

Voice of Women

Summer 1998

Central Midwest District Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation

PRESIDENTIAL WORDS

Greetings from the CMwD-UUWF Board. No, that small *w* is not a typo. In case you haven't heard, to keep from confusing two UUA districts that have been using the acronym CMD, the Central Midwest District is now officially using the new format. Members at our annual meeting decided that we should follow suit. (FYI, the other district is in Massachusetts.)

Speaking of "the home office" area, I'm sure your local group, like our board, has been wondering how things are going at Continental UUWF. During this past transitional year, due to financial, clerical and moving problems, many of us felt at a loss by various miscommunications and misunderstandings, in particular, regarding distribution of the *Communicator* and membership renewals. Patsy Sherrill Madden, one of the three new board members from our district, reported on the measures taken to regroup and tighten operations at Continental. Our members were pleased to hear of the turn-around in their financial audits/reports. To show our continued support for Continental UUWF as a strong and viable organization representing women at the UUA level, we have included another \$1,000 in our 1998-99 budget. Besides showing our financial support, the most important comment we made was to urge that the Continental Board be even more mindful of communicating effectively with all its members. To help, we've offered the use of *VOW* and our mailing list.

Money can make a big difference to individuals, as well. That's why we've been including grants in our budgets and a line for gifts on our registration forms. Our current budget allows \$500 for Allerton (4@ \$125 maximum grant) and \$425 for Lake Geneva (5@ \$85 maximum). We even have a \$150 line item for student ministers, though it hasn't been applied for recently. By the way, those figures are not absolute, since smaller amounts might be distributed to more applicants and since contributions can make more funds available. Also, when local UUWF, Alliance, Circles or other units help sponsor

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CONTINENTAL REPORT

by Patsy Sherrill Madden

The Ministry to Women Reception was Wednesday evening, June 24. About 90 women and men were there. Rosemary Matson and Lucille Longview were honored for all their work with and for women. Even though many were not in attendance because of extremely delayed flights (ask Janet Nortrom how she likes the Detroit airport), those there had a wonderful experience.

The Triennial meeting began on Thursday morning with a moving and meaningful worship service led by Katie Stein Sather--our own Board minister. Her homily was entitled "A Promise is a Promise." We also enjoyed the music of Olympia's Daughters (three for morning worship and eight after lunch). After a short business session at which the financial committee reported on the financial status of the Federation (there was not a quorum in attendance), we moved on to a panel discussion on Organizational Change with Denny Davidoff, UUA Moderator; Kay Montgomery, UUA Executive Vice President; and Meg Riley, Director of the Washington Office. After opening statements and prepared questions, the audience was invited to ask questions. It was a time for reflection on change--and how and why it occurs.

Lunch followed with folks asked to sit at a table that would discuss a topic of interest--there were a variety of topics to choose from (such as finance, FTA, the Clara Barton camp).

After lunch we "sang" our way to the second business session, led by Olympia's Daughters once more. (Such music - aahh!!) We immediately divided into small groups to discuss six areas of concentration on the future of the UUWF: purpose, structure, mission, membership services, focus and communication. These groups worked diligently for an hour and a half. We had small group reports to the whole--some really good ideas came forward. We will be sharing those with the membership as soon as we can.

(Continued on page 4)

ALLERTON 98 REPORT

by Sabine Vorkoeper

About 20 years ago I wandered through the grounds of Allerton while attending grad school at UIUC and thought that one day I would like to be a conference attendee so I could enjoy Allerton indoors as well as out. Allerton '98 was my chance. I packed a few expectations, headed for Allerton and was greeted by a host of droning cicadas as well as a host of wonderful women with more stories and dreams and energy than could fill many a good book. It was worth the 20-year wait.

With "Lighting Our Paths: Sunshine, Moonbeams & Candleglow" as the theme of the conference, the Allerton Committee '98 (a big hand for Decatur's Anne Reeser, Cindy Giesing, Kathy Kline, June Allison, Julie Hester, Leslie Martin, Amy Stockwell and Joyce Throneburg) and all the excellent workshop presenters brought the 88 attendees of Allerton '98 all that plus more. To that trio I would add "mirror" as the three worship services mirrored sunshine, moonbeams and candleglow; the Sunday Service mirrored a reading called "The Invitation" (see text on p.5) that returning Keynote Speaker Ginni Jones had shared the day before; the workshop presenter whose discovery of clay as creative expression and livelihood was a mirror of her father and grandfather's brick-making past; and all the attendees who saw themselves in a different way as well as pieces of themselves in others.

