

The PSWD NetwUUrK

Issue 107

Spring 2004



**DISTRICT ASSEMBLY
2004
is in VENTURA, CA**

April 23-25, 2004

**HOLIDAY INN
BEACH RESORT**

Making Waves in Ventura

District Assembly 2004 is at the Holiday Inn in Ventura. The theme this year is Making Waves, and we intend to! Our Keynoter this year is Rev. James Lawson. Rev. Lawson first met Martin Luther King in 1957, and they soon joined forces to realize their dream of starting a non-violent mass movement. Rev. Lawson continued to work with King until his death but has never given up on their shared dream of racial harmony. Rev. Lawson was the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for 14 years. He has a lot to say about making waves.

In addition to Rev. Lawson, there will be opportunities for worship each day, twenty one workshops on justice making, church management, and spiritual growth, outstanding entertainment, and community building. In addition, there is the business meeting of our District and deBenneville Pines, with elections. The PSWD Board has bylaw changes for consideration, so it will be a very busy and wonderful weekend.

Brochures will be in the mail shortly. You may check the PSWD website for information: www.pswd.uua.org/

- Nancy Loughrey

And also in California this year,

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION**

**Long Beach
June 24-28, 2004**

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**From JoAnne Smith,
PSWD Board President**

The weekend of February 6 to 8 was a joyous time to be President of the PSWD Board of Trustees. I hosted the Board meeting at my church, the Valley UU Church in Chandler, AZ. My congregation just moved to a new campus on five acres of land. We held our meeting in the spacious boardroom that is part of a ten-room administration building. We enjoyed touring the two education buildings and we had lunch in the social area of the meeting hall that will seat 500 worshippers. It is awesome complex and Valley UU folks are mighty proud of it.

Joining the Board for lunch were a minister, two directors of religious education, and several lay leaders from congregations in the Phoenix Metro area and Prescott, AZ. We had a lively conversation and they shared their vision for the future of Unitarian Universalism in the PSWD, to reach out to youth and young adults and be more responsive.

- ★ Provide sexuality education to everyone
- ★ Enhance awareness and knowledge of personal and cultural differences and extend relationships
- ★ Serious focus on growth
- ★ Spread message of inclusiveness and intellectual diversity
- ★ Active public relations program—"Uncommon Denomination" theme

The Board will continue this dialogue with members of District congregations at a workshop at District Assembly to be held at the Holiday Inn in Ventura. This is the best venue yet for our DA which is more spectacular every year. "Making Waves" is a very appropriate theme because we will be right on the beach and can get in the ocean and literally make waves if we want to. However, I am sure the planning committee is referring to the energy that everyone feels at these events as we see friends, attend workshops, worship services, do the business of the district and eat delicious meals. I have heard that the chef at the hotel is very talented and creative and that he even knows how to plan a vegan menu for those who wish to follow that food plan. See the article on page one for details.

Speaking of doing the business of the District, the PSWD Board is recommending to the delegates that the Bylaws be amended to reduce the size of the Board from sixteen to nine members. The reason for this recommendation is that those who are knowledgeable about board structure tell us that a large board is less

effective and unwieldy. This was demonstrated at our February meeting. We had 5 members absent because of unavoidable circumstances in their lives. Everyone agreed that it was one of our best, most productive meetings. The treasurer tells us we would save about \$5,000 per year in travel and other Board costs. The Board would rather spend that money to deliver services to congregations. Details of these amendments and the rationale for proposing them will be included in the Call to the Meeting packet that will be mailed to each congregation before the end of February.

The frosting on the cake for this fabulous February weekend was the service to dedicate the new buildings and land of the West Valley UU Church in Glendale, AZ, which took place on Sunday, February 6. This congregation has been wandering through the wilderness for a long time, overcoming many hurdles placed in their path by City Planning and Zoning Commissions. What a joy it is that they are finally settled in a home of their own. What a joy it is to see our congregations prospering and growing; full of vision and the energy to make the vision a reality.

I welcome comments or questions at any time at the addresses and phone number below.

YoUUrs in the Faith,
JoAnne Smith, President,
PSWD Board of Trustees

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Chandler, AZ



The PSWD Netwurk

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to view current or archival issues.

From Our UUA Trustee

Report to the PSWD NetwUUrK
from **Rev. Ned Wight**,
UUA Board Trustee from the PSWD
February 3, 2004

As you trudge up the snowy sidewalk from the Park Street subway station toward the Massachusetts State House, the first thing you see is a huge 2-story banner hanging on the side of 25 Beacon Street:

CIVIL MARRIAGE
IS A CIVIL RIGHT
Unitarian Universalist Association



Governor Romney, who opposes civil marriage for gay and lesbian couples, cannot miss this banner every time he looks out the window of his office. UU public witness is alive and well in Boston.

Despite the definite chill in the air (-6 degrees), the UUA Board enjoyed a lively exchange of ideas, feelings, hopes and wisdom at our January meeting. I was pleased to relinquish my role as Moderator pro tem to our very capable Acting Moderator **Gini Courter**. Recent GA attendees will recall her as the spirited and engaging Board Finance Committee Chair who made finance reports not only comprehensible, but even riveting and entertaining. We have an excellent gathering to look forward to this June in Long Beach.

