, stirring things up until you are an ingredient in the recipe of one another's lives."

--Meg Barnhouse, *Best of Bubba*

Heartfelt thanks to Wendy Wasserstein, 55; Coretta Scott King, 78; and Betty Friedan, 85. All died recently. Also to Shirley Chishom, 80 who died in January 2005. Each had a profound effect on the lives of women.

"Gradually, without seeing it clearly for quite a while, I came to realize that something is very wrong with the way American women are trying to live their lives today."

Betty Friedan *Feminine Mystique*

Women, if the soul of the nation is to be saved, I believe that you must become its soul.

Coretta Scott King

"Women are not inherently passive or peaceful. We're not inherently anything but human."

--Robin Morgan, in *Shirley Chishom, Unbought and Unbossed*, 1970

So, how are we doing? The new name and mission of the UU Women's Connection are a reflection of the re-visioning, incorporation as an Illinois non-profit and reorganization of the CMwD-UUWF that has been coming about in the last three years.

The Connection Governing Council recognizes that we stand on the shoulders of the many women who precede us. We are grateful to task force members and others who have served in various leadership roles recently and over our 43-year history. A special thank you to our patient *pro bono* attorney, Kathryn Vanden Berk, who has led us through the bylaws work and incorporation of the past year.

UU Women's Connection Statement of Purposes

The purposes of this organization are to facilitate better communication among the Unitarian Universalist women's organizations and individual members within the district, to stimulate interest in aspects of the UU movement and the problems of the world through annual conferences and other means, and to serve as liaison between women of the district and the larger UU movement.

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UU Women's Connection Governing Council

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