

Voice Of Women

Central Midwest District
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation

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Winter 1993

Soap Box

The Charity Business

I have saved the mail appeals for charity for the first 18 days of November. It makes a pile 8" high, too many to count. Barbara Janes kept track of her appeal letters from January 1 to November 1 among others included: Humanitarian letters = 20; miscellaneous = 13 (some of these had up to 8 letters per organization); Health = 11; Women's Affairs = 8; Save the Earth = 13; Public & Political Concern = 12; and Cancer letters from many different sources.

How do we best sort out the bonafide, well-managed funds? How do we know that the money we send is used for research and treatment and not for high executive salaries? Is it time for us to join others in developing an effective monitoring system. How can we keep from having our names on mailing lists being sold to others? What is the best way to sort out those so-called charities that are really for profit businesses?

Since I am not rich there is a limit to the amount and number of charities to which I can give. I sent \$1.00 for a list of approved charities and received a list that names "non-profit corporations which gave us their financial statement" which hardly weeds out the ones who spent 90% or more on "administration".

We have come into a different world from the one where churches supported missionaries, knew what they were doing and felt their work was good. "Business" has taken the

charities from the churches and we need to know whether this is good or not.

Would you like the CMD-UUWF to help sort out what are the most effective charities? Do you have ideas about how to do this or information, good or bad, about specific charities? Do you know organizations that do monitor charity appeals effectively? Please let us hear from you.

In 1992 I guaranteed the effective use of my "window's mite" by supporting UUSC and a very few non-profit groups about whom I know directly. I am no longer going to send money to groups who send me dozens of letters. As Peg Sering says, "it not only uses money and paper by the thousands of tons, but uses my time and money to sort out all the stuff." It may employ people in the mailing business, but they would be better employed in helping the people I want to be helped. Widowed ten years, I still receive appeals addressed to my husband and where I gave to one fund for 20 years, I now receive 9 appeals from similar charities. Where will it end?

UU women have always been leaders in making changes and improvements in problem areas. What can we do? What should we do to help unweave the tangled web of business of charity? Give us your ideas, please. Send them to Ruth Davis, P.O. Box 350, Avon, IL. 61415-0350.

(If you have ideas for SOAP BOX on other topics, send to the above address for consideration for the next issue of V.O.W.)

DUES NOTICE

You can tell when your dues are due to be paid again by checking the mailing sticker on your issue of V.O.W. There are two numbers; the first one is the month and the second one is the year stating the time of renewal. Presidents, treasurers, and individual members should take note.

Send dues of \$5.00 per member to:

Lu Krug
2625 N. Wahl
Milwaukee, WI 53211
(414) 962-1394

Indicate your PRESIDENT and TREASURER on the membership list that you include with your dues.

Also, list all your unit's members full addresses and complete membership list when dues are sent in. This is how the mailing list is updated.

HONOR ROLL

We are proud to have the following UUWF's listed on the Honor Roll of Meadville-Lombard Theological School: Third Unitarian Church, Chicago; Beacon Unitarian Church, Oak Park; UUWF of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Oak Park, Oak Park; DuPage UUWF, Naperville; AUW of Wausau, Wisconsin; and Continental UUWF.

In making up new budgets your group may want to consider gifts to the school which has more women than ever studying for the ministry. CMD-UUWF has a special interest in this school located in our own district!

ALLERTON 1993

Plan to Attend

Mark your new 1993 calendars right now and tell your boss to reserve the following vacation day for you: June 8, 9, and 10 for the Central Midwest District's Annual UUWF Conference at Allerton Park in Monticello, IL, near Champaign Urbana. This conference is open to all women of the CMD.

The conference starts on Tuesday late morning with registration followed by lunch and then ends on Thursday with lunch. Between those days, you will pamper yourself by staying in a well preserved mansion with maid service and deliciously prepared meals. During those days you will hear a stimulating keynote speaker, participate in lively, thought provoking workshops, vote on issues pertinent to the CMD-UUWF, attend a ceremony honoring an outstanding woman in the district, participate in worship services, and perhaps take a walk in either the formal gardens or in the surrounding natural forest. The evenings will be filled with entertainment, a Silent Auction, games, or perhaps a sing-along.

You deserve to treat yourself to a mini-vacation like this where you can be stimulated by other dynamic UU women from the district or even your home church. This is a good way to create some lasting bonds with other women.

The conference is chaired by Sandy Drenth and the Allerton Planning Committee from the Park Forest U.U. Church in Illinois. The theme is "Transitions."

