

the communicator

THE NEWSLETTER OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN'S FEDERATION

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UUWF is Going Green

In affirmation of our seventh principle – “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part” – *the Communicator* is going green. Most future issues will be published in pdf format for electronic distribution to all of our members and friends for whom we have e-mail addresses and publication on our website only. This will save just under 35,000 pieces of paper per year – and also spare the other resources that go into the printing and mailing process.

Not sure we have your current e-mail address? Go to www.uuwf.org and click “Receive our newsletter via e-mail” on the Home page.

If you would like to continue receiving a hard copy of *the Communicator*, please contact UUWF at uuwf@uua.org, 617-948-4692, or 25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108.

Resources Available From Our Grant Projects

Two of the projects funded through our Margaret Fuller Grants Programs – which supports scholarly and accessible work in UU religious feminisms – are currently available.

In Our Mother's Footsteps

UUWF's \$2,275 grant to the Church of the Larger Fellowship has helped produce “In Our Mothers' Footsteps,” a free, on-line course on significant women in our UU heritage. It's available at www.uuurl.com/learn/. This link will take you to the CLF's Learning Center, where you'll find “In Our Mothers' Footsteps” under “Unitarian Universalist History and Identity.”

If you do not already have an account with CLF, you will need to create an account and user profile to access the course. No payment is required – “Footsteps” is offered free of charge and CLF does not share or sell users' names.

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UUA Restructures UUWF Clara Barton Internship for Women's Issues

*Rev. Meg A. Riley
Director,
UUA Advocacy and
Witness Programs*

Things are changing in the UUA's Washington Office! And the UUWF Clara Barton Social Justice Internship program is changing as well!

Prior to this time, the program has funded one full time intern, working on federal legislation issues related to women and families. This focus has provided stability, credibility with interfaith partners, and the opportunity to move when key issues arise. (Think, the recent health care debate about women's reproductive health and the ensuing Stupak Amendment.) We have had fantastic young women who have taken the position and made it their own, and we have proudly sent them forth afterwards to change the world!

The way we have structured some internships has also cost us some opportunities. While we have been poised and ready for federal legislation to enter a phase when we can exert influence, many urgent issues have come through state and local arenas that we have been unable to address. Ballot initiatives in many states have moved right on through without support from the UUA on a national level.

So, we are going to try something different – an experiment in targeted responsiveness. Rather than have one intern focus on federal legislation, we are going to host four or five part-time interns to work on specific issues at key times. We are looking for two interns from Harvard Divinity School to work on women's



The first three women to hold the UUWF Clara Barton Intern for Women's Issue position attended our leadership breakfast at GA '08: left to right: President Linda Lu Burciaga, Meridith Schonfeld-Hicks (2006-07), Kirstin Homblette, (2004-06), and Grace Garner (2007-08). See page 5 for a report from the current intern, Orelia Busch.

issues in the Boston Office. We will deploy temporary organizers from the Washington Office for state or local initiatives.

We will keep an eye on how this works, and will keep fine-tuning it as we go forward. Thanks so much for your support for this program! We will keep you posted!

Editor's Note: The UUWF Board of Trustees conferred with Meg on the changes to the UUWF Clara Barton Internship position during its March meeting, and will continue the conversation as the position continues to evolve.

Make a Difference

Perpetuate your values by making a difference in the lives of women and girls. Please consider including UUWF in your planned giving. The UUA's Office of Legacy Gifts has the resources and expertise to help you – contact them at 1-888-792-5885 or visit www.uua.org/giving and click on Planned Giving.

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In Her Footsteps: Creating a Margaret Fuller Tea

By Janet Paulk
UU Congregation of Atlanta

Margaret Fuller, a Transcendentalist Unitarian of monumental intellect and energy, was, among other things, the first female newspaper foreign correspondent, as well as an outspoken early advocate of women's rights. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton declared that she possessed more influence on the thought of American women than any woman in previous times. For a number of years she supported herself by inviting women to meet with her to converse about issues of the day – particularly those that were important to women.

This year – 2010 – marks the 200th anniversary of Margaret Fuller's birth. One way to celebrate this occasion is to harken back to the days of yore and give a festive afternoon "high" tea with a program and conversations, and, in addition, to honor one or more women from your congregation.

The Reverend Marti Keller, minister of the UU Congregation of Atlanta (UUCA) and the national UUWF Vice President/Communications held several such teas at her former pastorate in north Georgia, with programs such as having a number of women speak in the voices of our UU foremothers. Women from other congregations attended some of these teas and when Marti moved to UUCA, it was only natural that, with her assistance, we would want to have such a fundraiser.

