

# *The* Communicator

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## March for Women's Lives

by Kierstin Homblette  
UUWF Clara Barton Intern

Imagine, if you can, a million people. Imagine the national mall filled to bursting with people, signs and banners. Imagine the sound of a million people chanting and cheering as they pass the White House. Imagine women, men, and transgender folks, kids, young people, moms and dads, radical grannies, 2nd and 3rd wave feminists, students, health workers, and anarchists. Imagine ten of thousands of religious people marching - Catholics, Methodists, Quakers, Episcopalians, Reform Jews, Presbyterians, and seminarians of many faiths. Imagine thousands of Unitarian Universalists, a sea of blue t-shirts and GA banners, representing more than 200 congregations from as far away as California and Washington, marching as liberal religious people and witnessing their UU values to the world. This was the March for Women's Lives, April 25th in Washington, DC.

Many of you were there. You know the feeling I

am talking about - the power, the energy, the excitement, the hope. You remember the speeches, the rallying cries, the sense of urgency. You felt the camaraderie that only marches create, the sense of being in it all together. You smelled the dust kicked up by millions of feet marching, heard the chorus of voices raised as one, saw the passion and determination and happiness on the faces of your fellow marchers. You were there as an activist, as a Unitarian Universalist, as a person of faith.

Many of you marched vicariously through others. You helped raise money for scholarships, held a service in your congregation in solidarity with the marchers, and watched the coverage on TV. You told the first-time marchers of your life experiences as an activist, as a woman, as a feminist. You may remember past marches and you may wonder why they are still necessary.

This was the big one. An estimated 1,150,000 people descended on the



Kierstin Homblette and her mother, Kathy Homblette

National Mall to give an urgent wake-up call to government leaders and to the nation - to say that women's lives are at risk and lawmakers need to stop intruding on a woman's right to access critical reproductive health services and to make deeply personal decisions about her health and life.

Unitarian Universalists came out in droves to witness their belief in the rights and choices of women. The UUWF, which for so long has been a voice of strength and power for women in the UU movement, was joined in their organizing efforts by the UUA's Washington Office for Advocacy and by All Souls Church, Unitarian, in DC. For many UUs, the

march was the culmination of many weeks of planning, many hours of travel and a weekend of events leading up to Sunday. The festivities started on Saturday afternoon at All Souls Church, with a chili dinner and time to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. The dinner was followed by an Ingathering Program, offering us a chance to examine our UU values and history as they relate to women's rights, to center ourselves after tiring travels and to ground ourselves in our reasons for marching. It was an amazing feeling to be in the sanctuary with 750 other UUs from around the country!

The next morning, All Souls was again the host

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## March, cont. from p. 1

for more than 1,300 UUs who gathered for Sunday worship. The sanctuary was filled to bursting, with overflow seating and video broadcast in the nearby fellowship hall. The service was lead by All Souls ministers Revs. Rob Hardies and Shana Goodwin, and the sermon, entitled "For All That is Our Life," was delivered by Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker, president of Starr King School for the Ministry and author of *Proverbs of Ashes*. The service provided a powerful stepping-off point for UU marchers, a place of preparation and thoughtfulness, and an acknowledgement of the complex issues of reproductive choice. After the benediction, we marched right out of the church and down the middle of the street, to the fading sounds of the All Souls Choir. Led by a drummer and the UUA banner, which proclaimed "Affirming the Dignity and Equality of Women," we made our way slowly down to the mall, some taking the metro, some on foot, all buzzing with anticipation.

The sight that greeted us is impossible to describe. Many had thought this would be a march of aging feminists, an issue out of fashion and out of

the minds of young people. Many times I have heard the lament, even from those in the pro-choice movement, that young women don't care, that we take our rights for granted, that we are letting choice slip through the cracks. This couldn't be farther from the reality present at the march. Young women and men were present in huge numbers, many with irreverent and clever signs declaring their rights, their power, and their opposition to a certain shrub-like President.

