



UU Update

Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa

• September 2009 • Volume 53 • Issue 9 •

Beginning September 20th: Sunday Services will be at 9:00 and 11:00am

September 6th

"A CELEBRATION OF RECOVERY"

Service Leader: Michael Walsh

Worship Associate: Scott Miller

Addiction takes many forms, and touches nearly every family in some way. The path to recovery and healing is a spiritual one, with lessons for everyone. Come join us as we "share the basket" with The Drug Abuse Alternative Center. They are a local community-based organization providing alcohol and other drug treatment services to those in need.

September 13th

"INGATHERING"

INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE

Service Leader: Rev. Chris Bell

Worship Associate: Erin Howseman

In the Zen tradition, every morning the practice leader "opens the Zendo" by marching around the circumference of the practice hall and bowing to each practitioner. It's a way of saying, "O.K., we're starting our practice again, NOW!" In this, the last of the 10:00am services, we'll conduct our version - marching into the sanctuary, reconstituting ourselves as a community, renewing our commitments, and honoring important transitions in the life of our children.

September 20th

"WHAT IS REQUIRED OF THEE?"

TWO SERVICES BEGIN TODAY! 9:00 and 11:00!

Service Leader: Rev. Chris Bell

Worship Associate: Andy Levine

One of the beautiful things about the path of Unitarian Universalism is the freedom to discover, or even create, our own spiritual path. "Take what works and leave the rest," we say. The danger of such an approach, however, is that we ignore an important dimension of the religious life: the obligations and demands that a tradition imposes on us for the sake of our own betterment and transformation. Not everything can be, or should be optional, in a life of faith.

September 27th

"FACES OF WAR"

Service Leader: Jim Costy

Worship Associate: Leslie Norinsky

The Delta Mens' Group is presenting an alternative service of individual and group readings and interesting music. The focus will be on what the government likes to call the "collateral damage" of war. We are expanding their concept of the term.

9:00 AM SERVICE

It is a smaller gathering, we have the same readings and message that are given at the 11:00AM service, plus we have time for a discussion of the sermon topic. What UU doesn't like a discussion? There is childcare available. Any questions, contact Andy Levine at 887-9810

Coming October 4th

THE 2nd ANNUAL NORTH BAY REVIVAL!

Don't Forget!! Starting September 20th we go back to two (2) services at 9:00am and 11:00am

A Fine but Fuzzy Line—Rev. Chris



It's hard being a human being sometimes, isn't it? There are the obvious challenges like feeding and housing ourselves and our children, coping with our fragile bodies, and caring for our sick and aging loved ones. We have to work and toil. There are our moral questions: the countless temptations and our own weaknesses thereof, figuring out the right thing to do in difficult situations, determining how much we should demand of ourselves and others. Then add the existential struggles: finding some measure of truth and meaning from an ever-changing and dangerous world, knowing whether or not we are loved and whether we have a place in the world, and, of course, of facing our own mortality.

Meanwhile, all around us billions of other people are struggling in more or less the same way. And because we are complicated and imperfect critters, many of those folks disagree with our approach and our answers, and history shows that very many will hurt or kill in order to make their case.

In the midst of all these conundrums we also want (and, I might say, deserve) to be happy, or at least content, and live in relative peace, comfort and safety. In our dark hours we may think that the very thought is madness, or that the only way to achieve it is to bury our head in the sand, or the bottle, or the TV. And it is simply a fact that, at times, we are indeed powerless to affect our fate or the fate of the world.

So what do we do? Where shall we find our joy and power given the reality of our lives?

What tiny shards of wisdom I've gleaned from the wise ones of the world suggests that we must walk a fine but fuzzy line between acceptance and action.

On the one hand, no one has ever changed the human condition through an act of will. As the first four of the Five Remembrances of Buddhism remind us, "I am of the nature to grow old, to have ill health, to die. Everything I love is of the nature of change and there is no way to escape being separated from them." The incomplete list of difficulties I gave above is just our lot, plain and simple, and wishing it were otherwise will only compound your suffering. Sometimes, no matter

how good you are, the universe is going to dump a \$20,000 plumbing bill in your lap!

The system just works this way and we are wise to abandon the idea that we can perfect the world or ourselves. Perfection is the longing of fundamentalists of all stripes, as Chris Hedges points out in his little polemic *I Don't Believe in Atheists*. Whether through holy wars, scientific engineering, the exercise of political or economic power, conversion or re-education, the fundamentalist seeks to forcefully eradicate the ills of the human race and command nature itself. Or to get some god to come down and do it for them. It has never worked, and it never will.

On the other hand, The fifth Remembrance is "My deeds are the ground on which I stand." In swirl of our lives, moments of possibility and opportunity constantly present themselves. Beauty breaks through, healing occurs, crowds swell up and demand justice, dynasties crumble, peace arises, people forgive, minds open. In every moment we can make a choice for awareness, for compassion, for peace, for sacrifice, for community, for love. The blessings of life are as real as its curses. Delusions are inexhaustible, yes, but dharma gates are boundless, too!

This is why religious community is so important to me. Here we share our sorrow and our joy with each other and find that the burdens of living are lessened by our carrying them together. When we get lost we can find a hand on the darkened path. When those moments to act and move arise there are more bodies behind the plow. When joy arises it is magnified. There is a place for everyone and everything.

