

Mark your calendar now!

Friday, October 31 through Sunday, November 2, 1997  
for the CMD-UUWF fall retreat. Join us  
at George Williams College in Lake Geneva, WI., for

**"Sisters on a Journey:  
Remembering the Future"**

Join us as we Honor the Past,  
Live in the Moment,  
and Dream the Future.

Leading us on our Journey  
will be keynote presenter

**Jennifer Armstrong.**

Those of you fortunate enough  
to have seen Jennifer perform  
already know that she is an engaging storyteller,  
a beautiful, poetic singer  
and a gifted instrumentalist;

the rest of you are in for a real treat!

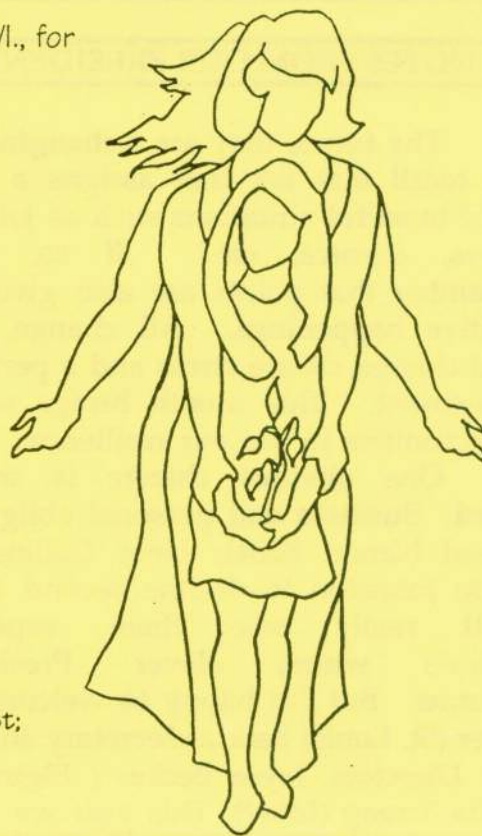
We plan to have some interesting workshops,  
some super vendors, (maybe you?)

and time to remember, relax, and recharge.

Registration forms and more detailed information  
will be coming to your mailbox the first week in August;  
for information please contact

Magdalena Zimmerman, (630) 584-8001

or Sandy Smith, (630) 232-9255, ext. 309.



**CMD-UUWF NEWSLETTER  
6341 BLACKHAWK TRAIL  
INDIAN HEAD PARK, IL 60525**

**VOICE OF WOMEN SUMMER 1997**

# VOICE OF WOMEN

## NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The times, they are a,changing! Do you recall that list that assigns a point count to awful situations such as job loss, illness, divorce, etc.? If so, you'll remember that points are also given for positive happenings. All change, even good change, causes stress and a period of adjustment. This month brings several opportunities to test our resilience.

One obvious change is in the Board. Business and personal obligations caused Nancy Babel, Janet Collins and Linda Johnston to decline second terms. We'll really miss them, especially Nancy's warm, clever President's columns. But I'm happy to welcome Pat Baker (St. Louis) back as Secretary and two new Directors, Joyce Becker (Elgin) and Sheila Young (Joliet). This year we won't have anyone from Wisconsin, so be sure to start thinking of candidates for next year now; the new Nominating Committee, Julie Putman (414-830-2944 in Appleton, WI), Mary Lou Steadman (329-452-9008 in Bloomington, IL) and Nancy Babel (314-567-3867 in St. Louis, MO), wants and needs your suggestions to assure district-wide representation.

Based on last year's evaluations, the Allerton Committee suggested trying to conduct the Annual Meeting in one session. A separate question and answer period was held earlier to satisfy those who like to delve into the nitty gritty of financial reports, helped take stress out of the Annual Meeting. One change you'll see immediately is that your VOW came by first class mail. Even though it's more expensive, getting VOW to you on time, keeping up to date with address changes via forwardable mail, and freeing ourselves of mounting problems with bulk mail should be worth the added cost.

Finally, you'll probably note the large increase for Continental UUWF, to show our support. Our members were concerned about the organizational and financial problems of which they'd been hearing. The petition to call a special meeting just before the UUA General assembly in Phoenix was an especially confusing matter. The budget did pass, with the understanding that the CMD Board is to hold payment of our contribution until all the issues have been aired and the plans for a revitalized Continental UUWF are presented and favorably reviewed. In an extraordinary move, an additional expenditure was authorized: since no one attending our Annual Meeting had plans to be at the pre-GA special meeting, we voted to provide funds for a CMD-UUWF representative, Clarise Jefferson, past Continental President, to attend. We have since learned that the special meeting was canceled for lack of a quorum, so Clarise did not go.