Speaking of which, the Board, joined by **Lynda Bluestein**, President of the District Presidents' Association, and **Jan Sneegas**, GA Manager, discussed the provocative question, "Whose GA Is It, Anyway?" We reaffirmed that our annual assembly is "a meeting of congregations," and received word that there is considerable excitement throughout our districts about the offer to pay the GA 2004 registration fee for current congregation presidents. We are an association of congregations—we want the duly elected leaders of these congregations to come share their wisdom and become more familiar with what their Association offers and stands for.

Lynda Bluestein has drafted notes about our meeting, which you can read at www.uua.org/TRUS/jan04notes.html. I won't repeat everything that she has reported, but only those highlights that I think might be of greatest interest

Ken's Corral - by Ken Brown, District Executive

This fall I was asked to join the newly created UUA Growth Team. The Team is a group of UUA staff and people from congregations who have had some experience with what it means to grow a congregation. I was honored to be asked to join this team. I hope we will be able to create or share resources and ideas about growth with congregations around the continent.

I know that we don't all agree on growing our congregations. In fact, whether an individual congregation should be growing is often an issue between members. Yet, at a time when people in this country and in this District are struggling with concerns around jobs, education, healthcare, etc., we are in a place where having more Unitarian Universalists can truly make a difference in our communities and in our individual lives. A basic tenet for most Unitarian Universalists is that revelation is ever changing, that, at best, we continue to grow throughout our lives. I would suggest that being in an ever changing and ever growing UU congregation helps us all grow in many ways. Further, if we believe that we UUs stand for creating a better world for all, isn't it likely we would come closer to such a goal with more folks in all our congregations? For me, the key reason to support growth in our congregations is the simple fact that there were dedicated people who ensured that there was a strong Unitarian Universalist congregation in my community when I needed it. I believe it is our responsibility to help make sure there are strong UU congregations for future generations.

Discovering and creating ways to support strong UU congregations is at the heart of our work in the District. You are invited to be a part of this conversation with the District staff, volunteers and the PSWD board. It is a conversation that goes to the soul of our reason for being here. It is a discussion that I trust will lead us to be a greater presence in the lives of more people and in the communities and the states that we serve.

- Ken

to UU congregations in our district.

GROWTH: The "Growth Working Group," on which I serve, talked in depth about the "soul work" that healthy congregational growth requires in order to tap the wellsprings of hospitality, welcome, enthusiasm for newcomers, and openness to change in our UU culture(s). Growth follows healthy "inreach" as well as "outreach."

Tracey Robinson-Harris, head of the Congregational Services Staff Group, shared with us a report on the results to date of last year's test marketing program in Kansas City. The \$200,000 campaign of paid radio, TV, billboard and newspaper advertising (plus "The Uncommon Denomination" bumper stickers) yielded the following learnings:

Continued on page 4 . . .

Trustee, continued...

- ◆ Potential UUs are "out there" in appreciable numbers.
- ◆ There are definitely things a congregation can do to make visitors feel more welcome.
- ◆ We don't need a complete change in congregational culture to foster growth; smaller strategic changes can make a significant difference.
- ◆ Collaboration among UU congregations in a specific geographical area is both possible and productive.

For wisdom and materials about growth (based on this campaign), visit www.uua.org/programs/congservices/uncommon/begin.html

To help the UUA administration develop a clear vision of growth and identify broad growth strategies, **President Bill Sinkford** has drawn together a "Growth Team" (including our own DE, the **Rev. Ken Brown**). They will be gathering information, sharing insights, and informing further growth efforts.

Finally, UU donor generosity and vision will soon make it possible for the Association to hire a Director of Marketing to lend additional professional expertise to our healthy growth efforts. Stay tuned.

PUBLIC WITNESS: In addition to advocacy for civil marriage (which is a live issue before the legislature in Massachusetts even as I write), **President Bill**, on behalf of the UUA, will speak at the national Rally for Women's Lives in Washington, DC, on April 25. He joined other representatives of "Religions for Peace" (formerly the World Conference on Religion and Peace) in a meeting at the Vatican to continue international advocacy for peace and justice. And Bill was invited to an NAACP summit with other religious leaders who are also people of color to explore challenges posed by increasing religious pluralism.

Our Washington office is working in collaboration with other progressive religious organizations to spearhead "Faithful Democracy," a new initiative directed toward voter registration and turnout. The staff also continue to support our Family Matters, Religion and Society and Racial Justice priorities.

The Committee on Socially Responsible Investing (with **Joan Cudhea** of First Church San Diego as chair), continues its shareholder advocacy work, challenging Chevron-Texaco to respond to the AIDS crisis in countries where they do significant business (e.g., South Africa), and Exxon-Mobil to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. At this meeting, the Board approved a "greater use of renewable energy" as a new "screen" for socially responsible investment.

Finally, Beacon Press, in addition to being on target financially (for the second year of the Board's three-year financial plan limiting losses to an average of \$200,000 each year), continues to publish award-winning titles that

are making a significant contribution to public discussions about fair tax policy, civil liberties, just treatment for people with disabilities, quality public education, women's mental health, and other issues consonant with our UU principles. The current (and planned) book list also contains compelling fiction by authors from groups that have been frequently marginalized (and had difficult getting their work published). **BUY AND READ BEACON BOOKS.** For Beacon Book information, visit www.beacon.org. For Skinner House titles and other books carried by the UUA Bookstore, visit www.uua.org or call 1-800-215-9076.