This march may have shared a name with the NOW March for Women's Lives of 1992, but its focus and energy were entirely new. Young women are slowly changing and broadening the face of the pro-choice movement to include many more issues and people than ever before. This march was for abortion rights, but it was also for universal health care, access to birth control, family planning funds, comprehensive sex education, reproductive freedom, the right to choose a health baby, women's economic justice. This march was for our sisters around the world and for a White House and Congress that respects and trusts women.

The young women working to redefine the movement stand strongly on the work of the women's movement of the 60s and 70s. We are only able to expand what choice means because *our* choices have

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**"We are only able to expand what choice means because *our* choices have been ensured by the generations before us."**

— Kierstin Homblette

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been ensured by the generations before us. We are working to do the same for our daughters, our granddaughters and beyond, so that they, too, can shape the face of the struggle, becoming ever more inclusive, ever stronger, and ever more effective in asserting their rights as women and as people.

So the questions remain: What did we accomplish? Where do we go from here? Will things really change? The answers are up to all of us. What we do with the energy and inspiration from this experience will determine the future of the movement and of our country.

I have two things to offer: First, join the newly forming UU Women's

Issues Network. Send me your name and contact information and we can work together to do effective advocacy and mass mobilization around women's issues in the future.

Second, tell people about the march. Tell everyone about the energy, the direction of the movement and how it changed you. Use this energy and direction to vote in November and to encourage others to do the same. As signs from the march said, "Vote as if your life depended on it." It does.

Although challenging at times, the planning for this march has been the best thing I have done as the UUWF Clara Barton Intern. I have had the opportunity to meet some of you and communicate with many, many more. The connections I have made while working on this project will serve this position well into the future. To see my work, and the work of many others, come to fruition in such a beautiful and powerful way was truly amazing. And marching side-by-side with so many amazing UU women, including my mother, was unforgettable. Thank you all for the opportunity and support.

# I Was There: The Historic March for Women's Lives



by Laurie James  
Community Church,  
New York City

You may not have been able to spot me in the front page picture in the New York Times, but I was there – one of 2,000 UUs from all over the USA, who made a notable presence marching with over a million other abortion rights advocates on the Mall in the nation's capital on April 25. (My taxi driver told me the movement was split and he predicted only a few hundred would show up.)

We held high our purple signs blazoned in white with the words, "Pro-Faith, Pro-Family, Pro-Choice," with UUA President Bill Sinkford leading in the same turquoise T-shirt so many of us wore. Following a UUA banner which read "Living the Dignity and Equality of Women," our group joined the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice in what turned out

to be one of the largest protest demonstrations ever assembled in Washington, DC. It was estimated at 1.15 million and the organizers claimed we made history (though some will contest this number because crowd counts always seem to be debatable).

We started out in fine form, all UUs together but, as we continued, wave after wave of small groups merged and became one enormous wave of protest. In this flowing sea of a crowd I searched for but never could find my friends who had traveled with a NOW bus tour.

It did not rain; it was overcast and cool. And it was peaceful. Only a few arrests were made, apparently pro-lifers demonstrating without a permit, even though they had made threats and were behind barrier gates shouting into bull horns, praying, holding banners, icons and rosa-

ries and looking sad. The first hostile opponents we came upon were the most chilling. A huge sign was standing upright: "Praise Jesus, Jim Kopp Popped and Stopped A Baby Butching 'Dog.'" A second man held up "God Hates You Sodomites Abortionists, Drunkards. Just the Way You Are." Still another sign read "Paul Hill – Jim Corp – Heroes."

Some women were dressed in black and held signs reading "I Regret My Abortion." Children grasped at messages such as "Thanks, Mom, For Not Killing Us." Some men stood with "I Regret Lost Fatherhood." Other signs read "Abortion is Murder," "Women Deserve Better Than Abortion," "Women Need Love, Not Abortion," and "Abortion Doubles Breast Cancer 50-800%." Some black-robed priests looked on in groups of three or four.

All along the way police with riot gear stood be-

tween them and us, and sometimes we pro-choice participants chose to engage in conversation, some vented anger and some just stood in front of the barriers, staunchly blocking blow-ups of bloody aborted fetuses.