During our budget discussion, we tried to give as complete and balanced a picture of the history and current situation confronting the Continental UUWF as possible. Members asked for and were promised an update as soon as possible. A letter was sent to Arlene Johnson, Continental President, stating that CMD-UUWF members are interested in focusing on the organization and how it can be streamlined, improved and revitalized. We want to see Continental UUWF continue, even restructured to serve all UU women, to be a strong and viable organization, which will be run efficiently with fiscal responsibility.

May it be so,  
Betty Jachim, President

## What's really happening in the Continental UUWF?

Confused about what's going on with Continental UUWF these days? It's hard to sort out all the rumors, charges, counter-charges dealing with the UUWF Continental Board's recent actions toward trying to solve its financial crisis. The money problems aren't new. Some of the financial drain goes back to large expenses associated with removing and transferring the Clara Barton Camp (for young diabetics) from direct UUWF control to a separate governing body. One thing is clear: UUWF has been working with significant budget deficits and depleting its endowment. At the October '95 Biennial convention, the UUWF board received a mandate to create a financial plan that would create a balanced budget within three years.

At its October '96 board meeting, with the UUWF's financial advisor and its endowment fund manager present as consultants, the board felt it must take more immediate action and adopted a balanced budget for 1997. In order to accomplish this, the entire six member staff was laid off on November 15: full salary and benefits were provided through December 31; staff was paid severance, per Personnel Policies, ranging from 2 to 8 weeks as well as \$500 for out placement counseling; and lump sums based on years worked were given to cover health insurance through March of 1997. Since they were laid off, staff members were eligible for unemployment compensation. Two of the staff were rehired (part-time bookkeeper and office administrator) for a transition period until reorganization is accomplished. Implementation of these decisions were entrusted to an appointed Transition Team of three board members.

Those are the bare facts. But, most of the controversies whirl around other

factors and issues. The most vehement protest centers on the decision making process. The most vocal protest group labels the board's style of leadership hierarchical, not in keeping with the UUWF mission statement and believes the board improperly overruled the budget decision made by the general membership at the 1995 Biennial. They call for a partnership/ collaborative process organizational model to restore UUWF to its mission statement.

Almost everyone was taken aback by what seemed to be a sudden decision to lay off the entire staff. The most angry reactions characterized the cutback and how it was carried out as a betrayal to our principles; they expressed chagrin that the UUWF could do such institutional violence to other women. Other members commented that they reluctantly agreed that a staff cut was necessary, even overdue, but regretted the holiday timing and swift action. Whether or not the staff was blind-sided depends on your interpretation of prior meetings and discussions with staff members present.

What almost everyone seems to agree on is that there was a critical lack of adequate warning to the general membership that such drastic measures might be in the offing and that they would be taken so swiftly. As one woman wrote, the information she received "did not indicate to me an impending crisis, so we were unprepared for this decision or for the dearth of explanation as to why other solutions were impossible." The lack of information has fed confusion and confidence in UUWF's viability has been shaken, especially when coupled with the demise of the Continental Women and Religion Committee.

Now came letters, faxes, Email, memos, petitions to call a Special Session of the Continental Convention before GA in Phoenix, letters preparing for and then canceling that special meeting seem to be

flying everywhere. There was even some backlash regarding a letter from UU's *Acting to Stop Violence Against Women* to raise money for the former UUWF staff. Some of the rhetoric, arguments and misunderstanding have been quite distressing to read, since UU's can be vocal activists with strong opinions. In the heat of debate, some of us are not always temperate in our disagreements. There are expressions of wounded feelings, defensiveness, frustration and confusion, as often happens in a major family or congregational squabble.

How will the UUWF emerge from this crisis? The organization is not bankrupt; about \$1.3 million in endowments, though restricted are intact. As a 501c3 organization, UUWF can still be a fiscal sponsor for such special projects/ funds such as the Convocation for UU women, the Task Force for Clergy Misconduct and our Scholarship Fund. Self funded programs such as the Feminist Theology Awards will continue. *Rise Up* kits are still being sold.