MORE ON GENERAL ASSEMBLY: Preaching at this year's Friday night "Service of the Living Tradition" will be the **Rev. Rosemary Bray-McNatt** of Fourth Universalist Society in Manhattan. The Sunday service will be designed to welcome "seekers" from greater Long Beach, non-UUs who are intrigued by who we are and what we offer. The Board voted that the entire offering from that service will be given to support this year's GA service project, the shelter start-up fund in Long Beach recommended by our own Long Beach congregation. There will also be a special offering during one of the plenary sessions to raise additional dollars for the ongoing development of a comprehensive lifespan religious education curriculum.

The Board and District Presidents Association will be planning special workshops, mini-plenaries and receptions for the substantial number of congregation presidents expected to attend this year's GA.

Finally, the Board approved Ft. Lauderdale, FL, as the site for GA 2008. Economic accessibility was an important factor in this choice by the GA Planning Committee.

OPENNESS: As many in this district know, a resolution concerning openness of UU governance has been placed on the GA 2004 agenda through the dedication and commitment of folks on the "openUUA" e-mail list, who drafted the resolution and secured petitions from more than the required number of congregation boards to place it on the agenda. Following lively Board discussion, the UUA trustees passed the following motion:

Moved: That the UUA Board charge First Vice-Moderator **Rev. Ned Wight** to form an Openness Task Force, consistent with **Carol Agate's** offer of January 16, with three other Board members and four UUs "selected by current subscribers to OpenUUA and people who served as liaisons to congregation boards that signed the petition." This Task Force will (in the words of Carol Agate's 1/16 e-mail) "study the issue [of openness] and make recommendations for the 2005 GA."

Further goals will be to frame a context, as well as specific policy and rules, to guide the Board and its committees in achieving a level of openness that will enhance trust, right relationship, and accountability within the

Continued on page 5 . . .

Trustee, continued . . .

UUA. The Task Force will also determine the best way to foster a fruitful discussion about openness among congregational delegates at GA 2004 in Long Beach. The Board further commits to continuing along the course it has set to increase its own openness and to encourage committees "to work on ways to be more open."

I look forward to continuing to build on the dedicated work of Carol Agate and others on the openUUA list.

ANTI-RACISM, ANTI-OPPRESSION, MULTICULTURAL COMMITMENT:

To continue moving our work in this area forward, the Board urged the administration to move ahead with some sense of urgency to develop accessible AR/AO/MC training for members of both elected and Board-appointed committees. The Board itself continued its reflection on AR/AO/MC concerns through reading *Soul Work and Uprooting Racism* and viewing together the disturbing PBS series "Race: The Power of an Illusion." The emotional intensity of our engagement in wrestling with these issues continues to underscore the magnitude of the work still ahead of us.

FINANCE: The newly renamed "Stewardship and Development" staff group, headed by Acting Director **Rev.**

Terry Sweetser, requested and received Board approval for a new "umbrella giving program," which enables donors to give money to other UU-related organizations through the UUA. In the language of the motion, "The UUA will distribute funds according to donor specification, as a percentage of the gross, or a total amount received before expenses." In other words, the UUA will bear the entire burden of development costs from the portion designated for the Association, therefore passing along to the other recipients 100% of the amount(s) the donor specified. This program should greatly simplify the process of giving for donors who wish to support multiple institutions (including local congregations) within the UU movement.

MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP: The Board received a report evaluating the Regional Subcommittees on Candidacy. The Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) accepted all but three of its sixteen recommendations. Several of these recommendations touched on our anti-racism, anti-oppressions, multicultural commitment. The overall assessment affirmed the value of the RSCC process in the formation of our religious leaders.

We also received from the MFC a draft proposal on redesigning preliminary fellowship, which the MFC will revisit in March, and for which additional feedback will be solicited at GA in June. Implementing by-laws could not be completed until GA 05, and fall 2005 would be the earliest possible implementation date. The direction of the proposed changes is toward granting preliminary fellowship in UU ministry (rather than in any specialty category), and then designing specialty competency requirements to

be fulfilled during the preliminary fellowship period, before the granting of "full" (currently "final") fellowship.

OTHER ISSUES: We received a report from the Task Force on Independent Affiliates, Associate Members and Related Organizations, proposing some changes to categories, fees and policies. The board approved several fee increases, and will revisit this work, including clearer definition of "sponsored organizations" and other categories. at a future meeting.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: Congratulations to the **Rev. Monica Cummins** (former intern at our Monte Vista congregation), who was appointed to the Journey Toward Wholeness Transformation Committee board.

Our meetings were invigorating and productive, yet I was not unhappy to be boarding the plane back to sunny (and much warmer) Southern California after the meetings concluded. As always, feel free to contact me at **uuevned@aol.com** or call (619) 463-4676 with any questions or concerns you might have about this report or issues facing our UU movement. And thank you for the opportunity to serve on this board.

Cordially,

Rev. Ned Wight
Minister, Summit UU Fellowship
and UUA Trustee from PSWD



Julia Nordquist

Next Leadership School

The next PSWD weekend Leadership School is scheduled for July 9 -11, 2004. This school will be our "Leading the Vision: Shared Ministry in Depth" weekend and will be held at the Mary and Joseph Retreat Center in Rancho Palos Verdes, California. More information about this school will come out in the early spring but put the dates on your calendar now and make sure your congregation has funds in the budget to support sending folks to Leadership School.

