

# VOICES OF WOMEN

Newsletter of The UU Women's Connection (Successor of CMwD-UUWD)

Spring 2006



## Women's Connection Grantee at GA

**Project Dirty Laundry (PDL)** social justice and outreach program for churches, civic organizations and schools will be featured at the UUA General Assembly. A \$350 grant from the Women's Connection enabled Sara Carpenter, Connection grant recipient, to produce PDL at SIUE this spring and offer the program to congregations across the CMwD. **PDL** and Sara will have a booth on the exhibit floor of the America's Center in St Louis.

**PDL**, a program developed by Sara through SIUE Campus Ministries is available to congregations and organizations as a way to showcase diverse social justice interests of members. The project seeks to bring local, national and global issues supported by congregation members together in one weeklong event.

Information about **PDL** at GA in St Louis or as a project for your congregation may be obtained through Sara at [SRCarpenter@gmail.com](mailto:SRCarpenter@gmail.com) Visit the **PDL** website [www.projectdirtylaundry.org](http://www.projectdirtylaundry.org) or stop by the exhibit hall at the America's Center June 21-25.

## UU Women's Connection Call for Social Justice Grant Proposals

Build a community garden. Campaign for a living wage. Feed the hungry. Large or small, global or local; social action requires resources. The UU Women's Connection wants to connect women of action to a community of resources and support.

You see a need. You have an idea! You develop a plan of action. You have the energy, but not quite enough money to realize your plan. If you need seed money to initiate a project you envision, or if your project is already running, but requires more money, send a grant proposal to the Email of UU Women's Connection Program Councilor Cheryl Springwood at [cspringwood@yahoo.com](mailto:cspringwood@yahoo.com) for details.

## Womanspirit, Sisterspirit: Toward Right Relations Among Ourselves

America's Center 260, Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 11:00 AM

Dr. Nancy Vedder-Shults, First Unitarian Society of Madison, Wisconsin was awarded one of the five UUWF program slots for 2006 General Assembly.

Nancy is well known to Central Midwest District Unitarian Universalists as creator of Chants for the Queen of Heaven and innovator extraordinaire.



Searching for her spiritual practice in the 60s and 70s, she found that many other feminists didn't believe that spirituality and politics were personally compatible. She disagreed. In Unitarian Universalism she finds a faith community that welcomes diverse faith practices. She believes that "our spiritual differences can be our political strength. It leaves us in good position to really accomplish a great deal in the 'real world'."

Dr Vedder-Shults taught Women's Studies at University of Wisconsin--Madison, since the program's inception in 1975 until 1991 when she began offering spiritual growth workshops and keynotes. ([www.mamasminstrel.net](http://www.mamasminstrel.net)) She served as Music Consultant for [Rise Up and Call Her Name](#).

As moderator Nancy asks, *How does our spiritual practice impact our social justice work? What can we learn from each other...to expand our work? What commonalities can we see in our approaches and goals?*

Nancy will sing a chant, below, composed with lyricist, Farrell Collins, to begin this workshop, then weave the lyrics into the discussion with a dynamic and highly credentialed panel listed on page two.

♪ *Womanspirit, wise in spirit, free our minds,  
Sisterspirit, rise in spirit, free our hands.  
Make the world as we perceive it,  
Change ourselves as we believe it,  
Womanspirit, sisterspirit, hand in hand.* ♪

## A Sampling of GA Programming

**Exploring Womanist Theology** America's Center 260, Thursday 8:00 AM. Panel of womanist theologians including Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatly and Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt.

