

VOICE OF WOMEN

WINTER 1997

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Presidents Column
February 1997

I haven't traveled outside the Midwest very much in February, so I don't really know what kind of weather others are enduring or enjoying at this time of the year elsewhere. But here in Missouri, winter in February is like the worst flu you have ever had, and it lasts so long it seems sometimes doubtful whether it's worth going on, if this is what it will be like up ahead.

Just when I thought I had my attitude adjusted to brave the last long miles to spring, the people at the State Office sent me notice that our new alcohol/drug treatment program, would have its final approval inspection January 22nd. Well we passed and received good reviews. And now I am to bring you some words of inspiration that will somehow make your trek through the February ice and snow a little cheery and bright...huh?

Well the heat is working, and there is food in the fridge. I have a nice warm comforter to snuggle up in with my pillow and bear to keep me cozy. Tonight I had dinner at T.G.I.'s with a friend, surrounded by lots of others sharing good food and drink with friends and family. My car runs well, even if the left wiper did freeze up and poop out, and the computer is responding efficiently to my every command. Life is good after all!

Such is the trivia of which a comfortable life is made.

Just a year ago, I was 6 months away from seeing a profit in my business. Mom was buying my groceries with hers at Sam's and I struggled to make the last three

payments on my car before the state contract came through—one we had first submitted three years earlier.

Tonight at dinner I talked with my friends about how difficult it is to hold onto a dream even when all your instincts tell you it will not only come true, but it is really the only hope you have. There are always the security mongers trying to lure you to the safe bet, the tried and true choice. "Think of your future, save your money, don't try to do too much." And then I remember that grasshopper and ant story, which undoubtedly reached its climax of pain and humiliation in February. Maybe they are right, I say to myself.

Marian Baker must dance with those bold grasshoppers. She heralds the spring with her perpetual cheer and perseverance. But she is an ant inside! She works with diligence and she takes care of business. Last time the VOW came out, there was a rather blatant omission. We had this fantastic Allerton Conference which accomplished some quite impressive feats, the most obvious and important being that we all had a wonderful time. Our keynote speaker was a warm and delightful leader and the workshop leaders did a very fine job, one and all. However the backstage info. is that the conference also increased attendance significantly over the past few years levels, there was a nice profit made on the event, and the silent auction went right through the roof in money earned, plus it became quite an event all by itself.

Marian wrote me a

letter....and thank goodness she did. I know who I'd want walking behind me next time I tuck the bottom of my skirt into the top of my pantyhose! So. I have the opportunity to correct my mistake and I want you to know that our friendship has survived just fine. I wrote her back and explained how my head had gotten somehow lost in the fog. By return mail I received this loving and appreciative note with words of faith in my goodness of heart, as well as my job performance. No matter where I go in life, the women of UUWF always provide me with role models to emulate. At our gatherings I feel so glad to have found such a group, building our altars, singing our songs, and conversing about our beliefs and ideas. Marian has a dream for CMD-UUWF. She began with others many years ago planning the first Allerton Conference, and that group of women began something special and enduring.

This week I spoke with the board members and renewed the bonds of friendship. There was that same feeling of devotion to our purpose desire to serve our membership and willingness to travel and take time to work out all the large and small details that go into making our conferences such a joy and our mission to make things better in our community and the world succeed. How did I get that from 8 short phone calls? I can feel it because I know the sound of the magic of which dreams are made. Come, join us at Allerton. The Peoria women are preparing a nice surprise. See you there.

Nancy Babel,
President

CMD-UUWF 1996 RETREATS

LAKE GENEVA FALL 1996

Registrations came in fast and furiously (even with the glitch of a typo in the registrar phone number). Most of the available spaces were taken by the end of September. There even was a waiting list, after going above the targeted number (100) in order to be able to cover requirements for the lower cost dorm space. These days we believe in treating ourselves well when we're on retreat: at least 80% of the requests were for doubles or triples!

