



The Communicator

of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Lake County

January 2008 Programs

6 - Tom Kelly of our congregation will speak on his volunteer role as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Tom has valuable information for all of us.

13 - "Becoming a Responsible Member of the Congregation". Rev. Roger Seidner promises to give us a challenge in a surprise-filled message. The Annual Meeting will be the concluding part of this service. While it will be short, it is important to come and be a vocal part of our congregation.

20 - "Remembering Martin Luther King, Jr." Choice Edwards of the South Lake Philosophy Club in Clermont will provide a review of King's life, message and legacy.

27 - "Chasing Melville's Whale - Part 1: The Theology of Doubt." Ronald Vierling, Rollins College Professor, explores the writing of the UU author, Herman Melville, in a 2 part presentation. His wife, Joyce, will assist him. The Vierlings are UUsers from Orlando.

Our monthly Pot-Luck Lunch follows this service. All are welcome.

Roger and Clarice are available to respond to calls for pastoral care in crisis situations. If you or someone you know has a need, feel free to call them at 407-905-5767. Reverend Seidner is consulting minister to our church.

Monthly Canned Goods Collection

The congregation is asked to bring canned goods to be donated to the Lake County Food Bank. Please avoid foods in cardboard or plastic bags that might attract little critters.

President's Column...

Happy Holiday Season!

I could have said: Merry Christmas! But after hearing Rev Jack Higgins' sermon last Sunday, perhaps I should say: Happy Pagan Celebration! In any event, whatever we want to call this season, enjoy it. If you are spending time with family members, make sure everyone loves each other before they leave and are not mad at each other... that does happen in families, doesn't it? I enjoyed my recent visit from a nephew and his wife, and they enjoyed visiting us and our UU Fellowship. We still love each other. They have returned to their home base in Oregon, and I am planning a five-day trip over Christmas to Savannah, Charleston, and Tybee Island. So I won't see you on Dec 23, but I will see you again on the 30th when we will spend the last Sunday of 2007 together.

This will be the last President's column I will be writing for *The Communicator*. My term is up as your president, and I do not plan to run again. Election of officers and trustees will be held and installation of the new board members will take place at our annual meeting, January 13. Also, the proposed 2008 budget will be presented for your consideration.

A nominating committee consisting of Wayne and Pat Linfield, and Phyllis Gillette has provided the following slate:

- President: Bill Hermann
- Secretary: (not yet determined)
- Trustee: Henry Gray (for a second term)
- Trustee: Ruth Gray (replacing Bill Hermann)

Additional nominations for these positions may be made from the floor. Potential nominees must be notified and must consent to having their names placed into nomination prior to their nomination.

(Continued on next page)

Next issue deadline: Wednesday, January 23.

Send material to canopus1@comcast.net

UUCLC Information/Contacts

Mail address: PO Box 1761, Eustis, FL 32727

Phone: 352-383-2263

Email contact: canopus1@comcast.net

Website: lakecountyuu.org

Officers

Ruth Gray, President
Barbara Coats, Vice Pres.
Patti Stiner, Treasurer
Dorothy Burke &
Marilyn Steingart, Secretaries

Trustees

Henry Gray
Bill Hermann
Carol Ann Patton

Roger Benton Seidner, Consulting minister.
Phone: 407-905-5767

The *Communicator* is published monthly, from
September through June.
Editor, Ted Fessler Phone: 352-483-7405

Anyway, I have enjoyed being your president; am not satisfied with what I did or did not accomplish, and look forward to supporting a younger and vigorous next president.

...Ruth Gray

Meditation Group

On Dec. 16th, a Meditation Group began meeting at the church led by Steve Collins. We meet on Sunday mornings from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Steve's experience with meditation goes back to the 1980's in California. It continued when he moved to Thailand where he continued to practice additional types of meditation and taught at various universities. He met his wife, Tasana, there at a Thai-Buddhist temple. Tasana, who has been a chef at a three-star hotel in Bangkok, was cooking for the monks at the temple and Steve was both studying and teaching there.

Steve and Tasana are now snowbirds, spending half the year in Florida and half in Maine. We welcome them to our group and greatly appreciate Steve's willingness to teach and lead us in the practices of meditation. He began our first class by describing some of the benefits of meditation, including its healing potential, which is now recognized by many health care professionals. We learned in the second class that our group is called a "sangha", which means a group that comes together in support of each other's mindfulness and to practice meditation as a community.

If you are interested in learning more about meditation and practicing it, come and join us. (You may think that it makes for a very long morning, but I have found that the time goes by quickly and getting there an hour earlier is well worth the effort!) Or, if you are unable to attend the Sunday morning sessions, Steve will be starting another group in mid-January at 7:00 p.m. in Leesburg at the Hawthorne Clubhouse. Please sign up if interested by contacting Marilyn Steingart at 343-5536 or Steve Collins at 326-2844 so that the security gatekeeper will know to allow you in.