- Ken Brown



Churches Around the District

Emerson UU Church, Canoga Park, CA

MUSICAL EXPLORATIONS

Our concert series continues its third year with a concert featuring the Imbroglia Wind Quintet in a concert of March wind music, on March 28, at 4:00 pm.

The finale concert of the season features the Occidental College Glee Clubs and is titled "American Choral Music". It will feature Aaron Copland's "In The Beginning". So mark the date for this—April 25, at 4:00 pm.

Suggested donations for each concert are \$15 in advance, or \$20 at the door. Concerts are held at Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church, 7304 Jordan Avenue, Canoga Park, CA. Questions? call 818-887-6101 or email info@emersonuuc.org.

HUNTINGTON EXPLORATIONS

Join members and friends of Emerson UU Church as our Hiking and Outing Group sets out to explore the Huntington Library in San Marino, CA. Visit this famous library, art collection, and botanical garden with other like-minded souls on Saturday, February 28. Car pools will be forming at Emerson UU Church, 7304 Jordan Avenue, Canoga Park, CA at 9:30 am. Museum fees are the responsibility of each participant (fees range from \$12.50 for adults to free under age 5, with student, senior, and youth discounts). Questions? Call 818-887-6101 or email info@emersonuuc.org.

- Rev. Anne Hines

First UU Church Los Angeles

SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY at First Church:

At a congregational meeting for deciding upon social justice initiatives for the coming year, the members of First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles chose three issues of focus: US policy in Mexico and Central America; Repeal of the "Three Strikes" Law; and the Patriot Act. A coordinating committee was selected and will plan church education projects, larger community forums on the subjects, petition drives, demonstrations and other peaceful means to contribute to the larger religious and other community efforts currently in progress on these vital issues.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING OR HOLY UNION? Want pre-commitment/pre-marital counseling? Sign up for this helpful, supportive and fun weekend of introspection, discussion, skills-building, reflection and conversation. Includes 2-3 meetings with the minister and a survey with analysis, then participation in a weekend group process. Or if group process isn't your thing, call and ask for sessions exclusively for you and your partner. Same gender/opposite gender couples—all are welcome. **Rev. JD Benson**, First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles, 213-389-1356. The next workshop opportunity is this May. Fee:

\$350 per couple. PSWD UU pledging members of area UU churches: \$300 per couple; First Church of LA pledging members: tba. Weekend group, 10 couples maximum.

- Rev. JD Benson

Long Beach UU Church . . .

. . . Is hosting a Dream Workshop with **Jeremy Taylor** March 26 - 28. Beginning with a Friday evening lecture, at 7:30 p.m., exploring "Postcard from the Unconscious." The Saturday workshop, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., is about "The Dream Experience—Discovering the Deeper Meaning in our Dreams." On Sunday, Jeremy Taylor will speak at the 11:30 a.m. worship service. Everyone is welcome, regardless of experience.

The cost for Friday evening is \$25 in advance or \$28 at the door. For Friday and Saturday, it's \$55 in advance or \$58 at the door. To register, send your name, address, and check—made out to UUCLB, Memo/Dream Workshop—to **Rev. Marguerite D. Lovett**, UU Church of Long Beach, 5450 Atherton St., Long Beach, CA 90815. If you need child care, please call the church by March 19, 562-597-8445. A light breakfast will be served on Saturday. Bring a bag lunch or purchase food at local restaurants—a list will be available at check-in.

- Rev. Marguerite Lovett

Orange Coast UU Church, Costa Mesa

Mark your calendars for this can't-miss, gotta-be-there, bring-a-friend musical event. Jim Scott, the Orange Coast Choir, and guest musicians will present Jim Scott's "Vessels of the Sun Concert" (World Premiere), a 10-song oratorio that explores the earth's seasonal cycles using jazz, classical, and world music influences. Saturday, May 15, 2004 at 5:00 p.m., at the Orange Coast Unitarian Universalist Church, 1259 Victoria Street, Costa Mesa, CA 92627. Tickets: \$15 reserved seats. To purchase tickets, mail \$15 per ticket to **Beth Nakao** at OCUUC (address above). Make checks payable to OCUUC please. Childcare and refreshments will be provided. Questions? Contact Beth Nakao, OCUUC's Music Director, at bethmusic@aol.com.

A second performance is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, May 23 at the Monte Vista UU Church in Montclair, CA.

- Beth Nakao

San Diego First UU Church

The Unitarian Universalist Men's Fellowship (UUMF) of San Diego will again conduct a Renewal Weekend April 16th to the 18th. The theme this spring is "Passion-What is it, Where is it and How do I nourish it" For further information contact Mike Dorfi at: mdorf@cox.net.

- Mike Dorfi

New PSWD Chalice Lighters Committee Now in Action



Call #1 to help First Unitarian Church in Los Angeles acquire adjacent land to provide for parking as well as other improvements to their building has been very successful. Chalice Lighter donations are nearing the \$10,000 goal and we will be able to present a check to them this spring. We apologize for the printing error that left off the "mail to" address on the letter itself. Some faithful Chalice Lighters in the PSWD had to do some research to find out where to send their checks this time.

The new Committee is now at work. Three PSWD UUs with long time service to their congregations have joined **Linda Bunyard** and **Mary Nelson** on the Chalice Lighters Committee.

Cindy Lee has been a member of the Studio City church since 1985, where she served on the Board, on the nominating committee, with the building and grounds committee, with the worship committee as pianist, and she worked on the capital campaign and canvass. She has been ADR for Studio City and has served on the District Leadership Development Committee. An architect with special interest in interior design, she brings both UU and professional experience to the PSWD Chalice Lighters program.

