



The PSWD NetwUUrk

Newsletter of the Pacific Southwest District of the UUA

Issue 126

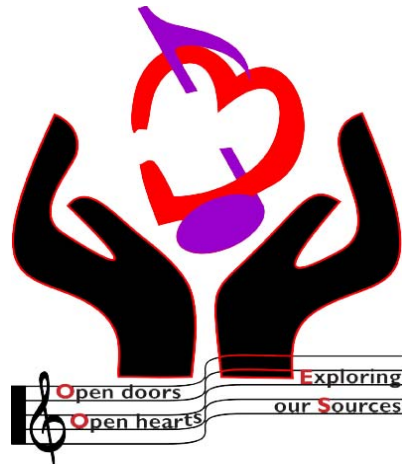
Spring 2009

OPEN DOORS, OPEN HEARTS, EXPLORING OUR SOURCES

Join us for our annual District Assembly at the Hilton Phoenix East in Mesa, Arizona, May 1-3. This will be an exciting and unique DA with the Friday evening performance "Sources," a Unitarian Universalist Cantata; music by **Jason Shelton** & words by **Kendyl Gibbons**. Led by **Connie Clemons** and **Kellie Walker**, a choir of 100 people plus orchestra will perform this very special UU piece that includes a wonderful diversity of music styles. It is not to be missed!

There will be workshops covering Personal and Spiritual Development, Social Justice, Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Church Organization, Effective Fund Raising and more. There will be special programs for Children & Youth. We will worship and celebrate together and be entertained by UU stand-up comedian **Jerry Robin** at our banquet on Saturday evening.

Brochures with more information and registration forms will be available soon online at www.pswduua.org or from your local congregation. The Hilton Phoenix East is centrally located in the heart of the Phoenix's East Valley in Mesa, Arizona at 1011 West Holmes Avenue, and is just 12 miles from Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. For reservations, call 1-480-833-5555 and let them know you are part of the Unitarian Universalist Association group. The room rate is the same as last year: \$119 plus tax for two people in a room.



May 4, 2008 performance of "Sources," at the UU Congregation of Phoenix.

DISTRICT ASSEMBLY 2009 May 1-3 at the Hilton Phoenix East In Mesa, Arizona

The deadline for both DA and hotel registration is March 31.

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Thoughts from the President, Michael Sallwasser

There are two elections of importance to the future of our Association of Congregations.

The first was the election of a one-time community organizer as the 44th president of the United States. During the campaign, the opposition dismissed Barack Obama as a “community organizer,” but those of us in churches that have formed partnerships with other faith-based organizations in our communities know that community organizers, especially those inspired by faith, as were Martin Luther King, Jr. and César Estrada Chávez, are essential to justice and equity. Harvey Milk, whose life and times are the subject of an Oscar-nominated movie, is another community organizer whose success in defeating the Briggs Initiative can be credited to building coalitions among disparate groups with a common purpose, a commitment to fairness.

The same election that united people in communities all across our nation to elect a community organizer, also dashed hopes of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community by barring marriage equality in multiple states, two of the states being in our Pacific Southwest District.

While there are many reasons that we fell short, a primary deficit, especially in California, was the lack of what made Barack Obama’s and Harvey Milk’s campaigns successful. We failed to build broad enough coalitions that would have successfully defended marriage equality.

As we regroup to pursue afresh the cause of marriage equality and other issues of social justice that we as religious people are called to address, consider this: A Unitarian Universalist minister was extemporizing on the foundational nature of our covenant as expressed in the Principles and Purposes. What I took from his comments (which I found to be inspirational both in their content and the passion with which they were expressed) was a clear understanding that we are a religion grounded in relationship. Our covenant with each other is the essence of Unitarian Universalism. Without it we would cease to be Unitarian Universalists.

Our covenantal relationships, which makes churches vibrant, is also what holds the promise of keeping our Association, both at the district and national levels, a

vibrant and compassionate force in the world. That we came within four percentage points of defeating Proposition 8 in California can be credited to our congregations working together with a common purpose beyond the walls of our individual churches. By strengthening the covenant between UU churches and expanding them to embrace other religious communities, we will close the gap that separated us from victory this past November.

Another election that will have a more direct effect on the future of our Association will be held at General Assembly. Delegates will gather in Salt Lake City to choose a new President of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. An important criteria I would encourage you to consider as you decide whom to vote for is which candidate will do the most to deepen and enhance the covenantal relationships within Unitarian Universalism. Which candidate will encourage us to strengthen the religious bonds within and between congregations so that we can bring justice and compassion to a world desperately in need of both?

May the answer you find to that question determine how you cast your ballot.

