

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

*The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Salem, Oregon
March 11, 2009*



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AGM Kudos

There were too many UUCS members and friends working at the PNWD Annual General Meeting to mention in one newsletter. The AGM Team was listed last week; now it's time to highlight people who worked with children and youth. Erin Zysett, assisted by Todd Logan and Shannon Lucas, ran the youth program and helped them organize the Saturday night worship service. Valerie Neevel made the preparations for the younger children

and worked with Beth Malouf and Phil Smith Sunday morning. They were assisted by Kim Farar and Erica Smedsrud (Jerry Nathan's daughters), Kellyan Welch, and Shannon Lucas. Lydia Gutierrez and Mary Murphy were ready to help if needed. THANKS to all of them, and a special thanks to Lise Adams Sherry for the children's story during the Sunday morning service!

AGM "Scopes Trial" Performance a Success!

The UUCS Chalice Circle Players were exceptionally proud to provide the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Pacific Northwest District of the Unitarian Universalist Association the evening's entertainment following the banquet Saturday, February 21 at the Red Lion Hotel.

The presentation of our original play, "Evolution against Fundamentalism, the Scopes Trial Re-visited", conceived, written, and adapted by Phil Cogswell from the original trial transcripts was a complete success enjoyed by hundreds of UU's from all around the Pacific Northwest.

Congratulations are in order for our director, Cherie Ulmer and the cast and crew of old hands, first timers, visual artists, and youngsters. Our thanks go out to the following cast members: Todd Logan, Narrator/John Scopes; Dave Cozart, Judge John T. Rauston; Dennis Ehrp, William Jennings Bryan; Chuck Howard, Clarence Darrow; and Members of the Town, Phil Cogswell, Susanna Gardner, Virginia Cozart, John Gorman, Alan Holland, Gloria Holland, Danielle Olsen, and Peter Olsen.

Of course, the performance would not have been possible without the able assistance of our wonderfully overworked crew: Don Fries, Assistant Director; Galen Brownson, Stage Manager; John Prohodsky, Sound Technician; and Jean Logan, Program Art.

Acknowledgements to Tom Hewitt and Judson Middle School Drama Department, Oregon School for the Deaf, Rose Drake, Nick Brownson, Wendy Brokaw, Capitol Community Television, and Rev. Rick Davis who unselfishly assisted in our project.

The following Saturday afternoon, February 28, your Merry Players moved the play to the recording studios at CCTV where Wendy Brokaw of Shedlight Productions filmed our play for the production of a DVD and an upcoming television broadcast. She comments on the play

It was an adventure, a mission, and a success in that order.

(continued on page 4)

Reverential Ramblings

After President Obama's recent speech before Congress and the nation the Republican governor of Louisiana delivered his party's response to the president's proposed economic stimulus plan. The governor criticized the "pork" in this initiative and cited the funds earmarked for "volcano monitoring" as a particularly porcine example of wasteful spending.

Those of us who live in the Pacific Ring of Fire region – which circumvents that entire ocean and has many active volcanoes – know that the governor's comment is geographically provincial. It is akin to a Pacific Northwest official saying funds earmarked for early hurricane warning would be wasteful spending. Southeastern officials would rightfully defend such spending because they live in the path of hurricanes.

In truth, volcano monitoring makes good sense – after all, not so many years ago warnings that Mount St. Helens was going to blow saved lives. Taking this idea and running with it in a pastoral direction, I think there should be personal volcanic monitoring systems because any one of us can erupt without warning.

One tragic example: A few months ago I read about a prominent man who left work, seemingly in high spirits, and then had a pleasant dinner with his grown daughter. Later that night leaped out of a high rise and plunged to his death – a suicide. Of course, family and friends were stunned and heartbroken. No one suspected he was on the edge of despair – there were no apparent warning signs.

