



The UNICORN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Santa Cruz County
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The UNICORN

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Please submit all newsletter related materials to unicorn@uufsc.org. The February publication due date will be January 21, 2007

January Sunday Services

All Sunday Morning Services Begin at 10:00a.m.

- Jan 7 ***"Winter Survival for Low-income Workers"***
 How do Santa Cruz County's seasonal workers survive in this unaffordable region, especially during the off-season? Community organizers of Western Service Workers Association will tell us about the "Winter Survival Campaign" to help families supplement their budgets and address some of the underlying causes of the injustices faced by these lowest-paid workers.
 Fred Seamon, Service Associate
- Jan 14 ***"Words, Images, and Music of Martin Luther King"***
 The good Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King JR's birthday will be celebrated today with a special service commemorating his life. This morning we will hear his prophetic words in the call for respectful relations amongst all people and a dream that freedom will ring.
 Kara and Doug Bowman, and Terra Collier-Young, Service Associates
- Jan 21 ***"The Burning Coal"***
 Does the congregation have a mission? Not a mission statement, but a glowing coal at its center? How well does it foster spiritual growth and promote social justice?
 Rev. Ann Schranz and the Committee on Ministry
- Jan 28 ***"Who is My Neighbor?"***
 The flaming chalice has been the symbol of Unitarian Universalism for over 50 years. The program supporting growth in the movement is called "Chalice Lighters." We will focus on neighbors and on the size of the neighborhood.
 Rev. Ann Schranz and Kären Aaker

In the Interim with Rev. Ann Schranz

I hope the new year is off to a good start for you and for your loved ones. Many people make resolutions for the new year. Do you have room on your list for one more resolution? Resolve to cultivate sources of inspiration. Sources of inspiration are all around us – in relationships, in nature, in spirituality, in social justice work, in the words and deeds of countless fellow travelers in this amazing adventure called “life.”

You might consider doing something that I have done for several years. Collect inspirational quotes and organize them by topic. That way, you will have inspiration from A to Z, so to speak. When I am feeling blue or lethargic, I may bring up a relevant quote on my computer, let it sink in and meditate on it for a few minutes. Afterwards, I often feel energized and renewed.

For the fun of it, I looked at my file of quotes, alphabetized by topic. Here are the first topics in each category: age, beloved community, candor, dancing, education, failure, garden, hands, idea, Jesus, kindness, labor, magic, neurosis, offense, paradise, nothing for Q, reality, sadness, Taoist, Unitarians, virtue, war, and nothing for X, Y, or Z.

Now the challenge – I will attempt to craft a blessing for the congregation, a blessing from the vantage point of your interim minister as we enter our final seven months together. In this blessing, I will try to use each word in order. (Blessings seldom have such constraints. I figure if I start the year with something difficult, things will only get easier.)

Regardless of your age, may you find here the potential for beloved community, a potential that will be realized by your candor, by dancing in the give-and-take of collaboration as you lead, upon occasion, and as you follow, on occasion. May your continuing education in congregational life bring intermittent failure, for failing with as much grace as humanly possible will inspire those around you and strengthen your resilience.

Here at the Fellowship, may you garden with bare hands or garden with gloves, just garden. Nurture relationships and ideas. Honor the wisdom of the world’s great teachers, teachers such as Jesus. Remember that institutionalizing kindness is the work

of a lifetime and is holy work. When life seems full of labor, remember the magic of a shared burden – not only is the work easier, but relationships are strengthened.

Don’t worry too much about neurosis, your own or that of others. What’s the point of having character if you can’t be a character? Be slow to take offense, and you will find paradise close at hand. Reality includes sadness, and a Taoist perspective can help bring acceptance of what is. Unitarians are fun to be around, and they know a thing or two about virtue and the folly of war.

I wish for you many blessings in 2007!

Rev. Ann



"New UU" Sessions

Are you considering joining the Fellowship? Would you like to learn more about Unitarian Universalism? You are invited to attend two "New UU" sessions from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on January 14 and January 21 in the minister's office. The Membership Committee will host the sessions. Please contact Rev. Ann by calling the office or by emailing minister@uufsc.org so that we know to expect you.

Committee on Ministry Reports

Happy New Year! Your Committee on Ministry met in December and we are continuing to work on our goal of evaluating UUFSCC's fulfillment of our Mission Statement this year. We would like to invite you to be sure and attend the service on Jan. 21st when Reverend Ann will be leading the service on this topic.