Cratty Hall was set in as nearly a circular pattern as possible, given the size of our group. (109) Though we couldn't form a *Circle of Women Joined* with our bodies, we did so symbolically. On entry to the room, each of us selected a 15" cut out paper doll to decorate, sign and place on the walls around us. Edna C. Groves created a program that lead us through an exploration of the concepts and techniques described in Christina Baldwin's book *Calling the Circle. The First and Future Culture*. Even for those already familiar with the topic, the satisfaction in interaction with other UU women in small groups was more than enough to make the weekend a real treat.

This year's schedule allowed for more free time, with only one set of smaller circles being offered Saturday afternoon. Topics ranged from journaling, dream work, fiber artistry, a communication painting experience, intimacy, discussion of Kaye Gibbons' book *Charms for the Easy Life*, and an exploration of the decades of women life. On Saturday night Carol DiMatteo facilitated a Medicine Wheel teaching.

The Art Room, along with the vendors displays, were housed in the Children's Building near Cratty. It was a big hit this year, as well as last year. Thanks to Bloomington for the great idea and a role model to follow! The remaining supplies have been passed on to next year's committee. And thanks to the Oak Park women who made this year possible.

Remember, Cratty is a lovely meeting area but space is limited, so don't delay sending in your registration forms next August.

Betty Jachim, reporting

ALLERTON SPRING 1996 "The Fabric of Our Lives"

I always have a good time at the CMD-UUWF meetings and Conference—a.k.a. "Allerton". But the '96 conference set a new standard for doing things in style and with ease. The sign of a well-planned event always, and this one paid off royally. We had great fun, and all the while I felt as though I was at the home of a (well-to-do) friend.

In keeping with the chosen theme, the hall of the manor house was decorated with beautiful quilts, handmade by women in attendance, and giving the formal setting of Allerton House the feel of colonial America with women's handwork proudly displayed. Even novice quilters could create a part of the quilted ambience by joining in to sew a square of their own designs.

We had workshops and activities to care for needs of "the Head, the Hand and the Heart" I enjoyed learning about The Enneagram in a workshop led by

Doris Knight. Betty Jachim led a discussion of Carol Shields book *Stone Diaries*. Rosemary Sammons got us to thinking about mentoring experiences and Clarise Jefferson gave us an opportunity to learn the basics of sewing a quilt block. Janet Nortrum gave us lots of news and information on UU women's groups around the continent, and we had an opportunity to preview Edna Groves, our key-note for the fall conference at Lake Geneva.

Beverly Feldt shook us up in her Crazy Quilt: Theater Improvisations. I can definitely say I have never done anything like that and was briefly tempted to contact Saturday Night Live for an audition. Lu Krug gave us an opportunity to discuss the religious right and Helen Johnson returned to talk with us about the women of El Salvador.

Carol Lytle introduced us to Clare Cooper Marcus, through *House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home*, with exercises designed to invoke a deeper understanding of the meanings of home. My workshop on Feng Shui: The Chinese Art of Placement took a look at homes from the perspective of good or bad fortune. Rossam led a workshop too using UUSC's curriculum *No Punching Judy* to illustrate tools we can use to support women of all ages and conditions. Well this is all so much to imagine, I know, but I haven't told you the best, Nancy Vedder-Shults, PhD, our keynote speaker. She brought us together with the beauty of her words and songs, inviting us to join her and one another in appreciation for time we shared. I felt nurtured in these times we sat together, permission to be the

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child and sit with sister, aunt, mother and memories of many precious years in that place.

The conference was a roaring success, even the fund-raising silent auction set a precedent, we earned more money than ever before, and the display of wares for sale was so extensive we had two aisles down the middle.

Rossann Baker-Priestley did us proud and I congratulate her on putting together a wonderful party, where nothing we needed was ever lacking, all the touches of home-away-from-home were there with love, and every piece of the experience was woven gracefully and naturally together. Bravo!

Nancy Babel, reporting

SISTERS on a JOURNEY: REMEMBERING the FUTURE LAKE GENEVA 1997

The U.U.Society of Geneva and the Elgin U.U. Church are combining forces to facilitate this years CMD-UUWF conference in Lake Geneva for fall of 1997. This years gathering will be Friday, October 31-Sunday, November 2. Our "Journey" encompasses Honoring the Past, Living in the Moment and Dreaming the Future.