And, amazingly, when we are on that fine but fuzzy line, open to all life has to offer, accepting this moment just as it is, trusting our hearts and the universe, we can actually find that happiness and ease we seek. I have felt it. So have you. In the singing of a bird, at the bedside of a dying partner, in a painting, a flowing stream, a fireside song in the night.

I sing praises for our lives, our struggles, our journeys, and our willingness to take face them together. I sing praises for you!

- Rev. Chris

Splinters from the Board

The 80-Percent-of-Success Solution

It was good to see pretty darn near everyone at the August 23 Sunday service. Funny how the greatly increased attendance just happened to coincide with the return of our ace starting pitcher—what was his name again?...oh yeah, Christopher Thomas Bell—to his familiar spot on the mound. Threw a few of his customary zingers, that fellow did! (And all was once again right with our UUCSR world...)

One of my personal goals for the Board of Trustees this year is that us Board members become, if we are not already, masters in the well-honed commitment (I hesitate to call it an "art") of "showing up." (Two words Woody Allen made famous by quipping that they comprise 80 percent of success.) What I mean here is that if anyone is going to attend services regularly, come to fundraisers, join work parties, greet visitors, respond to emails and generally do their best to keep abreast of the thousand and one matters that make congregational life go 'round, it should be us.

Not that all of us should—or could possibly—be at every event. (My abject apologies right out of the blocks here for all those I've missed and will miss in the future...) We all have to pick and choose what our available time and resources and energies allow.

That said, I do think it is incumbent upon Board members to take quite seriously the notion that a leadership position requires many things of us, including "leading visibility" and participation to the greatest degree possible in congregational activities. Most all those activities have a prima facie requirement of simply "showing up," whatever the context. All good things mostly flow from there.

Showing up, of course, is no less fundamental for those not currently in leadership positions, at least as it applies to getting the most out of—and giving the most to—congregational life. Let's return to Sunday attendance as a further springboard for this conversation.

I have mused long and hard about the "star pitcher" phenomenon mentioned in the first paragraph above. Attendance goes up and down on Sundays, partly depending on the season, but most assuredly depending on whether Chris is in our pulpit. It is normal and human to make a point of attending when chances are best we will be nourished by the words we hear, and all of us are delightedly aware of Chris's uncanny ability to deliver a veritable banquet, one Sunday after another. It was not for nothing that we called him to be our minister.

But I also think a strong case can and should be made that we not even consult the sermon schedule when making Sunday plans. The life of a spiritual community—a committed band of brothers and sisters in covenant with one another—adds up to hugely more than the inspirational vitamin shot we get from a Sunday sermon, no? In our identity as that spiritual community, a church service is what we do on Sundays, part of which involves listening to a sermon. But who we are is not contingent, it seems to me, on what we get out of any given sermon and exactly who is delivering the message. Who we are is much more contingent on how much—and with what kind of commitment and even ardor—we are showing up to be with our brothers and sisters. Sunday after Sunday, and often enough, on variable Mondays through Saturdays as well.

In this formula, who we are is comprised of what we show up for—bringing our commitments, our talents, our heart's desires to make a difference for other people.

Me, I want to show up for UUCSR, whatever is on the menu and whomever is the chef on any given day. I want to show up for you and you and you and you. And you over there. And for myself. For all of us, together, a great committed band of shower-uppers, doing our part to change this wild and troubled and wonderful world.

—Andrew Hidas
President, Board of Trustees

Who and What is the Committee on Shared Ministry

Here is some information about the Committee on Shared Ministry.

Who are we? We are Elizabeth Marrs, Chairperson, Rev. Chris Bell, Nancy Hargis, Cathy Reid, Mary Wagner and Andy Levine.

This is our charge: The purpose of the Committee on Shared Ministry is to encourage healthy communication among members and committees of the UUCSR, to help insure issues and concerns are addressed and resolved amicably and in a timely manner and to provide support and feedback to the minister.

The committee identifies trends, synthesizes information and appreciates the diversity of viewpoints within in the congregation.

Please contact anyone of us on the committee with any issues that arise.

In fellowship, Andy Levine

Treasurer's Report

Happy September! This is a favorite month of mine, seeing it's the month of my birth. A time when we Libras feel right at home. Did you know that, astrologically speaking, those of us of Libran descent are known to have a keen ability to see both sides of the picture? Well, speaking of which... in last month's Treasurer's Report, I spoke of lovely, colorful flowcharts showing annual UUCSR cash flow. So this month, I wanted to tell you a little about the OTHER side of the story.

When we speak of "cash flow", we are talking about money in the general (operating) bank account with which to pay normal everyday expenses. There are several members who can remember the old days, just a few years back - when "cash flow" was a real problem. We'd be all set to write out the monthly bills - and we'd realize that there wasn't quite enough money in the bank to pay them all. It's been quite awhile since we've had to literally call up a member or two and say, "Uh... could you please pay your monthly pledge, like, right NOW - so that we can pay this week's payroll??" But for the last few years, we've been fortunate to have had a nice "cushion" in our operating account - so that we can write checks for our normal monthly expenses without worrying about having money in the bank to cover them. (Thus, good cash flow).

