

UNI-VERSE

Chair persons *Bill Coburn & Ruth Deussen*
February 2009

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Marion County., Florida, Inc.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 829, Summerfield, Florida 34492
Email: uufmc@comcast.net Web <http://www.uufmc.org>
7280 SE 135th Street, Summerfield Fl. 34491-2510
Telephone Number 352-245-7944

Forum 9:30 Sunday Services 10:30

February 1st

Speaker: *E. Thomas Garman* will present
"Humor that Illuminates Our Seven UU
Principles" Unitarian Universalism is not about
sin, guilt and redemption. So what is UU all
about? Most UUs believe in and promote and
affirm the seven principles. Tom will use
humor to illuminate what it means to be a UU
so that we will have a better understanding of
why we are the way we are.

Forum: *Wendy Griffith* will present:
"Connection Groups – what they are about and
how the fellowship can greatly benefit from
them.

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open:
Barbara Schuster, Close: *Don Hill*
A/V Operator: *Jim Mitchell*
Children's RE Program: *Carole Clarke, Mary
Hord, Fran Marciano or Joyce Mills*
Coffee & Hospitality: *Barbara Schuster and
Betsy Gilleland*
Greeters: *Bob and Marilyn Feser (9:15), Bob
and Judy Kemp (10:10)*
Service Leader: *Robert Ridgard*
Chalice Lighter: *Ann Barefield*
Social Justice Moment: *Andrea Coburn*

February 8th

Speaker: *Robert Ridgard* will present "The
Scientific Method and Humanism"
This will be a discussion of the inter-
relationship of these concepts.

Forum: *Rodney Sheffer* will present "Evolution
Weekend and Other Topics"

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open:
Mary Hord/Hope Deckman, Close: *Dick
Bassett*
A/V Operator: *Roy Love*
Children's RE Program: *Carole Clarke, Mary
Hord, Fran Marciano or Joyce Mills*
Coffee & Hospitality: *Mary Hord and Hope
Deckman*
Greeters: *Lucia and John Beall (9:15),
Barbara Schuster and Celia Everest (10:10)*
Service Leader: *Joyce Mills*
Chalice Lighter: *Carole Carver*

February 15th

Speaker: *Jim McIntosh* will present "Ordinary
People: The Toughest Task of All"
Among people we have three groups: the
idealists; the sustainers; and the pretenders.
The toughest job goes to the sustainers in the
middle. Their task is to maintain the
organization and to carry out its goals even
though both the idealists and the pretenders
may have bailed out under the cloak of
"principle."

Forum: *George Erickson* will discuss "Faith
Healing"

Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open:
Wendy Griffith, Close: *Ann Barefield*
A/V Operator: *Jim Swickard*
Children's RE Program: *NA*
Coffee & Hospitality: *Wendy Griffith and
Barbara Thomas*
Greeters: *Joe Rada and Dick Chady (9:15),
Phil Edgington and Barbara Thomas (10:10)*
Service Leader: *Ann Barefield*
Chalice Lighter: *Bill Denison*
Social Justice Moment: *Mary Ann Donato*

February 22nd

Speaker: Ron Vierling will present "Chasing Melville's Whale" Part One: The Theology of Doubt

Forum: Author Bill Marks will discuss "The Other Side of the Law"

*Building and Grounds Duty Person: Open:
Fran Marciano, Close: Jacky McCabe
A/V Operator: Robert Ridgard
Children's RE Program: Carole Clarke, Mary Hord, Fran Marciano or Joyce Mills
Coffee & Hospitality: Fran Marciano and Carole Clarke
Greeters: Helen Ogren, Gene Sessions and Isabel Bligh (9:15) Bruce and Roxanne Gonseth (10:10)
Service Leader: Mary Ann Donato
Chalice Lighter: Karl Scheffer*