Bonnie Norwood has been a member of Emerson UU Church in Canoga Park since 1983 where she was also involved with the religious education program, served on the worship and social justice committees, and served on the Board as president. She has been ADR for Canoga Park and attended several General Assemblies. In her professional life Bonnie has worked in human resources for a large law firm for several years and is especially interested in policy setting. We are excited about the perspective she brings to the program.

Barbara Sunderman has been a UU since 1975, first becoming active in Marietta, Ohio, and continuing that service in the UU Church of Tucson, where she has served as President, has done fundraising, and has held many other positions over the years. Now living in Sierra Vista, she

serves as ADR for the UU Church of Southeastern Arizona. A geriatric nutritionist who has also owned and operated a nursing facility, Barbara brings both executive and caring experience from her professional life as well as a desire to keep the flame of faith alive in our district.

These three join **Mary Nelson**, PSWD Office Administrator, who has supported this committee with her graphic design expertise and passionate interest in the growth of our churches since taking the position a few years ago. As Office Administrator, Mary keeps the subscriber list up to date, receives and records the donations for each call, prepares the call letters and does the mailing three times a year. As a committee member Mary brings her years of experience at the Studio City church, where she is currently serving as President, as well as her talents as a graphic artist.

At the January 24th meeting **Linda Bunyard** was elected chairperson. When the Extension Committee was disbanded, she was the lone member who was able to stay with the Chalice Lighters program. She is Consulting Minister at the UU Congregation of Green Valley and has worked with the PSWD Chalice Lighters program since 1999.

The committee would like to round out our geographical connections by adding three new committee members, especially from San Diego County, Northern Arizona or Las Vegas, and the Channel Cluster. We meet quarterly to review grant applications and make decisions that will affect the growth of our movement in the Pacific Southwest District. We also administer the program, developing materials for congregation reps to use, maintaining relationships with over 50 congregations in the District.

Our next meeting will be held March 27th in the Los Angeles area. If you are interested in being a part of our team, call or write Rev. Linda Bunyard, 520-861-0074 **LindaBunUU@aol.com**.

- Rev. Linda Bunyard

Faith in Action Workshops

The Leadership Resources Council of the PSWD is sponsoring three workshops at different locations on Saturday, March 20, all focused on putting our faith in action. The workshops will begin at 9 AM and conclude by 3 PM. The congregations hosting the workshops are the UU Church of South County in Mission Viejo; the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara; and the Valley UU Church in Chandler. The cost of the workshop will be \$10 per person and includes the cost of materials and lunch. The morning will include opening worship and a series of workshops. The workshops will be different at each loca-

tion but might include Farm Worker issues, the CA UU Legislative Ministry; Voter Registration; Journey Toward Wholeness; Border Concerns; Green Congregation; and Prison concerns. Registration brochures are in the mail to each congregation. For more information contact **Ken Brown** at the District Office 818-769-5917 or via e-mail at **uurev@aol.com**.

- Ken Brown

DATES TO SAVE

**District Assembly in Ventura
April 23-25, 2004**

**UUA General Assembly in Long Beach
June 24-28, 2004**



We're busy shoveling some much-needed snow from the decks and walkways at camp. The outdoor maintenance work has been put on hold until spring, but we've been doing some work inside, upgrading the kitchen lighting and putting in a new furnace. **Laura Janes** has been redecorating the camp office to make it a more pleasant place to work. She and **Janet James** have been putting their heads together, planning the Coffee House redecoration project. The next time you're at camp, take a look at all the improvements.

If you'd like to help with the remodeling projects and would like some high altitude exercise, please consider coming to this spring's Work Weekend. We'll be getting together to get the camp ready for the busy summer season on Friday May 7 through Sunday May 9. Please e-mail the camp office to let us know you're coming. For your efforts, we provide lots a good food and a comfortable bed, as well as the satisfaction of making the camp beautiful.

We've got some great camps coming up. The PSWD youth camps for Elementary aged children will be on President's Day Weekend, February 14 - 16. The Jr High Camp will be March 19 - 21.

Registration forms for the summer youth camps will be on the camp's web site by the time you read this. Early registration discounts will be in effect through April 30, 2004. Look for special sign ups at the Super Camp Sunday event in your congregation in May.

Start planning your family's summer vacation. The UU Family Camp will be happening Sunday, August 1 through Saturday, August 5. For information on the theme and activities, visit the Family Camp web site at **www.refamilycamp.org**. Receive a discount for registration and payment before May 15, 2004.

Long Beach and Orange Coast congregations will have their church retreats in March. San Dieguito will be coming to camp in April, with the Throop, Monte Vista and Riverside congregations sharing a weekend in May. First Church San Diego, Pacific Unitarian Church and Santa Monica will each have a weekend in June. If your congregation would like to schedule a retreat, please contact Janet James in the camp office. We have only a few weekends available each year, but are pleased to add congregational retreats to the schedule. The weekend of May 21 - 23 is open and it's a great date for warm, spring weather for your retreat.

We'll have a fantastic new music camp for women on April 23 - 25. The spring camp will be limited to only 30 women. If you don't get in, don't worry. Wild Jammin' Women will be returning this Fall for a full camp, October 15 - 17. To register for either the spring or fall camp, call the camp office or download a registration form from our web site.

