



## 2015 UU Women's Connection Council

Diana DeWeese, Chair  
kidi71@aol.com

Debbie Czarnopys-White,  
Vice-Chair  
bdcw@frontiernet.net

Susan Wilhelm, Recorder  
jaderosequartz@yahoo.com

Janet Adams, Treasurer  
jadams5357@att.net

Juli Cicarelli, At Large  
cicjimjuli@gmail.com

C. Sage Hagy, At Large  
csageh@comcast.net

Buffy Lael-Wolf, At Large  
moonsgirl292@hotmail.com

Brenda Wade, At Large  
witchiwoman71@yahoo.com

Tracy Zieber Minks, At Large  
TracyZieber@gmail.com

**YOUR NAME HERE!**  
Recruiting for Councilors  
starting in 2016 — let us  
know if you want to help  
with the work of connecting  
women across the Mid-  
America Region!

# Voices of Women

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Summer/Fall 2015

~ Fall Retreat brochure inside this VOW ~

## Down to Earth Journeys of the Spirit – June 5-7

Once again, our Spring Conference brought us together at the Pilgrim Park Conference Center, with its cozy gathering spaces, sturdy porch furniture, and peaceful natural setting. Our keynote speaker, Marsha Forrest, spoke to us of noticing, acknowledging, and listening to every living thing, being close to the earth, and taking the time to understand our own path upon it. She led us in a self-exploration exercise that included a solitary walk, barefoot if we wished, around the grounds. We shared our symbolic hand drawn pictures and personal discoveries, and supportive and curious responses from others were much appreciated.



A fascinating talk about the 13 feminine archetypes, an intimate chat about the book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, and an intriguing activity that explored the idea of Earthing (also a book, and nicely fitting with the theme of the weekend) kept us busy throughout the day on Saturday. As it grew dark, many women enjoyed a circle of drumming (and a little bit of singing) around the bonfire where we also held a small conversation with an owl. There was yoga in the morning, games at night, and an opportunity to create cards for a very worthy cause: Moms Demand Action. These were sent to people who have lost family members to gun violence.

(Continued on page 2)

*(Continued from page 1)*

Members of the UU Women's Connection council read all of the evaluations of the weekend, and found that there were many things that women enjoyed and appreciated about the weekend. Although there were no complaints, we do want to apologize to any women who were uncomfortable in any way about not being able to have their requested accommodations, or being surprised about a few last minute changes (as far as single, double, triple, etc). The council has been working hard to make our conference experiences comfortable and refreshing for everyone, and we will continue to keep those goals in mind as we make plans for future weekend stays. Please understand that we do our best to accommodate earlier registrations as they come in and as space and available options allow.

— Susan Wilhelm



## Spring Drum Circle

If you've ever been to one of our retreats, you know how we love to drum. At Pilgrim Park this year we drummed outside around the campfire, and under the trees. I happened to look up and saw that we truly were in a natural cathedral, underneath a canopy of towering trees. Our drumming and singing echoed into the night. At first we were joined by a joyful chorus of noisy birds. Their songs seemed a celebration of early evening, their last exuberant calls before they settled into the night's silent darkness. As darkness descended, our campfire flames lit up one another's faces, and accompanied by a lonely hoot owl, we drummed on into the night.

I hope you can join us for our drum circle at Dekoven in October; we have extra drums, and maybe we can drum under the fall sky!

—Juli Cicarelli



## Women as Voices of Wisdom and Compassion



### *The Red Tent* *Things We Don't Talk About* *(Women's Stories from the Red Tent)*

Featuring  
Special guest: Dr. Isadora Gabrielle Leidenfrost

From [isadoraleidenfrost.com](http://isadoraleidenfrost.com): “Inspired by women's communities and textile traditions, Dr. Isadora Gabrielle Leidenfrost creates documentary films, video productions, websites, and other multimedia. Dr. Isadora is trained as both a filmmaker, a textile historian, and a feminist folklorist. Her mission is to create multi-media to empower women. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and a Masters and a PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In addition to her educational experiences, Dr. Isadora has owned and operated Soulful Media, her film production company since 2004 and has produced 13 films since she began. Dr. Isadora continues to be inspired by international travel and many of her films have led her to live in and travel in more than 18 countries.”