So think about our Mission, "*We, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Santa Cruz County, join together to foster our spiritual growth and to promote social justice. Honoring religious diversity and affirming the inherent worth and dignity of all people, we commit our combined actions and personal sources to these goals*" before the service and come prepared to learn more and share your thoughts on this important subject. And don't forget our suggestion box if you can't make it or have suggestions on any topic related to shared ministry. It should be on the greeter's table every Sunday.

Erica Crawford for the C.O.M. (myself, Thomas Witz, Marley Smith-Merrill, Linda Neher and Lee Cavanaugh)

We can't solve the significant problems of our time by using the same thinking we had when these problems were created.

-Albert Einstein

President's Letter

Communication: Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary lists one definition "n; a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs or behavior..." Why does it matter? It matters to me as we, the members and friends of the UUFSCC, very often communicate with each other. I see it as a vital tool we use to build our community here, to learn about each other and to help move forward our common goals. When it goes smoothly, we may not even notice it. But in those times when the message is lost, the intent not understood, or people go unheard, we become painfully aware of the deficit.

As President, I ask you to think about what you consider "communication." For me, it is a back and forth dialogue, both given and received. For example, an email sent without any response is an incomplete communication situation. I also try to be flexible, and sense how whomever I am trying to communicate with likes to communicate (phone, in person, in writing). It is reasonable to assume we all desire smooth, safe, and clear communication. As Unitarian Universalists, we don't have to agree on everything (and often don't). How do you respond to views different than your own when they are communicated? I try to see their value with an open mind, and respect for the passion of the person presenting them and the reason that they may be different than my own. I hope we all can create a place here at the UUFSCC where communication is an engaging, vital and lively process.

I am in our office most Thursdays from 9a.m. to 1p.m., and my mobile phone number is 831-332-7599. I remain open to your thoughts, cares, concerns and feedback.

Yours in Service, Lora Lee

PS: if you would like to explore this concept of communication further, please join us Tuesday, January 16th, 2007 at 7pm in the Gallery. Help carry the Unitarian Universalist light into Santa Cruz County and beyond.

"Beyond Categorical Thinking" Service and Workshop Success

On Sunday, December 10th, we were treated to a stimulating service and workshop on "Beyond Categorical Thinking" by the Rev. Keith Kron. In the workshop, attended by approximately 25 members, Rev Kron solicited the concerns and benefits of calling a minister of color, or one that is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) or a minister with a disability. We talked about the hot button issues in each of those instances. Rev. Kron disclosed the number of ministers seeking a settled ministry in the UUA and the number of UUA churches seeking a settled minister. He mentioned there were approximately an equal number of male and female ministers in search, and that the majority of ministers seeking a settled ministry were around fifty years old. Rev. Kron pointed out that, contrary to our assumptions, calling a LGBT minister does not necessarily draw an increased number of LGBT members, nor does calling a minister of color necessarily draw a greater number of people of color to a congregation. He stressed how important it is to find the right match for the congregation and the minister based on mutual honesty in the ministerial search process.

Lorraine Sandoval~Vigil,
Ministerial Search Committee

Ministerial Search News



I bring the good news that we have had twelve wonderful applicants for the position as our minister. We have had to narrow them down to about half so that we can manage the next steps which we have already started: telephone interviews, calls to references, reading and re-reading their packets which contain details about them including four of their sermons, presumably the four of which they are the most proud. By early January, we will be forced to choose the top three to invite to Santa Cruz. At that point we must become secretive to maintain the confidentiality of our candidates.

We hope you enjoyed the Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshop with Rev. Keith Kron. I think it was a great success.

We continue to welcome your input. Members of the Search Committee are: Bruce Fihe-Chair, Randy James, Andy Kreyche, Steve Morairty, Mark Rogers, Lorraine Sandoval-Vigil, and, myself, Jenny Wood.

Social Action Committee News

FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Curtis Reliford, founder of Following Your Heart [FYH], has just completed his sixth trip to Louisiana. While many people were at the malls buying Christmas gifts, he and his volunteer drivers were delivering six tons of clothes, household goods, building materials, toys and food to the residents of Renaissance Village, a FEMA Camp outside Baton Rouge.

Renaissance Village, whose residents are mostly evacuees from New Orleans, has grown from 1600 to 2500 people since the closing of smaller camps in the area by FEMA. The harsh winter has added even more stress to the families residing there. The two-hundred square foot trailers were never intended for ongoing cold weather use. They are poorly insulated, and many people are without sufficient propane for heating. As many as four or five people in a family are jammed together, and have to sleep in their warmest clothes to survive the night. They are now facing a shortage of coats and other warm clothing. More than a third of the camp's inhabitants are children; most are not in school. There are few jobs for the able bodied, and with an unreliable and/or absent public transportation system, those wanting work, as well as those that are infirm, elderly and psycho-socially handicapped are unable to get to jobs or services.

