



# Voices of Women

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Connection

Summer 2007

**Celebrate!** In this issue of *Voices of Women* there are announcements of a successful Spring Conference at Pilgrim Park, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at Lake Geneva in the fall of 2007, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gathering at Allerton in the spring of 2008 and July marks the first birthday of [www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org) our website. For more information on each read on....

**Logo Update** We will also celebrate "narrowing" of the logo possibilities. Thanks to artist Jeanne Fitch, Bloomington-Normal Illinois Church we narrowed our choices at the spring conference with her original renditions of the favored female symbol with flame...a piece of altered clip art we cannot copyright. Council has delayed the decision until we are together again for our quarterly meeting in September. We want to make a deliberate and considered choice for this important icon. Thank you for the many submissions, ideas and thoughts about what this logo could/should be. Stay connected for further updates.

## Hospitality and Name to Boot

Many thanks to Unity Temple UU Church Women's group in Oak Park, Illinois for hosting our district UU Women's Connection Council at the April quarterly meeting by providing home hospitality, meeting space in the Frank Lloyd Wright designed temple AND a Friday evening pot luck, meet 'n' greet. This is the *Women's Connection* group who originated our organization's name and graciously allowed us to adopt it for this Central Midwest District women's organization--**UU Women's Connection**.

Unity Temple has provided many leaders for the CMwD-UUWF and UU Women's Connection over the years. We stand on the shoulders of these women and many others from other congregations who have been so active in helping carry out the mission of this organization and keeping us going for 45 years.

**Next Council Meeting** We look forward to the third quarter meeting September 22-23, 2007 at the Rockford Illinois UU Church. Interested members are always welcome at these governing council meetings. For further information about the meeting or to give input into the work of the UU Women's Connection contact any of the councilors listed on the back of this issue.

## For Women at GA 2007

Reported by Meredith Schonfeld-Hicks UUA Clara Barton Washington intern for women's issues.

**Sex, Religion and Politics: Reclaiming our Moral Ground** Facilitators Emily Goodstein, Director for Spiritual Youth for Reproduction at RCRC, Rev. Debra W. Haffner, The Religious Institute for Sexual Morality, Justice and Healing, and Meredith Schonfeld-Hicks, Clara Barton intern for Women's issues at the UUA Washington office of advocacy.

**RECEPTION to gather UU Reproductive Justice advocates from around the country.** In partnership with the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, RCRC and the Religious Institute this reception celebrates our successes, introduces outstanding advocates and religious leaders and allows time together to draw strength from one another at this critical time.

**September...**Fall 2007 *Voices of Women* will interview Meredith Schonfeld-Hicks about her two-year Clara Barton Washington internship as it nears completion. What's up for women?

**Also** look for a feature article on UU Women's connection **website** [www.uuwomensconnection](http://www.uuwomensconnection) in July about the Clara Barton Washington Internship for women's issues.

## Lake Geneva Celebrates 25 Years

### "Feel the Rhythm"

Lake Geneva Fall Retreat will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, November 9-11, 2007. UU Women's Connection with hosts, North Shore UU women of Deerfield Illinois invites you to the celebration with keynote, **Shelley Jackson Denham**. (Continued p.3)



## ***We Remember . . .***

**Ruth Davis**, Avon, Illinois our longest-term member, the earliest of the surviving Hester Huff awardees (1982) and last of the old guard presidents, who died in April. It is with great respect and gratitude that we remember Ruth and celebrate her life.

## **Historical Highlights: VOW's 40 Years. 1960s and 1970s "The Times They are A-changing."**

All 2007 *Voices of Women* quarterly newsletters will celebrate the publication's 40-year history. Various newsletter names were suggested over the years including: *Prairie Pioneer*, *CMD-UUWF Alertin'* and *In Touch*. The newsletter, however, was called the *CMD UUWF Newsletter* until 1979 when the *Voice of Women* name was introduced. It wasn't until 2005 that it became the *Voices of Women* during reorganization that began at the 2003 spring conference and Annual Meeting.

This issue's *Historical Highlights* will consider the 1970's, a decade of changing times for UUs in the district and in the Association. Just as the theme of the 1969 General Assembly in Boston, *Encounter with Change* reflected the changes the 1960s, Allerton Institute themes name some of these changes in women's lives.