Also in camp April 23 - 25 with be Camp Real Girls. Look for the article in de Benneville's next Connection about this fun camp for lesbian women. Camp Real Girls will be returning for two more camps this year.

It looks like this year's Rainbow Family Camp, March 26 - 28, will be full. Call the camp office to find out if we have any spaces available before registering.

The annual Men's Spring Renewal will be held April 16 - 18. The theme is "Passion: What is it? Where is it? How do I get & nourish it?" Registration forms are on the camp web site.

The annual Women's Retreat will feature Jungian Therapist, **Connie Zweig** discussing "Holy Longing: The Hidden Power of Spiritual Yearning". There are lots of other wonderful workshops scheduled for the weekend as well. Register early, as this event usually fills quickly.

Registration forms for most camp sponsored events are on our web site at **www.uucamp.org**, under the Calendar link. To reach the camp office, call 909-794-2928 or e-mail Janet at **uucamp@aol.com**.

It will be a busy spring. We hope to see you at camp!

Caroline Quintanilla
Administrative Assistant
Camp de Benneville Pines
uucamper@earthlink.net



For information, costs, and registration forms for any camp, visit the Camp de Benneville Pines website at **www.uucamp.org** or call **(909) 794-2928**

REjoice

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS for PSWD
from Tera Little

Newly hired DRE: We welcome **Jacylee Harris**,
Valley UU Church in Chandler, AZ

New additions to the PSWD Lending Library

Check out the new titles available in the Lending Library.

Video - **Wilderness Journey: The Struggle for Black Empowerment and Racial Justice within the Unitarian Universalist Association, 1967-1970.** A film by Ron Cordes

Video - **The Color of Fear.** A film by Lee Mun Wah. The Color of Fear is a film about the pain and anguish that racism has caused in the lives of eight North American men of Asian, European, Latino, and African descent. Out of their confrontations and struggles to understand and trust each other emerges an emotional and insightful portrayal into the type of dialogue most of us fear, but hope will happen sometime in our lifetime.

Video - **Raising Healthy Kids: Families Talk about Sexual Health.** Videos One and Two dealing with elementary and pre-adolescent children.

Audio Tapes - **A Theology of Religious Education.** Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker. Theme speaker, 2002 LREDA Fall Conference. Dr. Parker uses a metaphor of a theological house in her presentation. The foundation of the house, our theology, defines the nature of human beingness and our relationship to God. Her goal is that we learn to explicitly articulate our heritage, direction, mission, and relationships with our neighbors, so that we become better caretakers of this house.

Check out the full listing of resources at www.pswd.uua.org; click on RE Library. To make a request, email Tera Little at teralittle@worldnet.att.net or call 818.769.5917. Materials may be borrowed for up to six weeks.

Youth Opportunities Abound

How many times have you heard, "When it rains, it pours?" This will certainly be true in PSWD this summer in terms of youth ministry programs. It will literally be pouring opportunities for high school youth to get involved in greater denominational events.

Youth & Young Adults of Color Leadership Development Conference, General Assembly Youth Caucus, SATUURDAY conference (Sexually Alternative Teenage UUs Respecting Diversity Among Youth), PSWD YRUU Summer Camp, Continental Youth Conference (Con Con), and Continental YRUU Youth Council. Whew! Let's hear an amen for those!

I know, as a former youth advisor, that one of the absolute best ways to encourage youth to get active in the local congregation is to get them active outside the congregation by attending denominational events. I will never forget the wonder and excitement as our youth group in Fayetteville, Arkansas attended their first district youth conference, or "rally" in Southwest District speak. The youth were

amazed to find over 100 other youth who thought like them, who questioned the status quo, and who were the lone Unitarian Universalists in mostly conservative religious southern towns.

Finding their comrades gave new energy and life to our youth group, and our group became part of a larger connection of people ministering to each other. District events were much anticipated, and they served as an impetus to stay connected at the local level. These district events were also educational for all of us, teaching advisors and youth how to lead together, in partnership. We learned about new ways to create worship, how to integrate social action into the youth community, and that it was absolutely necessary to maintain real, tangible contacts with the rest of the congregation. The youth group was just one vital part of the church; if the energy of the youth weren't present, then the congregation itself wouldn't be whole.

You may have attended many national and district youth events, or perhaps your involvement has never gone past the front doors of the church. Please make this summer the time that YOUR voice, energy, and wisdom will be heard in the greater youth ministry movement. Encourage the young people in your congregation to get involved. Sponsor one (or two or three) youth to attend General Assembly, or PSWD YRUU Camp, or Con Con. You will most definitely play a major role in changing their lives, and helping them change the world.



MAKE YOUR PLANS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN LONG BEACH!

It's almost that time of year! Time to start registering for General Assembly. Since GA is in our district, it is an exciting opportunity for our youth to show strong representation in Youth Caucus. Youth Caucus is the programming at GA for YRUUs (age 14-20). Last year there were over 700 youth in Boston, and we're hoping that the numbers will stay strong this year. Youth Caucus is a wonderful opportunity for youth to meet new friends, attend interesting workshops, worships, anti-racism and social action programming, and lots of other fun, exciting, or intriguing events and activities. If you've never been to GA before, now's the time to start; if you've been lots of times, keep showing your support. It would be awesome if, this year in Youth Caucus, PSWD youth made up a large percentage. We already have strong representation on Youth Caucus staff from our district: We, the HUUPERS (similar to being the deans) are both from PSWD, as are two other staff members. Encourage any youth you know of to attend youth caucus. For more information visit www.uua.org/yruu/events.html.