Living my faith,
Michael Sallwasser

THE PSWD NETWUURK

**Published by the Pacific Southwest District
of the Unitarian Universalist Association**
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Deadlines for the NetwUUrK:

Fall issue - September 5,
Winter issue - November 5
Spring issue - February 5
Summer issue - May 5

View NetwUUrK on the Web: www.pswduua.org
to view current or archival issues.

REjoice

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS for PSWD
from Tera Little

It's great to be back at work! In the fall, I took the rest of my sabbatical and completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, a requirement both for graduation at Meadville Lombard and for the Ministerial Fellowship Committee. Being at a hospital 40 hours a week, offering spiritual care to sick or dying patients and their families was an intense way to spend sabbatical time, but I learned so much. Not long after sabbatical, I completed my third of four January terms at Meadville Lombard. After being on the road toward ordained ministry part-time since 2001, I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel.

A lot of people ask me, "Once you graduate, what next?" One thing seminary has done is encourage an attitude of expansiveness and openness about the future. My plan for now is to continue the wonderful, meaningful ministry I've enjoyed for so long here in Pacific Southwest District. Ken and I started together in 1999, and this year we celebrate ten years with you all. The roles, programs, and ministries continue to evolve, offering new ways of engagement and meaning-making, with the best group of volunteers anywhere.

Coming up on the horizon is an expanded camping ministries program. This year we add Family Camp under our umbrella, and we continue to develop the Adult Advisor Training and Backpacking Journeys program. Look for cluster-based book groups focused on youth ministry, a second training for Youth Ministry Consultants in Fall 2009, and more news on the 3 Ps Youth Ministry Project. (The three Ps stand for preparation, presence, and program). This summer we co-sponsor the 2nd Water Justice Road Trip for Young Adults, August 3-9. In all these areas, the focus is on equipping leaders, nurturing souls, and creating justice.

I look forward to seeing you or hearing from you. As always, feel free to drop me a note and let me know how things are going in your congregation.

With peace and hope,
Tera Little



Ken's Corral

By Ken Brown, District Executive

As I visit congregations and read newsletters I am impressed with the variety of ways our congregations are addressing the UUA Ethical Eating Congregational Study Action Issue (CSAI). This is the first year in the four year process of study and action within the UUA. Voted as the CSAI at the last General Assembly, this issue seems to have caught on with our congregations. I believe it has done so because it connects something we do everyday with ethical choices we make in how we eat. It is an issue that we can all do something about.

As Unitarian Universalists we care about human rights and our interdependent web of life. Thus it seems natural that this is an issue we care about and can focus on as a congregation. There are enough choices about how to eat ethically that I believe everyone can take some steps to address this concern.

I eat a basically vegetarian diet in addition to wild caught fish, eating vegan when I can. For meat eaters I suggest you seek out local ranchers and farmers who raise their animals on a natural diet. I have personal policies I follow in what foods to purchase and eat. First preference is given to items I grow myself, then buying from local farmers' markets is next (preferably organic), then local grocers who sell local produce and products, then produce grown in the states surrounding where I live, with preference given to organic products. If I buy out of the region, I try to buy only organic products. I do believe that if more of us made choices like these we would impact the farming, ranching, and food delivery in our communities, nation, and the world.

I would be remiss if I did not end with a reminder that we also need to tend the garden that feeds us spiritually, the congregation of which you are a member. Statistically we know more people reach out to religious communities in an economic downturn and that in the past the religious community has been up to the challenge. So while we discuss how we as congregations and individuals might make choices in our eating, I also hope you will make choices to support your congregation and your District as we work together on this and other issues that we care about.

- Ken

Ken-raised tomatoes

UUA Trustee's Report

There is a great deal happening within the Association right now and I would encourage congregations, members and friends to periodically take a look at the UUA website (<http://uaa.org/>) and subscribe to UU World Online (<http://uuworld.org/>). I would like to address four issues briefly that I think deserve your special attention.

The first is the upcoming election of officers for the UUA. There are several that we will be voting on at GA in Salt Lake City including the President, the Moderator and the Financial Advisor. Of these three only the President's position is contested. **Gini Courter**, our current Moderator and **Dan Brodie**, our current Financial Advisor are unopposed for new terms. They both have my hearty support and appreciation for the work they do.

The President position is sought by **Rev. Laurel Hallman** of Dallas, TX and **Rev. Peter Morales** of Golden, CO. These are two very fine people who have both already made significant contributions to Unitarian Universalism. You can find out more about each at their respective websites: <http://www.hallmanforuapresident.com/> and <http://www.moralesforuapresident.org/>. I am encouraging congregations to explore each candidate's positions carefully. You can read about them, you can ask them questions by e-mail and you can hear some of the recorded forums that have occurred between them. I have been asked by both candidates to endorse them and at this point have chosen to not do so. I strongly believe this is a congregational decision that should be based on the congregation's research. I strongly encourage congregations to instruct their delegates to GA in how to vote. These elected officials serve the congregations, not individuals, and I believe it is the congregations who must make the call. I will tell you though that I will make an endorsement by the time of our own DA in Arizona on May 1st. By that time congregations will have had time for a proper discernment process and congregations in the PSWD are entitled to know where I stand.