But now.. for the REST of the story. While cash flow is certainly a good thing to keep an eye on... that doesn't tell us everything. We also have to look at the picture as a whole... how all of our other accounts are doing, and how our monthly expenses are comparing with our projected budget. This can foretell how we might be doing 3 months from now, or 6, or 12. And while the cash flow charts that I spoke of last month painted a pretty good picture through Dec '09 or so... our budget tells us that we will have some real tough decisions come next year, around February or March.

The Accounting Committee recently submitted the actual, approved, this-is-it, finalized Budget for the year 2009-10. One problem area we've been looking at is the amount designated for pledges. This year, both the Budget process and the Annual Pledge Drive were completed a little bit late in the year. Both needed to be complete so that the new (fiscal) year's budget could be submitted at the June Congregational meeting. However, when it was time for the meeting - all the pledge cards had not yet been turned in. So, the amount budgeted for "Pledges" had to be estimated (to cover the last 40-50 pledge cards not received). We of course

tried to make our best estimation... but, the figure we came up with, \$323,000 - was actually a bit overstated. According to our records, right up to this minute - we have now received \$315,000 in pledges for this fiscal year. (This includes the amounts received in our "additional pledge drive" - which, if I may add, was MOST GENEROUS of everyone... thank you, thank you, again, to all who responded to that call for extra support).

And as you probably recall - we have, this year, a DEFECIT in our budget. That means, we are already planning (hoping) to spend MORE money than we will bring in. The final, bottom dollar amount of this deficit is \$14,335. So if we add the shortfall in pledges coming in, we are looking at a shortfall of a whopping \$22,335.

I wish I didn't have to paint such a gloomy picture. But, this is serious stuff. One other fact to look at is, in our "additional pledge drive" - many members made an additional one-time payment (paid in June or July), rather than increasing their monthly payment (which would mean a smaller monthly income to the church - but an additional amount over the next 12 months, not just over the first month or two of the year). Which is ok - we'll take whatever we can, of course! But, this sort of skews the perception, because it gives us a really nice amount of cash flow during the first part of the (fiscal) year, when these "extra" payments came in. But, when you look farther down the line to next spring.. it's not so pretty. We may run into some pretty tough times. While we do have a nice reserve (savings) account that can help us get through hard times - we must remember that it took us YEARS to build up that extra savings, and we really really don't want to have to use it, or use much of it, if we can in any way avoid it!

So, at the moment, I don't have any answers. And I can't even BEGIN to address this recent situation that has come up in the last few days (as of this writing). If 2008 was the year of the Great Property Tax Problem, I guess 2009 will be the year of the Great Plumbing Problem. (UG). As The Beatles said, "We Can Work It Out"... but - we may have some challenging times ahead. I'll do my best to keep you posted. And keep on trying to come up with additional fundraising ideas... we sure could use a few!

Respectfully Submitted,
Denese Pender

Children's and Youth Religious Education (RE)

As summer draws to a close my attention is focused on the dawning 2009-10 congregational year. This year's theme in RE will be **Peace & Justice**. By our sixth UU Principle we covenant to affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all. We live in a world riddled with war and conflict, where differences big and small create great divides among us, and people turn to deafening shouts of anger instead of respectful resolution of conflict. As people of faith we strive for a better way. Our children need to learn the tools of peacemaking to navigate our world in a way that will promote respect for others and affirm self-worth.

Each of our three age-grouped classes will use a curriculum called *In Our Hands: A Peace and Social Justice Program*. Each curriculum provides a developmentally appropriate series of classes designed to help children define what peace means to them and how it can be expressed in their lives.

Children in grades kindergarten through 2 will explore their own knowledge and feelings about the issues of peace and justice, with the concept of *fairness* used to define justice. Peace & justice will be examined through the lens of relationships with family, friends in the home, school and in the congregation. They will also learn about the contributions of UUs in the cause of peace and justice.

Children in grades 3 to 5 will explore their beliefs about peace and justice and share them with peers. The focus will be on immediate experiences - how they perceive and treat themselves, how they interact with others, and with their environment. They will engage in a variety of activities including visioning, movement and

expression. They will learn about and participate in peaceful conflict resolution, and they will plan and carry out a peace & justice project.

Kids in grades 6-8 will explore their beliefs about what would constitute Utopia or ideal society. In doing so, they will reflect on injustice (prejudice, hunger, poverty, and war) that must be precluded in an ideal world. They will learn about UUs in history from Elizabeth Cady-Stanton to Linus Pauling who have made great contributions to the cause of peace and justice. The class will create social justice project together integrating what they have learned through the year.

Youth Group starts Sept. 3rd and continues on the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month from 4-6pm. Together youth will explore life's bigger questions, develop ties to UU peers, and have fun (pizza is also involved!). They will craft a worship service for the congregation in the spring.

I am looking forward to a great year with our wonderful children and youth!! Hope to see you in RE!

In faith,
Deborah

Beginning Sunday Sept. 20 we will resume our regular schedule: *Sundays 11:00 to 12:15*

Here is our monthly schedule:

- 1st Sunday: Children's Chapel - *all ages together*
- 2nd and 3rd Sundays: Curriculum - *grouped by age*
- 4th Sunday: Social Justice - *all ages together*
- 5th Sunday: Arts Sunday - *all ages together*

"Family Community Night"

Friday, September 11

We will start with a meal at 6:00p.m

At 7:00 the children and youth
will break off for fun and games.