It's hard to tell how folks are doing if you don't look beneath the surface. Yet we have been socialized to put up a brave front, to conceal our inner turmoil. It's not that we seek to deceive others, it's just that we don't want to burden other people with our cares and concerns, or perhaps we're embarrassed to be struggling while everyone else seems to be doing so well. Thus, we fail to realize how much turmoil or despair may be going on in one another's hidden depths. On several occasions in my ministry, I have discovered that someone who appeared bright and cheerful was actually struggling with depression. We get fooled. In fact, we can even fool ourselves and get blindsided by our own true, deep emotions.

Sometimes hidden pressures build up until someone has an emotional eruption. It can get messy and painful. We may say or do things that are hurtful or destructive to ourselves or others. Or, it may just be a private, personal eruption, a breakdown that no one else witnesses.

Countervailing social pressure to keep a lid on it only makes things worse. Paradoxically, it takes strength to admit that you need help, that the pressures of life are building up to dangerous levels.

Sad to say, religious communities have often added to this problem – people get the implicit message that members are supposed to have it all together. It's not true. Each one of us struggles at times and the struggles are that much greater when they are borne alone. Especially now, in these economic downtimes when many among us feel inordinate pressure, may ours be a community where we can bring our whole selves, where we allow one another the space to be human. If we resolve to do this, I don't think it will be a wasteful use of our time and energies.

Love, Rick

.....
"For Estefani Lora"

The poem "For Estefani Lora, Third Grade, Who Made Me a Card" was read in the service on February 15 and we didn't know the name of the poet. It was written by Aracelis Girmay, a New York poet and writing teacher. The poem is from Girmay's book, *Teeth*. It has been republished here in *PeaceWork Magazine*. Enjoy! <http://www.peaceworkmagazine.org/print/677>



LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem
March 11, 2009

Religious Education Dates to Note

Youth/Adult Weds. – Meditation 7-9 PM
Youth/Adult Sundays – Readers' Forum 9:15 am
Child Sundays – Children's Choir, 9:30 – 10:15 am
All Sundays – Sign up for Mystery Friends continues through March.
7th-9th graders Sundays – OWL continues.
All Sat. Mar. 14 – Multigenerational Potluck (Sources Supper). Edict of Torda. If possible, please bring eastern European foods.
6th – 8th Sun. Mar. 15 – Buddhist Field Trip @ 8:50 am
Youth/Adult Tues. Mar. 17 – Religious Education Team meeting, 6-8 PM in library. All are welcome, contact Lise if need childcare
Older Child/Adult Thur. Mar. 19 – Dances of Universal Peace, 7 PM, Hanneman Hall
Child – Sun. Mar. 29 – Children Worship in RE Commons

Christi's Thoughts

Since this week I was consumed with the settling in of our new foster daughters and a multitude of appointments and visits here and there, I thought I might share a bit of our journey with you.

We began our time as foster parents about eleven years ago when my husband and I decided to take the training courses. Our intent at that time was to help children in need and to be open to the possibilities of adoption if someone needed us!

The training consisted of weekly lessons pertaining to all of the things that children that have been removed from their families might have experienced and how to handle it. There was an emphasis on not using duct tape even though our trainer said the thought will definitely go through our minds! That comment in itself started to scare us off!

The first time through the training, we were so naïve and to even think children have experienced these things at the hands of parents was really an eye opener. Had I just been turning my head to reality? I had worked with children for such a long time and yet understanding the foster care system was sadly something new. I should have been more aware. (Hold on, screaming kids! . . .)

(OK I'm back!.....) We were originally called for two children ages 2 and 4 who were no longer wanted in their current foster home due to behaviors. We went to visit with them before their move. When we took them back,

they would not get out of our car and screamed and yelled NO! That day began our time as official foster parents!

We have since parented and adopted children with serious behavior issues and other special needs and have successfully helped them onto a better path. Since all was settling down, we asked, why not start the process over again? This time though, we are on the path of fostering and being a forever Auntie and Uncle not forever Mom and Dad!

I think one of the most surprising things to us as foster parents was the number of people that seem to think "foster children" are like second-class citizens. I can't tell you the number of doctor appointments where I asked questions or nurtured our children only to be asked "Why? Aren't they JUST your foster child?" Or when with a baby at the grocery store someone says, "Your baby is so cute!" I respond without wanting to take the credit, "She is isn't she. She is my foster daughter." To then watch the person be no longer interested.