We marchers – multi-generational women, men, children in carriages, babies in arms – generally just passed by these right-to-lifers at our 2-mile-an-hour clip down Constitution Ave, Pennsylvania Ave., past the White House, answering by raising our signs all the higher:

- "My Body My Choice"
- "Freedom Means Choice"
- "I Am A Mother of Choice"
- "Every Child A Wanted One"
- "Sex Education Saves Lives"
- "Women Are Not State Incubators"
- "Women's Health, Not Corporate Wealth"
- "The Choice To Be A Mother Is Not Up To Big Brother"

Energetic young activists drowned out the catcalls by loudly chanting,

- "Women Use Your Voice, Our Bodies, Our Choice!"
- "Pro-Life, That's a Lie; You Don't Care if Women Die!"
- "Sixteen Hours On A Bus, Will Protect My Uterus!"

## *I Was There*, cont. from p. 3

In fact, young people were seen everywhere. Bill Sinkford had told us that the Washington Post had forecast that this March would be made up only of people of his generation. But youthful energies certainly were the root and excitement. They carried the most outrageous signs:

- “The only Bush I Respect Is My Own”
- “Keep Bush Out Of My Bush”
- “Bush, You’re Fired!”
- “If You Cut Off My Reproductive Rights, Can I Cut Off Yours?”
- “If You Get Viagra, I Deserve Birth Control”
- “Don’t Hate Me Because My Uterus Is Beautiful”
- “My Oval Office Is Not Happy”
- “Keep Your Rosaries Off My Ovaries.”
- “Mr. Bush: Had Your Mother Chosen Abortion More Than 800 American Soldiers and Over 10,000 Iraqi Civilians Would Be Alive Today”

Of course, we all cheered when we saw signs such as, “Another Catholic For Choice”. One man made a statement by standing atop a pedestal with his stomach stuffed with newspapers: “If Men Could Get Pregnant Abortion Would Be A Sacrament.”

I wound up the March about 3:30 p.m., so in-

volved that I unfortunately missed most of the rally, which had been in progress since about 2 o'clock on a large platform on the Mall. There were lights and TV cameras and large screens that transformed speakers into giants so that all could see them from a distance. On hand were celebrities who each had about two minutes to speak: Gloria Steinem, Kathleen Turner, Cybill Shepherd, Whoopi Goldberg, Ani DiFranco, Moby, Patricia Ireland, Madeleine Albright, Barbara Boxer, Ted Turner, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton and many others.

The night before the March, UUs were invited to All Souls Church, where members generously hosted a chili/cookie dinner and a rally with former US Senator and Ambassador to New Zealand Carol Moseley Braun. She spoke about how the women’s rights and civil rights movements were one and the same. She explained how her life started as “a colored girl from the South side of Chicago” who was enabled to secure enough grants to attend college and work her way into the Senate. She was eventually inspired by her niece to run for President and paralleled America’s progress on both revolutionary fronts over the

past fifty years. Martin Luther King, she said, always called the Declaration of Independence a Declaration of Intent. That is, a document of ideals that our country had yet to work for and attain. America will never be what it can be, she said, until the interests of the whole community are taken into account.

“The past stands in front of you, the future stands behind you, and the future is the legacy of our actions. Our actions will create a better future.”

It takes a lot of people to make change, she said, but it starts with individual effort. Every voice makes a difference. Our country’s founders promised the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and it is up to us to transform the vision into reality for the next generation.

Other inspiring speakers were UUA President Rev. William Sinkford, UUA Moderator Gini Courter, Rev. Roberta Finkelstein, Rev. Deborah Mero, Rev. Meg Riley, Rev. Robert Hardies, (Sr. Minister of All Souls Church, Washington DC), Denny Davidoff and others. Kierstin Homblette, the UUWF Clara Barton Intern who had organized the March for UUs, was introduced as well as many others. A call was made for UU

women and men to send in their stories regarding pregnancy and abortion for documentation and preservation in a book with a view to inspire the next generation of activists. Mentioned as an example was Blanche Ames who, in the 1910s and 20s, taught women how to prevent pregnancy and helped form the Birth Control League of Massachusetts. Also mentioned were several ministers, including Rev. Dick Gilbert, Rev. Farley Wheelwright and Rev. John Nicols – all part of the 60s Clergy Consultation Service, providing women with referrals to safe clinics before abortion was legalized. We heard about Amy Hetrick, who spearheads a new movement, Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom, to involve youth and young adults in a campaign to maintain legal reproductive choice options.