The second issue I want to bring to your attention is the revision of our Bylaw Article II, better known to most as our Purposes and Principles. The UUA Board voted to send the work of the Commission on Appraisal to the agenda of GA. While this will be debated and studied, the only thing that the delegates of GA can do is vote it up or down. It cannot be amended. If a simple majority approves it then it goes to the next GA agenda in 2010 where a two-thirds majority must approve it. I really like this process. As I see it we can't lose: if we vote to adopt, we affirm the new language and intent; if we do not adopt then we are affirming that we like what we have. The main point is that we are thinking about what these words mean seriously and do not take them for granted. You can read more at <http://www25.uaa.org/coa/>.

The third topic is the situation with Independent Affiliates. At the January meeting the Board passed a resolution that sunsets the current Affiliate status by June of 2010, contingent upon the staff's "creating a strategy to honor and harness the incredible talent, passion and experience present in this large group of dedicated UU volunteers. We encourage these important organizations to partner with the staff to create best practices for engaging with congregations, districts, and staff in carrying out our vision for Unitarian Universalism and the hope we have for healing the world." Applications for new IA status (under the current rules) will no longer be accepted after June of 2009.

This rule change is a good step. The staff has also been uncomfortable with the Board's stringent guidelines, and is committed to create positive relationships with these key organizations. I think this is good work and will create a process and place to recognize the important differences these organizations make for Unitarian Universalism.

My colleague, **Linda Laskowski** has posted to her blog on February 2nd a very good piece on this with an article by **Gini Courter** that I find helpful in understanding the issue. <http://pcdtrustee.blogspot.com/>. Take a look.

Finally, I want to tell you about the financial situation of the UUA. While it is financially in good shape it is also clear that unless budget changes are made for the next two years (we do a two year budget process) it will not remain so. A significant portion of the annual revenue of the UUA comes from our endowment. Because the endowment has been reduced dramatically by the current economy, it will reduce the amount available each year for current income. The Board and staff are taking several steps to have a balanced budget that recognizes reduced income. Staff salaries are frozen, positions are not being re-filled when vacant, staff attendance at GA is being reduced by 30%, and committees are being asked to reduce expenses by 10%.

Congregations are the primary source of revenue through the Annual Program Fund (APF). We can do several things to help during this difficult time, including making sure we honor our commitment to this year's APF by June 30th and continue to do so for next year. PSWD is a leader in what I think is a covenant between congregations and the Association that is nothing less than the covenant we as individuals have in our pledge to our own congregations.

Congratulations to everyone for our near complete congregational certification. We only missed two congregations and as an Association all but 54 congregations re-certified. This is much better than most years.

Continued on page 5 . . .

UUA Trustee, continued . . .

Again, I remain available to you to assist in any way I am able and am open to invitations to visit your congregation. Let me know by email at tloughrey@uua.org. You can also see my blog at <http://tomloughreyuuaatrustee.blogspot.com>.

In faith and trust,
Tom Loughrey

Friends of the PSWD

Our new giving program, Friends of the PSWD, supports important ministries of our wonderful district: young adults, lay leadership training, and youth camps.

Our District is supported largely through donations made by you—congregational members—through the UUA Annual Program Fund and PSWD Fair Share contributions.

The Friends of the PSWD is in place to help us go above and beyond programs and ministries funded through APF and Fair Share. Last year was our first year for this program, and thanks to your generosity we raised almost \$6,000.00.

Those funds were instrumental in the creation of two new young adult outreach programs: the Water Justice Road Trip, co-sponsored with UU Legislative Ministry, California, and the Young Adult Camp held at de Benneville Pines. At both events, our young adults tapped into their fire and passion while exploring justice issues as people of faith. During the Young Adult Camp, one young woman looked around and said, “Look! We are like unicorns—people in congregations are always asking, ‘Where are the young adults?’ Well, here we are!”

The young adults on the Road Trip and at the Camp had one thing in common—they are ready to explode the myth of the young adult unicorns and are eager to engage in congregational life.

We did not stop with young adults. You asked for more daylong cluster-based leadership training and we delivered with workshops on a diversity of topics such as organizational transitions and governance, church finances, congregational social justice, committee meeting basics, and integrating members.

Now is the time for us to be bold Unitarian Universalists; to proclaim our liberal religious message; to courageously lead our congregations. Your financial contribution to **Friends of the PSWD** makes programs and ministries possible that help us become better, stronger leaders for the 21st century.

PSWD NEEDS YOUR HELP

The PSWD needs your help in identifying a few outstanding volunteers who have played a significant role in the continuing growth and health of our District, as well as the unsung heroes whose quiet contributions add so much to the life of our larger community.

