



# Voices of Women

Unitarian Universalist Women's Connection Newsletter

Fall 2009

## Goodbye George Williams Retreat Center

This year, the 27<sup>th</sup> year at the Lake Geneva George Williams College/Aurora University Retreat Center at Williams Bay, Wisconsin, 2009 fall retreat participants will bid farewell to the retreat center location. The focus and goals of George Williams have been changing for several years effecting not only the UU Women's Connection, but also many other groups who have used the center over the years.

Retreats will continue during the spring and summer months, but the board at George Williams/Aurora University will discontinue "off season" retreats that traditionally have been scheduled after the end of October. This "off season" rate has enabled the Connection and our predecessor, CMwD-UUWF, to keep the costs reasonable and accessible to many women. So it is with a heavy heart that the decision to leave the retreat center at the end of the 27<sup>th</sup> year is made. The Connection Council is looking for an alternate location and will have news about that soon. **"It is what it is"**... and we must move on.

**A Brief Fall Retreat History:** In November 5-7, 1982 the women of the Rockford, Illinois Congregation's Alliance Women's group began the fall conference featuring Carolyn McDade. The only workshop, "Choosing Wellness" was conducted by Rosalie Knutson and Norma Anerberg-Freeberg.

Over the many years at the Williams Bay location on Lake Geneva retreat themes have spoken to the times and the changes in the lives of women since 1982. Some theme titles are: "Women for all Seasons", "Women in Transition...Women on Retreat", "Women's Web", "Women and Wisdom, Coming of Age", "Empowerment: Women as Agents of Change." "A Circle of Women Joined", "Women For

All Seasons "Women's Voices", "Women's Spiritual Journey: Mother, Maiden, Crone." AND those were only the themes with the word "women" in the title.

In other years' theme titles were: "Searching, Sharing, Soaring", "Let Your Spirits Soar", "Renewal", "The Goddess Within You." "We Laugh, We Cry, We Live, We Die, We Dance, We Sing Our Songs", "Under One Sky—Cosmic Theology", "Sisters on a Journey: Remembering the Future", "Intuitive Living in the FEMillennium" "The Sacred Within" "Celebrating the Goddess: "Sources of Wisdom", "Creating Joy", "My Body: Live, Love, Laugh", "Feel the Rhythm", "Peace of Cake." **2009 theme, "It is what it is...healing in hard times."** is planned by the women of Unity Temple UU Congregation of Oak Park Illinois. **(More info about the 2009 retreat on page three.)**

Notable keynote speakers and performers at Lake Geneva in 27 years were: Carolyn McDade, (twice) Mary Grace Stern, Lela Miller, Patricia Fares O'Malley, Ruth Barnard, Carol Graywing, Shelley Jackson Denham, (twice) Jennifer Armstrong, Jennifer Berezan, Pam Greenslate, Rev. Mary Ann Macklin, Patricia Monaghan, Rev. Jacquie Meli, Wendy Selene, Meg Barnhouse, Judy Piazza and Nancy Vedder-Shults. In **2009** we will **welcome Rev. Rebecca Armstrong.**

Thank you to women's groups over the years that have planned the Lake Geneva Fall Retreat. Thanks also to many Connection Council and UUWF Board members who recruited planners and assisted in every year of planning for 27 years.

The 1986 fall retreat information is missing but was deemed "a dream come true with over 100 women in attendance" in the 1987 Winter VOW; no further information is available about the retreat. \*

See page two for the list of host congregations who planned Lake Geneva through the years.

**\*If you have information about this or other retreats for our archives, please contact Pat Goller, VOW editor.**

*Let your life be the poem you write.*

--Bokonon

## Lake Geneva Retreat Hosts 1982-2009

**1982, 1987, 1998:** Hosts: Rockford Illinois UU Church.

**1983:** Hosts: Beverly Unitarian Church, Chicago, Illinois.

**1984, 1989, 1993:** Hosts: First Unitarian Society, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**1985:** Hosts: First Unitarian Society and Prairie UU Society, both of Madison, Wisconsin.