During our weekend with Dr. Isadora, we will see her groundbreaking documentary “Things We Don't Talk About” that shows how the Red Tent, a red fabric space, is empowering women. The film documents the things women hide, the things that bring them pain and joy, and for many it is a place to be honest for the first time in their life. “Things We Don't Talk About” seeks to humanize the stories in the red tent—to put a face on the space. Read more at [redtentmovie.com](http://redtentmovie.com).

## Fall Retreat Workshops

### **GongSong Meditation, Reflection and Workshop — Heather Poyner**

Journey within during an amazing journey of deep meditation through the transcendent harmonics of sound. Rhythm facilitator Heather Poyner will be your tour guide as she plays a 26" inch symphonic gong. Following an hour of music (give or take—we'll be on village time!), participants can journal—write, draw, doodle—their experiences to share with the group should they choose. There will also be time for discussion of the gong as an instrument for spiritual journeying as well as a sharing of its playing techniques.

Workshop attendees should bring yoga mats, blankets, pillows and a journal. Other supplies will be provided.

### **Zentangles — Nicole Nichols**

Zentangles are miniature pieces of unplanned, abstract, black and white art created through a very specific method from an ensemble of simple, structured patterns called tangles on a 3.5-inch (89 mm) square paper tile. Zentangles are not only exquisitely beautiful, they are fun and relaxing to create.

The process of creating a Zentangle is a form of “artistic meditation” as one becomes completely engrossed in making each pattern, deliberately focusing on “one stroke at a time”®. The creativity options and pattern combinations are boundless. And anyone can do it!

“You can Zentangle in a very meditative state, or you can do it more distractedly while also doing something else, from watching TV to sitting in a meeting. I find that Zentangling chalices, even when I do it in a more distracted mode, is a valuable spiritual practice for me. The chalices connect me back to Unitarian Universalism with every doodle.”— Rev. Dr. Cynthia Landrum—quote from her recent article in UU World

### **Belly Dancing Workshop — Mikhaila Scoville Durante**

Connect with your “inner Goddess”. All ages, shapes and fitness levels are warmly welcomed as we dance our way through hip drops and shimmies resulting in our own dance at the end of class. Mikhaila will discuss the history of belly dance and then teach the individual movements of the dance. Dancers will learn a short 'mini' combination. Close fitting clothes are best for this workshop: Dance wear, leggings, t-shirt; ballet shoes or bare feet; hip scarf is optional.

### **Women's Resource Center of Racine**

The Connection Council has chosen to support the Women's Resource Center of Racine during our Fall Retreat. The Women's Resource Center (WRC) was founded in September of 1977. Over the past 35 years WRC have grown to provide a continuum of safety services, emergency shelter and a small permanent housing project in rural Racine County. The Center serves individuals and families of all backgrounds, cultures, ages and sexual orientations. All of the services are aimed at creating safety and self-sufficiency for a lifetime for victims fleeing abuse.

Staff from the Women's Resource Center will discuss efforts to provide crisis intervention, advocacy, education and prevention services for a diverse population of victims or individuals at risk of domestic abuse and/or sexual assault.

### **Rise and Shine – Saturday and Sunday mornings and join us for Yoga and Tai Chi!**

Kathy Salzano will lead an early morning Tai Chi class. Janet Adams will lead an early morning Yoga class.