We ask you to take a little time to consider if someone in your congregation might be a potential nominee for one of the awards to be presented at this year’s District Assembly in May. (Note: Distinguished Service Awards are given to those who have provided particularly effective service in more than one capacity as a volunteer in the District.) Nominations are sought for the following awards:

- u Distinguished Service, Lay person.
- u Distinguished Service, Religious Professional.
- u Global Stewardship Award is presented to the UU person or group that has contributed significantly, either by work or example, to the cause of global survival.
- u Arthur W. Olsen Award may be given periodically to recognize someone who has made a significant long-term contribution to Unitarian Universalism.
- u Unsung UU Award is given to those volunteers whose actions inspire, support, and express UU ideals, but who are not generally eligible for recognition within the framework of other awards.
- u Unsung UU Youth Award honors a youth between the ages of 14 and 20 whose activities demonstrate service to UU values through witness to and for our faith.
- u Youth Advisor of the Year Award is presented to a youth advisor who has shown amazing energy and dedication to the growth of Unitarian Universalist Youth Ministry.

To nominate someone from your congregation for one of these awards, please fill out the form found on the PSWD website (www.pswduua.org) under “Brochures and Flyers” and supply the supporting documentation required for the award being suggested.

Friends of the PSWD brochures
Can be found online at
www.pswduua.org

GENERAL ASSEMBLY— A MEETING OF CONGREGATIONS June 24 - 28, 2009 Salt Lake City, Utah

UU's Meeting in Salt Lake City?

You know it's not all white, all Mormon, conservative and definitely not boring. Well, a bit conservative, but Salt Lake City chose Barack Obama over John McCain in 2008.

* 39.4% of residents are non-white

1 A majority are non-Mormon

1 Restaurants, clubs, music, the opera, symphony, ballet—really great night life (really!) and a vacation wonderland nearby (Zion, Arches, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef and Bryce Canyon)

1 Getting around SLC on TREX, the light rail system in the convention district is a breeze and the airport is just minutes away from the Salt Palace Convention Center.

1 Salt Lake City boasts three openly gay or lesbian state legislators and one of the largest gay pride marches in the West. They want and need our presence at GA!

Who's Coming to GA in Salt Lake City?

We know for sure that UUA Presidential Candidates **Rev. Laurel Hallman** and **Rev. Peter Morales** will be hoping that you come to engage in the process of electing the new leadership of our Association. And tons of UUs will be there to honor the presidency and 8 years of the inspiring leadership of **Rev. Bill Sinkford**. UUs from more than 500 congregations from across our continent and around the world will be there waiting for Moderator **Gini Courter** to drop the gavel (or is that pound the gavel?) There will be authors (Beacon Press and Skinner House) and singers (**Ysaye Barnwall**), and thought leaders like **William F. Schulz**, **Sharon Welch**, and **Richard Gilbert** as well as the comedian **Kate Clinton** for when we need a laugh.

What's Happening at GA '09?

Besides the Election and the Ware Lecture (**Melissa Harris-Lacewell**) and the opportunities for congregational presidents networking, and the GA Choir singing at Sunday Morning Worship, and The Service of the Living Tradition, and all of the youth programming (including their open mic on Saturday night) on Thursday we'll have a film night to wrap up a day of amazing programs, and on Friday a dance for us GA folks and, by invitation, members of the SLC GLBT community.

There will be workshops and programs, and the two CSW Study Action Issues (Peacemaking and Ethical Eating) and those fabulous booths in the Exhibit Hall, and the

Interfaith Social Witness Event in downtown on Friday focusing on immigration Issues, the opening Banner Parade and having too many wonderful programs to choose from.

The whole Salt Lake City area is a vacation destination for families of all ages and sizes, so come before GA or stay after Closing Worship to tour. This region of the country is too wonderful not to explore.

As if all of the above were not enough, this year there is even more. The type of programming that once was available only at an extra cost pre-GA, UU University, is now an integral part of GA programming. There will be focused tracks on stewardship, multi-generational and multi-cultural ministry, leadership, justice and mission and theology which will allow GA registrants greater opportunities than ever before to network and engage in topics in much greater depth within the designated tracks. Check it out on the GA 2009 Grid: <http://www.uua.org/documents/gaoffice/grid.pdf>

I'm sold, How do I start?