Another comment that has been hard to handle is the one where people say to us, "Well I could never do it – it would break my heart!" like we are cold hearted! It is good to know if you do not think this is something you could handle and then find other ways to support the programs, but it is wrong to assume that it doesn't break our hearts when our children move back to bad circumstances or even move on to good ones!

I look forward to the day that as a community we are aware of the children in need and are providing a plethora of prevention instead of just supporting an ongoing cycle of children in care. Everywhere we segregate our ages in our community from nursery programs to retirement homes. How are children to learn how to parent without the experiences of working with younger children with good role models? Yearly, parenting classes need to be a required part of high school graduation including experiences with children of all ages if we are going to build a society that knows how to parent their children. Yes, drug and alcohol abuse play a large role in the removal of children from homes, but a lot of the children that have been in our care are simply from parents that are neglectful and/or do not have the skills necessary to keep the children safe.

I appreciate the volunteers that are making Foster Parent Night Out at our Congregation a reality for parents in our area! Let's continue to think of ways our congregation can help these children in need.

Until next time...

Christi

(Continued from page 1)

Everyone was intent on making this a fine performance, and did. It was a treat working with actors who turned in compelling and at times gripping performances.

The second part, interviews and a short history of the actual Scopes Trial, will round out the production. For me, this has been an exciting and gratifying experience.

We were truly honored by the number of people who approached us after the performance and asked if we would be able to bring our play to their congregations. And perhaps, the most poignant of all was the lady who was so inspired by our play that she will be starting a theater group in her own church!

Thank you,
Dennis Ehrp, Chair,
UUCS Chalice Circle Players

UUCS Board Meeting Highlights

The February 12, 2009 UUCS board meeting continued the practice of devoting part of the meeting to visioning and discussed serving the needs of the individual in the congregation. Mentioned were Affinity Groups (as implemented in larger churches), expansion of Adult RE, providing opportunities to make a difference, and increasing the size of the nominating committee.

The board approved a bake sale fundraiser for the women's retreat and agreed no action was needed at this time about Girl Scout cookie sales.

The board asked our office administrator to find someone to organize the credenza in the Fellowship Hall and the Social Action team to find a contact person for the Welcoming Congregations program. Several items were deferred to later meetings because of timing issues or the need for more information.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, **March 12, 2009.**

from John Gorman,
UUCS Board Secretary

Memorial Garden Planning

The memorial garden planning committee is continuing their design process, and a conceptual plan of their chosen layout is hanging in Hanneman Hall on the bulletin board. Please comment.

The Unitarian Universalist

published by

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This issue was edited by Kathleen Ehli. NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 11:30 a.m. Sunday, March 22. Send news to editors@uusalem.org (or to Lois Nodland AND Kathleen Ehli, put it in workroom newsletter "mailbox," or mail it (marked "newsletter").

The committee will meet on **March 15** to discuss designs. Please contact Bonnie Heitsch if you have ideas.

CUUPS Meeting

The next Coven of UU Pagans of Salem (CUUPS) meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on **March 17** at the church. We will be celebrating our Celtic traditions with a potluck and ritual. We will also be having a business meeting.

2009 Stewardship Campaign

THANKS to all of you who have already made a pledge for the year starting July 1. And thanks-in-advance for writing "08-09" or "09-10" on all the pledge checks you write these next few months, so that the treasurer will know how to credit the check!

Dances of Universal Peace

The third Thursday of the month Dances of Universal Peace night on **March 19** falls on the eve of the Spring Equinox, the day of equal length of day and night, so there will be a special evening of dance and ritual to celebrate. This dance evening will be slightly longer than usual, from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. It will include a time for

meditation and ritual. Feel free to bring snacks to share afterwards. Celebratory/ethnic dress is encouraged. A donation of \$5-10 is requested. (See the February 25 UUCS newsletter for more details.)