And the parents have an informal program.

Call Deborah at 568-5381 to RSVP

Religious Education Visioning Retreat

Saturday, September 26 10:30am to 3pm

To take a deep look at our RE program:

- ◆ set priorities that serves spiritual needs,
- ◆ clarify our mission,
- ◆ make plans for an expanding program that provides for children in the very best way

Together in Exploration (TIE) Group Taster Session for Friends and Members

Sunday, September 13, 2009 right after the 11:00 Service

If you are new at UUCSR or a long time member
and have not been in a TIE group please join us.

You will have the opportunity to get a taste of what it is
like to be in a TIE group. See the article following to learn
more about this exciting Small Group Ministry experience.
have fun, meet new people and find out how to join a TIE Group.

All groups begin in October and end in May.

Questions? Call Carolyn McLeese-875-3542

Musings from the Caring Committee

Good News!

The Caring Committee has new team leaders! Sam Miller will take on the complex job of helping find transportation for UUs in need. We always need help with transportation to service, so let Sam know if you can assist. (sammiller@cds1.net). There are about 4 of our non-driving folks including one in Rohnert Park and 2 within a mile of 547 who need rides. Our goal is to get 3-4 drivers for each non-driver to share the assist.

Also, Gail Alford will manage the Caring Committee food preparation. She may give a call for a "cooking party" and would love help with that

(galford58@comcast.net). We like to be able to provide a meal when needed. Many thanks to both of you for your help.

UUs seem to find it hard to ask for an assist, but the purpose of the Caring Committee is to help, and we feel quite useless if you or your family don't ask for our services. We offer when we know of a need, but a call is quite appreciated. Remember we can provide respite care, medical supplies, a caring presence and the above noted food & rides.

Gretchen Vap, Chair - Caring Committee

UUCSR Bridge—The Card Game

We have Three Regular Bridge Games each Month: The first Thursday evening; the third Saturday and the fourth Tuesday. All games start at 7 pm. We have no afternoon games at present, but could start one if there is enough interest.

The UU Bridge groups are comprised of players of many skill levels who are friendly, smiling humble

players. The Saturday game especially welcomes those who haven't played in a while and those who would like to learn the game. If you are interested in learning more about the groups or in joining a group, please call Ed Pine at 707/528-8447 or e-mail me at EPine7@aol.com, referring to UU Bridge. You can also ask any player you might encounter.

Thursday Night Meditation

Thursday night meditation will commence at UUCSR after Labor Day, Sept. 10, and on successive Thursday nights from 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Patrick Gabriel will facilitate approximately 10 sessions based on the book and study materials by Eckhart Tolle called "The Power of Now". Patrick can be reached at 686-8655

or 539-3840.

Subsequent readings and formats will be determined by whomever is attending.

Together in Exploration (TIE Groups)

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY (SMG) PROGRAM SIGN-UP NOW FOR TIE GROUPS

Look for the TIE sign-up sheets at the Together in Exploration sign up table in the social hall before or after the Sunday services through September 20. All friends and members are welcome to join a TIE group. If you have any questions, come to the Together in Exploration table and we will be there to help you out.

The Small Group Ministry Program steering committee members have been hard at work this summer making plans for our 5th year of the Together in Exploration (TIE) groups being offered at UUCSR beginning in October.

For those who are new at UUCSR, the TIE groups are a good way to get to know members and friends in a small group of 6 to 12 members. The TIE groups meet twice a month for 2 hours each time.

Each TIE group is led by trained facilitators. The bi-monthly gatherings includes opening words, lighting of the chalice, a check-in, a topic for discussion, a check-

out and closing words. A simple format that allows for developing close relationships from October through May. These new friends will become part of your church family forever!

The following quotes from TIE participant's evaluations from May will give you an idea of what you might expect when you join a TIE group this fall:

"We started out as almost strangers and by the end had developed a real sense of trust and intimacy."—"It was wonderful to get to know people on a deeper level than is possible at Sunday services."—"I enjoyed getting to know these interesting people. I very much enjoyed knowing the oldest members of the group, whose contributions to the group were very valuable."

Do you have any questions? Leave a message at the church office (707)568-5381 and someone will call you back.

Submitted by Carolyn McLeese
SGM/TIE Groups steering committee member

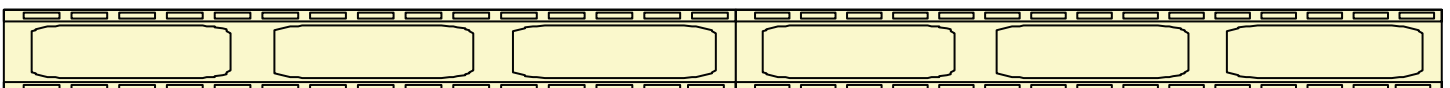
The Photographers Are Coming!!

LifeTouch photographers will be here in October to take pictures of all members and pledging friends for a new UUCSR photo directory. Family members who are not UUCSR members can also be included in a group photo. Please mark your calendar now for the dates and times listed below. Although each photo session only takes about 10 minutes, you should allow at least 30 minutes for viewing following the session and any possible

wait time either before or after the session. All photo sessions will be scheduled online, so watch for details on the Focus List later this month or in the October newsletter. If you are unable to use the online scheduler, please contact me by E-mail (preferred) or by phone, and I can schedule an appointment for you. The earlier you can schedule, the greater the chance that you will get your first choice of a time.

