



SWUWWorld

*Women Helping Women
Lighting the Way to Possibilities*

Newsletter of Southwest UU Women

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Volume 2007 Fall Issue

SWUW AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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The second-largest General Assembly in history, situated far from the Southwest District in Portland, Oregon, still benefited from a major SWUW presence. Before the opening ceremony, SWUW had already hosted a reception for those involved in, and soon to be involved in, the 2009 convocation. Nearly all the members of the Advisory Committee attended and greeted honored guests such as the Rev. Laurel Hallman and Rosemary Matson.

The major activity swirled around the SWUW booth in the mammoth Exhibits Hall. SWUW shared a double end cap space with UU Women & Religion and the Buhata Pinay project. Women and men could select a "Women's Rights Worldwide" T-shirt, browse the UUW&R materials, pick up a convocation brochure and sign up for the new Cakes for the Queen of Heaven curriculum and the Cultural Literacy Project. Who knows how many were lured to the booth by the Many Flames One Fire quilt, towering over the crowds as Martha Northington and Grace Amborski hawked raffle tickets.

SWUW's workshop, "Women Building Bridges to End Global Poverty" featured the Rev. Dorothy Emerson, the Rev. Olivia Holmes, Karen LaFrance and Dr. Christine Nielsen in a panel discussion moderated by Carol Huston. The 200-plus attendees gained inspiration from the real-time efforts of these women to ease poverty with innovative initiatives.

Bolstering the presence of women's issues at GA were the nod to the 30th anniversary of the Women & Religion Resolution at the opening ceremonies and these workshops:

- "Ministerial Sisterhood UU Worship: Sermon Contest Winner," sponsored by the Ministerial Sisterhood UU
- "Islam and Gender: The Slippery Slope of Multifaith Dialogues," sponsored by the Starr King School for the Ministry
- "Supporting Justice for Women: UUWF Grants Programs," sponsored by the UU Women's Federation
- "Revolution by Resolution: Celebrating 30 Years of Women & Religion," sponsored by the UU Women & Religion

By the end of GA, SWUW had amassed \$2,134 in quilt raffle tickets and hordes of contacts, new friends and good will with UUs from across the country.

And you had to read this far to see who won the quilt: Maria Schmidt of Westside UU Church in Fort Worth. The MFOF quilt made a round trip back to the Southwest District. --- Amy Youngblood

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SWUUW RECEIVES 2nd & 3rd GRANT FOR INTERNATIONAL CONVOCATION

Drawing together UU women leaders from across the country and myriad UU organizations, to serve on the Advisory Committee for the International Convocation of UU Women has been one of our major accomplishments to date. The Committee began its work by talking about our audience and goals and built upon the work of the proposed Study Action Issue at GA 2005 on Women's Rights Worldwide initiated by Dr. Chris Nielsen and the Rev. Carol Huston both of whom are members of the Advisory Committee. We have agreed that the primary audience will be UU women from around the globe convened for the first time ever. It is important to note that this will also be the first national gathering of UU women in almost 20 years. We agreed that we would also reach out to invite all progressive women of faith.

We discussed herstory as it relates to our UU movement and noted that women have had major achievements when we work together. We want to help build a resurgence for the women's movement and a new definition of feminism and agreed that an important outcome of the Convocation is UU women taking action in the world. We wanted the action to come from individuals but also through international partnerships between organizations and communities.

Such an agenda requires that we, as American women, are sensitive to the fact that we do not have all the answers, and that we are prepared to listen and learn as well as teach. One goal that has been difficult to meet is setting up an international conference call that would allow women from the UU Church of the Philippines and Transylvania to join in our planning efforts. We continue to try other ways to communicate. This fall Advisory Committee members Cathy Cordes will be in Transylvania talking about the Convocation this month and next month Mary Overton, Executive Director of the Convocation will lead a workshop for the annual gathering of the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists, ICUU, in Oberwesel, Germany.