More information will be coming to your church office soon. Pre-Registration opens on Monday, March 2nd at 9AM CST. Go to www.uua.org. Read more about the details of GA 2009 at: <http://www.uua.org/events/generalassembly/index.shtml>



Pictured above are the candidates for UUA President: Rev. Laurel Hallman and Rev. Peter Morales, shown at the recent UUMA/LREDA retreat.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2009
June 24 - 28
Salt Lake City, Utah**



It's snowing! Which in Southern California, always surprises and enralls me. Living at almost 7,000 feet allows us each of the 4 seasons. For those who only visit de Benneville in the summer, a winter, spring or fall trip is a very different and wonderful experience. While snow can make it difficult to run the facility and to get our campers in and out, it's also a great draw for youth and families. Many dedicated parents bravely purchase chains, shovels and tarps so that their Southern California-born child can have a first experience of snow at de Benneville.

Snow play is often the focus of our winter events. As you read this, we will have already enjoyed two UU groups at camp this year. **Neighborhood Church's** winter retreat looks like it is going to be terrific. The organizers invited UU's from other congregations and filled the weekend to capacity. President's Day Weekend, the **PSWD Elementary campers** will spend the long-weekend with us and in the beginning of March, **Long Beach** has their congregational retreat.

The second weekend in March, we host a **reunion of Youth Campers** (LRY, YRUU, Jr High and Kiddie Camps) from the 1960's, 70's and 80's. If this reunion is anything like the one held in 2005, it will be an exciting weekend. We have campers coming from all over the country and when they get together, emotions run high. The stories about camp and its importance in the lives of these adults are gratifying to hear. Several of them have been attending events at de Benneville regularly in the past few years and now their children are coming to camp. It reminds Janet and the de Benneville staff that the job we are doing here is valuable and important.

Later in March, we have invited troops from around Southern California for a **Girl Scout SongSwap Weekend**. This is our second year offering the music camp for Girl Scouts and we're very pleased to have **Savvy Pletcher**, a UU from the Conejo Valley congregation and a de Benneville camper since she was very young, planning the program as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award. She and Becky Fish, another long-time camper, are putting together a wonderful weekend of camp songs and fun.

The LA Gay & Lesbian Center's **Rainbow Family Camp**, the 12-step program's **Camp Recovery** and **UU Men's Fellowship** from San Diego have slots on our spring calendar. The **San Dieguito** congregation has their retreat at the beginning of April and this year, **Riverside** teams

up with **Monte Vista** for a retreat in May.

Work Weekend is set for May 8 – 10 this spring. As always, we are grateful to the volunteers who make time to come up the mountain to rake, paint, build, clean, chip and haul. It takes a lot to get ready for our busy summer season. The extra help from our volunteers makes all the difference. There is no charge for food or lodging; as a "Thank You" for their labors, volunteers have a free weekend at camp with UU friends, the hot tub in the evening and plenty of good food to keep them going. To RSVP, please contact Caroline in the office or by email.

We are very, very excited about our Women's Retreat this spring. Scheduled for the last weekend in April, our theme will be **Women as Storymakers**. The theme speaker will be storyteller **Karen Golden**. She, along with many other workshop leaders, will be sharing personal history and explaining the processes we use for sharing stories. Some of the workshops planned will include Laughter Yoga, dry-brush Chinese calligraphy, Writing from the Heart, a Maypole dance, Tie Dying, Archery, a Photo Safari, Telling Your Story Through Art, Belly Dancing, Acupuncture, a labyrinth walk, as well as an interactive talk-back session with Karen Golden. The weekend is already half filled, just from pre-registration. We expect to sell out, so don't wait to send in your request to attend.

Family Camp this summer has also had strong pre-registration numbers. This is the first year that the PSWD UU Camp Ministry Team will be organizing the program. With Dean Amy Brunell and a committee of dedicated planners, the camp is expected to be a fun, intergenerational UU family summer camp experience. We will have several 3-generation families attending, making Family Camp their family vacation together.

Pre-registration is currently available for the **Art Camp** in August, the **Yoga & Wellness Retreat** in September and the **Thanksgiving Holiday Celebration** in November. Pre-registration allows campers to pay a \$75 non-refundable deposit to save their space for future events. Holding the space early gives you first pick of available accommodations and also the benefit of paying last year's prices for this year's event.

There is additional information and links to registration forms for events sponsored by de Benneville on our new page on **Facebook** at <http://facebook.dj/uucamp/>. Information about the **PSWD UU Camps** is also on Facebook at <http://facebook.dj/pswdcamps/>. We are

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For information, calendar, costs, and registration forms for any camp, visit the Camp de Benneville Pines website at www.uucamp.org

de Benneville, continued . . .