Stories should be sent to [UUChoice@comcast.net](mailto:UUChoice@comcast.net) or Choice Project, c/o Deb Weiner, UUA, 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108. For more information on the March, visit [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org).

*Laurie James is the author of "Men, Women and Margaret Fuller" and has toured her original solo drama on Margaret Fuller at GA and throughout the world. She serves on the Board of UUWA, Metro District.*

## Images from the March



*Clockwise from top left:*

- Natalie Gulbrandsen & Justice Waidner
- Mary Ella Holst, Rev. Bill Sinkford and others from All Souls in New York City
- Barbara Paton Gardner at All Souls Church
- Carrying the UU banner
- Former UUA Moderator & UUWF board member Denny Davidoff and Clara Barton Intern Kierstin Homblette
- More UU high-energy marchers
- Rhoda Whitney, Arlene Johnson and Kierstin Homblette

# Linda's Window

This is my final column for *The Communicator*, as I am finishing up my tenure on the UUWF board, first as Treasurer for three years and as President for the last three years. I want to take this opportunity to catch up with the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation ... a chance to sum up the work of UUWF for the last time.

The biggest news of the year is the exploration into what restructuring would look like for the UUWF. The Board formed a task force in

October 2002 consisting of current and past board members. The task force was given the mission to come back to the board with a vision of a new UUWF ... what would it look like and what would be its mission?

The task force took its mission very seriously. They wrote a grant proposal, submitted it to the UU Funding Panel, and received \$15,000 to survey UUWF members and other concerned UU women to ask them what they liked about the

current UUWF and what its future would look like to them. UU's not being shy, there were lots of answers and lots of ideas. The task force then came back to the board in January 2004 with a restructured and re-visioned UUWF.

It is an exciting plan and UUWF is acting on it. The administrative board will downsize to a five-member group and a Grants Panel will be formed with an additional five members. UUWF will start to make grants from the interest of the endowment instead of funding an administrative structure. We want to make the money work for women and all UU women will have the opportunity to participate.

A special meeting of the UUWF has been called for Saturday of General Assembly, a no charge meeting off the grid so as many women may attend as possible. The current board and the task force will present the plan and a vote will be taken. I hope that, by early evening on Saturday, the new UUWF will begin some of the most challenging work the organization has ever dreamed to accomplish.

This was also the first full year of funding an intern

in the Washington Office of the UUA. We are much closer to our fundraising goal and many women's groups have taken the challenge to support this effort. An artistic sculpture is in the beginning of its construction and when it is completed, it will reside in the Washington Office with the names of the donors who have given \$1000 or more permanently engraved on the piece.

We were major supporters, financially, spiritually and physically, of the March for Women's Lives in Washington in support of reproductive freedom and justice for all women. UUWF will sponsor five exciting programs at the General Assembly in Long Beach.

These have been a challenging six years in the life of the UUWF, and the board committed itself to making the tough decisions to make needed changes. I believe UUWF is an outstanding example of how an organization can take a hard look at itself and then move forward. UUWF has 40 years of exciting history behind it and unlimited possibilities for its future.

In faith,  
*Linda*

## Make Your Vote Count at the Special Meeting

By now you have received your official call to the Special Membership Meeting called by the Administrative Board of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation for June 26th at 1:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Long Beach, CA. This is another reminder of this historic event.

The current Board has called this meeting with the specific purpose of revising the Bylaws and electing a new Board of Trustees. To make the meeting accessible to as many members as possible, there is no fee for attending. While no advance registration is required, please help us prepare to welcome you and anticipate our space needs by contacting the UUWF office at 617-948-4962 or [espencer@uua.org](mailto:espencer@uua.org) as soon as you know your plans.

If you cannot attend, the official call and notice of meeting contained your proxy form. **Please, if you are not going to be at the meeting in Long Beach, return your proxy. Make your vote count!** Just mail the completed proxy form to the UUWF, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 07102. By doing so, you will allow the proxy (either Linda McAffrey or Patsy Sherrill Madden) to vote for you. This is an important issue, let's act on it together.

# Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation GA 2004

## *"Empowering the Future"*

### **Our Booth**

Learn about the newest UUWF projects . . .  
Participate in tracing your family roots . . .  
connect with other members by stopping at  
our booth in the Exhibit Hall!

### **Our Workshops**

**FRIDAY, JUNE 25 1:30 - 2:45 pm**

Long Beach Convention Center, Room 102C

#### ***Revolution and Transformation: The UUWF Meets the Future***

Transformation and restructuring requires honesty, risk and hard work. The UU Women's Federation is moving forward in its process of radical change. The Restructuring Task Force will reveal the exciting future, identifying what UUWF has accomplished and sharing the results of the survey that helped define where UUWF is going next.

*UUWF's Restructuring Task Force - Patsy Sherrill Madden, Phyllis Rickter (co-chairs), Denny Davidoff, Arlene Johnson, Justice Waidner*

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**SATURDAY, JUNE 26 5:00 - 6:15 pm**

Long Beach Convention Center, Room 102A

#### ***UUWF Margaret Fuller Awards***

Come meet our Award winners and hear about their exciting new projects. The Margaret Fuller Awards are given annually by the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation and this year's winners will share their work and dreams with us. Through these awards, the UUWF seeks to influence thought and urge women to develop their potential – by lifting up the diverse voices of UU women engaged in the creative work of religious feminisms.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 26 8:30 - 9:45 pm**

Long Beach Convention Center, Room 102A

#### ***She Changes Everything She Touches: Honoring Our Music***

*Cymbal* is a quartet of UU women - Diane, Lynn, Toni, and Linda - who evoke emotion, healing, and energy through song. Hear the close harmonies as they sing of feminism, justice, change, and hope. Listen, rest, reflect, and restore your spirit. Respond to the music's power - write, draw, dance, sing!

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**MONDAY, JUNE 28 8:30 - 9:45 am**

Long Beach Convention Center, Room 203A

#### ***Are You the Opposite Gender, or Am I?***

How do others shape our gender identity, whether we're predominantly female or male? Come with good humour to share personal histories and explore how to overcome prejudices. An education professor and a co-author of the course "Unraveling the Gender Knot" will facilitate. Handouts will be provided to replicate this workshop back home.

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**MONDAY, JUNE 28 10:15 - 11:30 am**

Long Beach Convention Center, Room 103A

#### ***How My Year in Washington Changed the World***

Just as Clara Barton labored in the nation's capital, now three UU interns spend tireless hours by candlelight - OK, fluorescents - advocating for justice and equality. Be inspired by their tales of power and woe! Learn how you could be next. Starring interns Kierstin Homblette, Megan Joiner, and Amelia Rose.

# Empowering Women through Margaret Fuller Awards

A group of women develop a new adult education curriculum aimed at “untying the gender knot.”

A skilled and creative videographer goes to Transylvania to meet with and interview women in a Unitarian church community there, asking them what their aspirations and limitations are.

A longtime UU minister embarks on a project to find and lift up the lives and thoughts of the women peace activists in our liberal religious movement.

Margaret Fuller Awards were given to these educational, creative and visionary projects in the past several years, partly underwriting the work of contemporary women in exploring and expressing religious feminisms. In each case, their work was grounded in UU principles and purposes, with a feminist perspective, and will result in findings that are accessible to more than those attending a single congregation, workshop, or event.

The Margaret Fuller Awards, named for the outspoken, courageous and prophetic Unitarian, are funded annually through the UUWF. Proposals are solicited from UU women scholars in our

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“Their work was grounded in UU principles and purposes, with a feminist perspective, and will result in findings that are accessible to more than those attending a single congregation, workshop, or event.”

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## Women of Transylvania: A Video of Hope

This 20-minute video documentary invites the viewer into a complex, other-worldly, yet somehow familiar community of Transylvanian village women and their daughters. It reveals many of the issues and challenges they face in post-Communist Transylvania: decreasing village population, poverty, unyielding physical labor, sending their children away to school, the burden of the roles and responsibilities they face as women, and questions of how their children can have a hopeful future.