The government could have done more, but it didn't. Instead, like many of the hands-on non-profit and faith based programs, Following Your Heart, as a Santa Cruz based grass-roots organization, is gaining in strength and is growing rapidly as its impact inspires others to join in. "Thank you, thank you, we still need so much help and now we know that we haven't been forgotten" is one of the most common responses of Renaissance Village residents when they see the FYH trucks and volunteers.

Many people are inspired to help as they see the FYH Caravan traveling across the nation, through California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Dr. Princess, an African-American grandmother, who saw the Caravan on the Los Angeles Freeway, knew she had to help. Her family home in New Orleans, which had survived for seven generations, was destroyed. Her brothers and sisters are now living in other states, displaced since Katrina. To date, they have not received assistance from FEMA or other Government programs. "I knew I had to help Curtis; we have to help each other, the Government isn't doing

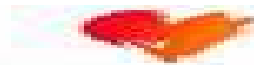
it!" said Dr. Princess. She joined a "Prayer Circle," one of many that Curtis conducts along the way. Later that day, when one of the trucks broke down near the California state line, and Curtis' team was told it might take three or more days to repair, possibly costing several thousand dollars, Dr. Princess helped again. She called a local dealership and had the truck fixed by the next day. In addition, she contacted local organizations and her friends who along with her covered the complete cost of the repair!

At press conferences and cell phone interviews along the way, the drivers and other volunteers talk about how their lives have been changed by their on-road experiences. Isaac, a young African-American man, is a spoken word poet and performer. He said, "I go to represent every 23 year old African-American man who wants to help our people". He grew up in Los Angeles, where life was all about people destroying each other; now he can take part in helping and healing others in need. Isaac, besides driving, will bring his music/spoken-word performances to Renaissance Village.

Another volunteer, Doug, who became the cameraman for the trip, joined because he saw first-hand the mismanagement of the rebuilding effort, and knows that there is still much to do. "I can't forget the images of what I saw," Doug recalls. He remembers the faces of the displaced people and their poverty. He related his dream: "that people in every state will join the Caravan, see first-hand the devastation and needs of Louisiana and the Gulf Coast, help rebuild it as one region of the country helps rebuild another." Doug, in addition to being a camera bug, is also a construction worker and a "Surfing Magician." Curtis had asked him and other performers to consider going on the trip to help bring some lightness, joy and music to Renaissance.

FYH is grateful for all the financial and volunteer support from the UUFSCC through sponsorship by the Social Action Committee. But FYH will need continuing help to repair or replace trucks that have logged over 50,000 miles. Curtis and FYH will now begin preparations for their seventh trip to Baton Rouge in the spring.

Helen Isherwood, on behalf of SAC



HEROES & HEARTS

"Helen, your journeys with Follow Your Heart are an inspiration to all of us."

-Brian Heath, SAC co-chair

Sunday Services Committee Seeks Your Ideas



With a substantial number of lay led services to plan for the spring and summer, your Sunday Services Committee wants to hear your ideas for potential topics and presenters. We also want to hear how you would like to be involved in future services.

Please offer your input and plan on attending the "Sunday Service Idea Seed Planting Session" on January 28th, following the service.

For those of you who cannot attend, or who want to present your ideas by email, contact the SSC Chair, Marcia Heath at marcia200heath@yahoo.com.

Your thoughts are always welcome.

UUFSCC 2007 Canvass Season Begins

While our annual membership canvass will take place in May, the process leading up to it will be beginning soon. This year our canvass theme will be "Paving the Way," which will support a new settled minister, and also a new commitment within the membership to support the fellowship not only financially, but also with active involvement.

This year our canvass season will be longer than usual, so that the canvassers will have the opportunity to get to know their canvasees, and encourage discussion and active involvement in the numerous committees and functioning of the fellowship. We will be actively recruiting canvassers in January and would love to have you involved! Our annual canvass dinner will be on Saturday, April 28, followed by the canvass sermon on Sunday, April 29. The actual canvass will take place from May 1 through May 18.

Remember that this is YOUR fellowship and that YOU are an important part of this process, so let us know if you can help!



This year's canvass is being driven by a team: Iran Mohsenin, Kären Aaker, Helen Oxley, Katherine LeMaster, and Donna Senko.