If you have a workshop that would fit well with this theme, or would like to help plan this conference in any way, please call Sandy Drenth at (708) 479-2679. Registration forms and more information on this conference will be mailed to all CMD-UUWF Members around mid-April.

Women's Alliance Scholarship

First Unitarian Church of St. Louis

In 1987, Edna Landzettel, a longtime member of The First Unitarian Church of St. Louis and of the Women's Alliance, and a retired public school teacher, left a bequest of \$10,000 to the Women's Alliance. Discussion centered on how to best use this gift to honor Landzettel's memory and to perpetuate her effect on UU Women. The money was invested and the income was used to establish a \$1000 annual scholarship, awarded to a woman over 25, who is a member of a SLAUUC (St. Louis Area Unitarian Universalist Council) Church and who is continuing her education at an accredited college or university.

Three awards have now been made: to an artist, a future minister, and a chiropractic student. Since its inception other contributions and fundraising have added to the endowment. The award is made in April of each year and publicly announced in May at a Scholarship Luncheon, where the recipient is Guest of Honor.

1992 CMD-UUWF Fall Retreat

There were 120 women who attended the Fall Retreat this past November 13-15, 1992. This retreat is held annually at George Williams College Conference Center, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

This year the retreat was planned by the UUWF committee from the Olympia Brown UU Church in Racine, WI. The theme was "Women and Wisdom". Carol Graywing, vice president of the Continental UUWF presented the keynote address. She talked about her perspective on the empowerment of women, their wisdom, and the changes for good this has and will bring.

In free time some women watched videos, hiked the lake shore path, talked together, and went shopping in Lake Geneva.

Please plan on joining us next year for the

DEFENDING AN ABORTION CLINIC

in Milwaukee , Wisconsin by Lu Krug

I started up the hill toward the Clinic building from a Hardee's Restaurant, wincing in pain since I had scalded the roof of my mouth, not having learned to drink boiling coffee through a straw. As I climbed, I wondered what this first day of helping protect the clients of an abortion clinic would be like. It was five o'clock in the morning on a day in late June and the street lights were just going out. Almost two-thirds of the members of our congregation were participating, in one way or another, in this campaign to defend the clinics in our community. There were six clinics that would need protecting. We had been told we must be there at the crack of dawn, to prevent the anti-abortion forces from barricading the entrance before we arrived. It was, anticipated that members of Operation Rescue and Missionaries To The Pre-Born from all parts of the country would be present.

The building was a five-story affair fronted by a sizable parking lot. As I came in sight of the area, I saw 300 people, men and women of all ages, locked arm-in-arm, lining the three open sides of the parking lot, so that it was impossible to get into the building without breaching the line. I reported and was assigned a place.

While they unlocked arms to let me in, I learned that five of those beside me had driven in that morning from a community seventy-five miles away. Soon several squad cars filled with police arrived. The officers debarked and took up various tasks inside the parking lot. One was to erect a snow fence on the boundaries, which then served as a back-up for our lines.

Suddenly a shout went up. The first busload of "antis" had arrived. We stiffened and pulled together tightly in anticipation of an assault. But, no, they had reconnoitering to do. Also, as we soon learned, they were preparing to launch a massive propaganda campaign. Several, taking their places across the highway from our front line, began to unfurl a banner about thirty-five feet long. In huge letters the banner charged, "MURDERERS."

Soon, a line of "antis" began to parade in front of us. Some bore placards covered with pictures or words. Some carried bibles and read from them at the top of their voices, wagging their fingers at us.

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Some simply said their beads or engaged in other "anti" activities. Many of the placards contained greatly magnified and vividly depicted, mutilated fetuses. From time to time a group of boys, aged six to eleven, would approach, eyeing us carefully to see if they could crawl between our legs and thus gain entrance to the front of the building. But the snow fence discouraged them from trying. Several of these children, we learned, had come from communities as far away as the east coast, some without their parents.

A family with three young children moved down the line. The children's clothing was ragged and soiled, as was that of their parents. The father carried a placard and pushed the middle child ahead of him in a stroller. The mother cradled an infant in one arm and held the hand of the oldest, a girl of four, who walked beside her. The little girl was crying and the mother leaned over and said, "We have to do this, dear, so they won't kill the babies." The girl looked at us and cried harder.

To us, the most distressing aspect of the whole operation was the way the "antis" used their children. The children served many functions. Agile and able to crawl long distances on their hands and knees, they could elude defenders and gain access to doorways more easily than adults. Also, because the laws governing the illegal behavior of children are more lenient, when they were arrested, the monetary penalties were much lighter and they were processed through the justice system more quickly. I wish I could report that the children were reluctant participants, but, in truth, those who were old enough to have even a glimmer of understanding of what was afoot appeared to relish their roles, regarding their arrests and brief incarcerations as a badge of honor. They were all part of a crusade to "save the babies," and among those whom we observed the commitment was wholehearted and intense.