In this documentary we also see the cultural intertwining of these village women with their Unitarian heritage (which is so strong), and the effects of their relationship with their Partner Church in the United States.

own seminaries, from those attending or teaching in non-UU theological schools, and from the wealth of lay scholars, artists, and social activists across the country.

Awards range from \$500-5000, supporting the publication and production of works that contribute to the feminist transformation of our UU

They have found new ways to be together as women, as they develop a new Sunday School program and start a popular UU women’s group. In many ways it seems as if the future of the village may be in the hands of the women.

Funding for this project was provided by the Margaret Fuller Award Program (Feminist Theology Award), a Unitarian Universalist Women’s Federation Program for Religious Feminisms.

Copies of the video will be available for sale on Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>, at the UUA General Assembly in Long Beach. VHS is \$25. DVD is \$35. Or contact producer Laurie Simons at [edvideoplus@comcast.net](mailto:edvideoplus@comcast.net).

communities and the world. Funded projects include examinations of current streams of religious feminisms as well as historical works focusing on contributing to the conversations of today.

This year’s award recipient is Dr. Clare Fischer, professor at Starr King School of Ministry in Berkeley, CA, one of our UU seminaries. Dr. Fischer has taught feminisms over her many years of teaching and was a participant in earlier efforts to explore feminist theology and provide support for UU women doing significant work in this area. She will use her grant to help in her research about and interviews with UU women engaged in social change and their spirituality of work.

Dr. Fischer will be talking about this project and her thoughts about identifying and encouraging women to explore religious feminisms at the UUWF-sponsored session on the Margaret Fuller Awards during the General Assembly in Long Beach. This program is scheduled for 5 p.m., Saturday, June 26.

Information on applying for a Margaret Fuller Award is available online at [www.uua/uuwf](http://www.uua/uuwf) or by sending an email to [uuwf@uua.org](mailto:uuwf@uua.org).



# Above the 49th Parallel

by Betty Donaldson  
edonalds@ucalgary.ca

A common phrase above the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel is "wait 'til Spring break-up". It's a time when the ground thaws and new green shoots pop up daily, making gardening and walks a sacred exercise. People who don't live through seasonal rotations really cannot appreciate why ancient cultures honored the Goddess, Estra (as in Easter) at the Equinox.

This year, at the full moon, some of us gathered outside at the edge of Vancouver Island to celebrate various types of new growth. Joyous welcoming of more sunlight in the mornings, three planets aligning in the night sky, baby lambs frolicking in fields, snowdrops, crocus and lilies nodding in wilderness parks, and the renewal of individual goals. It's a good time to be alive.

On the other side of the country, in Nova Scotia, the Uppity Women's group in Halifax prepares its booklet about Unitarian women leaders who pioneered various causes in Canada. Be-

tween these far-flung geographical points at the edges of two large oceans, other Unitarian women busily plan Spring and Summer events. CUC meets in Edmonton this year, May 21-24, and the organizing theme is "We Are the New Pioneers". The Women's Breakfast has become an annual event and a networking session is scheduled to facilitate dialogue between Canadian Unitarians in the difference regions.

Women of the Unitarian Congregations of the Western Region women will gather at St. Michael's Retreat Centre, Lumsden, Saskatchewan for the 18th consecutive year. Theme: "Since We Can't Avoid It, ... We May As Well Celebrate Change." Contact [louise.parsons@shaw.ca](mailto:louise.parsons@shaw.ca) for further information. We'd love to have visitors from south of the 49th or outside the prairie provinces.

At the Long Beach GA, Barbara Schonborn and Betty Donaldson will facilitate a Saturday UUWF workshop, "Are You the Opposite Gender or Am I?" Bring a sense of humor.

Barbara, Rosemary Matson, and the late

Alison Campbell are co-authors of the new curriculum, "Unraveling the Gender Knot I". Barbara and Rosemary will be presenting two sessions on this exploratory curriculum for women and men who want to cross gaps and negotiate occasional truces in the ongoing gender wars. This program uses some Canadian material and

eventually will be further adapted for Canadian audiences, we hope. This GA marks organizational changes in UUWF and ends my term as the Canadian Board representative. How Canadian and American Unitarian Universalist women will communicate post GA 2004 is not very clear, but since we share a continent, we'll find ways.