Fall Retreat

October 9 – 11, 2015



The Red Tent: Things We Don't Talk About

# UU Women's Connection

DeKoven Retreat Center • 600 - 21st Street, Racine, WI 53403

## REGISTRATION FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

CONGREGATION \_\_\_\_\_

### CONFERENCE FEES

**1. Membership Dues**

\*The renewal date is on the upper right corner of your mailing label

- \$15 Supporter
- \$25 Sustainer
- \$50 Visionary

\$ _____
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**2. Conference Fees**

- No lodging, no meals \$95
- No lodging, lunch Saturday \$105
- No lodging, Saturday lunch & Dinner \$115
- No lodging, Friday dinner, Saturday lunch and dinner \$125

- With lodging, Single occupancy \$285  
(Single Occupancy rooms are very limited and will be assigned on a first-come basis.)
- With lodging, Double occupancy \$265

\$ _____
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Must Specify Roommate \_\_\_\_\_

- Are you a member of UU Women's Connection? Yes (\$15 discount)
- No (no discount)

- \$ _____ (if you are a member)
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**3. Scholarship Contribution**

Scholarship donations go directly to help sisters in need attend this Conference or the fall Conference. Won't you lend a sister a hand?

\$ _____
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**4. Late Fee – if mailed after October 3, 2015**

- \$20

\$ _____
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### TOTAL CONFERENCE FEES

- Please add the amounts in each of the boxes above: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*This is the Total Amount Due. Be sure to subtract \$15 if you are or are becoming a UUWC member.*
- Subtract the amount enclosed with this form: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*At least 50% of the total must be included with your registration form.*
- This will be your amount due at the retreat: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*On the Electronic list? Email us to check your membership renewal date. [info@uuwomensconnection.org](mailto:info@uuwomensconnection.org)

Please REGISTER ONLINE on our website, [www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org)  
or mail completed registration form with payment to:

**Janet Adams, 1310 Clement Street, Joliet, IL 60435**

Make checks payable to: **UU Women's Connection**

Questions?? - Call Janet – 815-727-1948 or email – [registrar@uuwomensconnection.org](mailto:registrar@uuwomensconnection.org)

**Workshop Choices** — Please indicate your **first** choice for a workshop on Saturday.  
You will have an opportunity to sign up for a second workshop when you check-in on Friday or Saturday.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bellydancing with Mikhaila
- \_\_\_\_\_ GongSong Meditation, Reflection and Workshop with Heather
- \_\_\_\_\_ Zentangling with Nicole
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social Justice—Women's Resource Center of Racine

**There will be a Croning Ceremony on Saturday evening. Please indicate if you will be participating.**

Yes, I will be participating. I'm ready to cross the threshold into cronehood!

**OTHER NEEDS/REQUESTS** (We will try to do our best to accommodate.)

Dietary concerns/restrictions  Please list \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetarian meals preferred  Indicate type of vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_

Other  Please list \_\_\_\_\_

### **ROOM/BOARD INFORMATION**

- Rates listed are per person for the entire conference period, Friday evening through Sunday morning.
- Meals included are Friday dinner (6-7 p.m.) through Sunday's Pack-and-Go lunch.
- Check-in time is 4 p.m. Friday. Room checkout time is 10 a.m. Sunday.
- Sheets, pillow, blanket, towel and washcloth are provided. If you want an extra pillow, bring your own.
- *There are a limited number of rooms at DeKoven, so send in your reservations early!*

### **SCHOLARSHIP/GRANT APPLICATION**

The UU Women's Connection budget funds four grants of *up to* \$100 each.

Additional \$40 grants are available to help with childcare expense. *Note: On-site childcare is not available, though nursing babies are welcome.*

**Applications must be postmarked by September 15. These go fast!**

You'll get an answer to your request within 10 days.

My need is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My home church/group will provide \_\_\_\_\_

An additional scholarship is allocated for ministerial students. Please list school name and degree sought.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Are You Ready to Cross the Threshold into Cronehood?

The word crone is derived from the word cronus (time) and it means the wisdom gained through life-long experiences. Krone also means crown. To become crowned crone then, acknowledges that you are a wise woman who has gathered up the fruits of her experience into profound and sovereign understanding. The wise crone becomes the resource of wisdom for her community.