The workshops reflected the theme, and ranged from exploring the paths of Allerton Park with Marge Evans to examining the sun symbolism with Christina Smith-Owings (who also put together a fabulous craft area) to participating in a sacred fire ceremony with Jeannie Abbott to creative candlemaking, also with Christina Smith-Owings. In addition, some attendees "stirred the stars" with Tai Chi energy exercises (one of my favorites) with Karen Murley, while others enjoyed exploring a holistic approach to health and wellness with Karla Peterson, beginning and advanced improv (much laughter resonated from that workshop!) with Beverly Feldt, and a circle of clay and of a ceremonial talking staff (what fascinating stories that staff elicited) with Nancy Shoop. An exploration of Illinois suffrage leaders with Kathy Sorensen, an inspiring writing workshop with Rosemarie King, a look at the power of names and words with Deonne Orvis, and an opportunity to reenergize individuals to enable them to affect social change with Rev. Mary Moore rounded out the wonderful workshops that opened up many, many paths. And of

course a few lucky attendees got to enjoy a moonlight massage, thanks to Leslie Martin.

Other highlights included the keynote address "If the Gods Were Girls," with dress-up opportunities for attendees. Then there was the "Hester Huff Shuffle" (you had to have been there) at the lovely Hester Huff Award ceremony and reception. The talent show on Sunday offered stories and stories and a few songs and more stories, followed by a mad dash to claim at least one treasure (someone else's trash?) at the silent auction. And then there was the food (I'll never forget that chilled strawberry soup!), Allerton Park, cooperative weather (mostly; I did actually enjoy doing Tai Chi in front of the reflecting pool in the rain) and most of all the company of a fine group of kindred spirits ready and willing to embrace paths of sunshine, moonbeams and candleglow.

Hope you can join us next year. Mark your calendars-- June 5-7, 1999 (that's Saturday through Monday).

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

The date shown above your name is your membership expiration date. If the date is earlier than 7/98, this may be your last issue of *VOW*. There's been a good deal of confusion over Continental renewal lists and the status of UUWF in general, so it just may be possible that your local dues/list didn't get in as usual. You may renew your membership at the Lake Geneva retreat, through your local unit or via the dues/address change

FROM DANGER TO DIGNITY

From Danger to Dignity: The Fight for Safe Abortion is the name of a videotape available for loan with a study guide for \$15 from RCRC (Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice). This hour-long film combines rare archival footage with interviews to document the efforts of people who broke the silence and changed the laws. Call 773.509.6374 for more information about the tape and/or RCRC.

AND THE WINNER IS...

The winner of the 1998 Hester Huff Award, Sandy Drenth, has been known to Allerton participants for at least 20 years. In addition to serving as chairperson for the Allerton Conference and the Lake Geneva Retreat, Sandy has offered many workshops at both. She has also served as director and vice-president of the CMD-UUWF board, vice-president and president of the Park Forest UUWF, and board member of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church in Park Forest, Illinois.

Sandy teaches special needs children and tutors after school. She has also developed her own business, called Arts 'n Flowers. Many UU functions have been graced by Sandy's way with flowers and decorations. Congratulations Sandy!

REMEMBER RENORA

The Women & Religion Summer Gathering at Camp Renora in Watervliet, Michigan is from August 7 to 9. It's theme this year is "Dancing With the Moon." Cost ranges from \$145 to \$190, with accomodations ranging from tents to cabins. Call the registrar, Claire M. Karchner, at 773.779.4676 for more information

AN INSPIRING LETTER

5/21/98

Dear Betty and UUWF Scholarship Committee & Board,

I want to thank you for the assistance you gave me last year to attend Allerton & fall retreat. In June I was afraid I would lose my job. I did to down sizing after 19 years. The program at Allerton really helped me. By October retreat I had only been working a week and as yet had no paycheck. I realize my circumstances were different from those usually deemed appropriate for scholarships. Thank you for your flexibility and understanding that the bottom can fall out for us older "established" women.