A bit more about the evening: It will begin with dances that take us inward with a focus on our breath that brings us into balance and connects us with our source. We'll have a brief meditation exploring what has been gathering within us throughout the winter and participate in a ritual of passing through the seasonal gateway. The second set of dances will be more outward, inspired with the renewal and new life of spring.

Contact UUCS member Pam Prichard for more information.

From Age-ing to Sage-ing

A new adult religious education class, *From Age-ing to Sage-ing*, will meet Wednesdays starting in April.

Learning goals will include building skills to review your spiritual journey, clarifying it for life today, and creating a spiritual action plan for the future.

The class requires attendance at each meeting and willingness to keep a personal journal. It is open to those of retirement age and honors privacy, confidentiality, and the need for each to work at his/her own pace.

Six 90-minute classes will meet in the Library at 1:00 p.m. starting on **April 1** and run through May 6. The class is limited to eight people. A waiting list will be started for those interested in a second class.

The leader is Lou Stoetzer, MSW, PhD. After years in psychology and consulting with clergy and religious communities he assured Rev. Davis that, "I've come to my senses and I don't do that stuff any more." Let's pray that he means it. Contact Lou Stoetzer

UUCS Board Nominees Wanted

Carrying out the work of our UUCS takes a big village and many good people step forward to support that work. It is time for an opportunity to serve our village in yet another capacity as we look to the future of our Board of Directors' membership. Annually, nominations are taken from the congregation as well as thru the Nominating Committee for expired positions. Board membership involves attending monthly meetings and a summer and fall retreat, actively engaging in the work of the board, including financial, legal

and maintenance needs, empowering staff, and visioning the future. One must be a current member of the congregation and be willing to serve a two year commitment.

New and old members are encouraged to participate in this work. If interested you may nominate yourself, or if you know someone who is interested or you feel is up to the task you can offer that nomination. A slate of candidates will be presented to the congregation in mid-April, and a final vote will be at the annual congregational meeting on **May 17**. Contact Christine Ertl Phil Smith or Linda Geissler.

SIHN

We're happy to welcome our new coordinators: Crystal Areal, Miranda Woods, and Kendra Forster. Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network families will arrive at UUCS on **April 5**, and we'll be recruiting volunteers after church on March 15, 22, and 29. We'll need dinner preparers, evening hosts, two people to stay overnight, and breakfast hosts. To volunteer, call Miranda or Crystal.

Oregon UU Voices for Justice

The *Oregon UU Voices for Justice*, an emerging statewide UU legislative advocacy network in Oregon, will be meeting at UUCS on Saturday, **April 18** 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (soup lunch will be served). The workshop is meant to further the development of the statewide network and learn from Rev. Carol McKinley, Coordinator of the Washington State UU Voices for Justice, and Rob Keithan, Intern Minister at the First Unitarian Church in Portland and former member of the Advocacy and Witness staff at the Washington, D.C. UUA Social Justice office. The mission of the UU advocacy networks across the country is to help educate, organize, and advocate for public policies that reflect our UU values.

Sign up at the Social Action Team table after church if you plan to attend and/or help us out by making a pot of soup, loaf of bread, or plate of cookies for the workshop lunch.

Contact Laura Stine to RSVP & for more information.

News of the UUCS Community

Mieke Visser's son **Brendan Gifford** has been a part of the UUCS community since his birth in 1981. She writes that he's currently living with friends in NE Portland, in a spacious and historic home, c.1904. He works in Tualatin pro-

viding technical support for Apple's iPhone. Brendan's a reader of history and philosophy, and an accomplished drummer on many types of drums.

Kai Arnold Bodtke also was a son of our community for many years. In a tragic circumstance two weeks ago his pickup was struck by a train in Portland, ending his life. Our condolences go to his parents, **Diana** and **Egon Bodtke**. Pastor Rick conducted a memorial service for Kai last Saturday at Portland's First Unitarian Church.

Another UU youth, **Sophia Knudsen**, is living in Aarhus, Denmark, this school year. She will return to Oregon in time for her senior year of high school at South Salem High. Sophia was born in Denmark and lived there until she was six, when she moved to Salem with her American mother, **Leah**, to start kindergarten. Her Danish dad remained in Denmark, remarried, and has three young children with his wife, Helle.