At what age can I be croned? Each decade, starting with the 5th, brings its own challenges and blessings, resulting in newly harvested wisdom. Do you feel the calling to move into Crone, to let go of expectations of physical appearance and move into another form of nurturing and wisdom? Whether to cross the threshold isn't an age-related decision, but a response to a calling to move to the next "age".

Do I have to be post-menopausal? No. Today some women still bleed in their 60s and others experience menopause after an operation in their 30s. We honor this rite as a woman's (blood) mystery, but the timing depends more on age (see above) and personal readiness than biological factors.



It's been a few years since we had a croning ritual at our Fall Retreat. I still have the croning wand I was given on my personal altar! A croning ceremony honors a woman's passage into the third phase of life. Crossing the threshold into Cronehood can be a major event in a woman's life. It's a celebration of all that you've learned, and all that you will come to know in the future. For many women, it's a time to make new commitments and vows. If you've ever had an interest in taking a leadership position in some aspect of your life, now is a great time to do so. This third cycle of your life is the one in which you become an Elder, and you've joined a special group. You have a lifetime of achievements behind you, and decades more to look forward to. The word Crone should now be a word of power for you, so celebrate it. You've earned it.

If you are ready to cross the threshold into Cronehood and would like to participate in the Croning Ritual on Saturday evening of our Red Tent Weekend, let us know – check the box on the registration form!

— Diana DeWeese

### Vendors, Artists, and Practitioners

This is your invitation to participate in the 2015 Fall Retreat of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Connection October 9-11. Vendors will be in Assembly Hall where we plan to have the Red Tent and other workshops. Wares and services should reflect the retreat's theme or be of interest to UU women.

To apply for a booth to exhibit at the event, register online at [www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org) by September 20th. Exhibitor fee is \$35.

If you know other vendors whose services or wares would be of interest to UU women or in keeping with our theme, please feel free to pass this information along to them or to have them contact Diana DeWeese at [vendors@uuwomensconnection.org](mailto:vendors@uuwomensconnection.org) or call 217-546-5834.



Photo courtesy of [TheModernCurio.com](http://TheModernCurio.com)



## Women's Resource Center of Racine

*Aiding victims of domestic violence to secure safety and self-sufficiency for a lifetime.*

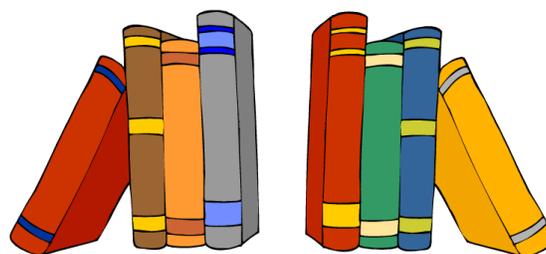
October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. In keeping with our Red Tent Weekend of honoring women, we want to support the women in the Racine area. Please consider bringing the following donations to the Fall Retreat:

- ◆ a monetary donation to the Women's Resource Center, or
- ◆ bring an item to donate from their wish list – here is the URL [www.wrcracine.com/index.php/donate/wish-list](http://www.wrcracine.com/index.php/donate/wish-list) , or
- ◆ bring a holiday gift for a child so that the mothers at the shelter will be able to give their children a gift this holiday season. Do not wrap the gift.

### The Connection's Lending Library

At General Assembly in Portland, Oregon, Gretchen Ohmann generously donated a second copy of the DVD – Things We Don't Talk About – Women's Stories from the Red Tent a film by Dr. Isadora Gabrielle Leidenfrost, PhD. She also donated five books written or edited by Meg Bowman, PhD.

- ◆ Courageous Women
- ◆ Lilith: Adam's First Wife
- ◆ Women's Wisdom
- ◆ Women's History: Dramatic Readings
- ◆ Memorial Services for Women.