Because I do not yet get vacation time I will not be at Allerton this year. I hope to be able to return next year.

Enclosed is a check to give back to the scholarship fund so someone else can be as lucky, as supported as I was.

Fondly,

**SAVE THOSE DATES !
Allerton 1999; June 5-7
Saturday - Monday**

SCHOLARSHIP GRANT APPLICATION

(Please apply by September 15.)

So that as many women as possible can attend the Lake Geneva conference, CMwD-UUWF makes available five scholarships of up to \$85 each. Home churches may also provide financial assistance. All requests will be kept confidential. To apply for a CMwD- UUWF scholarship, complete the following:

My financial need is _____

My home church will provide _____

I would like the CMwD-UUwF to provide _____

An additional scholarship is available for ministerial students.

I am a student at _____

Mail this form to Gloria Pillmore, 4651 Stage Coach Trail, Rockford, IL 61101

(PRESIDENTIAL WORDS..Continued from page 1)

their own members, our funds can go farther. As a matter of fact, a special contribution received last year made a gift possible that is still rippling. What amazing pleasure I had in receiving a letter (see copy on p.3) and a \$100 check from someone who had "hit the wall" last year and really needed that help to get her through a hard time. That's what it's all about. We're a women's federation united for the purpose of helping women develop themselves through mind, spirit and action.

As you may have heard, the last brass plate on the Hester Huff plaque has been filled with a most worthy recipient's name, that of Sandy Drenth (see story on p.3). The board will be considering how best to continue this tradition. Or should another and/or additional form of recognition be instituted? We'll review the award guidelines and procedures during the next year. A committee of past recipients has already begun collecting information and suggestions. You can send your comments via email to me (Jachim@msn.com) or Pat Baker (one of the committee members; tellingu@aol.com), or any other board member.

Thanks to Decatur's marvelous theme, plans and fantastic marketing campaign, this year's Allerton attendance roster included 88 names! Not only was the program wonderful, but there were some scrumptious new menu selections. Mark your calendar with next year's dates: June 5-7, again Saturday through Monday. Sorry to say, we don't have a commitment for the year 2000, so please continue to keep an eye open, search out or suggest alternative sites in Illinois, south of Chicago.

Finally, in case you haven't noticed the changes in our CMwD-UUWF directory, a hearty welcome to our new VOW editor, Sabine Vorkooper, of St. Charles, Illinois. She'll be more than happy to receive articles, photos, graphics, and news items from you. It's also great to welcome a young occupational therapist, Barbara Crowley, of Gurnee, I to our board. And, many thanks to retiring board members, Kasey Kephart and Joan Plestina.

(CONTINENTAL REPORT ..Continued from page 1)

Our budget was approved for the next three years (we had a quorum for the afternoon session). The new officers and board members were sworn in. The new president is Tina Jas of Massachusetts; Patsy Sherrill Madden (CMwD St. Louis) is the new VP; Katie Stein Sather (Newfoundland) is the new Secretary; and Linda McAffrey (CMwD Ellisville) is the new Treasurer. Melinda Perrin (CMwD Illinois) is a new Board member--we have excellent representation on the new Board.

The membership was overjoyed to hear of the generous donation from CMwD women to the cause of women and send heartfelt thanks to you all, as do Linda, Melinda and I.

More in the next column. In the meantime, I (Patsy) am reachable at

patsysherrillmadden@maddenenterprses.com.

(Long but effective, and I will answer if at all possible.)

Best, Patsy

PRAIRYERTH UU FELLOWSHIP

Prairyerth is an Earth-centered congregation in the Central Midwest District whose purpose is to bring people into harmony with themselves, each other and the Earth through the teachings and healing practices of Earth-centered traditions. Prairyerth members live in a broad geographic area and its programs and services rotate to meet their needs. Because of this unusual structure and the fact that it doesn't hold Sunday services, Prairyerth doesn't compete with any other congregation. Membership in Prairyerth does not preclude active participation in other UU congregations. Prairyerth offers an interesting array of speakers, teachers and workshop leaders, which can be a resource to other UU congregations in the district.

For more information contact Melinda Perrin at 708.579.5695 or Joe Saintcross at 630.941.3752.