## Women's Covenant Groups

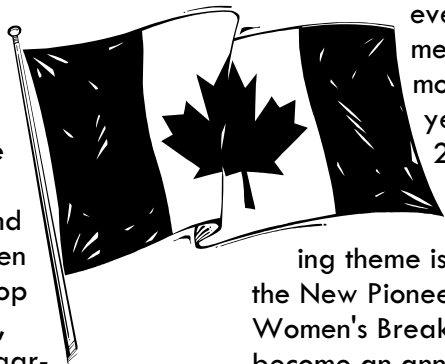
By Kathleen Dillon  
Excerpted from UUWF-L

Some of us who have boasted large, strong women's groups have discovered that women seem to be in a different space than in years past. While the women of my congregation are willing, even eager, to participate in women's activities, meetings or short study groups when they are offered, they do not want to be part of another committee, undertake planning, or commit over a long period.

Our solution was a potluck lunch for women who were interested in being part of a small sister circle. Scattered around the room were curricula (*Cakes for the Queen of Heaven and Rise Up and Call Her Name*), feminist books from the church library, minutes of past women's committees,

along with a photograph album and copies of the spiritual celebrations we had done in the past.

A few minutes were taken to introduce the Alliance (our branch of the UUWF). The Circle concept was explained and small groups chose their own meeting time, day and frequency, as well as the focus and format of the group. Some time was spent with concepts of inclusion and confidentiality. Women were asked to approach several sheets of paper marked for the days of the week... and like magic, we had five initial groups! Several have become strong presences to their members and continue after several years time. Some have faded away; new ones have formed. They seem to fit the always-shifting needs of their members. And they are wonderful!



# The UUWF Clara Barton Internship for Women's Issues: A fundraising update

by Rebecca Scott  
UUA Coordinator  
for Special Gifts

A recent surge of energy and excitement around the fundraising for the UUWF Clara Barton Internship for Women's Issues has led to donations arriving every week from individuals, congregations and women's groups around the country. I am pleased to say that, as of May 5th, we have received a little more than \$110,000 in pledges and gifts. Add this to the lead gift of \$200,000 from the UUWF and we are an exciting 78% of the way towards our goal of \$400,000, which is the amount needed to permanently endow the position at the UUA's Washington Office for Advocacy.

To recognize the generous support for this effort, we had a celebratory gathering on April 25th for donors who were attending the March for Women's Lives in Washington, DC. The event was held in the library of All Souls Church and the Rev. Bill Sinkford, UUA Moderator Gini Courter and UUWF President-elect Nancy Van Dyke were pleased to express their gratitude for the gifts we have re-

ceived. Gini Courter read aloud the names of the donors who gave \$1000 or more and will be on the permanent plaque in the UUA's Washington Office for Advocacy.

Patsy Madden is overseeing the design of the plaque itself, which is being created by a Missouri artist. Each donor will have their recognition name inscribed on a bronze-colored, metal puzzle piece and each piece will be attached to a metal back plate by a magnet, so the puzzle can be rearranged. Many people are taking advantage of the plaque as an opportunity to honor or memorialize women who have been important in their lives.

We also thank Denny Davidoff for her fantastic presentation about the internship at the UU gathering at All Souls church on the Saturday night before the March for Women's Lives. We received many gifts on



Kierstin Homblette and her mother, Kathy, show off a drawing of the beautiful bronze plaque, which will be permanently located in the UUA Washington Office for Advocacy and will honor donors to the Clara Barton Internship for Women. The piece was created by Greg Edmondson, who currently lives in the St. Louis, MO area. Greg's work has been shown in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, St. Louis, Virginia, Idaho and Munich. Among his collectors are Patricia Neal, Elton John and Halle Berry.

the spot and half of the next day's collection also supported the internship.

Several local congregations, UUWF groups and Women's Alliances around the country have organized special fundraising efforts towards the internship's endowment. Special thanks to the UUWF groups in the Pacific Southwest District, the Central Midwest District, the UU Church of Bloomington-Normal, and Janet Nortrom and the UUWF/Womenspirit group in Shorewood, WI.