Thank you Gretchen!!! We now have 245 items in our UU Women's Connection Lending Library. A complete list is on our website. You can check-out books, CDs, DVDs, cassettes at our Spring Conference or Fall Retreat and return them when done. You can also contact Diana DeWeese to make arrangements for the items to be mailed to you. Return them to the Lending Library when you are done.

**The Element we will be honoring during our Red Tent weekend at our Fall Retreat will be...**FIRE!****



## Membership Dues

We've created three levels of support for the Unitarian Universalist Women's Connection. *Select the level that is right for you!*

### \$15 Supporter

The UU Women's Connection's programs help you grow spiritually.

### \$25 Sustainer

You are also committed to sustaining the work of the UU Women's Connection.

### \$50 Visionary

You are also committed to both the present and future growth of the UU Women's Connection.

**Units of 10 register for \$130 in 2015. Register a unit of 10 members for \$13 each!**

## Meet Our New Council Women!

**Buffy Lael-Wolf** has been an RN for over 25 years in pediatric nursing. Buffy recently took all her years of experience and moved into a medical informatist role, assisting physicians, residents and students in electronic medical documentation. She has practiced Earth-based spirituality for a number of years and finds herself in harmony with the moon's ebb and flow often. Buffy is the proud mother of a 5 year old girl named, Antonea and recently married Mr. Wolf. She would love to tell you that she does yoga every morning and grows vegetables in her garden. In reality, she walks her crazy catahoula dog, Scooby daily and shops at the Farmer's Market.

A UU since 2002, **Brenda Wade** has chaired multiple committees at Abraham Lincoln Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Springfield, IL. She lives in Cantrell, IL with her husband of 12 years, daughter, stepson, black lab and recently acquired hamster. After staying home with her daughter as a full time parent for six years, she returned to Kelly Services in 2011 where she now works as a Recruiting Manager. Her hobbies include reading, jogging and biking. Her current self improvement projects are pursuing a healthy lifestyle and finding a solid work/life balance.



Buffy (left) and Brenda (right)

**Tracy Zieber Minks** has been an Earth-centered Pagan for seventeen years and a Unitarian Universalist for seven of those years. She has been a literacy tutor, a mental health advocate, and is often an activist in various social justice issues. She currently heads the Pagan Group for the Abraham Lincoln UU Congregation in Springfield IL. In her free time she loves to garden, read, browse the internet, and do woodworking projects.



## "On the Road Again!"

The purposes of UU Women's Connection are:

- to facilitate better communication among UU women's organizations and individual members within the MidAmerica Region,
- to stimulate interest in aspects of the UU movement and in the problems of the world through annual conferences and other means, and
- to service as liaison between women of the MidAmerica Region and the larger UU movement.

In keeping with those purposes, in November, the women of the UU Women's Connection Council will be traveling to Louisville, KY to meet with other UU women in the Louisville area. The Women of The Connection are very excited about this opportunity to network with the women in the UU Congregations in the Louisville area.



UU Women's Connection  
 1310 Clement Street  
 Joliet, IL 60435

*www.uuwomensconnection.org*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Time to renew your membership?** *It is, if the date on your mailing label shows a date earlier than September 2015.*

*Include recent update below and make check payable to "UU Women's Connection."*

*Send to the Connection Treasurer, Janet Adams, 1310 Clement Street, Joliet, IL 60435*

**Units of 10 register for \$130 in 2015. Register a unit of 10 members for \$13 each! Individual memberships are \$15.**

Membership/Mailing List

Have you moved? Let us know so you won't miss a thing.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH/  
 ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_

 **2015-2016 "Get Connected" Calendar**

September 2015.....3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Meeting,  
 Countryside UU  
 Palatine, IL

October 9-11, 2015.....Fall Retreat,  
 DeKoven Center, Racine, WI

November 2015 .....4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Meeting  
 & Council Annual Meeting,  
 Louisville, KY

June 3 – 5, 2016.....Spring Conference,  
 Pilgrim Park, Princeton, IL