- Tuesday, October 20, 12 Noon to 8 PM**
- Wednesday, October 21, 12 Noon to 8 PM**
- Thursday, October 22, 12 Noon to 8 PM**
- Friday, October 23, 12 Noon to 8 PM**
- Saturday, October 23, 10 AM to 5 PM**

Jenny Harriman
Photo Directory Coordinator
pjharrim@sonic.net or (707) 206-0488



Women Together

Start off the church year with a Pot-luck lunch on Saturday, September 26th from 12 to 2 at UUCSR. We'll reconnect with old friends and make new ones. New(er) members and friends are particularly invited to join us as we enjoy each other's company, share our usual superb food, and have some fun activities. Please bring a lunch dish to share, and any friends whom you'd like to introduce to our congregation in a relaxed, informal way. (My first contact with UUFSC, as it then was,

came at a pot-luck lunch and my life hasn't been the same since!)

Also, mark your calendars for our annual One-Day Retreat on Saturday, October 24th. We particularly hope that those who didn't or couldn't attend our weekend Retreat in May will be able to come! Details in the October Newsletter.

Linda Harlow



Advocates for Social Justice

Share the Basket

"Share the Basket" - On Sunday, September 6th, one half of the money in the basket, not including pledges, will go to the Drug Abuse Alternative Center. They are a local community based organization providing alcohol and other drug treatment services to those in need, and are one of the last agencies providing such services in the light of recent county budget cuts. When the basket comes your way, please help.

Also on **Sunday, September 6th**, **Ben Boyce of the Living Wage Coalition** will speak with us after the 10 am service. This is Labor Day weekend, a fitting time to learn about the growing movement in Sonoma County to

establish a 'living wage'. Ben will tell us about the Coalition's successes and how we can help to guarantee that everyone who works in our community, bringing us the quality of life we all so much appreciate, can afford to live here. We will meet in the Board Room at 11:30 am.

Save the date - Sunday October 4th, Norman Solomon, whom many of us heard in August speak about the critical need to abolish nuclear weapons, will address that issue and the challenge of creating peace. This will be after the 11 am service. Details in the October Newsletter.

Linda Harlow

Saturday Breakfast—Did You Know?

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|---|--|--|
| 1) That our Saturday Breakfast for our guests (homeless) Program is one of the most popular gifts UUCSR gives to the community? | 4) That it can be tiring, but it's that nice tired of a job well done. | (orientation provided). |
| 2) That most of the power of this program is carried by those who have been on the planet 3/4 of a century or more? | 5) That we need more help: regulars who can come once a month, substitutes who can help when a regular is traveling. | 7) And we need more "Openers". The folks who open are giving so much, and I want them to have back-up. Openers can supervise, and participate as much or as little as they wish. |
| 3) That it is REALLY FUN! | 6) And we need shoppers, this can be done on Thurs. or Fridays and whenever you can schedule same | Call me! Chair - Gretchen Vap 568-3290 or e-mail gvap@att.net |

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2009

Newsletter@uusantarosa.org

E-mail submissions
Greatly Appreciated!

Circle Dinner Groups—Fall 2009

Welcome to our Fall Circle Dinner Groups! If your name is at the **top** of a dinner group, please contact the others in your "circle" to arrange for your first gathering. You get to decide on the time and place with your group. Also you get to decide who brings what (ie: appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert, beverages/bread)! Please try to contact everyone within a couple of weeks so no one feels forgotten!!

As part of your after dessert conversation, don't forget to decide where and when you all will meet for the next month's gathering. If, for some reason, you are not contacted by the folks at the top of the "circle" group or another problem arises, please contact

- ***Paula Hammett and Bruce Hope** 792-0538
- *Judy and Bruce Taylor 794-9743
- *Shirley and Jim Costy 795-4877
- *Linda Reck 769-1080
- *Carol Weisker 776-4856
- ***Nathan and Susan Miron** 833-4683
- *Bill VonSeggern and Anitra Kitts 570-2245
- *Rick and Marilyn Beckerbauer 542-1779
- *Gail Alford 843-4466
- *Sandy Cook 588-9235
- ***Carolyn McLeese and Charles Rettke** 875-3542
- *Ann Chambers 823-6902
- *Claire Beery 823-4351

Cathie Wiese at 829-3634 or cathie@sonic.net or Shirley Williams at 537-9790 as we have volunteered to be the Grand Masters and Concierges of this fine organization! We can fix it!

If you cannot make a dinner, have to cancel, or (as the host) need to fill in an empty seat or two, please consider calling someone from the "Substitute List". They will be glad to hear from you.

Shirley and Cathie would like to recognize with gratitude, Joan Thatcher, who built the foundation for these Circle Dinners way back in our Todd and Stoney Point days! Thank you, Joan, for starting a wonderful tradition that we will carry on with pleasure.