Announcements

President's Message for February

*February is going to be a busy month for the Board and Leadership Team members. We will be getting ready for the Annual Meeting on **March 15th** and the beginning of a new organizational year on April 1st [the UUFMC calendar year is from April 1st to March 31st]. At the Annual Meeting, we will vote on the slate of officers proposed by the nominating committee and the Board president and treasure and the committee co-chairs will present their annual reports. We will also elect a nominating committee for the next year. If there are recommended bylaws changes, they will also be voted on at this meeting.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to encourage members and friends of this congregation to become involved in one of the many committees that help make this Fellowship the lively place that it is. It takes many involved people to keep the programs going in order to meet the needs of our growing membership. **YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT ARE NEEDED!!** Talk with those who serve on the committees [The co-chairs are listed on the back page of the directory.] and find an area where you would like to serve. We need people*

interested in finance, advertising and publicity, library work, communications, coffee making, and many other areas.

In the Unifiers (1984), Tom Owen-Towle [for many years co-minister at First Unitarian Church of San Diego] provided the following meditation.

"The purpose of people on earth is to counteract the tide of entropy described in the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Physical things are falling apart at a terrific rate; people, on the other hand, put things together. People build bridges and cities and roads; they have ideas. That is why people are here; the universe, as it were, needs somebody or something to keep it from falling apart." Annie Dillard

"What a glorious calling it is to be a bridge-builder, to be glue-furnishers, to be creatures who hold things together. I don't think many of us would really be satisfied with a lesser purpose than fighting entropy. We may want an occasional break or covet moments of being listless and lazy, but not for long." Tom Owen-Towle

Help us fight entropy by joining the members and friends who have committed to being a UUFMC builder? Please contact me or any Board member and let us know where you would like to help. Ann Barefield

Leadership Team Meeting: *This is an advance organizer for committee chairs and co-chairs. Please mark your calendars for the Leadership Team meeting for Sunday, **February 15, 2009** immediately following the service. You will receive the full agenda after the Board meets on Wednesday, February 4th. However, some items for discussion will be your reports for the Annual Meeting on March 15th, your willingness to continue in your chair or co-chair position for another year, and progress on the strategic plan. If you cannot attend, please have a committee member attend and get the information to you.*

February Board Meeting: The Board will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, **February 4th** in the conference room at the Fellowship. Please send your agenda items to Ann Barefield at abarefield@comcast.net as soon as possible.

RED NOTEBOOK - B&G Book

Members and friends are asked to be aware of the condition of our building and grounds. If you see anything which appears to be a safety hazard or is in need of repair. The **B**uilding and **G**rounds committee needs to be made aware of these problems. Please take a minute and write it in the RED NOTEBOOK which will be found in the conference room. Thank you in advance for helping take care of our building and grounds. If you see anything that you feel needs to be called to my attention sooner than later please do not hesitate to call or email me. Bob Gore - 352-615-3741 or bobgore@earthlink.net . Thanks again!

Northeast and Southeast Clusters
A Spring Study with Rev. Meg A. Riley

Director, UUA's Advocacy & Witness Program;
Board Chair, Faith in Public Life: A Resource
Center for Justice and the Common Good.

Saturday, **March 14**, 2009

8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Morning Address & Workshops - Gender Issues
Afternoon Address & Workshops - Social Justice
Issues

Election of Northeast Cluster 2009 Officers
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach
SE corner of 16th Street and 27th Avenue
Vero Beach, FL 32960 772-778-5880

Hi "Hospitality Team,"

Thank you all for your hard work and welcoming smiles on Sunday morning. Welcome to the new folks; thank you for agreeing to be part of our team.