**1988:** Hosts: Park Forest, Illinois UU Church.

**1990:** Combined UUWF and W&R Women's convocation at LG. (Spring 1990)

**1991:** Hosts: Former and Current UUWF Board Members.

**1992, 2002:** Hosts: Olympia Brown UU Church, Racine, Wisconsin.

**1994:** Hosts: Fox Valley UU Fellowship, Appleton, Wisconsin.

**1995:** Hosts: UU Church of Bloomington, Illinois.

**1996, 2001, 2009:** Hosts: Unity Temple UU Congregation, Oak Park, Illinois.

**1997:** Hosts: UU Society of Geneva, Illinois and Elgin, Illinois UU Church.

**1999, 2003, 2007:** Hosts: North Shore UU Church, Deerfield, Illinois.

**2000:** Hosts: UU Church of Peoria, Illinois and ALUUC of Springfield, Illinois.

**2004:** Hosts: Unitarian Church of Evanston, Illinois.

**2005:** Hosts: Congregational Unitarian Church. Woodstock, Illinois.

**2006:** Hosts: ALUUC Springfield, Illinois.

**2008:** Hosts: UU Women's Connection Council.

### **Looking forward...**

*We cannot look behind us for answers. They do not live there. We must imagine ourselves forward, envision the world we want to create, and feel the new reality in every cell of our beings in order to bring it about-for it is our feelings, our heartfelt emotions, that will inspire the new choices and open our minds to the new solutions. The question is not what is wrong and how can we fix it? The question is **what does the world we want to live in look like?***

--Jan Phillips from *The Art of Original Thinking*

**Special thanks** to *pro bono* attorney, **Kathryn Vanden Berk**, who stepped in front of Oak Park's speeding Fall Retreat planning train in August and convinced the retreat center to allow us a final November Fall Retreat at George Williams Retreat Center.

[www.nonprofitlawchicago.com](http://www.nonprofitlawchicago.com)

**Southern (Illinois) Hospitality** A special thanks to the women of the Carbondale, Illinois Unitarian Church who hosted the Connection council for the third quarter meeting. Thanks also to Diana's mother-in-law, Jewel DeWeese, who allowed councilors to stay at her Carbondale home where we slept, cooked and met together for our third quarter meeting and annual retreat. Council also worked there like "elves-in-the-night" on the banner pictured below.

Women's Connection councilors presented a program Saturday afternoon at the Carbondale church from the feminist curriculum: *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven: On the Threshold*. The final session, "Future Fantasies" in the newly released Part 2 of the Curriculum by Rev. Shirley Ranck was the focus of the presentation and called on women in attendance to think about themselves and the world 15 years into the future.

The Future Fantasies banner gave participants an opportunity to conceptualize those "fantasies" in a quilt square, which was made into a banner and presented at Sunday service the following morning. Pictured in the photo in Carbondale's lovely sanctuary from left to right are councilors: Kathy Kline of Decatur, Illinois; Pat Goller and Diana DeWeese of Springfield, Illinois; Nicole Nichols of St Louis, Missouri and Tori Kilhoffer of Danvers, Illinois. Not shown are Jennifer Evans of Oak Park, Illinois who joined our meeting through conference call and Janice Bailey of Chicago, Illinois who took the train home on Saturday afternoon.



Newly recruited Women's Connection Councilors for 2010 from Carbondale, Cathy Kline and Debbie Czarnopys-White, along with Carla Feldhamer gave a program for Sunday service about the International UU Women's Convocation they attended in the spring. The inspirational service featured music of Emma's Revolution and Shelly Graff, who performed at the convocation. Personal UU Women's Convocation memories were shared by Carla, Cathy and Debbie. Thank you to the Carbondale church members who made it an outstanding weekend for women. (Look for 2010 councilors' welcome in the Winter *VOW* newsletter and annual report.)

**Like to host the council for a quarterly meeting in 2010?** Contact any councilor listed in this issue.

“IT IS WHAT IT IS...HEALING IN HARD TIMES” **2009** UU Women’s Connection Fall Retreat, November 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> on Lake Geneva, WI.

Don’t miss this last (27<sup>th</sup>) UU Women’s Connection fall retreat held at George Williams/Aurora University Retreat Center with keynote **Rev. Rebecca Armstrong**. Let us celebrate the joy of connecting with sisters in the CMwD-UUA.

How many times have you said, “*It is what it is*”? The words resonate because we are all struggling with acceptance during this economically, culturally, politically and spiritually transitional time

**Friday In-Gathering:** Kicks off with a ceremonial walk around a Native American inspired medicine wheel created by the women of Unity UU Temple in Oak Park, Illinois.

**Saturday Activities:** Rev. Armstrong’s keynote will address the powerful symbolism of gold in “*Living the Golden Years – Without the Gold*”. It is a journey through stories, fables and myths of our ancestors with Rev. Armstrong’s story telling and songs. Feel how healing the story telling process itself can be. Then enjoy a wide range of workshop choices including a field trip to Yerkes Observatory, reiki, sound therapy, what’s up on Wall Street, creative aging, yoga and shiatsu. Vendors, movies, drumming, bonfires and open mic are all part of the event.