- *Pam Tennant 823-1845
- *Phyllis and Bob Clement 823-0925
- ***Gretchen and Gene Vap** 578-3290
- *Hilevi Wyman 527-9048
- *Bruce Maxwell 568-3981
- *Donna Stephens 545-7299
- *Elizabeth Olson 573-0543
- *Tomas Phillips 235-2200
- ***Judy Schwalben** 523-4470
- *Carol Weisker 776-4856
- *Shirley Williams 537-9790
- *Calvin and Susan Simons 527-7191
- *Larissa and Omar Dahroug 545-1961

Fall 2009 Circle Dinner Substitute List

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Mary Ann and Leonard Holt 527-6797 | Kathy McGuire Norman 523-2787 |
| Betty and Sam Miller 539-3654 | Brian and Kitty Wells 433-1196 |
| Mary and Wells Wagner 523-1366 | Barbara and Jules Glaser 538-4870 |
| Jewell and Don Ford 874-3616 | Antonia and Dick Rodriguez 836-0757 |
| Chris Bell and Rita Butterfield 528-2714 | Mike and Joan Reid 431-8757 |
| Marley Fein 575-8946 | Karen Lillard 575-1255 |
| Barry and Marian Quirk 525-1943 | Phil and Jenny Harriman 206-0488 |
| Louise and Ollie Ostlund 578-8619 | Frances and Roger Corman 528-3321 |

UUCSR Writers

The next UUCSR Writers meeting date is Monday, September 14, 2009, from 4 - 6 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 547 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa.

Whatever your creative endeavor: fiction, non fiction, memoirs, letters, history, biography, the Great American novel, poetry, essays, dissertation, thesis, song lyrics, report, term paper, cook book, web pages, blogging, twittering, etc., our focus is to provide an atmosphere where serious writers improve and hone their writing skills.

The UUCSR Writers is open to the novice, the more experienced, and the published author. Membership at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Santa Rosa

(UUCSR) is not required. We meet once a month at UUCSR in Santa Rosa, CA on the First Monday of the month, except September, from 4:00-6:00pm.

UUCSR Online Writers

Can't attend monthly meetings? Live in another City, State or Country? Join our "Online Writers" Blog. You can learn more about our group, and current "Works-in-Progress", at the UUCSR Writers Blog.

Information

UUCSR Writers, Georgette G. deBlois, GGdeB@aol.com, <http://uucsrwriters.blogspot.com>

Update from the New Facilities Team

In order to better distinguish itself from the Operations Council, the Operations Team has decided to rename itself The Facilities Team. This group will continue to meet monthly, while the Operations Council will meet quarterly. The Facilities Team is one committee within the Operations Council. The other committees can be found listed in "UUCSR Councils / Committees / Interest Groups Contacts" listed at the beginning of the latest issue of the UUCSR Directory of Members and Pledging Friends, June, 2009. If you are a member or pledging friend and do not have this most recent directory you can obtain a copy of it from the office on weekdays, or the person staffing the Visitors' / Members' table on Sunday mornings.

In order to save on cost, labor and trees, the Facilities Team is proposing issuing a complete, updated version of the Directory of Members and Pledging Friends in October of each year. A supplement will be

issued quarterly listing new members and pledging friends and changes in existing directory information.

The congregation is in the process of leasing a new copier machine. This will replace the old copier and risograph machines. It will also have new capabilities—collating, stapling and hole punching. We will be asking those using the machine for personal business to contribute an amount still to be determined into a box near the machine (this is likely to be less than you'd have to pay at a commercial establishment). The new machine will also have color copying ability, but that will likely have to be controlled so that it is not available for personal use.

The members of the Facilities Team are: Janis Brewster, Fred Dodge, Phil Harriman, John Jaffray, Barbara Leahy, David Templeton, and Bud Willis.

Contributed by Phil Harriman

Women Together Ice Cream Social

On Sunday, September 20, I'm hosting an ice-cream social as a fundraiser for the Women Together retreat scholarship fund. Many women already paid and are planning to come, but there is room for more. So, please join us at the Yulupa Cohousing common house at 1:30 for a little back-to-school ice cream.

Donations of \$10 per person will be gladly accepted to help make sure any woman who wants to can attend the annual retreat.

Submitted by
Rita Butterfield



Church Administrator Vacation

This year I am celebrating my 22nd wedding anniversary and taking vacation from September 20th through October 2nd. I will be back in the office on Monday, October 5th.

While I am away, Amy Young and the office volunteers will staff the front office and Phil Harriman has kindly agreed to put together the October newsletter. More details to follow.

Janis Brewster

Focusing Workshops

Last July I attended a workshop offered by Bruce Gibbs on Focusing. I had read the book by Gendlin years ago and found it provided me with some good tools for managing my interior life, so I was very interested in attending the workshop to start with. I was not let down; Mr. Gibbs demonstrated how the Focusing technique can be used in a group setting in a skillful way that allowed those of us in the group to go deep into an

issue without even having to reveal any specifics about it. I was really impressed. I recommend his class highly. There are fliers in the lobby or you can contact Bruce directly by email or phone. He is currently forming a new group within our congregation.

For more information call Bruce Gibbs @ (707) 827-3176 or email: bbentonb@gmail.com

Submitted by Peter Wilson



FALL CELEBRATION

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October 4, 2009

3:00pm—6:00pm

Fall Celebration honoring Chris Bell's three years with UUCSR

At the Hageman-Bond residence in Oakmont

Roger Corman on piano—special guest on bass.