If you have any conflicts with the schedule, please try to exchange dates with someone else. Call Wendy or me if you can't work out a trade. We are going to continue to ask people to sign up for a Sunday and hopefully we can recruit additional folks to serve on the committee. That way our rotation won't be so frequent! Spread the word that this is r e a l l y a fun committee and you get first dibs on the food!! Fran

Director of the American Humanist Association and Maggie Arden

To the members of the UUFMC and friends,
You are invited to come to a 2:00 meeting at our church on Monday, **February 16** with Roy Speckhardt, the Executive Director of the American Humanist Association and Maggie Arden, also of the AHA. Roy will be speaking about the new AHA ads on the Washington, DC buses, and about the AHA's friend-of-the-court lawsuits on church/state issues plus other topics of current interest. To see the DC campaign follow the link below.
<http://www.whybelieveinagod.org/images.html>

Those who would like to attend should E mail or phone me ASAP.

My phone number is 352-430-3331. By E mail address is tundracub2@Comcast.net.

George Erickson, member UUFMC and past president of the Minnesota Humanists and former AHA board member.

CSAI—Ethical Eating: Food and Environmental Justice for 2008–2012

Congregational Study/ Action Issue (CSAI)

Issue

Religious organizations throughout the world have discussed the production, distribution, and use of food. Some people enjoy many food choices while others remain hungry. The food industry produces wealth, but small farmers and farm workers are often poor. Food production and transportation contribute to many environmental problems.

Background and Reasons for Study

Congregations can develop effective strategies to address two of the world's biggest problems: social inequality and environmental destruction. This Congregational Study/Action Issue is inspired by the work of the several Unitarian Universalist (UU) affiliate and associate organizations that work with congregations in support of environmental justice. Hunger is both a community problem and an international problem that can be approached in a variety of ways. There is a need for political advocacy in support of government programs that try to feed the hungry. There is a need also for involvement with service programs that deliver food

to individuals and families - for example, Meals on Wheels programs.

Significance to Unitarian Universalism

Unitarian Universalists have a vision of environmental justice. One of our principles acknowledges "the interdependent web." Others affirm the importance of human rights. Together our principles form one holistic statement that helps to define liberal religion.

Possible Study Topics

There are different religious teachings concerning the production, distribution, and use of food. Why is food so important in religion?

There are environmental concerns and concerns about animal rights and human rights. What moral guidelines, if any, should govern food production? Some people have too much food and some have too little. How should congregations address issues like poverty and hunger, nutrition education, and health promotion?

What guidelines, if any, govern the purchase and use of food and beverages in your congregation? Do you pause for a blessing when you serve food?

Possible Actions

Support sustainable agriculture and farmers' markets. Encourage organic community gardening. Volunteer in support of community food pantries, Meals on Wheels programs, and similar projects that address the problem of hunger.

Become an advocate for social and economic justice. Support labor unions, farmers' cooperatives, "fair trade" associations, and other organizations that help the farmers and other workers who produce and distribute food in the global market.

Clarifying Statement: The first paragraph of Background and Reasons for Study has been amended from the original proposal in agreement with the proposing congregation, the previously cited UU Service Committee, and the Commission on Social Witness to identify accurately the source of the work inspiring this proposal.

Contact

Rev. John Gibb Millspaugh, Winchester
Unitarian Society, Winchester, MA
(781) 835-9422, jmillspaugh@uuma.org

UU Fellowship of North Bay – Wine Country Excursion

"Napa was as delightful as I had expected. What was equally important and somewhat unexpected was the profound connections I felt with my hosts and hostesses."

Carol Lim, Los

Angeles

The UU's of Napa, California proudly announce an addition to our successful Wine Country Excursion program which we have offered the past 3 years.

In a year when overseas vacations are harder on the budget, why not plan a trip here in America? There is so much to see and do in the Napa and Sonoma Valleys, e.g. wine education and tasting, art, history of the regions, gourmet dining, bicycling and hiking to explore the natural beauty of our hills and valleys and only an hour to San Francisco!

Sites of particular interest include Jack London's home; renowned and boutique wineries; numerous fine restaurants including the Culinary Institute of America; the diRosa Art and Nature Preserve; many museums and galleries; miles of bicycling and hiking trails, etc.

