

Voices of Women

Newsletter of the Central Midwest District UU Women's Connection

Winter 2007



2007 Annual Report

It is time again for the UU Women's Connection Annual Report to its members. I encourage everyone to review this issue to see how your dues and donations have made a positive impact on women in our district this past year and will contribute to future goals for 2008. With the overwhelming number of charitable contribution choices available, we appreciate your inclusion of UU Women's Connection among them. You are financially supporting something you believe in!

Financial support from members allows us to have a vital and thriving district-wide UU women's organization that provides a website, quarterly newsletters, Spring Conference at Pilgrim Park, Fall Retreat at Lake Geneva, grants, scholarships, donations, gifts and other supplemental programming. All contribute to the fulfillment of the UUWC mission: *to facilitate better communication among UU women's organizations and individual members in the Central Midwest District; to stimulate interest in aspects of the UU movement and problems of the world through annual conferences and other means; to serve as liaison between the women of the district and the larger UU movement.*

I am pleased to say that goals set for 2007 have either been achieved or are in progress. It has been a year of growth. In addition to our regular programming and other projects, the following is a review of the five major goals for 2007:

- *Facilitate district communication by reaching out to targeted congregations.*
The Council visited Oak Park, Rockford, Decatur and Carbondale and hopes to visit two others still this year.
- *Increase and improve leadership.* We are using a leadership information form that was developed this year to recruit new leaders; informational meetings are presented at spring and fall retreats and an informational table is set up at district assembly. We have developed a liaison system; we talk to women in person about leadership.

- *Ease the way to leadership* by providing retreat registration reimbursement and travel expenses to councilors, (if they choose) who are required to attend retreats and travel to quarterly council meetings around the district.
- *Seek a more permanent location for Spring Conference.* We found a new home this year at Pilgrim Park near Princeton, Illinois, where retreat participants were happy and complimentary about the employees, food and retreat center facilities of the Outdoor Ministries of the United Church of Christ who operate the beautiful camp.
- *Work with Women & Religion Committee on a common project.* Plans are in progress to train-the-trainers for "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven" feminist curriculum re-release in cooperation with the district W&R committee, the larger UUWF and continental W&R Committee. See *Cakes...2007 Goal* on page 3.
- *Develop a contact list of congregational liaisons.* We began talking to women in person at retreats and during church visits to ask them to be a liaison for the UU Women's Connection in their congregation, effectively publicizing our retreats and other projects in their congregations.

In 2007 UU Women's Connection established one year "guest memberships" for new women. Our hope was to acquaint a more diverse group of women with our work, so they would value and support district UU women financially beyond their first year. The Guest membership offer expires at the end of 2007, but will be replaced with other incentives to membership in 2008.

UU Women's Connection continued to provide need-based and incentive grants and scholarships to retreat participants. You generously donated scholarship money at both retreats for "sisters in need" to supplement the scholarship line item in our 2007 budget. We also continued to offer ministerial student grants, Child-care grants and first-time retreat attendee grants. Funds were also raised through silent auctions and book sales to supplement our programs and keep us in business. Thank you for your generosity. (Continued on page two.)

Annual Report continued.

Other gifts and donations were continued in 2007. See the 2008 budget, Annual Meeting summary, 2008 goals and officer designations in the following pages.

It has been a productive year and a bumpy ride at times. We will continue to fine-tune some of the mechanics of the organization in this geographically large district to help increase membership and keep the momentum going. We want to encourage more to answer the call to leadership to continue the good work on behalf of women in the CMwD and broader community. We are, indeed, making a difference in the lives of UU women around us. Thank you all for your steadfast support and wisdom.

-Jennifer Evans, 2007 Governing Council Chair

UU Women's Connection 2008 Goals

- **Membership:** increase sustaining membership with new unit membership offers, increased "connection" with women's groups in local congregations, up-dated organizational flyer, expanded programs and participation in CMwD and beyond.
- **Programming:** 50th Anniversary Allerton Reunion, Spring and Fall Retreats, *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* feminist curriculum Train-the-Trainers program, grant awards to worthy projects and begin planning a 2009 Choral Festival.
- **Fellowship:** Increase interaction and connection with congregations; provide programming, resources and visits.
- **PR:** Continue logo search; increase visibility of UU Women's Connection through newsletter, web site and other means.
- **Feminist Spirituality:** Support and facilitate *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* Feminist Curriculum Train-the-Trainers (T3) Program in cooperation with Continental UUWF, CMwD W&R Committee, Continental W&R Committee and district congregations.
- **Easing the way to Leadership:** Increase the pool of retreat planners and other leadership through liaison program and other means; identify potential council and other leaders in the CMwD.