Andrea Welles and Annie Abernethy
HUUPERS, GA 2004

Compensation Consultants News

After more than six years of service to the District and the UUA as a Compensation Consultant, **Marlene Brown** has taken a well-deserved break from her duties. Her hard work, knowledge and dedication to fair compensation, as a matter of social justice is much appreciated. She is replaced by our soon to be retiring PSWD President, **JoAnne Smith**.

JoAnne and **Tom Loughrey**, our other Compensation Consultant, recently attended the semi-annual meeting of the comp consultants in Boston. A good deal of time was spent in looking at issues relating to health insurance availability for church staff. Several new programs are available that may provide some assistance for congregations dealing with this issue.

Health Savings Accounts (HSA's) have gone into effect this year, which allow individuals and families to purchase a high-deductible health insurance plan and create a savings account with it that will allow the individual to pay for the health care services not covered due to the high deductible. The major advantage for this program is that the underwriting requirements are somewhat less restrictive because of the high deductibles. This may allow individuals with pre-existing conditions who either could not find any coverage or found it to be too expensive, to be able to get reasonable coverage at a reasonable cost.

Contributions to an HSA are tax-free and can be put in to the maximum of the deductible (there is a cap of \$2,600 for an individual and \$5,150 for a family). Companies are setting these up now so that payment of the deductible can be done with a debit card or special checks that take the money directly out of the HSA. More information can be found at: www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/reports/1061hsafactsheet.pdf

Another option is Health Reimbursement Accounts or HRAs. Health reimbursement accounts consist of funds set aside by employers to reimburse employees for qualified medical expenses, just as an insurance plan will reimburse covered individuals for the cost of services incurred. The guidance provided by the Department of the Treasury makes it clear that health reimbursement accounts are not a new type of account designated within the Internal Revenue Code. Rather, employers qualify for preferential tax treatment of funds placed in a health reimbursement account in the same way that they qualify for tax advantages by funding an insurance plan. (Employers can deduct the cost of an insurance plan—and now a health reimbursement account—as a business expense under Internal Revenue Code section 162.) HRAs have the advantage over flexible spending accounts of being allowed to roll over from one year to the next. If an employee only spends part of the account this year it can accumulate to succeeding years. Recent tax court decisions have even allowed HRA money to pay for over the counter drugs and

cosmetic surgery.

By combining the HRA and an HAS, individuals may have new-found ability to have affordable, very inclusive health care coverage.

Just a reminder, the Compensation Consultant program is funded by the UUA and a grant from the UUMA. The services of your district Comp Consultants is free including travel costs. If you would like one of us to visit your congregation and explain the Fair Compensation program, just drop either of us a note to arrange a time.

Tom Loughrey

tloughrey@economedix.com

JoAnne Smith

uujsmith@aol.com

WHITE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The winner of the White Memorial Scholarship for 2003 is **Nancy E. McDonald**, a ministerial student at Meadville Lombard Theological School. She is a member of the Northern Hills Fellowship in Cincinnati, OH, and is in her final year of preparation for a Master of Divinity Degree.

McDonald is a winner of the Xavier University Community Service Award, 2000, the Meadville Lombard John B. Wolf Scholarship, 2002, and the Unitarian Universalist Association Martha and Robert C. Atherton Scholarship, 2003-04.

A check for \$1500 was sent to Ms. McDonald in December. A thank you letter from her to the PSWD reads in part: "It was with great pleasure and gratitude that I received your letter regarding my selection as the White Memorial Scholarship winner for 2003. The committee's support will enable me to complete my final year of seminary preparation with substantially less debt than I would otherwise have accrued. Already, it has eased my mind and given me a boost of confidence as I engage in the search process for the congregation that will ordain me to the Unitarian Universalist ministry."

The White Memorial Fund was established in the 1920's with a gift of \$10,000 from George White of Pasadena. The interest from this fund was to be awarded to deserving Unitarian Universalist ministerial students to help defray educational expenses. Over the years the fund was allowed to lapse. In the 1970's the PSWD Board of Trustees re-established the fund and in 1981 began awarding stipends to ministerial students. Tax deductible gifts and donations to the White Memorial Scholarship Fund from individuals or UU organizations may be sent to the PSWD treasurer, John Blue.

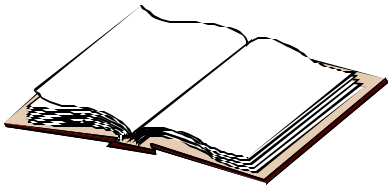
The committee members for 2003 were **Ardis Coffman**, chair, and the **Reverends Jay Atkinson** and **Walt Wieder**.

- Ardis Coffman

Scholarships for People of Color

Once again, funds earmarked for registration scholarships for people of color in the Pacific Southwest District to UU events in district or denomination are available. With General Assembly in Long Beach in late June, this could be a great opportunity. The good news is that a number of people have been supported in attending General Assembly and District Assembly, as well as other conferences, in the two years since the fund was established, many of them youth; the downside of that success is that funds are dwindling and may not be sufficient to meet the demand. However, we will try to provide at least some scholarshiping for those who apply. Applications for funding for General Assembly registration should be received by May 1; applications for District Assembly should be received by April 1. Other applications will be considered on a case by case basis, pending availability of funds. For further information, or to submit a request for scholarship assistance, please contact **Phyllis Daniel** at phyllisdaniel@sbcglobal.net.