*Womanist theology comes out of African American and Christian tradition.*

**Young Adult Activism for Reproductive Justice** America's Center 42, Thursday 9:45 AM Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom, *youth/young adult program of RCRC and the Clara Barton Internship UUA Washington office.*

**Tea and Cakes for the Queen of Heaven** First Unitarian Church of St Louis, Wednesday 3:00-5:00 PM *Honors Cakes author, Shirley Ranck on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publishing of the Feminist Theology Curriculum. Register* for this event at [www.uuwr.org](http://www.uuwr.org)

**Womanspirit, Sisterspirit** America's Center 260, Friday 11:00 AM Moderator: Dr. Nancy Vedder-Shults **Panelists include:** Dr. Sharon Welch, Chair Religious Studies, U of Missouri-Colombia; Rev. Monica L. Cummings, working to further immigrants rights while serving her LA congregation; Rev. Melanie Morel-Ensminger, engaged in interfaith worship, fellowship and social justice work with churches from New Zealand to New Jersey.

**Changing Women's Lives: UU Women's Federation Grants.** America's Center 230, Saturday 7:15 PM Features four innovative programs that have received funding from UUWF Grants because they are advancing equity and justice for women.

**Cakes for the Queen of Heaven—She Changes** America's Center 276, Saturday, 2:15 – 3:30 PM **NPR correspondent Margot Adler** interviews author Shirley Ranck and editor Leslie Westbrook on the twentieth anniversary of the feminist theology curriculum, Cakes for the Queen of Heaven. *What's changed? Where do we go from here in the on going process of liberation? We also honor our elders with ritual and song.*

*Something happens in the company of women  
Souls open like the sun, rising between blue mountains.*

-- Rebecca Rajasser

## **GA Sunday Worship**

June 25<sup>th</sup> 9:30 - 11:00 AM  
America's Center

Sunday worship is open to the public.

The sermon, "**Good News of the Unitarian Universalist Faith** of open minds, loving hearts and helping hands" will be delivered by Rev. Gail R. Geisenhaimer, Minister at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach, Fla.

400 parking spaces are available at America's Center Garage. (\$5-\$10) Entrance is on 7<sup>th</sup> Street between Washington Avenue and Convention Plaza. Other surface parking at street level is available near the Center.

## 2006 Summer Retreats, Festivals

### **The National Women's Music Festival**

Illinois State University Normal, Illinois

**Presented by: Women in the Arts**

July 6-9, 2006

*Jam-packed 4-day weekend of workshops, concerts, drama, dancing, films, videos, and shopping, and MUCH MORE.*

*All events are inside. Childcare services.*

*Incredible lineup features: Vickie Shaw, Cheryl Wheeler, Margie Adam, Lisa Koch, Erika Lockett, Deidre McCalla, Tret Fure, Karen Williams, Ellis, Nedra Johnson, Natalia Zukerman, Lisa Yvonne Ferraro*

### **Registration and Tickets:**

<http://wiaonline.org/nwmf/forms/nwmfbrochure2006.pdf>

## **Summer WomanSpirit**

at

Ronora Lodge  
Watervliet, Michigan

*Join the Universal Dance.*

*Play and dance under the sun, moon and stars  
"Passion, Power, Pleasure"*

August 4-6, 2006

**Brochure and Registration info at**  
[www.womenandreligion.org](http://www.womenandreligion.org)

## A Great Discovery for Book Lovers

The Minnesota Women's Press was founded in 1984 to publish a biweekly newspaper. Its feminist worldview celebrates, honors and promotes women's words, experiences and values in the belief that doing so is the foundation for individual, social and cultural transformation, convinced that such transformation is necessary for the good of women and also of men, children and all living things. Over the years, as the Press has grown and expanded and is currently offering, in addition to the newspaper, a comprehensive Women's Directory as well as many opportunities for women to meet, read, learn, write, talk and explore.

The Press also publishes a wonderful resource, *The Great Books because women say so!* created as a feminist response to the University of Chicago's *Great Books of the Western World* (with nary a single woman in its original index). Following the Press' impressive list of great books by/for females and annually updated by input from its affiliated women's reading groups, there's a section on starting a book group (with tips on how to make it work), along with a sampling of ideas and types of groups around the country.