We are looking for workshop ideas and presenters, plus vendors. If you have an idea to offer, a workshop to present, or wish to be a vendor, please contact Magdalena Zimmerman, (630-584-8001); Karen Nunn, (847-742-4094) or Sandy Smith, (630-232-9255, ext.309)

Look for further details this summer, and save the dates on your calendar!

LETTING GO ---AND BECOMING

ALLERTON 1997--June 8,9,10

Keynote Speaker DR. VIRGINIA JONES

Dr. Virginia(Gini) Jones is a member of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Joliet. At the age of 48, Gini was a computer specialist and teacher at the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago. After 20 years of teaching in elementary and high schools, she was in a very comfortable position from which to look forward to the rest of her life. However, she instead decided to let go of a successful career to become a clinical psychologist.

In the training for her doctorate in clinical psychology, Gini spent three years, including internship, at Cook County Hospital, in Chicago. She conducted research on Mask Making as Art Therapy with children who have cancer. She also received additional training in hypnosis, biofeedback and play therapy. When asked what the consistent thread throughout her work both as a teacher and a psychologist has been, Gini replies: "Change is inevitable. But we have the choice to either enter into the process consciously using our own power, or just be swept along haphazardly by the current. Education, therapy and weekend retreats such as Allerton can be agents of empowerment which facilitate people directing their own lives."

As a speaker, Gini has presented on topics as diverse as "Counterbalancing-Living with Cancer," "Psychological Approach to Reduction of Headaches," "Optimism vs Pessimism," and "Honoring Death". The youngest child of a Baptist minister father and a teacher mother, she grew up spending many hours seated in wooden pews listening to sermons and speeches. Consequently she has vowed to have each presentation that she gives be one that she would want to sit through herself. As Gini puts it, "...an experience that is worthy of your time. If we both don't go away with something that we didn't come with, then I haven't done my job."

As always, the experience of Allerton will be unique. There'll be lots of TLC from some of the best UU women to be found, the beautiful Allerton mansion accommodations with its gorgeous surrounding grounds, delicious meals, late night games, and much, much more. Our workshops will include Book Discussion--Aging to Saging, Legal Issues for women, Theater Improvisation, Holistic Health, Coping with Cancer and other Life-threatening Illnesses, Ecofeminism, Creating Daily Rituals, and Poetry Sharing. Please be sure to join us for a powerful and nurturing experience. And for those of you who attended last year and thought for sure that we would need the Ark, we have been told that sunshine is guaranteed: well, at least there is a very good probability.

What Does Your UUWF Women's Group Look Like?

Four Examples from around our District

Eliot Unitarian Chapel Alliance

At Eliot Chapel the Alliance meets the 1st, 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of each month from September through June. In July and Aug. we meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays only. We meet in the mornings and have about 25 members.

The 1st Tuesday is devoted to a book discussion. The books for the year are chosen in a late summer meeting.

The 3rd Tuesday is our business meeting and a discussion of some topic of special interest to our members. A small committee is in charge of selecting the discussion topics.

The 4th Tuesday may be an invited speaker, an excursion to somewhere in St. Louis or a group activity developing some skill. This meeting always involves a luncheon at the church or at a restaurant near the location of our outings. These programs are decided at a May potluck party where we also elect officers for the coming year.

Janet Collins reporting

The Women's Connection

Based on what we've heard at various gatherings of UU women, the UUWF unit at UTUUC in Oak Park, IL shared many of the same quandaries of other groups. The old model of UUWF monthly programming was no longer as successful and fewer members were willing to take on leadership roles. As we became busier with work, family and our own education, time and energy became precious commodities. Still we felt a need to meet in smaller, more intimate and singly focused clusters. At UTUUC several groups emerged as spinoffs from UU retreats. (support, spirituality, dream, new moon, etc.)