Advisory Committee conversations were the genesis of our second successful grant application to the UU Funding Panel in the

spring of this year for the Global Literacy Project. This project combines education of American women about the status and condition of women's rights worldwide with building support for the Convocation. It is a six-session curriculum being written by Advisory Committee member Rev. Dr. Dorothy Emerson for use by American UU congregations who we hope will help to bring UU women to the Convocation by raising money for the scholarship fund. You will soon be able to order it online at uuwr.org store. We received two grants totaling \$9,000 and two challenge grants totaling \$5,000 of which we have already raised over \$2,000 from the GA quilt raffle.

We were not successful in attracting funding from the UU Women's Federation last fall; however, they did fund the Buhata Pinay Project of the women's group at the UU Church of Annapolis to which Chris Nielsen belongs. The Annapolis women sponsored their own mini-convocation last fall attended by several of the Advisory Committee members. One of the challenges in planning for the Convocation has been garnering the support of the organizations that are represented on the Advisory Committee. Face to face meetings and the opportunity to talk about our projects and common concerns has been an important part of building the partnerships necessary to sponsorship and support of the Convocation. At the meeting in Annapolis, many of the Convocation leaders met for the first time with leaders of the Women's Rights Worldwide Study Action Team

SAVE THE DATE - 2008 SWUW CONFERENCE



February 8-10, Peabody Hotel, Little Rock, Arkansas

Keynote Speaker - Carolyn McDade

Be sure to mark your calendar for the upcoming Southwest UU Women's Conference held in downtown Little Rock! "Riversong: Flowing With the Creative Spirit" will focus on the creative force we women carry within us and how each of us expresses that power within our lives. Some of us dance, some sing, some cook, some work for social justice or environmental issues, and some simply exude creativity in everything they do! Much more than just a celebration of the traditional arts, we will examine all the myriad ways we express spirit in our daily lives. Sessions will include all areas of the creative spirit including visual and performing art, dance, drumming, music, social justice, writing, and much more! In keeping with the music theme, singer-songwriter Carolyn McDade (pictured above), who wrote the wonderful UU anthem, *Spirit of Life*, will be our keynote speaker.

The Peabody Hotel is a beautiful and luxurious venue, set along the riverfront in the eclectic and always fun downtown area of Little Rock. It's the perfect place to pamper yourself in style and take in everything the downtown scene has to offer, including the River Market, the Clinton Library, and lots of great shopping!

It's going to be a conference to remember, so plan on joining us as we pamper both our bodies and our spirits in celebration of the creative spark within each of us!

- - - *Monica Robinson*

MEET NEW SWUW BOARD MEMBERS

Myrtle McMahan—Secretary

Myrtle became a UU in 1966, when she moved to Fort Worth, Texas. She has been a member of First Unitarian Church of Fort Worth, First Jefferson Church, First Church of Oklahoma City, and a founding member of Westside UU Church of Fort Worth. She has been a church administrator, financial secretary, board member, treasurer, and church president. For eight years she served on the Annual Program Fund Committee for the UUA. She is a canvas consultant for the Southwestern Conference of Unitarian Universalists.

Myrtle has been married to Howard McMahan for 52+ years, has three children, nine grandchildren. She volunteers at John Peter Smith Hospital (Tarrant County's hospital for the medically indigent) three days a week, where she is treasurer of the hospital auxiliary and hospital gift shop. She visits patients one morning a week for Pastoral Services, and she meets one morning a week with newly diagnosed breast cancer patients with Reach to Recovery.

For fun, she teaches a "Gourmet Made Easy" class at SWUUSI every summer and as a Service Auction Item once a year.

Carolyn Gaines— Director

Carolyn is a recently retired teacher. During her career she taught art and English as a second language. She also taught ESL on the Navajo reservation and art in Texas. She lives in Arlington, Texas, and attends First Jefferson UU.

Carolyn discovered the Unitarian church in the middle 90's, attended the Dwight Brown Leadership

Experience in 1999 and served on the Board of the church as secretary. Currently she serves on the Committee on Ministries and teaches in the RE program. She is very interested in social justice and work with the Allied Communities of Tarrant or ACT. She also care very much about women's issues.