Finally there's the periodical, *BookWomen*, "a reader's community for those who love women's words". It's a treasure house of reading and book related articles and commentary strongly emphasizing female writers, though not ignoring males. There are also postings about book retreats, some being longer ones which include travel. (The four-day, six-book Arizona retreat in which I participated drew women from Washington, Oregon, Minnesota, Michigan, Arizona and Canada together for in-depth discussions, sharing, fun and theme related side-trips. What an experience!) I heartily recommend paying a visit to [www.womenspress.com](http://www.womenspress.com).

Betty Jachim

### Logo Update: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

UU Women's Connection is accepting contributions of ideas which may be used as a logo for our group. So...Lean back, close your eyes, dream. What vision rises as you think about our network, our community, our web of district women? Who do you see? Where are we? Where are we going? What are we doing? What are we saying? Dreaming?

*Send your design drawings or direct your questions to Dorothy Brumbaugh whose contact information is on the back of this issue by May 1, 2007 to have your logo design ideas considered.*

## Get Connected! Try These Links !

[www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org) UU Women's Connection on line. Look for us there July 1<sup>st</sup>.

[www.syrf.org](http://www.syrf.org) Spirituality House—site for *Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom*; College students, youth and young adults. Project of RCRC (Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice [www.rcrc.org](http://www.rcrc.org) )

[www.uuwr.org/projects.htm](http://www.uuwr.org/projects.htm) for information about **Tea and Cakes for the Queen of Heaven** and other activities around the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rev. Shirley Ranck's [Cakes for the Queen of Heaven](#). Register on line.

[www.uuwf.org](http://www.uuwf.org) UU Women's Federation, Advancing justice for women through education and advocacy

[www.projectdirtylaundry.org](http://www.projectdirtylaundry.org) Information and sign up site for **Project Dirty Laundry**.

Submit Link ideas to:  
[Connections@rebuspress.com](mailto:Connections@rebuspress.com)

## Lake Geneva Fall Conference

November 10 – 12, 2006

George Williams College Retreat Center  
Williams Bay, Wisconsin

*Explore with us the spiritual nature of our bodies—  
head to toe—with humor and love.*

**Keynote Speaker: Judy Piazza**, interactive performer, percussionist, singer/songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, recording artist, music therapist and educator. Founder of Resonance & Rhythms, Artistic Director of Bendira, frame drum ensemble: Artist-in-Residence, Bloomfield Hill, Schools in Michigan; Featured performer at 2006 Michigan Womyn's Music Festival

*Come! Delve into the nature and use of rhythm, sound, vibration and healing sonic possibilities with the women of the Central Midwest District. Rhythm. Voice. Didgeridoo. Tone.*

Questions? Comments? Registration Info? Contact Springfield Planning Committee Co Chairs Ceceilia Haasis: [ceceilia\\_haasis@yahoo.com](mailto:ceceilia_haasis@yahoo.com) Or Rhiannon Gurley: [rhi\\_cpmmectopm@yahoo.com](mailto:rhi_cpmmectopm@yahoo.com)

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**Good Summer Reads**

- Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking***  
**Malcom Gladwell**
- Team Spirits: The Native American Mascots***
- Beyond The Cheers: Race as a Spectacle in College Sports***  
**C. Richard King & Charles F. Springwood**
- Red Tent: A Novel***  
**Anita Diamant**
- Highwire Moon***  
**Susan Straight**
- Small Wonder***  
**Barbara Kingsolver**
- The Giver***  
**Lois Lowry**
- Barbie's Queer Accessories***  
**Erica Rand**
- Spiral Staircase***  
**Karen Armstrong**
- Delights & Shadows (poetry)***  
**Ted Kooser**
- The Year of Magical Thinking***  
**Joan Didion**

**Next VOW---**"Feminist Primer," ERA update, **Spirit of Women--**  
**"SISTERS OF 77"** Conference Report and MUCH MORE.  
**Join us on line July 1<sup>st</sup>.** [www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org)