The individuals were happy within their particular groups, but what about contact among the various groups and what about UUWF? How could we maintain our connections with UU women within the district and continental levels? Was there a way to modify our UUWF structure to meet these needs, while providing for shared leadership?

Our solution was to create an "umbrella" organization. We adopted a totally revised set of bylaws for the *Women's Connection of the UUWF* which provides for a six member council (staggered two year terms: three elected each year), with candidates sought from the various smaller women's groups within the congregation. Except for the council's designating a secretary/treasurer for financial and contact purposes, leadership is shared, with the goal of making decisions through consensus. Our dues cover membership in CMD and Continental UUWF. The Council plans our local annual winter retreat and occasional other programming and serves as central contact point for communications by and for our women. We even have our own logo to use in flyers and newsletter announcements.

Betty Jachim reporting

Channing Club

A number of years ago at the Unitarian Church of Bloomington a group of women created the Channing Club. The purpose of the group was to have discussions of papers prepared by the members. It was a flourishing group but changing demographics and interests caused a decline and the groups eventual end.

About three years ago a group of UUWF women decided there was a need for such a group to meet on a regular basis. Channing Club is under the umbrella of UUWF but independent. Deciding on a time is always a problem. We chose the last Wednesday of the month and have stuck with it. We meet in the evening at members' homes. Many of the programs are done by women from the group and are far ranging.

This year our programs have centered around creativity. We have had an artist and composer, and a program on creative care given by a person from hospice. A male speaker tempted our senses and palates with creative cookery. Men are coming to our meetings and participating in presentations. Our next meeting is about creative life styles. Wouldn't you like to join us?

Mary Steadman reporting

Please check the back cover
for our 4th women's group
the Hacienda Happy Hour

ODDS AND ENDS

OBITUARIES

Marilla Thurston Missbach:
The VOW is sad to announce the death of a loved member, Marilla Thurston Missbach. Marilla served on the CMD-UUWF board and was also one of the founding members of the Women & Religion Committee. Marilla was active in several UU congregations and committees. Her contacts and interest in women's issues, spirituality and ritual made her a great resource to us all. She died of cancer with many loving UU women around her giving much tender care and support. Her daughters Lea and Nancy donated five boxes of books to be sold at "Womanspirit" in January. We collected \$516 from those sales to be used for the continental UUWF scholarship fund.

Carol Wike Nudo

Another unique and dynamic woman to die this year was Carol Wike Nudo, who served us many years a CMD-UUWF board member and Allerton Registrar. Carol was also a Hester Huff Award honoree. She fought a long battle with cancer with her usual strong will and determination. She joined us in June for one last Allerton Conference before returning to Arkansas for treatment. She will be missed by us all.

1997 Ministry to Women Award

The General Assembly will present Carolyn McDade the UUWF 1997 Ministry to Women Award. Carolyn was the keynote speaker at Lake Geneva 2 years ago with the largest attendance yet. She is the composer of "Spirit of Life" plus two other hymns in our book. She is a well known activist and composer of many social justice and women's songs. In the '80's she crossed the country stopping at more than 80 UU congregations sharing her Ministry to Women Mission with song and dialogue, so very meaningful for women and their lives. She will do a worship service at the UUWF Annual meeting where the restructuring of UUWF discussions will take place and she will do a concert for all GA participants of Saturday night when she receives the award. We hope Phoenix AZ will bring many attendants for Carolyn is loved by social justice men as much as by women. Congratulations to Carolyn McDade.

Notes from Janet Nortrom:

As our CMD Rep for the Continental UUWF, I would encourage all our members to write to me and give your ideas on the special UUWF group you would like to see develop. How can the continental UUWF best serve you-what voice for the UUA women of faith can we commit to? Also as editor of "Rise Up News Letter" I want your news to share about your groups or workshops.

I am also collecting money for the Ministry to Women Award since it was not budgeted this year-but it will happen, thanks to all of you. If your group is looking for adonation here is an excellent place to donate it to. I have a special fund set up.

Peace and Jugs and Blessed Be!!