THE INVITATION

by Oriah Mountain Dancer

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living.
I want to know what you ache for
And if you dare of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are.
I want to know if you'll risk feeling like a fool
for love
for your dream
for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your
moon...
I want to know if you have touched the center of your
own sorrow
if you have been opened by life's betrayals
or have become shriveled and closed
from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain
mine or your own
without moving to hide it
or fade it
or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy
mine or your own
if you can dance with wildness
and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers
and toes
without cautioning us to
be careful
be realistic
to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is
true.
I want to know if you can disappoint another
to be true to yourself.
If you can hear the accusation of betrayal
and not betray your own soul.
If you can be faithless
and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see the Beauty
even when it's not pretty
every day.
And if you can source your own life
from its presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure
yours and mine
and still stand on the edge of the lake
and shout to the silver of the moon,
"Yes."

It doesn't interest me
to know where you live or how much money you have.
I want to know if you can get up
after a night of grief and despair
weary and bruised to the bone
to do what needs to be done
to feed the children.

It doesn't interest me who you know
or how you came to be here.
I want to know if you will stand

in the center of the fire
with me
and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom
you have studied.
I want to know what sustains you
from the inside
when all else falls away.

I want to know if you can be alone
with yourself
and if you like the company you keep
in the empty moments.

THE "GOOD READS" LIST

An invitation to share "good reads" was posted at Allerton 98. We want to share it with all. Titles/authors/comments/addenda listed below are as spelled or deciphered. (By the way, what ever happened to the Book Club that used to be part of the Allerton conference? Any thought of reviving it?)

- A Gracious Plenty* by Sheri Reynolds (also *Rapture of Canaan* and *Bitterroot Landing*)
The Wheel of Life (biography) by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross
Her Little Majesty by Carrolly Erickson
Fear Falls Away
The Education of Little Tree by Forrest Carter
Larry's Party by Carol Shields
The Last Gift by Carolyn G. Heilbrun (also writes the Amanda Cross mysteries)
The Horse Whisperer
Stones from the River by Ursula Hegi
Deep End of the Ocean
The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood by Rebecca Wells
A Woman's Book of Life by Joan Borysenko
The Hidden Heart of the Cosmos by Brian Swimmer
Paddy's Lament (Understanding the potato famine in Ireland.)
Rainey (old South meets new South with some humor--short)
No Ordinary Time is no ordinary book--30s & 40s--Franklin & Elinor
Beyond the Relaxation Response by Herbert Benson
Einstein's Dreams by Alan Lightman
A Slender Thread by Diane Ackerman
Jazz by Toni Morrison (also *Paradise*)

WOMEN AS HEALERS

That's the theme of the annual CMwD-UUWF conference at Aurora University, Lake Geneva Campus, October 30, 31 and November 1, 1998. Rockford's UU women are proud to present Jennifer Berezan, singer/songwriter, internationally touring performer and teacher, well known in both the folk/women's music communities and the world of Women's Spirituality.

Look for our program and registration materials in the next VOW newsletter. Five half-price scholarship grants will be available. Contact Gloria Pillmore: 4651 Stage Coach Trail, Rockford, IL 61101; 815-963-3140; email_jacksglory@aol.com

CHALICE LIGHTERS

Our annual budget contains a section for gifts and contributions, centering on women and UU. During this year's discussion, CMwD-UUA's Chalice Lighters program was suggested. The board was directed to use part of the budgeted discretionary funds for this program.

The mission of the program is to provide, within the Central Midwest District, significant ongoing funding for well-thought-out extension efforts connected to the growth of the larger vision of Unitarian Universalism through individual donors called Chalice Lighters.

When Unitarian Universalists answer the call to help establish a new congregation or assist in special growth needs of existing congregations, they have "lit a chalice."

The help they provide is a donation, which is collected at the district office and distributed to the specific congregation that has been chosen for a Chalice Lighter Award. Chalice Lighter Awards are given three times a year. The funds can be used only as follows: to initiate a new congregation; to acquire meeting space for a congregation; to secure a minister, religious educator, or other professional staff; or to provide for an outreach or public relations program.