We offer two choices: Comfortable lodging in members' homes with full breakfast (up to 3 nights), or lodging plus our renowned Wine Country Excursion 2-day tour package.

In 2009 our program will run from April through October. Our fees for lodging are at least 25% below market rate (and include a scrumptious breakfast!) and tours are about 50% below commercial rates. All proceeds go to our small fellowship. We have limited openings, so contact us now for details. Tom Wilson (707.254-7443) or 2wilsons1dog@comcast.net

We look forward to sharing our lovely "home" with you!

*Members and Friends Survey
Members and friends are invited to complete the attached survey and return it by February 1st. Place the completed survey in the box which will be found in the rear of the main room. The results will be reported by the Sunday Service Program Committee at the annual meeting in March. Thank you!*

Northeast and Southeast Clusters

A Spring Study with Rev. Meg A. Riley
Director, UUA's Advocacy & Witness Program;
Board Chair, Faith in Public Life: A Resource
Center for Justice and the Common Good.
Saturday, **March 14, 2009**
8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
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Separate Tables will be Thursday,
February 19, at 11:30 AM at Felix's Restaurant,
917 East Silver Springs Blvd. For those who
haven't been there, it's in a lovely old Victorian
Mansion on the north side of the road. The
luncheon menu offers soups at \$6, sandwiches
and salads starting at \$9. Please sign up on the
sheet on the back table by **February 15th**.

Dark Energy and Dark Matter, the Dark Side of the Universe.

February 10 10 AM to noon.

This presentation will be an introduction to the
fundamental building blocks that makes up all the
visible Universe and the fundamental forces of
nature. We will explore the "Standard Model,"
the intellectual triumph of the 20th century, the
most accurate scientific theory in the history of
Humankind.

February 24 10AM to noon.

Where did everything come from? How do we
know that this "stuff" we call Dark Energy and Dark
matter is really something different from the
"stuff" that makes up all of the visible Universe? Are
there clues of what this Dark Stuff might be from
our theories of what happened at the very
beginning of the Universe. These will be the topics
covered in this session.

Humanist Meeting.

February 17 6 PM

Join the Humanists for a presentation by Jerry
Lieberman on "UUs and Humanists Building
Partnerships with Communities to Achieve Social
Justice" The Social Justice committee and the
board of Trustees are especially invited to attend.

Social Justice

Close the school of the Americas

A training ground in Georgia for Latin military

Father Roy Bourgeois

Founder, School of the Americas Watch

"The Latin American Project"

Wednesday, **February 18**, 7 P.M.

ST. Augustine Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

A1A South, 3/4 mile south of Route 312

Free and open to the public / wine and cheese

Sponsored by Amnesty International / info
(904) 460-1190

Happy Birthday to the following UUFMC members & Friends

<u>Birth date</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>
02/01	Ridenour*	Colleen
02/02	Klein*	Gene
02/03	Kemp	Bob
02/04	Deckman*	John
02/04	Mitchell*	Millie
02/12	Sessions	Gene
02/19	Hill*	Charlene
02/19	Spahn	Rebekah
02/25	Brown*	Adelyn
02/25	Denison*	Carolyn
02/27	Burrows*	Rita

Getting to Know Us



I was born (1936) and raised in NYC, but lived most of my life out on Long Island, except for several years spent in CT where I was married to a woman who bred and showed Shelties. My parents taught me to read when I was a preschooler and I grew up with either my nose buried in a book or out playing a variety of sports.

By age 12 I was playing chess, by age 16 I had my FCC-issued amateur radio license and was communicating with other "hams" around the world from my own station. At age 19 I became an FCC-licensed broadcast engineer (although I never worked in broadcasting). My career (if one can call it that) was evenly divided between R&D and field engineering in radio/TV/satellite communications technology on the one hand and technical writing/editing (same fields) on the other hand. In my senior year of high school I joined the USNR-R and eight years later left as a Communications Technician 1/C in the Naval Security Group.