SAVE THE DATE

November 7-9, 2008

2008 Lake Geneva Fall Retreat

George Williams/Aurora University Retreat Center
Williams Bay, Wisconsin

Details to be announced.

Women of the World: Peace and Sustainability Spring Retreat 2008 June 6-8, 2008 Pilgrim Park Retreat Center, Princeton, Illinois

The 2008 UU Women's Connection Spring Retreat will provide for an energizing opportunity for all women of the Central Midwest District to unite and explore the themes of peace and sustainability.

The spring keynote speaker is **Rev. Clare Butterfield**, ordained UU minister and the Executive Director of **Faith in Place** www.faithinplace.org

Rev. Butterfield counsels "There are two great responsibilities common to all faiths: to love one another and to care for Creation."

"Faith in Place creates hopeful and welcoming spaces for people of all faiths to fulfill these two responsibilities as we reflect deeply on our own faiths; integrate the teachings of these faiths into our economic and ecological practices; and work together for a shared future which is economically just and ecologically sustainable".

Join the retreat planners of the Joliet Illinois UU Church June 6th-8th, 2008 for the Spring UU Women's Connection Retreat.

Be a part of the circle of women who gather to reflect on the power of our own thoughts and teachings about social justice and environmental stewardship, and discover new ways to come together to promote peace and sustainability in our world.

For further information about the retreat as planning proceeds contact Joliet planning Chair, Trish Nolan at: swimchick72@yahoo.com or 815-838-4195.

Say "yes" when nobody asked.

--Lao proverb

Farewell to Dorothy Brumbaugh-Brown from the Joliet Illinois UU Church who will retire this year as a UU Women's Connection Councilor. Dorothy joined us as a member of the transition team during re-visioning of the Central Midwest District UUWF organization, UU Women's Connection predecessor.



Dorothy has had a hand in the work of UU Women's Connection incorporation as an independent non-profit, writing of the bylaws and re-writing of retreat guidelines as well as other basic organizational work. She has served as our official Recorder and record keeper for two of her three years and as a communication portfolio councilor working with the VOW production and mailing and so much more.

She not only has been a creative and vital voice on our council, but she has been a friend to the women of the Central Midwest District. Dorothy has continued the tradition of many Joliet women as "movers and shakers" of this district organization. Love and thanks to Dorothy!

Ninety-one—“Feel the Rhythm”
25th Anniversary of Lake Geneva Fall Gathering



Many thanks to the 2007 “Feel the Rhythm” planners led by Sage Hagy (left, back row) and Emily Meter, (center, back) shown here with some of the North Shore, Deerfield, Illinois planning committee members: Diane Banta, (right, back)

Joyce Bleier and Pat Wozniak. (front row) Other committee members not shown in the photo are: Sandy Moore, Valerie Walker, Marsha Wells and Libby Christiansen. Thanks also to Marcy Hamilton who created the striking logo and well conceived brochure.

The committee credits peace lover, mother, grandmother, friend, sister, composer, singer and musician, Shelley Jackson Denham, whose song “Affirmation” and other songs and suggestions became a part of the fall weekend. Shelley and the committee planned a memorable, musical and magical weekend that kept the ninety-one 2007 participants, swaying, singing, sighing and searching in heart-opening discussions of how UU women’s faith informs and gives meaning to the rhythm of our complex lives. Congratulations also to the workshop presenters who filled in the blanks on Saturday afternoon with varied and fun “rhythmic” workshops.

Shelley Jackson Denham writes about the LG 07 weekend.



It was an honor to be invited to speak and sing with you, and a privilege to spend time with such motivated, generous UU women.

Your warm welcome, enthusiasm and clear commitment to making the world a better place will continue to inspire me for a long, long time to come. As we continue on the journey, struggling for peace and justice, it is a great gift to have such wonderful company along the pathways.

IN THE 25TH YEAR a special thank you is also due to all the other named and nameless heroines who have been part of the planning of this popular retreat at George Williams/Aurora University Retreat Center on Williams Bay Wisconsin since 1982 and a special tip of the hat to the Rockford Illinois Women who began it. See the Connection website www.uuwomensconnection.org for a complete list of the planners over twenty-five years and photos of 2007 Lake Geneva.

Even to question, truly is an answer.
 --Shelly Jackson Denham
 from her song “We Laugh, We cry...”

We’ll Always Have Allerton.

**Allerton 50th Anniversary Celebration,
 April 19-20, 2008
 Robert Allerton Park, Monticello, Illinois**

The UU Women's Connection is planning this special one-time event for district women to gather with old and new friends at the Allerton Mansion in beautiful Robert Allerton Park near Monticello, Illinois. The UU Women’s Connection Council has reduced the registration fee to \$20, offers 4 scholarships of up to \$100, and has called an Honorary Committee of long-time attendees of Allerton Institute to give programming ideas and assist with the project.