The ideas and philosophy of the 60s became mainstream in the 70s - sexual freedom, the end of the draft, legalization of abortion, gay liberation, breakthroughs in women's rights and women's changing roles, focus on the environment to name but a few. Always ahead of the game the Allerton themes reflected these changes in the mid to late sixties. "Fight Against Waste," (1964) "Life and the Pursuit of Love," (1965) "Abortion: A Public or Private Concern," (1968) were but a few of the explorations and discussions.

The 1970 Allerton theme "Three Legs in the Evening" explored the middle years with a look at the *problems of generation gaps...the elderly and changing standards of the young*. By 1971 the Allerton theme and the work of the organization was beginning to declare as the Virginia Slims advertisement of the time that "We've come a long way, baby!" And indeed women had come a long way.

In 1971 the Allerton Theme was: "Women: Where are we Going?" Keynote Speaker Janet Bowering, Continental UU Women's Federation board member's address was titled "Keeping the Tightrope Tight." -- a *reflection of women's lives*.

In 1972 the Allerton Institute explored the subject of *women's responsibility in liberation and the importance of women's work being taken seriously* with the theme: "Hurrah for Women. A Profile of YOU in the 1970s." In 1973 the theme "Marriage and Its Alternatives" explored changing relationships. Other Allerton themes: "Close the Circuit: Communicate." (1974) "The Many Faces of Eve." (1975) "Role, Romance, Reality." (1976) "Honoring Thy Womanself" (1977)

The April 1977 *VOW* brought news of district discussions about the Women and Religion Resolution passed at the UUA General Assembly. *VOW* editor, Mildred Richards, reported women of numerous congregations were *meeting to examine their own religious beliefs and the extent to which these beliefs influence sex-role stereotypes.... It is gratifying to note that at least 2/3s of the church newsletters of this district report special programs dealing with this resolution.*

1978 theme was about "Dreams" and reflected an increasing interest in parapsychology, science fiction and Gestalt therapy. 1979 theme was "Bread & Roses" planned by the women of Madison and Milwaukee Wisconsin featured a team of creative artists and discussions on self-discovery through self-expression.

Many "Little Allertons" were reported in the April 1978 issue of *VOW*. Rockford, Illinois; Oak Park, Illinois; Eliot Chapel in St Louis, Carbondale, Illinois and other local retreats continue or have been reborn in recent years. Not the least of these retreats was the **Lake Geneva Fall Retreat** started by women of the Rockford, Illinois Congregation 25 years ago this fall. A feature report on this new-old phenomenon and a look at Rockford's part is planned for the fall *VOW*. Look for information of this year's celebration of 25 years at Lake Geneva in this issue. Join us in the fall for a look at *VOW Historical Highlights* of the 1980s and 1990s.

### **Allerton 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Slated.**

Is it any wonder that we look forward to celebrating the **50 Year Anniversary of Allerton Institute** in 2008? The Institute has had such a powerful impact on so many women of our district. Mark your calendar and plan to join us at Allerton in Monticello, Illinois on **April 19 and 20, 2008** to celebrate 50 years.

## Good Reads

### Books and Movies Recommended at the 2007 Spring Conference

*Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith* by Ann Lamott  
*The Space Between Us* by Thrity Umrigar  
*Black Girl White Girl* by Joyce Carol Oates  
*Infidel* by Aayan Hirsi Ali  
*The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss  
*Season of the Snake* by Claire Davis  
*Oh My Stars* by Lorana Landvik  
*Lamb: The Gospel of Biff, Christ's Childhood Pal* by Christopher Moore  
*The Alien Shore* by C.S. Friedman  
*Philosophy of Wicca* by Amber Laine Fisher  
*The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne  
*Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver  
*Blind Spots: Why Smart People Do Dumb Things* by Madeleine Van Hecke, PhD

### Movies:

*The Namesake* **Director:** Mira Nair  
*Limbo* **Director:** John Sayles  
*Water* **Director:** Deepa Mehta  
*White Countess* **Director:** James Ivory

## Shelley Jackson Denham

Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Shelley graduated from Cincinnati College's Conservatory of Music, with a degree in Voice Performance. She has four tunes and five texts in "Singing the Living Tradition" hymnbook and a number of published songs and anthems (including the recently released Hymnbook Supplement and the UU Musicians Network Children's Songbook). Shelley currently serves as Director of Program & New Initiatives at The Mountain Center near Highlands, North Carolina. [www.mountaincenters.org](http://www.mountaincenters.org).