Gail Tittle—Director

Gail is a member of Bay Area UU Church (BAUUC) in Houston, TX. She has been a member there since moving from Illinois 3 years ago with her husband, Rev. Dr. Matt Tittle, minister of BAUUC, and their two sons. In Illinois, Gail served on the Membership, Social Justice, and Worship Committees, chaired the Welcoming Congregation Committee, was a YRUU advisor, and served on the Board of the Urbana UU Church. Since joining BAUUC, she has served as chair of the Welcoming Congregation Committee and guided the congregation through the process of becoming a Welcoming Congregation. She also serves on the BAUUC Peacemaking and Membership Committees, chairs the Social Justice Council, and has organized a BAUUC Annual Women's Retreat for the past two years. Besides being a director on the SWUW Board, Gail is chair of the Communications Committee for the International UU Women's Convocation (ICUW) and serves on the ICUW Steering Committee.

Gail is a social worker (LMSW) and serves as Manager for Curriculum Development for the Protective Services Training Institute at the University of Houston.

Just Thinking

Rev. Mary McAnally

Women have always been good at multi-tasking. It's a mixed blessing, I suppose. Each of us may be a daughter, a wife, a mother, an aunt. When you wear many hats (bonnets?), you risk mistakes, like having the red one on your head when it's a blue day, or wearing a black one to a brown meeting. (Colors are symbols for profound and important realities - like races, moods, political parties! Think about it!)

This column is about women. It's about being complex, diverse, multi-gifted people of UU persuasion. It will "just think" about many issues and topics, hopefully offer grist for the mill of your minds, and prompt or motivate possible responses. Written or phoned ones will always be welcome! We are a diverse and wonderful network of women who wear many hats in our religious, political, socio-economic, and private lives!

I like to talk about some of MY diverse hats as the Four P's: Poet, Prophet, Pastor, and Pet-owner. Each of those can be defined by me one way, and others another way. Viva la diversity! Or they can just be left undefined and unlimited (like God?) in order to make many possibilities open for their understanding and use.

Understanding and use. Just thinking about those two options, I'm reminded of two my favorite

American philosophers: Roseanna Roseannadanna (Gilda Radner on Saturday Night Live) and Frank Sinatra. Sadly, they're no longer on this earth. Each of them have added immensely to my OWN thinking and acting.

Two huge contributions to our intellectual life of Roseanna Roseannadanna were her oft-repeated phrases: (1) "It's always something," and (2) "Think about it." I'm sure they came from her Jewish tradition, which is part of our UU tradition as well. If anything captures life's amazing complexity and challenges, it's those two phrases.

As for Frankie, he's always been my favorite crooner. I have every one of his records. When I was a student at Princeton Theological Seminary in the 60's (one of only four women!). I saw some graffiti on a fence around a Princeton University construction area. A student had written: "To do is to be." - - - Nietzsche. A second student had written beside it: "To be is to do." - - - Lao Tsu. A third added: "Do be do be do." - - - Frank Sinatra. The final word on the subject had been written by a nonstudent: "Nietzsche is misspelled." - - - Professor Webster.

Think about it.



DINAH

(Genesis 34)
Imagine the matriarchs mattering,
the first daughters figuring.
Then invoke Sarah, Leah, Dinah
with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob.
Our stories would be more
than tales of takings,
buyings, tradings;
our reach would be our grab.

The lesson of history
would be well learned: that
birthright not shared
is birthright lost.
All wars have been for this:
to deny to brother or sister
the singular designation
of child of God.

- - - Rev. Mary McAnally



FUTURE SWUUW CONFERENCE PLANS

- 2009 — International Women's Convocation, Houston
- 2010 — Oakcliff, Texas
- 2011 — Bay Area

GINO KENNEDY MEMORIAL FUND



A memorial fund in honor of Gino Kennedy has been established at Westside Unitarian Universalist Church, with an initial contribution of \$5,000. Gino wanted the funds to be spent on assisting people through a micro bank. A group of her friends have been meeting over the past few months, researching the various micro banks and have chosen to become associated with KIVA.

KIVA allows you to choose the people you wish to assist. KIVA gets the interest, but we will get back the investment providing the people we choose pay off their loans. KIVA has an excellent rate of fully paid loans.