The short weekend schedule includes plenty of time for reminiscing, and honoring those who planned and populated this spring event since 1958.

The Allerton Reunion brochure will be mailed with the spring *VOW* newsletter in February. For further information about the reunion at Robert Allerton Park near Monticello, Illinois consult the UU Women’s Connection website: www.uuwomensconnection.org

Please plan to join us to celebrate 50 years of cutting-edge programming for UU Women of the Central Midwest District.

For info about the Allerton 50th Anniversary Reunion contact Kathy Kline, Councilor from Decatur, Illinois, listed in this issue.

2008 UU Women’s Connection Calendar

- March 15-16.....1st Qtr. Council Meeting, Margaret Fuller Conversation Salon Hinsdale Illinois UU Church
- April 19-20.....Allerton 50th Anniversary Reunion Robert Allerton Mansion and Park Monticello, Illinois
- April 25-27.....2008 District Assembly, St Louis, Missouri
- June 6-8.....2008 Spring Conference, Pilgrim Park, Princeton, Illinois
- November 7-9....Lake Geneva Fall Retreat, Geo. Williams/Aurora Retreat Cntr Williams Bay, Wisconsin
- TBA.....2nd Qtr Council Meeting (Apr-Jun)
- TBA.....3rd Qtr Council Meeting (July-Sept)
- TBA.....2008 Annual Meeting/Council Retreat (Oct-Dec.)
7 Circles near Peoria, Illinois
- TBA.....3-Cakes for the Queen of Heaven Train-the-Trainers workshops

For up-to-date information about any event check our website www.uuwomensconnection.org

Perhaps the most important religious task of the 21st century will be learning to take pluralism seriously. It is necessary for each of us to begin to see our own tradition as one among many and to understand that no one tradition has the whole truth.

—Rev. Shirley Ranck, Ph.D. from “A Statement of Feminist Theology.” *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven. In Ancient Times*

2008 UU Women’s Connection Council

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Self-development is a higher duty than self-sacrifice. The thing which most retards and militates against women's self-development is self-sacrifice.

-- Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Update: 2007 Goal Work to Conclude in 2008

Cakes for the Queen of Heaven Curriculum Rewrite

In 2006 at the first annual council retreat Councilors of the UU Women’s Connection explored the idea of doing a common project with the CMwD Women and Religion Committee. Connection Councilors also discussed a “feminist spirituality” project and set a goal around these ideas. The 2007 announcement of a re-release of the first half of the *Cakes of the Queen of Heaven* feminist curriculum rewrite gave Council an opportunity to bring these two ideas together with *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* Train-the-Trainers project.

The goal of the *Cakes* Train-the-Trainers dubbed, “Cakes T3,” core program-planning group is to present three T3 sessions at widespread locations in the CMwD starting in spring of 2008. These trainings will prepare women to present the new curriculum in their individual congregations.

T3 core planners include at least three women who facilitated the original T3s in 1991. Other Core Group planning members include: Jennifer Evans and Pat Goller, (UU Women’s Connection) and Sherry Dearborn and Nancy Irons. (Women and Religion Committee) There are eight in all who represent the CMwD, Continental UUWF and Continental W&R in the core group. Tentatively, a schedule of trainings will be announced in the Spring VOW and on our website: www.uuwomensconnection.org.

Thanks to Gretchen Ohmann, representative of both district and continental W&R organizations for initiating the most recent discussions prompted by her work with *Cakes* author, Rev. Shirley Ranck, Women Spirit 2008 keynote speaker, who will meet with core planners during Winter Spirit 08 Conference-- February, 22-24, 2008.

For further information about the *Cakes* T3 project email: CakesTraining@uuwr.org

The latest edition of the *Cakes* curriculum may be ordered for \$40 plus shipping at the following address:

<http://www.uuwr.org/cakes.htm>

Or download an order form and mail with a check to UU W&R Treasurer, Patti Clark, 3224 Timmons Lane, #165, Houston, TX 77027.

What would it have been like to grow up in a world where the divine was imagined to be female?