Sophia's school is called Aarhus Katedral-skole, and since her spoken Danish is so well established, teachers often forget that she is an exchange student! She also works at Soestrene Grene, "an awesome boutique" with interesting wares from across the planet. Since in Denmark minimum wage is \$14/hour, she's able to earn her own spending money! She was able to return home for a visit in January, to attend Youth Con and vacation in Hawaii with Leah where she learned to surf!

Jasper Walton, son of **Christine Ertl** and **Jon Walton**, has had a busy and productive senior year at South Salem High School. Honors in music performance have been rolling in one after another! He was selected in the All State Wind Ensemble that played at Eugene's Hult Center in January for the Oregon Music Educator's Association Annual Conference. As well, he was selected for the All City Wind Ensemble held at North Salem High School in February. In addition to the Wind Ensemble, which is the audition band for South High, he plays in the school's symphony, the basketball band, and the jazz band that recently won high honors and was invited to play for the evening's highlight performance at the Oregon Jazz Celebration held at Lane Community College in February. Jasper has been accepted into the University of Oregon School of Music, where he plans to major in music education.

Dorothy Miteva, from Sophia, Bulgaria and **Jean Logan's** son **Adam** arrived late last month

for their spring break from the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York. Dorothy has a double major in advertising and public relations and marketing while Adam continues with his studies in the school of imaging arts and sciences. While in Oregon they visited **Nate Rochester** and his fiancé, Michaelina, in Eugene, as well as Cougar Hot Springs, Newport, and enjoyed a night on the town in Portland. Like Adam, Dorothy is hearing impaired but raised in schools without the use of sign language interpreters; she depends greatly on her refined ability to lip read.

A year ago, we announced the birth of **Harvey** and **Andrea Kramer's** first grandchild, Isaac Benjamin. They recently returned from a trip to Philadelphia to celebrate Isaac's birthday and to spend some time with his parents, Ari and Kelly. Ari's brother Erik, who sees his brother only rarely, traveled east with them, making a memorable family reunion. A side-trip to New York City was a reminiscence of sorts for Harvey, reared in the Bronx. There they visited two of the most popular cultural icons, The Museum of Natural History and Katz' Deli, "home of the renowned \$14 pastrami sandwich!" Andrea cites the excitement of the city, but notes that everyone seems to run in "high gear" and on edge. Their conclusion: Oregon's best!

Lee and **Carmela Coyne** will return home this week from a month-long cultural exchange in Costa Rica along with twenty other Oregonians. Lee writes that they have had an opportunity to explain the UU faith to a group of Catholics who hosted a special service for their group. He stressed UU's open-mindedness and the equality of minister and congregation, our lack of reliance on a scriptural focus and more on human rights, preservation of nature, and modern social issues.

Cathie Olcott and **Joyce Bynum** are enjoying the warmth and ambiance of Palm Springs this week, on an Elderhostel-sponsored tour and desert study at Miracle Springs. The desert's wildflowers should still be in bloom, and as a bonus, both will study the game of bridge!

Former UUCS member **Wilson Wyant** (ewwyant@verizon.net) writes that he and Barbara love their neighborhood in Bothell, Washington, with their son's family just a few blocks away. Collin (nearly 5) spends two afternoons a week with them and "keeps us busy and challenged"; and they're looking forward to the arrival of a second grandchild in the summer! Barbara has been practicing the piano diligently, an activity she loves, and Wilson enjoys listening to. Their daughter Liz is currently teaching mostly AP courses in European and American History to

English speaking Taiwanese high school students; she loves the culture there and getting to know that part of the world. Wilson and Barbara hope to visit her.

Wilson has joined the 160-member Woodinville UU Church, about eight miles away. They currently have visiting ministers -- and lots of fine musicians in the congregation. Wilson is on the equivalent of the Life Lines Lay Ministry Team he served on here. The church is currently hosting a "tent city" for three months: about 60 homeless people are living in tents set up in the church parking area, and a group of churches and organizations provides dinner in the sanctuary every night, "so it is quite an undertaking." They add that our e-mailed newsletter helps them keep up with events going on here, as well as with the many Salem friends they continue to miss.