Taking time from our busy work and home responsibilities to plan and have a tea and program proved well worth the effort because it afforded not only a delightful afternoon for women from various UU congregations, but netted well over \$1,000 for the work of our Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation.

Our theme was "Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History" (taken from Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's book of the same name) and

the event provided an opportunity for women to enjoy a "high" tea, learn about famous UU women who dared make a difference, engage in spirited conversation (both structured and unstructured), enjoy each other's company and honor several women in our congregation with a Margaret Fuller Award of Recognition for five UUCA Women Making History "who have demonstrated boldness, zest, commitment, and a willingness to be not so well-behaved in the service of positive change."



What did we do and how did we do it? Well obviously there's not room here for all the details, but we'll share a few key points. If you'll take the plunge to "put on" a tea, we'll be glad to share sample documents such as our terrific publicity flyer; program ideas and content; conversation questions; our biographical booklet profiling nineteen notable UU women; our "to do" list and "how to

do" notes, as well as the nomination and selection process for honoring one or more women from your own congregation who have made a difference.

What started with the idea of a tea with, hopefully, at least fifty women attendees turned into gathering of over 210.

The key to our success was hats (yes indeed: hats!). After a lackluster two weeks of traditional publicity to attract the attention of women to register for the tea – particularly during the social hour after Sunday services (we are a congregation of over 800 with lots of competing attractions during this time slot) – we tried having several women wearing big hats walk around distributing flyers about the tea. Folks at the registration table also wore hats and almost overnight the tea became the hottest ticket in town! Many tea attendees arrived at the tea wearing hats, including some riotous ones *à la* 1940s.

Our first rule was that the tea was a fundraiser and everyone who came paid – whether by

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Grant Projects, *CONT. FROM PAGE 1*

Feminist Ministry Institute

Our \$1,500 helped support this institute, sponsored by the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual last June. Video and audio recordings of its sessions are available at www.hers.com/water under "Programs." They include *Theological Education for Feminist Ministry*, *Feminist Ministry and Sexual Violence*, and *Liberation Beyond Borders*.

Also available from WATER's website is the Alliance's "Seasons Series," which developed out of a request from women with cancer for prayers specific to their situation. An earlier

UUWF grant supported development of "Seasons of Survival," specifically for women with breast cancer.

WATER is also sponsoring monthly conference calls with feminist ministers on a variety of topics – check out their home page for information on how you can participate in these.

May Sarton Compendia Available

Two grants totalling \$6,300 helped fund three compendia of the works of author, poet, and diarist May Sarton, two of which



are currently available through the UUA Bookstore. Compiled and edited by Beverly Anderson Forbes, Ed.D., one focuses on Sarton's work on spirituality and the other on her vision of life for women, our society, and our world. To order go to <http://www.uuabookstore.org/search-products.cfm> or call the bookstore toll free at 800-215-9076.

Margaret Fuller Tea, *CONT. FROM PAGE 2*

contributing finger foods (three dozen servings each), lending their good China tea pots, cups and saucers, serving on the Planning Committee, or participating in the program. Only the waiters – a number of game men and youth in the congregation who arrived in their white shirts and black pants looking for all the world like real European waiters – and non-attendee set up and take down helpers, were exempt from purchasing tickets.

The result was a delightful afternoon with other women, where we learned more about our UU foremothers, honored women in our congregation, and, for those who are so inclined, an excuse to "play dress up" with hats from the past.

In closing, I'll share a few quotes from the women who came to our tea:

"A lovely, interesting, fun way to connect with Unitarian women of today and Unitarian Universalist foremothers... resulting in a deeper connection to self. And my guest, who is not a UU, thoroughly enjoyed the tea as well."

"What a stellar job you and your committee did! Thank you for a fabulous event. I really enjoyed myself. I especially enjoyed the hats and the structured exercise at the tea. And, of course, the food. And, of course, the honoring of the women in our midst. And, I could go on..."

"It was wonderful to attend the Margaret Fuller Tea and to see so many contemporary

women, who are now able to experience all of the benefits and advancements we have now reached in the 21st century, engage in the historic and gracious ritual of afternoon tea. The event reminded us that there is a

continuous thread between past and present. It made real the message that women can be strong individuals who are supportive of each other, because we always have been."