At our first meeting, we set some criteria, knowing what Gino would have wanted. We also decided that we would not be the sole lender to anyone, but would fund only a portion of each loan. We selected four women to assist, and had to wait till morning till we could arrange for a Pay Pal Account. By morning, all four that we had chosen had already been funded. So, we authorized our church treasurer to pick four others. The first is a married mother of three living in Guatemala. Her loan will support her business of selling chicken and drinks. The second loan went to a married mother of two in Kenya. She lives in a one room house and wishes to expand her milk sales so that she can buy a bigger house. The third loan went to a widow with seven sons in Mexico. Five are married, but two still live at home. She wishes to expand her business of selling used clothing. At the request of her customers she would like to buy sheets from the U.S. The fourth loan went to a married mother of three. She has a small piece of land where she cultivates walnuts and lemons. She also sells shoes. She needs the loan to purchase shoes and make a down payment on a truck.

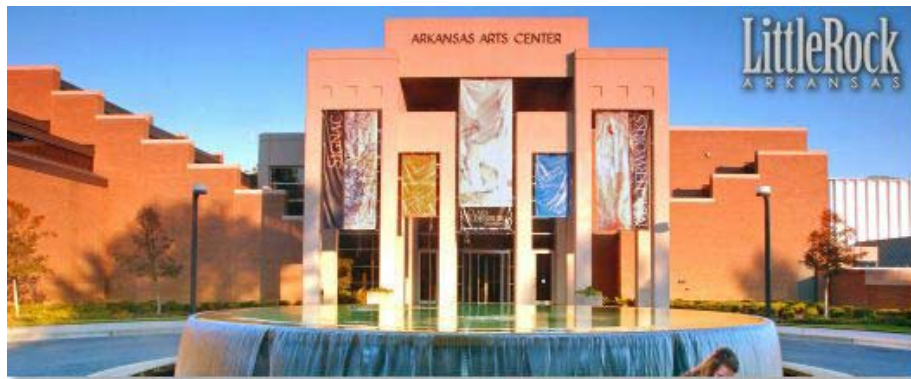
At our second meeting we hooked up the computer, selected four more women, and funded them immediately. One is from Cambodia, two from Ecuador, and one from the Ukraine. We have already been notified that a portion has been paid on two of the original loans. We also received thank you notes from two of the women. Our third meeting took place after KIVA was featured on an Oprah Winfrey program. When we went to fund some more people, there was only one person, who needed only \$50 left to fund. So, we still have not funded our entire amount yet.

We plan to do a workshop at the conference in Little Rock, showing you some of our loan recipients.

If you would like to make a contribution in memory of Gino, make a check payable to Westside U.U. Church, and mark on it Gino Kennedy Fund. Send to Westside U.U. Church, 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76110.

- - - Myrtle McMahan, SWUUW contact for the Gino Kennedy Fund

COME TO LITTLE ROCK FOR THE 2008 SWUUW CONFERENCE



SWUUW INTERNATIONAL CONVOCATION (con't from page 2)

to plan our GA workshop in Portland this past summer. We agreed to call it Women Building Bridges to End Global Poverty, a panel discussion involving selected members of the Advisory Committee in a discussion of micro-credit in this country and abroad as a tool targeted to combat poverty among women.

Although we were successful in raising the \$4,000 of match funds that we were offered as part of our UU Funding package in 2006, Convocation financing loomed large as an issue as we began to have a clearer understanding of what was involved to bring women here from abroad. We concluded that many women would want to travel in pairs to overcome language and also cultural barriers to traveling alone, and that we would need to decide early about scholarships in order to give applicants sufficient lead time to apply for necessary visas and passports. We sought and gained approval from the Funding Panel, to use a portion of our grant funds to hire a consultant, Karen LaFrance, who has been working with us on financial planning for the Convocation and searching for corporate sponsorship and underwriting to cover travel scholarships. Another expert has advised us that we ought to reduce our goal of 100 women from outside the U.S. down to 25 women because of the cost of scholarships and the details in arranging for their travel and other accommodations.