We welcome your input and assistance.

"From you I receive, to you I give, together we share, and from this we live."

--Joseph and Nathan Segal

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

The National Religious Campaign Against Torture is working to influence Congress to make revisions to the recently approved Military Commission Act. The President of the UUA, William Sinkford, among many other religious leaders including Michael Lerner of the Network of Spiritual Progressives, has signed on to this effort.

The NRCAT is seeking as many signatures as possible to take to the new Congress by January 15, 2007. You can add your signature online to this important effort, at www.NRCAT.org. At that site you can also learn more about how the U.S. has changed the definition of torture, discarded basic rights, and ignored decades of international precedent.

Time is short; please act ASAP.

For those who are not able to do so online, there will be hard copies of the petition at the Social Action Table for your signature. Please sign the NRCAT Petition Against Torture



For more information you can talk with Marcia Heath, or call Linda Milgate at home at 476-1521.

Nonviolent Communication

At our Fellowship's fall retreat, Rev. Cathleen Cox Burneo defined spirituality as staying in touch with yourself and with others at the same time. In order to help us develop our capacity to do this, she taught us concepts from Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication (NVC). Two of our members, Kara Bowman and Linda Neher, have recently completed a 9-month training in NVC.

Beginning in March, they will co-facilitate a practice group to give UU's who have had some training in NVC a place to hone their skills. Classes are available locally at the Center for Nonviolent Communication (www.nvcsantacruz.org or 459-6919.) After completing four of the Center's Monday evening basic classes (or the equivalent), UUs are invited to join a free drop-in practice group which will offer exercises in empathic listening; self-empathy; separating observations, thoughts feelings and judgments; making requests and other tenets of NVC.

The group will meet at the Fellowship from 7:00p.m. to 9:00p.m. on the first and third Mondays of the month from March to June. If you have questions, please talk to Kara (438-5460) or Linda (471-2109.)



Pacific Central District News

I have recently been asked to join the Chalice Lighter committee of the PCD Growth program. As part of my job I will be working with specific congregations to enhance participation and awareness of the work of the Chalice Lighters. Rev. Ann will be working with me in our congregation to that end in the coming months.

What is Chalice Lighters? The Chalice Lighters program was established to "Promote and Strengthen Unitarian Universalism" by facilitating congregational growth. Individuals participate in Chalice Lighters by making contributions to the Chalice Lighters fund three times a year. The donated money goes to fund growth projects planned and implemented by congregations in the Pacific Central District.

How does the Chalice Lighters Program Work? Individuals are encouraged to make three donations per year to raise funds for specific growth projects. There are six levels at which persons may sign up: \$250 (Beacon), \$100 (Benefactor), \$50 (Builder), \$20 (Believer) and \$10 (Basic). All contributions are appreciated! Checks are made out to the PCD with Chalice Lighters written on the memo line. All donations are tax deductible. As a Chalice Lighter, you will be sent a letter telling you about the current call to be funded. This letter will explain some of the details regarding the current project and request that you send in your pledged amount.

How to apply for a Chalice Lighters Grant? Grant applications are due three times each year: March 30, September 30 and December 31 of each year. The underlying goal of any proposal should be the growth of Unitarian Universalism in our district. Our board should approve any grant proposal. Innovative and multi-congregational grant proposals are encouraged. Preference is given to congregations that have at least 10% of their membership signed up to be Chalice Lighters.



I encourage all members to participate in this important program, as they are able. Please see me for an application or more information.

Let's get growing! Kären

January Dinner Club



The Dinner Club is open to all members. Each month, people are assigned a different dinner group and take turns being a host/ess, so you will have dinner with different people every month.

Remember, the first name listed is host/ess and provides appetizers and beverages. The second person listed brings main dish, the third brings salad/bread, and fourth brings dessert. If there is a fifth, that person brings a vegetable dish. Since some participants cannot host, others will host more than twice a year. If you would like to join, contact Iran Mohsenin.