**More:** Stay till Sunday closing and enjoy a final Geo. Williams lunch with sisters. Plan now to attend. Don’t wait...Register today!!! Brochure and Registration form:  
[www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org)

~~~~~

## Nurturing Ourselves ~ Sustaining Our World

February 26-28, 2010

WOMANSPiRiT 2010 CONFERENCE

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

First Unitarian Society, Womanspirit and Central  
Midwest Women and Religion Committee

### Keynote Speaker: Starhawk

Internationally known author, peace and environmental activist  
and a founder of the woman’s spirituality movement.

For Info Contact:

Janet Nortrom ~ [nortromj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nortromj@sbcglobal.net) ~ 414-964-3764

~~~~~

### Wisconsin RCRC Faith and Justice

Professor R. Alta Charo of UW-Madison Law and Medical Schools will speak at the Third Annual **Faith & Justice Awards Dinner** and receive the 2009 Faith & Justice Award.

The dinner will be held on Tuesday, **October 13, 2009** at Bethany United Methodist Church, 3910 Mineral Point Rd, Madison, WI beginning at 6:00p.m.

**Reservations** - <http://faithandjustice.eventbrite.com>

## SAVE THE DATE:

2010 Spring Conference

June 4-6 Pilgrim Park Retreat Center

Keynote: Teri Freesmeyer

[www.artoftransforming.com](http://www.artoftransforming.com)

Pilgrim Park near Princeton, Illinois, just off I-80, is an oasis of peace and green with a rustic and natural setting, lovely chapel with trees all around, pleasant staff, wholesome food and comfortable accommodations. On June 4-6, 2010 add your SISTERS to the mix.

UU Women’s Connection promises pampering and de-stressing with a *spa for body and soul*. Take advantage of our retreat payment plan, request a scholarship or receive a first-time attendance grant. (First-five new attendees who register will receive their \$50. registration free back.) However you do it...plan to join us for the most relaxing, reasonably priced retreat for women in 2010!

Check the Winter VOW for developing news. Or join us at our website: [www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org)

### UU Women’s Connection 2009 Council

Janice Bailey  
Chicago, IL  
312-842-0182  
[jjbsilverandmore@yahoo.co](mailto:jjbsilverandmore@yahoo.co)

Diana DeWeese, Chair  
Springfield, IL  
217-546-5834  
[KiDi71@aol.com](mailto:KiDi71@aol.com)

Jennifer Evans  
Oak Park, IL  
708-386-1840  
[Jenniferevans1@comcast.net](mailto:Jenniferevans1@comcast.net)

Pat Goller, Vice Chair  
Springfield, IL  
217-787-0687  
[patrandy@sbcglobal.net](mailto:patrandy@sbcglobal.net)

Tori Kilhoffer  
Danvers, IL  
309-963-6090  
[t\\_spangle@hotmail.com](mailto:t_spangle@hotmail.com)

Kathy Kline  
Decatur, IL  
217-428-1807  
[kkline923@aol.com](mailto:kkline923@aol.com)

Nichole Nichols, Treasurer  
St Louis, MO  
341-569-7103  
[sylvynn@hotmail.com](mailto:sylvynn@hotmail.com)

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth, dwelling deeply in the present moment and feeling truly alive.* -- Thich Nhat Han

### Is it time to renew membership dues/support?

It is, if your mailing label shows a date earlier than December 2009.

Include recent update below and send check made to "UU Women's Connection" to Treasurer, Nicole Nichols, 1461 Meadowside Drive, St Louis, MO 63146

**In 2009:** Register units of nine or more in 2009 for only \$9 each. "9 for \$9 in 2009." Individual memberships are \$10.



#### Membership/Mailing List Update

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

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

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

CHURCH/GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

**Clin and send.**

### **Get Connected Calendar**

*Your support and voice helps write the calendar.*

November 6-8:	27th Lake Geneva Fall Retreat UU Women's Connection
November 7:	2009 Annual Meeting
December 2009	Connection Annual Report Due Winter VOW
February 26-28:	2010 W&R Comm. WomanSpirit 1 <sup>st</sup> Unitarian Society of Milwaukee, WI.
April 30-May 2	2010 CMwD District Assembly Chicago-area
June 4-6,	2010 UU Women's Connection Spring Conference Pilgrim Park Retreat Center Princeton, Illinois