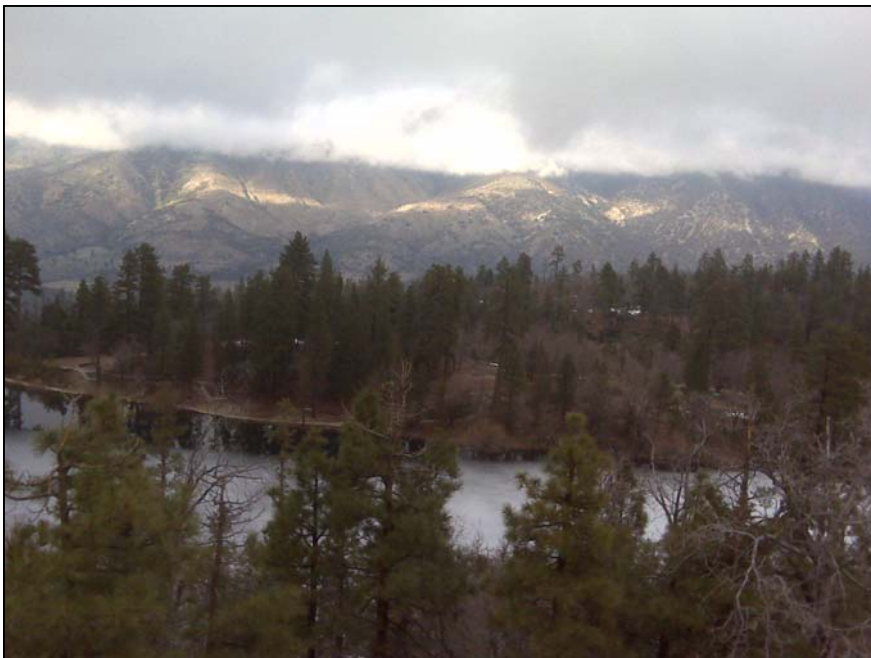
finding Facebook to be an easy way for our campers to share pictures and connect with others attending an event. You can become a fan of the de Benneville page to receive updates about activities at camp. Using Facebook is an easy way for the de Benneville staff to send out pertinent information in a timely manner, so we expect to be using this tool more in the future.

As always, you can see the full calendar of events on the **de Benneville webpage** at <http://www.uucamp.org/calendar.html> Soon, we are hoping to upgrade the website to a blog format, with news, pictures and information about current events updated every few days. We are also planning to put registration and a version of the camp Trading

Post online. Of course, these things always takes longer than we would hope.

We expect the **summer YoUuth camps** information to be available soon, the next **Connection** is set to be in the mail by the end of February, and we will continue to share pictures and happenings at camp on Facebook and our website. Please join us for a weekend, a week during the summer or virtually all year long.

Caroline Quintanilla
Administrative Assistant
caroline@uucamp.org



*“Ice on the Pond”
Photo by
David Dopps*



*“Craig’s Castle”
Photo by David Dopps*



Churches around the District

Santa Monica, CA

An Energy Oscar for 2008 was awarded to the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Santa Monica in the field of "Energy Efficiency and Conservation" by California Interfaith Power and Light, a national interfaith group which fosters sustainability.

The Unitarians of Santa Monica were honored for their efforts in remodeling the cottage on their property to LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) standards, completing a church building energy audit, replacing 75% of their incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs, and selling CFL bulbs to members in their congregation while also collecting the spent bulbs to facilitate proper disposal.



Sandra Trutt and **Leslie Reuter**, co-chairs of the Green Sanctuary Committee accepted the award at a ceremony in Berkeley on Dec. 4, 2008 on behalf of their church. They thanked their church leaders, office staff and the building committee for their help in making these changes. The Green Sanctuary Committee provided support and encouragement to help us stay on track.

Leslie Reuter and Sandra Trutt

According to **Susan Stephenson**, Executive Director of California Interfaith Power and Light, "The church has demonstrated, through the renovation of their R.E. cottage with everything from energy efficient lighting to drought resistant landscaping, a commitment to stewardship of the earth. The UU Church of Santa Monica is a wonderful example to the community and has been an inspiration to our network of over 500 member congregations."

Runners up were Congregation Kol Shofar in Tiburon and Stephen S. Wise Temple in LA. Other 2008 winners were: Holy Nativity Episcopal Church of Los Angeles, for *Education*; Congregation Beth El of Berkeley, for *Green Building*; St. John's Episcopal Church of Oakland, for *Advocacy*.

- Sandra Trutt

Costa Mesa, CA

A contingent of singers from Orange Coast UU Church is taking a caravan down to PSWD District Assembly in Mesa, AZ to participate in the performance of "Sources" for the Friday evening opening service. We will rehearse every Thursday in March and April, 6:30-7:30pm at OCUUC. Others are invited to join us. We may also have some carpooling opportunities available for non-singers (leaving on Thursday). For more information, contact **Beth Nakao** at 714-376-6666 or bethUUmusic@gmail.com.

- Beth Nakao

Santa Barbara, CA

The February '09 issue of *UU World* will have an article about the California UU Legislative Ministry Marriage Equality Valentine event of a few years ago, and what the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara did to make a difference.