Beverages, wine, and hors d'oeuvres

Space is limited so make your reservations early

Call Laura Jean Hageman at 539-3694 or Sally File at 539-3619.

Donations go toward PCD/UUA Dues

On the Fine Art of Celebrating our Differences

As you enter building at 547 Mendocino Ave., you will notice a series of framed pictures by Santa Rosa artist Edward Ryden. Though striking and lovely, at first glance many of them appear to be quite simple: people, birds, and landscapes sketched in bold, economic lines, some black-and-white, some colored in with soft primary colors. What is immediately clear is that there is something "different" about these paintings. What few realize is that Mr. Ryden's "paintings" are actually wood-cut prints. Each art-piece now hanging on the walls of our foyer and hallway represents hours of work that begins with a drawing carved onto a block of wood, brushed with up to two dozen different colors of ink, and pressed onto paper. The remarkable amount of detail that Mr. Ryden coaxes from a hunk of wood is truly a beautiful thing, but is not fully appreciated until we take a moment to think about all of the effort and skill and complexity that went into the creation of something that, in the end, looks very, very simple.

There is a metaphor here, of sorts, for the way we all interact with other people in the world. On the surface, everyone seems to be one thing, or perhaps one type of thing—a gender, a race, an ethnicity, a political affiliation, a religion, an age-group, an attitude, a "look"—but with a bit of effort on our part, each person we come in contact with often will reveal details and truths that make them so much more than we originally assumed.

This is one of the beauties of art, be it visual, musical, theatrical or otherwise: giving yourself over to the appreciation of a painting, a song, a poem or a play, is a kind of training toward opening up to the appreciation of other people, "different" people. It's part of the reason why we exhibit such a wide range of artists and artistic styles on our walls, from painting to sketching to photography (which reminds me to say 'thank you!' to Carina Zona, whose spectacular photos of the No on 8 protest in the state Capital have been gracing the foyer for the last seven weeks). If you happen to think that a particular exhibit is not to your taste for one reason or another, try letting yourself linger with the exhibit a little longer, allowing yourself to wonder about the inner life and process of the artist, much as you might wonder about the inner life and thought process of a visitor from another country, faith, or race.

This belief in art as a training-ground for social and cultural awareness is part of our motivation for bringing the beautiful one-woman play '9 Parts of Desire' to the Glaser Center for several performances this month, beginning, by design, on the evening of September 11. Sponsored by the Sonoma County Peace & Justice Center, and performed by local actress Denise Elia, '9 Parts of Desire' is a solo play by Iraqi-American Heather Raffo, telling the story of nine different Iraqi women, before and after the fall of Saddam. It is a beautiful, truthful, poetic piece of work, and we should be proud that Elia has selected us as the home of this show. As she told me last month, "I see this play as a prayer, and I love the idea of performing in a church, a sacred place where people, hopefully, come to open their hearts to love." I hope many of you will take the opportunity to see '9 Parts' during one of its September performances, and let it be a sacred moment, an exercise in celebrating the differences that bind us together as humans.

Take a moment to look at the list of upcoming Arts & Culture events. Each one is a new opportunity to share our common humanity, and yes, by design, some of them are even a little "different."

Have a great September.

David Templeton
Glaser Center Manager and Artistic Director.

Riot Theater presents
9 Parts of Desire
By Heather Raffo
Directed by Maria Magdalena Giordano
Co-directed and performed
by Denise Elia



9 Parts of Desire is the beautifully crafted one-woman play written by Iraqi-American actor and playwright, Heather Raffo. Based on her compassionate encounters with real Iraqi women, Raffo explains: "I intended to write a piece about the Iraqi psyche, something that would inform and enlighten the images we see on T.V. However, the play is equally about the American psyche. It is a dialogue between east and west." The play delivers a cross-section of nine Iraqi women including a mullaya (chanting mourner), a painter, a Bedouin model, a Communist, a doctor, a teenager, a bombing survivor, an old woman, and an Iraqi-American living in New York. Denise Elia, local actor and 2008 nominee of the Bay Area Theatre Critic's Circle Award, portrays all nine characters, and co-directs with fellow actor and director, Maria Magdalena Giordano. Riot Theater's fresh new vision brings a production that is both a celebration of life, and a timely mediation on the ancient, the modern, and the feminine, in a country overshadowed by war.

Sponsored by the Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County.

Show Dates:
September 11, 12, 13*, 17,
18, 24, 25, and 26

All performances at 8:00 p.m., except for
September 13, beginning at 2:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 23, 7:00 p.m.
**Sonoma County
Chamber Singers**
Annual Fall Concert

NOVEMBER 12, 7:30 p.m.
**Bill Horvitz
Large Ensemble**
A moving orchestral tribute, in
words and music

DECEMBER 4, 7:30 p.m.
**New Horizons Band
of Sonoma County**
50 sassy senior citizens joined
together in a massive holiday explosion
of large band music and rousing tunes

DECEMBER 5, 7:30 p.m.
**Twisted Christmas
Live #7**
An evening of off-the-wall Holiday tales
read aloud by the Bay Area's Funniest
people, with musical and
seasonal weirdness.
Hosted by David Templeton

TBA, 7:00 p.m.
**Sonoma County
Chamber Singers**
Annual Holiday Concert
Gorgeous choral music

DECEMBER 11, 7:30 p.m.
**Angry Black
White Boy**
The award-winning SF theater
ensemble Campasanto comes to
Santa Rosa for the first time, presenting
their groundbreaking hip-hop play 'Angry
Black White Boy,' a careening fable of
high-minded absurdity... a smart, merciless
story of cultural appropriation, racial justice
and individual authenticity.