One program that has definitely been impacted is the DDOC (District Development and Outreach Committee) project within districts and in Canada. Many women's groups, wanting to meet with other women's groups in their district, sought help from the UUWF office. But with no district structure and with 12 board members for 23 districts, such support was not easy to provide. A Veatch Grant was obtained to work on grassroots development in five pilot districts. Since March, 1995, three volunteers worked on the project with three staff members. A second grant proposal was recently turned down. The volunteers feel they can not continue without staff support.

What sort of restructuring will emerge? To begin, there are three board vacancies to fill. It will take some doing to find women with the skills needed to

analyze the organization and its staff requirements, to address what some constituencies feel is un-or-under representation; to find women with the time and willingness to take on the task given the current environment. Again to quote the California woman's letter: "We must go on...We have an office, a presence in our denomination to maintain...a program to support... The work we women face a UU's is responsibility for telling the membership what is going on, how we will operate and who is doing what." **Better communication is a must!** We expect a report from the pre-GA informational meeting scheduled to replace the called, petition-initiated, Special Meeting of the Continental Convention, which was canceled for lack of a quorum of registered delegates.

*Going through all this material was like being assigned a mini-term paper. I hope I've distilled the material and provided the essence to help explain the range of issues and the intensity of the debate. But, most of all, I hope I've fairly presented a balanced picture. BJ*

## Scholarship Grants for Lake Geneva

This year we are pleased to announce that there are five \$85 scholarship grants available for deserving women wanting to attend our fall conference at Lake Geneva. If you are interested please contact Magdalena Zimmerman, (630) 584-8001 or Sandy Smith (630) 232-9255, ext. 309 for additional information.

ALLERTON, SPRING, 1997  
CONFERENCE:  
"Letting Go...and Becoming"  
Kasey Kephart, reporting

Thanks to Bonnie Olson and the committee from the Joliet church the 1997 Allerton conference, meeting on June 8, 9, and 10th centering on the theme of "Letting Go...and Becoming" was an outstanding event. From the opening services and keynote speaker Ginni Jones (Dr. Virginia Jones) to the final rousing chorus of "So Long, It's been good to know you," led by Lorraine Webber in the dining hall, it was a pleasant, inspiring, well organized and coordinated conference. Ginni Jones set the tone for the conference with her dramatic and entertaining presentation in the wigs and costumes representing the myths we need to "let go of" to move onto become who we can be.

The conference afforded many opportunities to explore the various things we wanted to let go of in a wide range of workshops. Mask makers with Ginni Jones created many interesting masks and learned about themselves in the process. Ginni Jones also led a workshop helping in "Creating Your Own Visualization Script." Others were busy singing with Lorraine Weber, discussing From Age-ing To Sage-ing with Lois Pederson, using the shapes in art as a tool to explore images of ourselves with Lynn Lidbury, doing dreamwork with Sandy Drenth, exploring family relationships in transition with Caroline Bailey, playing with improvisation and spontaneity with Beverly Feldt, releasing stress and practicing verbal skills for conflict resolution with Kasey Kephart (even I had fun in my own workshop) and Bonnie Olson stepping in for Dorothy Brown-Brumbaugh (who had a family emergency) and using Dorothy's notes

taught "Creating Daily Rituals". We all enjoyed the workshop on "Conservation Painting -- A Group Experience" led by Susan Karcher as the paintings were displayed in the Solarium throughout the rest of the conference. The drummers came out of Becky Tilbrook's "Let Go and Drum" with exuberance and enthusiasm as demonstrated in the talent show. Other workshops of note were Bookmaking, (back by popular demand) led by Katherine Walker, a review and discussion of the social issues raised in Jane Austin's Emma led by Pam Godbout and on a more personal note, an informative workshop on "Are Your Personal Legal Affairs in Order?" led by Pam Gorcowski, a practicing attorney.

As always, the entire conference was enhanced by the elegant and splendid setting of the Allerton Mansion and grounds. Those who took a moment to stroll around the grounds found themselves in peaceful reverie--inspired to return to workshops with renewed enthusiasm. From the late night games in the Solarium to posing with statues, to the quiet reverie of the Library, we found ourselves refreshed by the setting.

The worship services were thoughtful and joyful experiences contributing to deepening the evolving sense of shared community. A highlight of the conference for many people was the talent show on Monday night featuring songs and drama. Members of the sponsoring committee appeared as the "Blues Sisters" and there were professional selections from a Spoon River Production. There was a very entertaining song done by the singers from Eliot Chapel.