- Bruce Hanna

Ventura, CA

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura is taking the lead to end homelessness in Ventura. Thanks to a grant of \$19,500 from the Fund for UU Social Responsibility and a PSWD grant to advertise our efforts, we have hired a Coordinator and are making progress. The name of the project is "Lift Up Your Voice" and it is designed to build relationships between Unitarian Universalists and those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness so we can work together to put a face on homelessness and end it.

To that end, we are creating a Picture Project which will be a traveling display with large photographs of people who are homeless in Ventura and their stories. Along with our sister congregation in Santa Paula, we hosted a Homeless Persons Memorial Service in a local park on December 21, which was attended by 130 people. It was mentioned in the Ventura Star editorial that day and got great press coverage later in the week. One article got the attention of a local foundation and we are now applying for money to organize clergy and laity to create a sense of urgency in Ventura. Our minister, the **Rev. Jan Christian**, organized ten of her interfaith colleagues to sign on a half-page ad in the local paper noting that, "It's 2008 and There is Still No Room at the Inn." The ad was designed by **Mary Nelson** and it also ran on December 21.

Rev. Jan Christian will be offering a workshop at District Assembly on funding for social justice projects and how the grant has transformed the congregation.

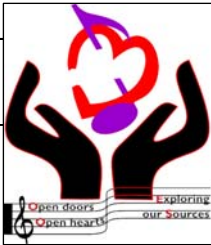
- Jan Christian

Leadership Day

Our next Leadership Day will be on April 4 at the Summit UU Fellowship in Santee, CA. The day will begin promptly at 9:30 AM and will include sessions on congregational leadership teams, transitions in organization and governance, recruiting and training volunteers, integrating new members, and committee meeting basics. The cost will be \$25 per congregation sending members. We encourage each congregation to send teams of ten or more people. Beverages will be provided but please bring a bag lunch. For more information and registration please go to the PSWD web site at pswduua.org.

Carbon Off-set

Once again registration for District Assembly will include \$1.00 allotment for carbon off-set. We have been doing this for several years as a way of implementing our commitment to a greener world. In the past we have sent the money collected to an organization that works on carbon off-sets. This year we decided that we would use the money collected to give a grant to a PSWD congregation who has sent delegates to DA and is involved in making their congregation less carbon dependent.



District Assembly Hotel Registration

The last couple of years we have had problems when people attending District Assembly did not register at the hotel in time to get our discounted rate. DA is May 1-3, with our rates available for a couple days preceding DA. You are encouraged to make your reservations as soon as possible. Contact information:

Hilton Phoenix East/Mesa
1011 West Holmes Avenue,
Mesa, Arizona 85210-4923

Tel: 1-480-833-5555 Fax: 1-480-649-1886

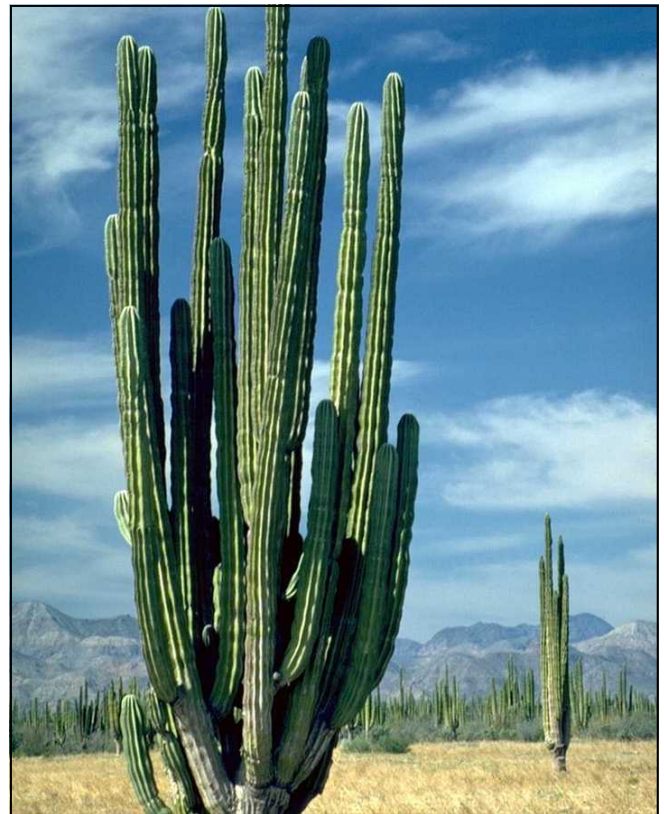
Room rate is the same as last year: \$119 plus tax for two people in a room.

Congregational Tools for the 21st Century

Plan to join us for **March 6-8, 2009** for our yearly **PSWD Leadership School**, at the Mary and Joseph Retreat Center in Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. This year we will try something different and offering a range of choices for the tools needed for congregational leaders. We will have concurrent workshops on particular skills; included will be congregational leadership teams and committees for the 21st century. This school is for current leaders as well as those interested in being in leadership roles in their congregation. Registration information is on our web site at pswduua.org. Scholarships are available; the application form is also on our web site.