Additionally, Marion Stano and the Women's Alliance of the UU Church of All Souls in New York City raised more than

\$5000 from their own group and then expanded their efforts by staffing a table and accepting donations at every coffee hour for the month of May.

Betsy Stevens, Sue Haskin and the Women's Alliance of the First UU Church of San Diego arranged for a special collection for the internship at one of their Sunday services in April. In order to make the presentation "come alive", they asked one of their local members to interview the current (and first) UUWF Clara Barton Intern, Kierstin Homblette, about what her job entails so she could play Kierstin in

*(Continued on page 11)*

## **Intern Update,** *cont. from p. 10*

the service. It must have been a convincing performance because they raised over \$2,100!

We want to take this op-

portunity to thank those who have already made generous gifts. There wouldn't be a voice working exclusively on women's issues for Uni-

tarian Universalism in Washington, DC without you.

If you would like more information about mak-

ing a contribution, please contact Rebecca Scott at the Unitarian Universalist Association. Call toll-free at 1-888-792-5885 or

## **Donors to the UUWF Clara Barton Internship for Women's Issues, as of May 5, 2004**

\* *An asterisk indicates a donation made since the previous list of donors was printed in the January 2004 issue of the Communicator.*

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- Dr. Barbara W. Brown & Ms. Linda A. McAffrey in honor of the lives of our Mothers, Anne C. Miller and Betty Ann McAffrey
- Tom & Dee Stegman
- Margery T. & Robert S. Ware

### **Gifts from \$5,000-\$9,999**

- Women's Alliance of the UU Church of All Souls, New York \*
- Lelia Wright

### **Gifts from \$1,000-\$4,999**

- UUWF in honor of the 1973-77 UUWF Boards for founding the UUWF Ministry to Women Award \*
- UUWF of the UU Church of Bloomington-Normal
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- Charles W. Wilson III in honor & memory of Marty Ann Moore Wilson
- Anonymous

### **Gifts from \$500-\$999**

- Honolulu Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
- Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
- UUWA - Metropolitan District NY
- Marcy Bailey-Adams
- Jana S. Leslie \*
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- Phyllis Rickter & Donald O. Rickter
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### **Gifts from \$10-\$499**

- All Souls Church, Unitarian in Washington, DC \*
- Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron
- First Unitarian Church of Honolulu \*
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# the Communicator

*the newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation*

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## Summer Events for Women

**Summer WomanSpirit 2004 – August 6-8** at Camp Ronora in Watervliet, MI. The brochure and registration form are online at [www.womenandreligion.org](http://www.womenandreligion.org) and available in both MS Word and PDF formats. Plain text versions are available by e-mail. Contact Gretchen at [office@womenandreligion.org](mailto:office@womenandreligion.org).

**“Women in Unitarian Universalist History: The Rest of Our Story” – August 7-13** conference at Ferry Beach in Saco, Maine. Joan Goodwin will be the theme speaker for the week Other speakers include:

- Bonnie Hurd-Smith on Judith Sargent Murray
- Mark Harris on Lydia Maria Child
- David Johnson on Maria Weston Chapman
- Dorothy Emerson on UU women in the peace movement
- Elinor Artman on our recent history from the 60s on.

For more information, contact Fayre Stephenson at [fayrestephenon@yahoo.com](mailto:fayrestephenon@yahoo.com).

**“Women’s Rights History Tour: Riding Through Women’s History” – August 8-22** bicycle expedition tracing significant historical sites of the Women’s Rights Movement in upstate New York. The tour will travel from Rochester to Poughkeepsie, riding along the Erie Canal, back country roads and through the Adirondack Mountains. For more information and an application packet, call 973-948-7426, e-mail [dprice@compassroseconsulting.com](mailto:dprice@compassroseconsulting.com) or visit [www.compassroseconsulting.com/expeditions.htm](http://www.compassroseconsulting.com/expeditions.htm).

**Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival – August 10-15.** For more information, write to WWTMC, Box 22, Walhalla MI 49458, call 218-767-4766 or visit [www.michfest.com](http://www.michfest.com).