- -Rev. Shirley Ranck, PhD

2007/2008 Budget Report

Category Description	2007 Budget	2008 Budget
INCOME		
Dues	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
From UUWC Checking	\$ 4,580.00	\$ 6,475.00
IN-Allerton - 50th Anniversary Celebration		\$ 4,000.00
IN-Fall Conference	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
IN-Spring Conference 2007	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,600.00
Spring Conference Silent Auction & Book Sale	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Interest Earned	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Scholarship Donations	\$ 250.00	\$ 500.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 15,290.00	\$23,035.00
EXPENSES		
Administrative Costs	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 2,095.00
Conference Grants		
Lake Geneva-in '07-4 grants in '08-5 @ \$100	\$ 400.00	\$ 500.00
Ministerial-2 @ \$100	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Spring-4 @ \$100	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Other Conference Grants - Allerton		\$ 400.00
2008 - 4 @ \$100	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Gifts And Donations		
Clara Barton Internship	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Illinois RCRC	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Missouri RCRC	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Margaret Fuller	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
UUSC	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Train the Trainer Workshops for Cakes curriculum		\$ 1,000.00
Incentive Grants-(5@50 first time participant & 3 @\$40 for child care)per retreat	\$ 740.00	\$ 740.00
OUT-Fall Conference	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
OUT-Spring Conference	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
OUT-Allerton		\$ 4,500.00
Social Action & Grants	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00
Communications/VOW, Website, PR	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,700.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 15,290.00	\$23,035.00

Increases in the 2008 budget from 2007 budget are as follows:

- With the new location for the spring conference in Pilgrim Park, we now have a better estimate of the income and expenses associated with the conference.
- We have added both income and expenses for the 50th Celebration at Allerton.
- We have added four \$100 scholarships for Allerton and increased the number of grants to the Lake Geneva conference to five.
- We will be lowering the registration fee for Allerton to encourage participation and will assume approximately \$500 of the expenses for the conference in the 2008 budget. Typically our goal is that conference budgets "break even", but we are making an exception with the Allerton conference in April, because it will be a 50th anniversary celebration.
- Administrative costs have risen slightly to reflect better estimates of the actual costs of operating the organization.

- UU Woman's Connection will partner with the UU Women and Religion in the Train the Trainer workshops for *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* curriculum (*Cakes T3*) and will donate up to \$1,000 toward the district training.
- In 2007, conference attendees have been even more generous than anticipated in their donations to scholarships; we anticipate that level of generosity to continue in 2008.

2007 Annual Meeting Summary:

Councilors Dorothy Brown-Brumbaugh, Jennifer Evans, Diana DeWeese, Kathy Kline, Pat Goller and Cheryl Springwood met in Springfield for the second annual councilor retreat and UU Women's Connection Annual Meeting on November 17, 2007.

Minutes were approved by consensus for the Annual Meeting, October 28, 2006 and the quarterly meeting, September 22, 2007. Council reviewed the 2007 goals during the weekend. (See Chair Jennifer Evans' 2007 Annual Report beginning on page one.) Councilors also approved the 2008 goals listed in this issue and discussed and approved the budget as explained by treasurer, Diana DeWeese in the adjacent column.

Program Portfolio

Councilors discussed and reviewed the fall retreat related to the Lake Geneva Retreat Center changes. Housing, vendor and workshop space was reviewed and the contract for 2008 was signed at the end of the 2007 conference. Spring Conference plans were also reviewed, as well as plans for Allerton 50th Anniversary Reunion.

Communication Portfolio

Councilors agree it is time to begin planning an electronic VOW, with electronic notices to members who request them.

Pat Goller, WebWeaver, wants to make fuller use of features on the website and will prepare to discuss this and other electronic issues at the next quarterly meeting.

2007 Goal Review/2008 Goals

Chair Jennifer Evans recounts Council's review of her 2007 Annual Report column. See page two of this issue for the 2008 goals.

2008 Officer Election:

Though the council operates by consensus and our work is shared, in the election of Officers to satisfy state and federal standards and Connection Bylaws, the following officers for 2008 were approved:

Chair, Jennifer Evans; Vice Chair, Cheryl Springwood; Treasurer, Diana DeWeese; Recorder, Kathy Kline.

Patricia Nolan was elected *in absentia* to a three-year term as an At-large Councilor. Janice Bailey and Pat Goller continue their terms as At-large Councilors. Cheryl begins her second term. (See Calendar for next meeting details.)

UU Women's Connection
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www.uuwomensconnection.org

Return Service Requested

2007 Annual Report



We all need more kindness in this world.
--Guy Davis

Your sustaining membership support makes UU Women's Connection programs possible

Next Issue: February 2008

- **Allerton 50th Anniversary Reunion** brochure and registration form.
- **Membership perks for 2008**
- **Final in the 2007 Historical Highlights** column series, not printed here to make room for the complete 2007 Annual Report

Is it time to renew membership dues/support?

It is, if your mailing label shows a date earlier than 12/2007.

Be sure to include a check for \$10 payable to the UU Women's Connection.

Send updates and checks to UU Connection Treasurer, Diana DeWeese, 716 South Douglas Ave. Springfield, Illinois 62704

Membership/Mailing List Update

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ Email _____

CHURCH/GROUP _____

Ask us about tax-deductible donations.