If you have any questions contact me at uurev@aol.com or 928-776-2929.

- Ken Brown



From Your Annual Program Fund Representative

With the worsening economic climate many are worried about the financial health of our congregations. The UUA is also concerned. Knowing this, the fair share pledge to the Annual Program Fund will remain unchanged next year at \$56 per certified member.

What is important to remember is that we are all in this together. Research shows that while not immune to economic downturns, churches tend to weather these fairly well. Why? Because in times of stress and crisis our church communities are often second in importance to our families. Our church is the place where we find a home, help and hope. While the anxiety is real, so is our commitment to support each other in our congregation and, by extension, our larger faith.

Just as we covenant to belong to our church home, so do our churches covenant to the larger movement represented by this District and the UUA. If you are a church leader I hope you will resist the temptation to reduce your fair share pledge to the either the District or

the UUA. Our fair share pledges are not dues we provide for services as much as our commitment to change the world.

If you have not yet certified your membership to the UUA please do so as soon as possible. Last fall we asked each congregation to "pledge" their giving to the UUA. About two thirds of our congregations have done so. For the remainder of us, I will calculate your gift based on your certified membership times \$56. If that is not your intention please contact me as soon as possible. Just as it is in our congregations, the UUA cannot create a budget without a fair estimate of pledge income.

One final thought. We know of four congregations who have had to reduce their pledge from last year. Please consider adding a slight addition to your fair share to help make up the difference. As Bill Sinkford reminds us: We are so much more together than we can ever be alone.

Yours in Faith,
Rev. John Morehouse
minister@pacifunitarian.org



UUs Networking for Peace in the Middle East

For a number of years, a small group of UUs across the continent have been working for peace in Palestine and Israel. The Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East (UUJME) have had a presence at GA with a booth and programs, and have recently put together a new website, www.UUJME.org, explaining what we do, and offering information, links, suggestions for programs, etc. We are working on putting together a list of current chapters and encouraging others to form. Though it is still a work in progress, I invite you to visit the website to see what we have done so far. I am a member of the national Steering Committee and welcome your comments and suggestions.

Gail Boehme,
Live Oak UU Congregation of Goleta,
UUJME Steering Committee,
gailboehm@aol.com.

PSWIRL

The UU-oriented nonprofit Pacific SouthWest Institute of Religious Liberals (PSWIRL) welcomes you to their annual adult event at beautiful Camp deBenneville Pines. Relax, swim, or take part in a wide variety of workshops and activities—it's up to you. The 2009 PSWIRL Week is from Sunday, **August 23** through Friday, **August 28**.

The Theme Speaker is **Rev. Jim VanderWeele**, Minister of the Community Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans and the theme is "The Secret of Working Together in Time of Crisis".

Per person costs range from \$335 to \$450 depending on the type of accommodation you select, and include all meals and a rich selection of workshops for the week. Please ask about partial scholarships.

The rich program (including a list of workshops and their facilitators) is available at <http://pswirl.org/Flyers/PSWIRL2009.html> with registration form and program information. Photos and other information from past years available at <http://pswirl.org>

For registration information, contact Registrar **Marcia Taylor** at marsha@pngusa.net or 909-597-1037. For program information, write to Come2PSWIRL@yahoo.com.

- Peter Landecker



PSWD DISTRICT CALENDAR

Send additions/changes to PSWD@aol.com

FEBRUARY 2009

- 14-16 Elementary Winter Camp,
de Benneville Pines, CA
- 15 50th Anniversary Celebration,
UU Fellowship of San Dieguito,
Solana Beach, CA
- 22 Installation of the **Rev. Aaron McEmrys**,
Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, CA

MARCH 2009

- 6-8 Worship for All Ages Renaissance Module,
Mary & Joseph Retreat Center,
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
- 6-8 Leadership School, Mary & Joseph Retreat
Center, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
- 15 PSWD Board Meeting, telephone
- 29 Ordination of **David Miller**, First UU
Church of San Diego, CA

MARCH (continued)

- 29 Installation of the **Rev. Hannah Petrie**,
Neighborhood Church, Pasadena, CA

APRIL 2009

- 4 PSWD Leadership Day,
Summit UU Fellowship, Santee, CA
- 12 New Sanctuary dedication,
Live Oak UU Congregation, Goleta, CA

MAY 2009

- 1-3 District Assembly, Mesa, AZ

JUNE 2009

- 24-28 General Assembly, Salt Lake City, UT

UUA Pacific Southwest District
The PSWD NetwUUrk
2052 Norma Street
Oxnard, CA 93036-2711

Return Service Requested