Finally, the Clinic opened for business and a candidate for an abortion was led toward the

the entrance. She was escorted by five members of our group who had been assigned this task. The escort's, carrying blank placards, completely concealed her body, so only her legs were visible. A policeman walked beside the group, holding the "antis" at bay. However, as they drew near the entrance to the parking lot, several of the children shouted toward the pregnant woman, "Mommy, don't kill me. Don't kill me, mommy." The woman wept. We saw no more abortion clients that day. The others were brought into the parking lot in cars. Some of the children lay down in front of the cars and had to be handcuffed and dragged away by the police.

Late in the morning, a man in his thirties accompanied by his three sons, ranging in age from ten to fifteen, came down the line. Approaching me directly, he asked, in what seemed a pleasant voice, "Why are you doing this?" His face was open and for some reason hope leaped in my breast. Could it be that one of the "antis" really wanted to discuss this with one of us pro-choice folks in a normal tone of voice? "Because children should be wanted," I said. He brushed this aside without comment and immediately launched into a sermon about low morals and easy virtue and God's disapproval. Clearly he was not interested in my reasons for getting up at 4:00 am to help defend an abortion clinic. His question had simply been a gambit to mount a lecture.

My hope had been quixotic, no doubt, but I was deeply disappointed and, out my chagrin, a mischievous thought grew. At least, I mused, this will get his attention. He paused for breath and I bore in. "I know you hate abortion," I said, "but what you just said sounded a lot like the lectures I used to hear when I was young, on sex." And then, the stinger, "Don't you care for it?" His jaw dropped and he tossed his head in amazement. A series of conflicting emotions played across his face. Finally, however, one of them overrode the rest. He grinned and leaped into the air. When he came down, he spun around twice. "Oh boy," he cried, and then again, "Oh, boy!" At this moment he was pushed from behind by his cohorts and pulled

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forward by his eldest son, who now had a grip on his sleeve. They moved down the line and out of sight.

I stood there for a few moments, smiling to myself. It had been such a long morning, standing there under the gun of all that fundamentalist scorn and Catholic piety. Although we pro-choice folk had tried to respond with quickly formulated chants and songs, nothing had been quite so satisfying to me as this brief moment of levity and, yes, small triumph. The feeling passed, as I suddenly realized that I was bone tired. I glanced at my watch and saw that it had been seven hours since I arrived almost under cover of night. and I could not bear another moment. Waving good-bye to my friends of the day, I moved away and started slowly and stiffly down the hill.

Lu Krug

V.O.W. Next Issues

In early spring the V.O.W. newsletter will contain all the information about the Allerton Conference, registration and brochure. It will also contain the Hester Huff Roll Of Recognition information and entry form.

In early summer the V.O.W. newsletter will be in a more regular format with information from all. The deadline for the summer issue of V.O.W. is August 1, 1993.

CMD-UUWF Board Bio's

Helen Cadoret - has been appointed to the Board as a new director. She has been member of The First Unitarian Church of St. Louis and of The Women's Alliance since 1965. Helen had tutored non-reading adults with the St. Louis Literacy Council for over 10 years. She also volunteers with the Coalition for the Environment.

Sandy Drenth- is the vice president of the Board. She is an active member in her local Park Forest UUWF since 1976. She has served as vice president and as president of her unit. She is chair of this year's Annual Conference held at Allerton Park. Sandy teaches for special education in Orland Park, IL, tutors, and owns operates a silk and dried floral arranging business.

Helen Johnson - was born in St. Louis and is a Washington U. Graduate in Sociology. She was religious education director at First Unitarian Church in Milwaukee for 10 years and a member of the Emerson Guild. She is on the Board and Sunday Morning Services Committee at her church. He has membership in many other environmental and peace organizations .

Lu Krug - is a former president of the Emerson Guild of the Milwaukee First Unitarian Church. She was a psychiatric social worker for Milwaukee Children's Hospital. She has been a member of the Milwaukee Urban League, Mayor's Commission on Human Rights, and on the Board of the League of Women Voters.

Mina Riddle - is a Board director. She is also vice president of Third-Beacon Women's Alliance and the Unitarian Universalist Church in Oak Park's UUWF. The was registrar for the 1992 CMD-UUWF Fall. Retreat up in Lake Geneva. Mina has been a UUWF member for 14 years.

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