Who is a chalice lighter? A Chalice Lighter is a person who has pledged to give \$10 (or more) for each Chalice Lighter Award to increase the presence of Unitarian Universalism in the Central Midwest District. A Chalice Lighter's commitment is for one year, though most people choose to renew their commitment annually. Each Chalice Lighter receives an insignia to proudly wear on his or her church nametag. This serves as a reminder to others of your special commitment to the denomination.

Every Chalice Lighter receives specific information about the Chalice Lighter Award at the time a call is made. You will know what congregation is getting the award and how it will be used. At the time of the next call, the results of the previous call are provided.

Need more info? Want to sign up? Contact your local Chalice Lighter liaison or the CMwD-UUA office at 708.343.3478 or email_hbishop@uua.org.

CMwD-UUWF ANNUAL DUES ARE \$5

They may be paid through your local unit or on registration at the Allerton Conference or the Lake Geneva Fall Retreat. Another option is for women to join as individual members. Note that the date at the upper right hand corner of your mailing label indicates when your next dues payment is expected. FYI, if you pay via your unit, the date entered is based on when we received the membership list from your local treasurer or membership coordinator.

WILL YOU/ HAVE YOU MOVED?

Don't miss a single issue of *VOW* or notice of women's programming. Also, please let us know if someone's name should be removed from our mailing list due to death, discontinued membership, or relocation. Thanks!

MEMBERSHIP MAILING LIST UPDATE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CHURCH _____

GROUP _____

INDIVIDUAL DUES PAYMENT Y _____ N _____
 (Send \$5 check, made payable to CMwD-UUWF, to treasurer Mary Lou Steadman, 5 Ardith Dr., Normal, IL 61761)

ADDRESS CHANGE Y _____ N _____
 (Send updates to Betty Jachim, 6341 Blackhawk Trail, Indian Head Park, IL 60525)

CMwD-UUWF BUDGET REPORT from Joan Plestina (as of June 30, 1998)

CATEGORY	1997-1998 ANNUAL ACTUAL	1997-1998 ANNUAL BUDGET	1998-1999 ANNUAL BUDGET
INCOME			
Dues	1,860.00*	2,200.00	2,000.00
Conferences			
Allerton	10.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Silent Auction	576.70	450.00	500.00
Lake Geneva	3,207.18	3,000.00	3,000.00
Scholarship Donations	359.00*	250.00	250.00
Interest	249.81	200.00	200.00
TOTAL	6,262.69	7,600.00	7,450.00
Reserve Funds	304.54	2,125.00	4,075.00
	6,567.23	9,725.00	11,525.00
EXPENSES			
Administration	603.06	1,000.00	1,000.00
<i>IOW</i>	974.28	1,500.00	1,600.00
Conferences			
Allerton	1,014.89*	1,800.00	2,000.00
Lake Geneva	2,250.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Conference Grants			
Allerton	0.00*	500.00	500.00
Lake Geneva	425.00	425.00	425.00
Gifts & Donations			
RCRC	100.00	100.00	100.00
Feminist Theology Award	150.00	150.00	150.00
Clara Barton Camp	100.00	100.00	100.00
Student Ministers Grant	0.00	150.00	150.00
Continental UUWF	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00**
UUSC			1,000.00
Discretionary			500.00**
TOTAL	6,617.23	9,725.00	11,525.00

* As of June 30, the 1998 Allerton Report had not been received so that final accounting of dues collected, conference income and expense, and scholarship donations and grants will be delayed until next quarter.

** At the Board's discretion.

Beginning Balance in Tompkins State Bank	11,728.27
Total Income	6,262.69
Total Expenditures	6,617.23
Ending Balance	11,373.73

Voice of Women

CMwD-UUWF Newsletter
6341 Blackhawk Trail
Indian Head Park, IL 60525



2/99

BETTY JACHIM
6341 BLACKHAWK TRAIL
INDIAN HEAD PARK, IL 60525

60525-4215 44



CMwD-UUWF 1998-99 Directory

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CMwD-UUA Congregational Services Director Helen Bishop (708.343.3478; *email* hbishop@uua.org) 1701 S. 1st Ave., Suite 310, Maywood, IL 60153
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Continental UUWF Board Liaison Patsy Sherrill Madden (314.664.3218; *email* patsysherrillmadden@maddenenterprises.com) 4131 Castleman Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110