From the outset, leadership has been critical. Over the course of the last 14 months we have added important members to the Advisory Committee including: Gay Ann Gustafson, Southwest Texas Representative of the UUSC; Arlene Johnson, past president of and representative of the UU Women's Federation; Mary Overton, from the UU-UNO Office who has become Executive Director of the Convocation; and last, but not least, Barbara Beach, past president of the UU Partner Church Council and current Treasurer of the ICUU who agreed to serve as Chair of the Advisory Committee. We have developed a Committee structure with most of our Advisory Committee members either chairing or serving on a Committee. As well we have many volunteers, and we are beginning to hire staff support. The Committee Chairs in addition to Barbara Beach include: Rev. Dr. Emerson, Program Committee; Mary Overton, Finance Committee; Gail Tittle, Communications Committee; Cathy Cordes, International Hospitality Committee; and Laura Nagel Convocation Administrator and Logistics Committee. In addition to our financial consultant, Karen LaFrance, we have brought on a Networker/Coordinator, Grace Amborski,

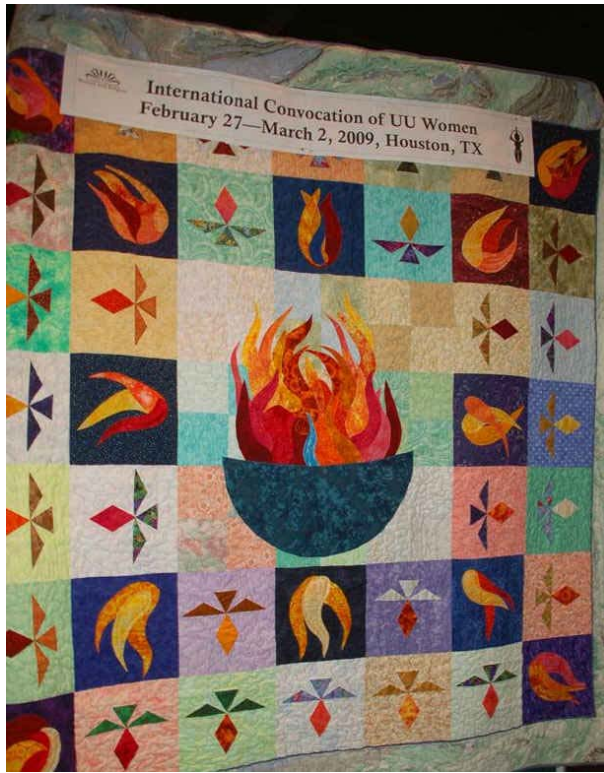
past president of First UU Church of Houston, to help with the Global Literacy Project.

As the program has begun to take shape, we have simultaneously been working on developing a logo as part of what we would need to promote the Convocation. At General Assembly in Portland we had over 1,000 copies of our first brochure available for distribution. We have held workshops about the Convocation in the Southwest District this past fall and at our annual SWUUW conference in February. We have had newsletter articles in the Women's Federation Communicator and in the Women and Religion newsletter. Also the Action of Immediate Witness passed at General Assembly this past summer to support the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) called for "U.S. congregations to work with the Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women (SWUUW) and the Unitarian Universalist Women and Religion (UUWR) to welcome Unitarian Universalist women worldwide to the International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women in Houston, Texas in February 2009." We have established a domain and website at www.icuuw.com which is on an SQL database platform.

Also at GA we hosted a reception, another opportunity for our key leaders to gather and get to know each other. UU Women and Religion has become a co-sponsor of the Convocation with Southwest UU Women. The two organizations' leaders were present at the reception along with our consultant, our Networker/Coordinator, the Advisory Committee and other key women leaders and potential Convocation speakers including Dr. Sharon Welch from Meadville Lombard Seminary and the Rev. Laurel Hallman who has agreed to do the worship service on the Sunday of the Convocation. GA was also an important opportunity to affirm organizational connections and to establish new connections. Linda Lu Burciaga, newly elected President of the UU Women's Federation attended the reception, and we are working with her to find a role for the Federation in planning for and supporting the Convocation in future.

We also met with Charlie Clements head of the UUSC to review our plans and discuss how we could work with their staff to involve their organization in Convocation plans. Though there is quite a bit of confusion about the disaffiliation of our organizations from the UUA, we continue to work to align UU organizations and congregations with the Convocation plans.