For further retreat information contact planning co chairs:

**Emily Meter:** [ecmeter@earthlink.net](mailto:ecmeter@earthlink.net)

**Sage Hagy:** [csageh@comcast.net](mailto:csageh@comcast.net)

*Editor's note:* Retreat theme, "Feel the Rhythm," is lyric from one of Shelley's songs. Can you name it?

## Get Connected

[www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org) UU Women's Connection Web Site marks its 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday in July. Check us out for new issues and articles and other fireworks though out the month of July.

### NEW Links:

[www.feministing.com/about.html](http://www.feministing.com/about.html) Feministing provides a platform for young women to comment, analyze and influence on behalf of the issues that affect their lives.

[www.churchofcraft.org](http://www.churchofcraft.org) Church of the Craft creates an spiritual environment where all acts of "making" have value.

## 2007 Spring Conference

### Connections:

### The Seventh Principle in Action

Submitted by Cheryl Springwood

Women of spirit and action gathered for a weekend of retreat and celebration at Pilgrim Park Camp and Conference Center in Princeton, Illinois June 8-10. Women from fifteen different churches within the Central Midwest District built connections by sharing meals, experiences, and stories with one another.

Rev. Dr. Ruth Gnagey illustrated the Unitarian Universalist Seventh Principle using parables, models, and examples in her keynote: *Connections: The Seventh Principle in Action*. We are each a part of the interdependent web, sometimes by choice, sometimes by chance. Our connections can be deliberate or accidental, but our actions and responses influence and affect other people and our environment

Resounding thanks to the workshop presenters who developed interesting, insightful, and uplifting workshops to choose from!

Particular thanks go out to the women of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington-Normal Illinois for hosting the 2007 Spring Conference: Mary Lou Steadman, Brenda Wernick, Joanne Alexander, Ariana Miller, Judy Miller, Rachel Hile-Broad and Cheryl Springwood. Profound gratitude is also sent to Patricia Nolan and the women of the Joliet Illinois UU Church who are already organizing to plan the 2008 Spring Conference, also at Pilgrim Park!

If you developed a workshop, embellished a quilt square, made bookmarks with our Maidens, sang a song at the campfire, walked the labyrinth, bid on something at the silent auction, shared memories with old or new friends, or attracted hummingbirds to you on the deck, then you share in the success of the 2007 Spring Conference!

### NATIONAL WOMEN'S MUSIC FESTIVAL

Thursday, July 5 thru Sunday, July 8  
Bloomington, Illinois

**Judy Piazza, 2006 Fall Retreat keynote**, will be teaching workshops on **Devotional Song, Frame Drum Bliss, and The Nature of Sound: Five Elements, Sound and Health**. For more info, go to <http://wiaonline.org/nwfmf>

**UU Women's Connection**  
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[www.uuwomensconnection.org](http://www.uuwomensconnection.org)

*Never again clutter  
your days or nights  
with so many menial  
and unimportant  
things that you have  
no time to accept a  
real challenge when it  
comes along. This  
applies to play as well  
as work. A day merely  
survived is no cause  
for celebration. You  
are not here to fritter  
away your precious  
hours when you have  
the ability to  
accomplish so  
much...No more  
hiding from success.  
Save time, leave  
space, to grow. Now.  
Now! Not tomorrow!*  
**Og Mandino**

**2007 Governing Council**

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**Membership/Mailing List Update**

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Church/Group \_\_\_\_\_

**Time to renew membership dues/support?**

**It is, if your mailing label shows a date earlier than 06/2007. Be sure to include a check for \$10 payable to UU Women's Connection with the above information.**

**Send updates and checks to Treasurer  
Diana DeWeese, 716 South Douglas Avenue,  
Springfield, IL 62704.**