- Phyllis Daniel



Toward a More Open UUA

The Pacific Southwest District is in the forefront of encouraging the UUA board and its committees to have a more transparent governance. More congregations in this district endorsed the petition than in any other district. (PNWD was a close second. Do we westerners feel left out?)

The petition, sponsored by 37 congregations, applies to all UUA elected and appointed boards, commissions, committees, and task forces. It requires public announcements of meeting dates and agendas, web posting of minutes and reports, open meetings, public comment, and access to committee email discussions.

As **Ned Wight** reported, at the last Board meeting the UUA Board endorsed the appointment of a task force to study the issue and present a substitute proposal to the 2005 GA. Task force members from the PSWD are **Ned Wight, Gila Jones, and Carol Agate**. Since the petition is on the 2004 agenda, it will be discussed in Long Beach.

To participate in the email discussions, subscribe to **openuua** on the UUA email lists.

- Carol Agate



PROJECT FREEDOM OF RELIGION

UUs HELP STOP EXTREMIST NOMINATIONS TO FEDERAL COURTS

UU Project Freedom of Religion and participating UUs can feel proud of our role in the coalition's record in 2003. Working together to preserve judicial independence does pay off.

What did we learn from our successes and our misses in 2003? Careful research, coalition-building, and regular communications to our Senators will pay off in stopping many of the most extreme nominees. We can help our representatives develop a strong and unified strategy to oppose the right wing takeover of the courts.

The strategy of persistence and regular communication with our representatives regarding the threat to our federal courts posed by the Bush Administration's determination to stack the courts with right wing ideologues succeeded in convincing the Senate Democratic Caucus that strong, united action is necessary to block confirmation of Bush's most radical nominees. Senate Democrats on the Judiciary Committee opposed many ideological appointments in committee and led the Democratic caucus in filibustering the nominations of Miguel Estrada, Priscilla Owen, Charles Pickering, Sr., Carolyn Kuhl, William Pryor, and Janice Rogers Brown.

We hope you'll join us again in 2004 to be part of the UU coalition to oppose the administration's more extreme Federal Court nominees.

- Bill Lakin

Save the Date . . .

SHARING OUR GIFTS IN OUR CONGREGATIONS

On Saturday, Oct. 2 (place to be arranged), the PSWD Leadership Resources Council will sponsor a workshop with **Jean Morris Trumbauer**, titled: "Sharing Our Gifts in Our Congregations." Ms. Trumbauer is the author of "Sharing the Ministry" and "Created and Called," she has led workshops across the country for congregations of all types and sizes helping lay and professional leaders create ways that congregational members can discover their gifts for abundant living. Her work focuses on integrating members into the ministry of the congregation, retaining members, and helping congregations find ways for members to be involved with the ministry of the congregation. The workshop will be 9 AM to 5 PM. We are asking that each congregation contribute \$300 if registered by Sept. 1, 2004 or \$350 after that date. The registration fee includes as many people from your congregation as you can bring and a copy of "Created and Called."

- Ken Brown



Pacific Southwest District CALENDAR

Send additions/changes to
PSWD@aol.com

FEBRUARY 2004

- 14-16 Elementary Winter Camp, de Benneville Pines
- 21 Youth Advisor Extravaganze,
Neighborhood Church, Pasadena, CA
- 28 Ordination/Installation of **Sarah Moldenhauer-Salazar**, UU Fellowship of Laguna Beach, CA
- 28 Leadership School Task Force meeting, Costa mesa

MARCH 2004

- 4-6 Renaissance Module: Identity, Montclair, CA
- 5-6 Larger Church Conference at Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, CA
- 14 Ordination of **Rod Richards**, UU Church of Southeastern Arizona, Sierra Vista, AZ
- 19-21 Jr. High Camp, de Benneville Pines
- 20 Faith in Action Workshops, UU Church of South County, Mission Viejo, CA; Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, CA; Valley UU Church, Chandler, AZ
- 26-28 Adult Our Whole Lives Facilitator Training, Neighborhood Church, Pasadena, CA
- 26-28 Rainbow Family Camp, de Benneville Pines

APRIL 2004

- 4 Installation of **Rev. Jade D'Aquilarive Benson**, First Unitarian Church, Los Angeles
- 16-18 UU Men's Fellowship Weekend, de Benneville Pines
- 18 Valley UU, Chandler, AZ building dedication
- 19-22 Spring Homeschool Camp, de Benneville Pines
- 23-25 **PSWD District Assembly, Ventura, CA**
- 30-2 Women's Retreat, de Benneville Pines

MAY 2004

- 5 Deadline for Summer issue of the NETWUURK
- 7-9 Work Weekend, de Benneville Pines--anyone welcome to help get camp ready for summer
- 22 PSWD Board Meeting, TBA

JUNE 2004

- 20 Ordination of **Thomas Schmidt**, Monte Vista UU Congregation, Montclair, CA
- 24-28 **UUA General Assembly, Long Beach, CA**

JULY 2004

- 1-6 Stebbins UU Summer Retreat, Asilomar Conference Center, Monterey Coast, CA
- 9-11 Leadership School, Shared Ministry in Depth, Mary & Joseph Retreat Center, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
- 11-17 Elementary Camp, de Benneville Pines
- 18-24 Junior High Camp, de Benneville Pines

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