Ken and I are in Ashland this week, visiting with eldest son Jeff and his family enroute, and seeing some plays. We'll be glad to share impressions of "Death and the King's Horseman," a new play out of Africa, and also the irrepressible "Music Man."

Sharing both our joys and our concerns is an integral part of our caring community. If you would share your news, please call or send me an e-mail. Joan Erickson

Events around the PNW District

Naramata 2009 – Joyful and Liberating!

Eliot Institute offers a seven-day, one-of-a-kind experience of play, community, and worship for the whole family in beautiful Naramata, on the shores of Lake Okanagan in British Columbia.

This year's session runs **June 27 – July 4**, and will feature Rev. Amanda Aikman and Julia McKay as the theme speakers. Come join us!

Visit www.eliotinstitute.org to learn more.

Come to UU Celebration of Interdependence Family Camp!

Our mission is to provide UUs from the Pacific Northwest a sustainable and affordable retreat, in honor of our 7th Principle, our "blue boat home." This camp offers an opportunity to share multi-generational fellowship, while rekindling our spirits and celebrating interdependence. Rich offerings of music, play, spiritual practices at sustainable earth-friendly camp in an alcohol-free setting.

The Second Annual UU Celebration of Interdependence Family Camp takes place 4th of July Weekend, **Thursday, July 2 to Sunday, July 5** at Camp Cedar Ridge, Vernonia, 40 miles west of Portland in the Tillamook Forest.

The camp is sponsored by UCCWC in Hillsboro. Come join us! Rev. Sue Ayer will be our chaplain onsite.

Prices: \$132-\$140 adults; \$95, 5-9 yr olds, 4 and under free. Includes *three* nights lodging and *nine* meals, along with all camp amenities: pool, slip-n-slide, athletic courts, 28 acres on the river under starry nights.

Registration opens April 15. Please go to www.uccwc.org/familycamp for more information and form, or contact Sara Cloe, RE, at UCCWC for more info.

* * * * *

SUNDAY SERVICE AND CHURCH SCHOOL

10:30 a.m. (Child Care Available)

Sunday, March 15

"Esther's Story"

Andrea Kramer

March 15 is the fourteenth day of Adar in the Hebrew calendar, the Jewish holiday called Purim. Purim celebrates the Old Testament Book of Esther. Andrea Kramer, a member of our Chalice Circle Players, will tell the story of Esther at the service.

Sunday, March 22

Coven of UU Pagans of Salem

Sunday, March 29

The Reverend Emily Brault

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem
5090 Center Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97317

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

March 11, 2009

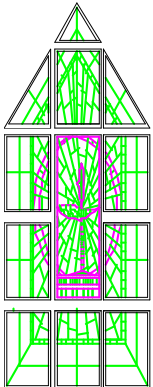
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UUCS Calendar

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|---------------------|--|
| Wednesday, March 11 | UU Meditation (Compassionate Mind UU Sangha),
7 p.m. (every Wednesday) |
| Thursday, March 12 | Board Meeting, 7 p.m. (All are welcome) |
| Saturday, March 14 | Intergenerational Sources Supper, 5:30 p.m. |
| Sunday, March 15 | Readers' Forum, 9:15 a.m. (every Sunday)
Elder Fest, after the service |
| Tuesday, March 17 | CUUPS, 6:30 p.m. |
| Wednesday, March 18 | UU Meditation, 7 p.m.
Chat & Craft, 7 p.m. (1 st & 3 rd Wednesdays) |
| Thursday, March 19 | Dances of Universal Peace, 7 p.m. |
| Friday, March 20 | Spring Equinox |
| Saturday, March 21 | Landscape Work Party, 9:00 a.m. |
| Sunday, March 22 | Readers' Forum, 9:15 a.m.
NEXT Newsletter Deadline , 11:30 a.m. |
| Wednesday, March 25 | UU Meditation, 7 p.m. |
| Sunday, March 29 | Readers' Forum, 9:15 a.m. |