Janet Nortrom
4332 N Woodburn St.
Shorewood, WI 53211
414-964-3764
emailnortromj@aol.com

or

CMD-UUWF 1996 ALLERTON CONFERENCE REPORT

INCOME:

Registrations	\$1,700.00
Silent Auction	616.55
Sunday Lunch Free Will Offering	113.85

TOTAL INCOME \$2,430.40

EXPENSE:

Pre-Conference Planning	\$455.26
Conference Supplies	241.32
Keynote Expense	777.50
Food	490.88

TOTAL EXPENSE \$1,964.96

CONFERENCE GAIN \$465.44

Registrations: 61

Scholarship Expense: \$500.00

CMD-UUWF 1996 LAKE GENEVA RETREAT REPORT

INCOME:

Registrations	\$3,715.00
Vendor Fees	139.00
T-Shirts	297.00

TOTAL INCOME \$4,151.00

EXPENSE:

Pre-Conference Planning	\$138.14
Conference Supplies	520.04
T-Shirts	307.81
Keynote Expense	913.75
Food	268.25

TOTAL EXPENSE \$2,147.99

NET GAIN \$2,003.01

Registrations: 109

Scholarship Expense: \$327.00

Scilarship Contributions: \$145.00

**DUES/MAILING LABELS
CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

CMD-UUWF annual dues are \$5.00. They may be paid through your local unit or on registration at the Allerton Conference or the Lake Geneva Fall Retreat. Another option is for women to join as individual members. Note that the date at the upper right corner of your mailing label indicates when your next dues payment is expected.

WILL YOU/HAVE YOU MOVED?
Don't miss a single issue of VOW or notice of women's programming. Also, Please let us know if someone's name should be removed from our mailing list due to death, discontinued membership, or relocation. Thanks!

MEMBERSHIP/MAILING LIST UPDATE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CHURCH _____

GROUP _____

INDIVIDUAL DUES PAYMENT Y___ N___
(Send a \$5.00 check, made payable to CMD-UUWF, to treasurer Joan Plestina, 516 Aberdeen Rd., Frankfort, IL 60423)

ADDRESS CHANGE Y___ N___
EFFECTIVE DATE _____
(Send updates to Secretary, Betty Jachim, 6341 Blackhawk Trail, Indian Head Park, IL 60525)

CMD-UUWF 1996-97 DIRECTORY

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PRESIDENT: Arlene Johnson, Tulsa, OK

BOARD LIAISON: Janet Nortrom, (414-964-3764) 4332 N. Woodborn, Shorewood WI 33211

The Hacienda Happy Hour Society

Sometimes we have four around the table, other days there are fourteen of us. The "Hacienda Hags", only we can call ourselves by that lovingly descriptive term. Officially it's the Hacienda Happy Hour Society. The third Wednesday of every month, come rain, sleet, snow or sunshine day, someone will be there! First ones there grab a table or 2!

Most of us have known each other since our now-grown children were toddlers. We met when we attended Women's Alliance at Eliot Chapel, making use of the babysitting, while we held our book discussions or business meetings. There were Las Vegas Nights, book sales, auctions and plenty of events sponsored by the Alliance that brought us together. Then life's events shook up that old gang and soon the Tuesday morning meetings were no longer viable.

Then in the early '80's, Maxine Stone and I talked of getting everyone together again. She went home, made a few phone calls, inviting 15 women of our acquaintance to join us at the "Hacienda" home of the daily happy hours with free snacks, on the third Wednesday of the next month. Membership would be open, we just wanted a place to get together and keep up with what was happening to our old friends.

The rest is history! We met month after month and now year after year. The best part is seeing each other when we can make it, monthly, quarterly or even annually. Our ages range from 30's to 70's and daughters join us at times. I strongly recommend this sort of gathering for others who have moved into more separate life paths and miss the old, simpler times when we women could gather at church, weekly on a Tuesday morning. It's something good that you can always count on, the company is friendly and warm and the snacks are still FREE!

Nancy Babel, reporting

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Deerfield, IL 60015**

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