CIRCLE DINNER GROUPS FOR FALL 2009

Welcome to our Fall Circle Dinner Groups! If your name is at the top of a dinner group, please contact the others in your "circle" to arrange for your first gathering. You get to decide on the time and place with your group. Also you get to decide who brings what (ie: appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert, beverages/bread)! Please try to contact everyone within a couple of weeks so no one feels forgotten!!

As part of your after dessert conversation, don't forget to decide where and when you all will meet for the next month's gathering.

If, for some reason, you are not contacted by the folks at the top of the "circle" group or another problem arises, please contact Cathie Wiese at 829-3634 or cathie@sonic.net or Shirley Williams at 537-9790 as we have volunteered to be the Grand Masters and Concierges of this fine organization! We can fix it!

If you cannot make a dinner, have to cancel, or (as the host) need to fill in an empty seat or two, please consider calling someone from the "Substitute List". They will be glad to hear from you.

Shirley and Cathie would like to recognize with gratitude, Joan Thatcher, who built the foundation for these Circle Dinners way back in our Todd and Stoney Point days! Thank you, Joan, for starting a wonderful tradition that we will carry on with pleasure.

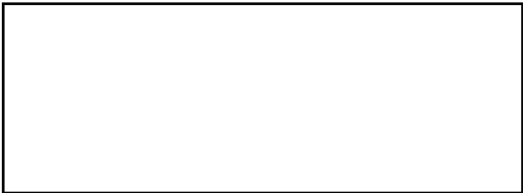
*Paula Hammett and Bruce Hope	792-0538
*Judy and Bruce Taylor	794-9743
*Shirley and Jim Costy	795-4877
*Linda Reck	769-1080
*Carol Weisker	776-4856
*Nathan and Susan Miron	833-4683
*Bill VonSeggern and Anitra Kitts	570-2245
*Rick and Marilyn Beckerbauer	542-1779
*Gail Alford	843-4466
*Sandy Cook	588-9235
*Carolyn McLeese and Charles Rettke	875-3542
*Ann Chambers	823-6902
*Claire Beery	823-4351
*Pam Tennant	823-1845
*Phyllis and Bob Clement	823-0925
*Gretchen and Gene Vap	578-3290
*Hilevi Wyman	527-9048
*Bruce Maxwell	568-3981
*Donna Stephens	545-7299
*Elizabeth Olson	573-0543
*Tomas Phillips	235-2200
*Judy Schwalben	523-4470
*Carol Weisker	776-4856
*Shirley Williams	537-9790
*Calvin and Susan Simons	527-7191
*Larissa and Omar Dahroug	545-1961

*Debbie and David Hope	337-3046
*John and Linda Farison	539-3650
*Diana and David Bower	785-9725
*Elsa Torres and Orlando Raola	776-2746
*Nancy and Bryan Hargis	571-1987
*Mary and Jim Wolfe	544-3134
*Millie Tripp	523-2351
*Nancy Fitzpatrick	539-7753
*Jill Hager	566-8847
*Elizabeth and Robin Marrs	528-6939
*Betty and Sid Gordon	545-0560
*Bonnie Daines and Bob Boone	537-7247
*Art Roseblum and Maureen Rumford	539-5104
*Tom Bond and Laura Jean Hageman	539-3694
*Phyllis Fitzgerald	537-8046
*Judy Withee and Steve Sweeney	538-3404
*Janet and Loch Grant	538-3937
*Dorthea Proctor	546-291
*Cassandra Lista	584-4293
*Linda Harlow	526-3528
*Marge Wright	887-7752
*Judy Meyer	542-6952
*Dorris Lee	836-1576
*Cathie Wiese and Robert Lunceford	829-3634
*Victoria Dreifuss	874-2728
*Heather Lawton	569-9655
*Gretchen Paradis	792-2156
*Erin Pipes	831-601-5842
*Laurel Visher	730-574-9235

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September 2009

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Newsletter by E-mail is available. To sign up, send an e-mail to Administrator@uusantarosa.org with your name and e-mail address

Editor: Janis Brewster

Newsletter deadline follows the 3rd Sunday. All electronic deadlines are noon Monday.

Please place any hard copy submissions in the Newsletter mail slot in the office by noon Sunday.

Staff

Minister Rev. Chris Bell, Ext. 108, Minister@uusantarosa.org
Director, Religious Education: Deborah Mason, Ext. 101 DLRE@uusantarosa.org
Administrator: Janis Brewster, Ext. 106, Administrator@uusantarosa.org
Music Director: Ben Taylor, Ext. 112, musicdirector@uusantarosa.org
Glaser Center Director: David Templeton, x103, glasermanager@uusantarosa.org
Sexton: Tony Crevelli

Sunday Religious

Education Staff
Krissy McWhorter
Kim Bringhurst