The Hester Huff award this year was presented to Joanne Fought, someone who has contributed much in her time and talents and leadership to the conference and the CMD. Joanne was unable to attend this year, and we missed

her Yoga in the morning . Many of the recipients from previous years were in attendance and honored at the reception. We all wish Joanne well. (Editor's Note: please read the following section on Joanne and the Hester Huff award)

As always, Rosann Baker-Priestley did a great job of cheerleading the bidding on the wondrous and unique items contributed to the silent auction, raising over \$500 this year.

A special thank you goes to Bonnie Olson, Sheila Young and the entire committee of women from the Joliet church who put this conference together for us. Great work! We salute You !

Reserve the dates now for  
**ALLERTON, SPRING,**  
**1998 CONFERENCE**  
**JUNE 6,7,8**  
See you all there!!!

**Hester Huff Award**  
**1997**  
by Jo Jameson

At the CMD-UUWF conference each year at Allerton a member is selected and her name inscribed on the HESTER HUFF ROLL OF HONOR. Requirements include not only active participation at the district level but also in her church and community. Joanne Fought was the recipient of this honor at the June conference this year.

Joanne has served as president of CMD-UUWF and has been involved in directing some part of the Allerton program many times over a period of more than twenty years. She has been involved with the Fall Conference at Lake Geneva for a lesser number of years. She has been vice-president of the Central

Illinois Area Council and was a member of the CMD nominating Committee at one time. In addition, she has been a active member of other district committees including Womenspirit and Women and Religion. She was treasurer of the Women and Religion Committee and was the founding editor of its publication, *SOPHIA*.

Joanne has been president of the congregation of the Peoria UU Church three times in 27 years of membership. She has been president of the local unit of UUWF and president of the Alice Wilson Guild. She has served as chairperson of the following church committees: Hospitality, Adult Education, Worship, Program, Summer Forum, Pledge Drive and the Ministerial search Committee. She was a member of the 1993 committee that planned the 150th anniversary celebration of the establishment of the Peoria church. In 1995-96, she served on the committee charged with the organization and development of the new church library.

Community participation has been an important part of Joanne's life. She has been a trustee of the local Alpha Park Library, member of the Norwood Grade School Board, and a member of the Board of Women's Services in Peoria. She established a library at the Peoria County Jail for the inmates and supervised a citizens' committee of other volunteers to keep it in operation. She was co-owner of *Community Word*, a newspaper published monthly and distributed throughout the city. Recently she has become a volunteer teacher and counselor at Common Place where she works with children and adults.

Joanne participated in most of these activities while she was a full time librarian at Illinois Central College and with the co-operation of her husband while maintaining a home where family and friends were always welcome.

## CMD-UUWF BUDGET 1997-1998

CATEGORY	ACTUAL JULY 1996- JUNE 1997	ANNUAL BUDGET 1996-1997	ANNUAL BUDGET 1997-1998
<b>INCOME</b>			
Dues	2,130.00	2,500.00	2,200.00
Conferences			
Allerton '96	113.85		
Allerton '97	1,763.80	1,500.00	1,500.00
Silent Auction	683.25	300.00	450.00
Lake Geneva '96	14,463.76	3,000.00	3,000.00
Scholarship Donations	366.25	100.00	250.00
Interest	269.36	200.00	200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,790.27</b>	<b>7,600.00</b>	<b>7,600.00</b>
Reserve Funds		990.00	2,125.00
	<b>19,790.27</b>	<b>8,590.00</b>	<b>9,725.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administration	702.09	1,000.00	1,000.00
V.O.W.	1,140.20	1,500.00	1,500.00
Conference Grants			
Allerton 5@ \$125.00	625.00	500.00	500.00
Lake Geneva 5@ \$85.00	327.00	340.00	425.00
Conferences			
Allerton '96	270.02		
Allerton '97	1,000.00	1,800.00	1,800.00
Lake Geneva '96	9,604.24	3,000.00	3,000.00
Lake Geneva '97	2,700.00		
Gifts & Donations			
RCRC	50.00	50.00	100.00
Feminist Theology Award	150.00	150.00	150.00
Clara Barton Camp	50.00	50.00	100.00
Student Ministers Grant	0.00	100.00	150.00
Continental UUWF	100.00	100.00	1,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,718.55</b>	<b>8,590.00</b>	<b>9,725.00</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>3,071.72</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**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 Betty Jachim, 6341 Blackhawk Trail, Indian Head Park, IL 60525)

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