January Birthdays:

Ruth Gray, Jan. 2
Royalene Millard, Jan. 8
Mike Parrinello, Jan. 14
Tom Kelley, Jan. 26
Bill Hermann, Jan. 27
Bob Olsen, Jan. 28
Carol Ann Patton, Jan. 30

President's Message, continued...

I have felt for some time, and I have expressed my feelings openly, that we in this small Fellowship do not know what is going on in the rest of the Unitarian Universalist movement. We do not even know what is going on in the rest of the Florida UU movement... to say nothing of UU footprints in England, India and other nations around the world. Also, we do not know what impact a small movement like ours can have and has had on our national life in America.

Besides, offering my services in this area, I would like to keep up with our afternoon movie group. I already have the next video from Ted Fessler, "The Lavender Hill Mob", and we'll set a date in January. Finally, I would love to pitch in some time and help with the Program Committee. Gladys Becker does a terrific job, and the work is hard. Both Carol Ann Patton and Kit Tatum resigned their positions with the Program Committee this past year, and perhaps Gladys could use another pair of hands.

We now have a chair of the Membership Committee in the form of Pat Linfield. Pat and I have had several discussions, and we both agree that we need more young people in this congregation, and we are right around the corner from the County college, and we have never made a dent in any of their activities. So maybe there is some help I can render there, with Pat.

It's time for Circle Dinners again!

Could you be a host this year? Last year the dinners were so successful (more than 40 participants) that we needed more hosts -- one host even had to help us out by having two! So please give some thought to this. I'll be taking names of volunteers who would enjoy having a small, informal, pot-luck type group at their home for lunch or dinner. This would be at a day and time of your choice. See me on Sunday, call 483-7405, or e-mail me at canopus1@comcast.net, to volunteer.

I'll also have a sign-up sheet on Sunday mornings for everyone who wants to participate as a guest. (If you host, you can also sign up to be a guest at another dinner.)

...Eleanor Fessler

THE UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMES TO OUR DISTRICT this year and with it the opportunity for more of us than ever to join as many as 5000 (or more) UUs from around the world in celebration of our community. GA will be in **Ft. Lauderdale** from June 25 to June 29, 2008. If you think you might like to attend, talk now to someone who has been before.

Anyone choosing to volunteer 24 hours during GA receives free registration. Of course you also will have the satisfaction of being truly a "part of the action" and knowing that you have the love and gratitude of all those attending. You'll also have a T-shirt to identify you to all as a source of information and help.

WHAT TO GA VOLUNTEERS DO?

- Greet people arriving at the GA site
- Provide information about the local area
- Assist UUs with mobility difficulties and other needs
- Care for young children or help with field trips for older ones
- Staff the local GA office
- Register attendees
- Act as ushers at events
- Count votes at plenary sessions and mini-assemblies
- Have a great time welcoming UUs to our district

Volunteer applications will be available at the UUA website uua.org/events/generalassembly/ on March 1, 2008. Applications must be postmarked in March 2008 and be mailed to the UUA.

UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS

Joan Lund

Hopefully each of you enjoyed a fine holiday season and are looking forward to a wonderful 2008. It seems the older I become the faster time flies. This month I write of good news. As you know our UUA began a new health plan in 2007, which belongs to the UUA itself. The UUA Employee Benefits Trust owns and operates the plan on a non-profit basis to benefit the participants. When our UUA first announced the intention to create a UUA Health Plan, the importance of owning and operating our own plan for the benefit of our congregations, affiliated organizations, and self-employed community ministers was emphasized. One of the goals of the plan was to create enough financial stability to be able to offer a better rate predictability than the broader market. This year solid progress has been made toward creating a rate stabilization fund. With that fund in place the plans will only experience a 4% increase over the 2007 rates. This was achieved as the plan was improved for 2008 to meet expectations in some important benefit and eligibility areas.

For 2008 the plan will be bigger and better. Based on the feedback received from plan members, three significant and valuable improvements will be in place for 2008. An annual comprehensive routine eye exam with no deductible has been added. Adult immunizations will be covered without a deductible. And outpatient mental health visits will increase from 20 to 40 per calendar year.

Your UUA Trustees also approved improvements to all three PPO plans and expanded eligibility to reach more staff in our congregations. The threshold has been lowered for participation to 750 hours worked per year from the current 1,000 hour requirement. It is hoped the eligibility reaches many who still do not have coverage. Responding to input from seminarians the eligibility of all interns in candidate status and working at least 750 hours per year for a UU congregation, paid or unpaid, or as a community minister will be specifically recognized.

Your Trustees and UUA encourage all congregations to contribute at least 80% of the cost for this plan for employees and at least 50% of the cost for additional family members. Contributing to the cost is a concrete way for a congregation to demonstrate commitment to UU principles of social justice and a life with dignity for all persons. Sharing the

cost is also a good way to enhance plan stability for the future.

To find out more about our UUA Health Plan go to the website and Google the Health Plan. Much information is at your fingertips. If you have questions and/or concerns for the UUA Board of Trustees or me, email jblund@uaa.org or call me at 813-931-9727. I always enjoy hearing from individuals and congregations. Happy New Year!