THE QUILT & THE RAFFLE AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY



SWUUW INTERNATIONAL CONVOCATION (con't from page 6)

We recently used the web-based database platform to compile survey results of the Advisory Committee members for a strategic plan. In addition to articulating the vision and mission and goals, the plan has an Excel template that committees can use in planning action steps, as well as an organization chart, and a budget. The Convocation Executive Director Mary Overton and Administrator Laura Nagel recently met with their counterparts for the Third International Women's Peace Conference that was held this past summer in Dallas and were assured to learn that we are ahead of where they were at this point in their own planning.

We have begun to identify and contact keynote speakers and workshop leaders and other presenters for the Convocation. In addition to the workshop at the ICUU conference we have set up workshops at District meetings around the country for this coming spring.

We have set the date and place for the Convocation to be Friday, 27 February to Monday, March 2, 2009 in Houston, TX. We have signed a contract with Hilton of the Americas located adjacent

to the Convention Center, the largest hotel in Houston. This is also the same time as our annual Southwest UU Women's conference so that we will be assured attendance by SWUUW members, though the conference will be two days longer than our usual annual conference. While we had originally planned to have the Convocation in New Orleans, after several trips there and other attempts to connect, the Advisory Committee agreed that Houston presented a much more favorable venue because there are nine UU churches in the Houston metropolitan area and an international airport with direct flights to many of the places in the world from which we hope to draw international attendees. New Orleans churches currently are putting all of their energies into restoration though we are still exploring a Convocation service project to aid with Gulf Coast Relief.

The support of the UU Funding Panel has been essential to this project. We are much indebted to their assistance and appreciative of their vision in supporting this project.

--- Laura Nagel

Application for Workshop Leaders

SWUW Conference 2008
Riversong: Flowing with the Creative Spirit

WORKSHOP GUIDELINES:

Workshops should be designed to offer an experience for women to be with their spirit through insight work, nurturing activities, creative expression or delights for the intellect. A general goal will be to provide offerings that support and inspire women working to creatively manage personal life challenges while also make meaningful contributions to the world in which they reside.

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name:

Address:

Home Phone:

Work Phone (opt.):

Mobile Phone (opt.):

Email Address:

WORKSHOP INFORMATION:

1. Proposed Workshop Title:
2. Brief description of the proposed workshop:
3. What are your qualifications and/or credentials that make you the right person to offer this workshop?
4. Why do you think this workshop is valuable for our conference attendees and how does it support our conference theme?
5. What is the desired # of participants and the min/max range?
6. What materials requirements would you have?
7. What special audio/visual needs would you have?
8. What space requirements and/or "ideal space" would you have?
9. What is the anticipated time requirement for your workshop?
10. What is the number of times you are willing to offer your workshop during the conference?

APPLICATION PROCEEDURE:

Deadline Date: Applications must be received by 11/11/07 – November 11th, 2007

For further questions, contact workshop coordinator:

mailto:SWUW2008@swuw.com

Home: 501.821.7736

Mobile: 501.350-7986

Janet Hanson

Mailing Address

3 Noyant Ct.

Little Rock, AR 72223

Applications by email are preferred but mail just fine! Simply type in your information and return this word document to us ASAP. If using an electronic application, please ***add your name to the end of the document name*** when saving it. As an example, my application form would be saved as: **Application_for_Workshop_Leaders_Janet_Hanson.doc**

And, THANK YOU from the bottom of our hearts for your willingness to contribute to this wonderful conference that supports Unitarian Universalist Women.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Southwest Unitarian Universalist Women

To join mail in the form below with your check to: Patti Clark, SWU UW Treasurer
710 D Bering Dr. Houston, TX 77057

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Address _____

Area Code _____ Phone # _____

Fax _____

e-mail _____

Name of Women's Group _____

Name/City of Church or Fellowship _____

Please make check payable to :
SWU UW
SWU UW is a 501(c)3 organization.
Your donations are tax-exempt. If you need more proof of contribution than your check, please ask us to send you a letter.



Dues	\$	10.00
Amount Contributing to Scholarship		_____
Amount Contributing to Social Justice		_____
Total	\$	_____

SWU UW

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