My parents were Roman Catholics, so when I was born they naturally assumed I was too. Well, that lasted until I was age 10 when I became a closeted agnostic. By age 18 I came out of that closet and remained un-churched until 1977 at which time I became a UU, quite literally by accident (ask me about it!). In 1977 I

also became a Deist. Upon moving to Florida I joined UUFMC in July 2001 and witnessed the events of 9/11 while flat on my back in a hospital bed in Leesburg: having suffered a stroke on 9/7.

I've pretty much been a humanist since my teens and a liberal since ridding my life of organized religion. My favorite (nontechnical) publications are FREETHOUGHT, the organ of the Freedom From Religion Foundation and AU (Americans United for the separation of church and state).

AI

Building Use

Is it important that any meeting or event planned in our UUFMC building must be scheduled on the UUFMC calendar. Just notify Andrea Coburn (andracoburn@thevillages.net) of your requirement.

Sunshine Committee – Wendy Griffith & Yolanda Brod



Please contact Wendy or Yolanda if you hear that one of our friends or members is having a difficult time or illness. The entire congregation stands ready to assist and support all our Fellowship.

Cards, calls, or e-mails from us always lift their spirits. Call Yolanda 352-751-5587 or Wendy Griffith 352-465-3450 or codysm695@aol.com

The UU Singles Group – The Singles will meet on the last Sunday of the month after service for lunch.

The UU Book Club – The Book Club will meet on the last Friday of the month, every month. The book to be discussed this month is Carl Sagan's *Demon Haunted World*.

Writers Group

The Writers' Group is scheduled for 10:00 - noon on February 5th.

UUA TRUSTEE TIDBITS

Joan Lund, February 2009

In these uncertain economic times it is more important than ever for us to maintain our support for our home congregations, and our District and UUA. There are folks in the congregation and in your community who will need the spiritual and emotional support found by attending UU services and we need to be there for them as they face difficult financial times. If history is an indicator the economic downturn facing the U.S. will have an impact on charitable giving and this will effect congregations. It will be necessary for those of us who can continue to meet our pledges to our congregations and our wider Association to do so...and perhaps then some.

I also know some of our Florida congregations will be conducting annual stewardship drives in the spring so I offer some suggestions paraphrased from Laura Amabile, Director of the Annual Program Fund who recently wrote a piece after reading *Enjoy the Ride: How to Effectively Raise Funds in a Roller-coaster Economy*, by Mary Ellen Collins: 1) be prepared to articulate your congregation's vision and mission statement in compelling ways that elicit a high level of financial support, 2) build solid relationships in and among the congregation, 3) avoid a dramatic shift in the manner in which your congregation conducts the stewardship drive or any fund raising activities, 3)



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maintain strong communications about the activities going on in the congregation by spreading accurate news enthusiastically, 4) practice openness and accountability about the financial condition of the congregation, and 5) have the board meet regularly with the congregants to answer questions and keep the congregants informed about all that is going on within the congregation.

In addition I offer further thoughts to encourage congregations. Remember generosity is a spiritual issue of the heart. A spiritually mature person cannot move forward until it is understood that "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also". The conversation must move beyond boring stewardship to exciting generosity. Tell stories about how the generosity of persons had changed the life of your congregation and lives within the congregation. Keep building relationship trust within the congregation. Cease ineffective programs and activities in the congregation. And finally make it a practice to continually thank people for their time and financial generosity to the congregation, especially those persons/families who are pledging for the first time.

As you consider making plans for 2009 in the midst of economic uncertainty remember adaptations may be necessary in the overall ministry of your congregation. I know UUs will continue with our faith and good works in the times ahead. Please email (jlund@uua.org) or telephone me (813-931-9727) with thoughts, concerns, or with whatever you might like to communicate.