Group 1) 1.Meyer 2. James/McCrow 3. Oxley/Newfarmer

Group 2) 1.Collier-Young 2. Crawford/Newbold 3. Rogers 4. Star Dancing/Partlow

Group 3) 1.Wood 2 Newman 3.LeMaster 4.Heath

Group 4) 1. Mohsenin 2. Cole 3. Neher 4. Hudson/Shackelford

Group 5) 1. Bowman 2. Smith-Merrill 3. Aaker/Fihe 4. Senko 5. Lamb

Substitutes: Morairty, Seamon, Thiemann, Hoernschemeyer, Fish, Lachman

First Friday Book Group

January will see the book group tackle a fascinating biography of J. Robert Oppenheimer, *American Prometheus: the triumph and tragedy of Robert J. Oppenheimer* by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin. In February we'll be reading *The Kite Runner* whose author is Khaled Hosseini. We are trying to track down a source for *Disturbing the Peace* by James Hodge and Linda Cooper for our March meeting. This book is about the College of the Americas, the government sponsored organization which trained/trains many of the repressive governments in the Latin and South America and continues to train members of foreign military establishments today.

We meet the first Friday of each month at 7:30p.m. at Joan Roberts' home and if there is a DVD or video of the book we watch it the next night. Questions? Call 688-7598.

We'd be happy if you would join us.

Musical Ministry

Chant and Meditation Circle

January 24, Wednesday
at 7:30. Join us in the Sanctuary
as we gather the calm, sing
from our souls, listen with open
hearts, and relish the silence. (Great voices not
required!!) January chant night will be led by Sylvia
Forsyth.



Great News!

The Music Coordinator Hiring Committee is excited to announce that Gail Swain has been hired for our new Music Coordinator position to work with the choir and the Sunday Services Committee, and she will begin the first week of January. Gail brings with her a wealth of experience and enthusiasm, so everybody, get ready to sing!

Many thanks go out to all who put persistent time and effort into this project: Marsha Hudson, Amy Carlson, Brian Heath, Doug Bowman, Gerry Bailey, Yael Lachman, Erin Balbanian, and Terra Collier-Young.

Also, a huge *thank you* goes out to Rick Holt for leading the choir in such a beautiful song for Christmas eve..

UUF FYI's

**John Isherwood's new address:* Aegis of Aptos 125 Heather Terrace Rm 239, Aptos, CA 95003 662-0661. He would like to hear from congregation members.

**A Grand Thank You* to Wendy Wyckoff for hosting Thanksgiving dinner at the Fellowship.

**We have a new copier.* Many thanks to Doug Bowman and the Finance Committee for doing the research and making the purchase.

Communication!!

"The mission of the Communication Committee is to promote accurate and consistent quality publications within the UUF and to the greater community."

To participate in this vital part of fellowship life, please join Scott Young and me on January 16th, at 7:00p.m. in the Gallery to promote and support quality communication.

Yours in Service,
Terra Collier-Young,
Publisher



Poetry Corner



I am only one
But still I am one.
I cannot do everything,
But still I can do something.
And because I cannot do
everything
I will not refuse to do the
something that I can do.
-Edward Everett Hale

Hospitality Committee Reports

Thanks to the following people who helped with coffee hour and potluck during December: Jane Boone, Kara & Doug Bowman and family, Ken Chambers, Shannon Edwards and Keavon, Mel & Lois Cole, Sue & Rick Meyer, Patt Taylor and Sylvia Forsyth. Here is some food for thought!

PARABLE OF THE POTLUCK: There once was a little chicken that wanted to grow a garden to have good food to make a meal for her friends. "Who will help me turn over the soil to plant the seedlings," she asked. "Not me," said the cow. "Not me," said the horse. "Not me," said the rooster. "Not me," said the dog. (ETC, ETC, ETC,) So she did all the work herself and even though she was very tired she had a lovely garden. She made a great salad and cooked potatoes, etc. and spread it all out on the table and said, "Who is going to help me eat this?" With great enthusiasm, the cow said, "I will." And the horse, the rooster, the dog, etc, all said, "I will."

The above story is the essence of how the Hospitality Committee feels about potlucks. Everyone says they want to have them but when the time comes there is not enough food brought and setup and cleanup jobs are being done by the same people or no one. On January 14th we will have a pot luck *IF* we have four people signed up for setup and four signed up for cleanup. **EVERYONE WILL BE ASKED TO BRING A DISH:**



A-G MAIN DISH
H-N SALAD
O-R BREAD/DRINKS
S-Z DESSERTS

Sign-ups must happen before January 8th or the Potluck will be canceled. Sign up at the Fellowship or call Sylvia Forsyth, Patt Taylor, or Kara Bowman to let us know how you can help.

THANKS! WE HOPE THIS WORKS!!



Photos from the UUF retreat “Conversations About Spirituality: giving voice to our personal and communal experience as UU’s” held at the Land of Medicine Buddha in Soquel, October 13-15, 2006, by Erica Crawford.



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