Checklist: Tea Tips and Topics

- Schedule for a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, whichever would bring the most women. From around two to four p.m. or so seems to be the best time.
- The planning can be done by a UUWF group within a congregation, or other women's groups, including reading circles.
- You will need leadership around program, food, greeting/registration and clean-up, also publicity and follow-up (thank-you notes and fund disbursement).
- The program can vary, from table conversations such as "What matters most to you as a woman today?"; or "What are you reading (viewing, listening to)?" a speaker on Margaret Fuller; awards for the women in your congregation for their equity and justice work; or a reader's theater on a famous woman – fictional or real. At one congregation, we held a fashion show using clothing from a resale store in our community that serves low income families.
- The tea itself is central. Ask for volunteers to prepare and bring favorite tea foods, such as homemade cookies and small cakes, tea sandwiches (the kind with crusts cut off and maybe cucumber and butter), fresh fruit on kabobs, all kinds of finger foods. Participants can bring their recipes to share. Make sure that the ingredients for all refreshments are listed in this time of food allergies. You can purchase enough tea for the event or ask people to bring some.
- Ask for loaners of tea pots and cups – making sure that it is understood that breakage can always occur. Encourage hats and other tea apparel.
- Ask young men from your youth group to be servers so that the young women can attend this intergenerational event. They'll all have a great time, whether serving or being served.
- Consider charging enough money to both cover the costs of holding the tea and raising money for a local group or national group (think UUWF) that serves and advocates for women and girls.

UUWF at General Assembly 2010

Going to GA in Minneapolis this June?

If so you'll want to catch UUWF's events.

Thursday, June 24

All of the following programs will take place in the Minneapolis Convention Center

Men, Women, and Margaret Fuller



Celebrate Fuller's 200th birthday by witnessing this solo dramatic presentation by author/actress Laurie James, who has created a passionate portrait of

Fuller's life and work. Through Fuller's own words you will see, hear and imagine the beginnings of the feminist viewpoints and principles that laid the groundwork for the women's rights movement in the U.S.

2:45 p.m. – Room 200 ABIJ

No Silent Witness:

A Web of Empowering Conversation

Empowering women to make themselves heard as agents of feminist transformation

describes one goal of UUWF's Margaret Fuller Grants Program. Come hear how this



mission is being advanced by 2009 grant recipient Dr. Cynthia Grant Tucker, whose project – the website NoSilentWitness.org – offers resources for study

groups and a home for transformative conversation.

1 p.m. – Room M100 GH

Funding for Women's Work

Need money for projects relating to women? Learn how UUWF can help through our Equity and Justice Grants, our Margaret Fuller Grants in Religious Feminisms, and our Marjorie Bowers-Wheatley program, which provides financial aid to aspirants/candidates for the UU ministry who identify as women of color, Latina, or Hispanic. 9 a.m. – Room M100 GH.

Saturday, June 26

Discussion: Women – Identity Based Group or Half the World?

Join UUWF leadership at 4 p.m. in the Hilton Hotel (Marquette I) for an hour-long exploration of this question.

Ministry to Women Award

UUWF will also present Dr. Cynthia Grant Tucker with its Ministry to Women Award during General Assembly. Given at most GAs since 1974 to an individual or organization that has ministered to women in an outstanding manner, previous recipients have included Ms. Magazine, May Sarton, Sweet Honey and the Rock, Rev. Shirley Ranck, Ph.D., and Riane Eisler. Cynthia is being honored for her book, *Prophetic Sisterhood: Liberal Women Ministers of the Frontier, 1880-1930*.

The award will be presented during a tea on Thursday afternoon. Space will be limited at this private event. If you would like to attend it, please contact Ellen Spencer at the UUWF Office before June 1st.

Leadership Changes



The term of UUWF President Linda Lu Burciaga (left) will end following this year's General Assembly. Succeeding her will be Rev. Marti Keller (right), who is currently serving as Vice President/Communications, who will in turn be succeeded by Kirstie Lewis, Bellevue, WA.

In other leadership changes, Luz Bravo-Gleicher, Vice President/Funding Programs, completes her term this year, as well as Catherine Onyemelukwe, Vice President/Development. Our new VP/Development will be Terry Davis of Atlanta, GA, with the new VP/Funding Programs to be announced.

We also welcomed new funding program panelists this spring: Jacqueline Duhart, El Cerrito, CA, and Juliana Keen, St. Paul, MN to Equity and Justice and Betsy Darr, San Francisco, CA and Janet Nortrom, Milwaukee, WI, to Margaret Fuller.

From the UUWF Clara Barton Intern: Putting Our Values into Action



By Orelia Busch
UUWF Clara Barton Intern for Women's Issues

In my time as Clara Barton Intern, I have met and worked with UU activists and organizers around the country, and their work inspires me. I have served on numerous interfaith and secular coalitions working to pass legislation that supports reproductive justice and bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender rights.

In 2009, I celebrated the passage of the Hate Crime Prevention Act, which the UUA Washington Office has been supporting for over a decade. And I was proud to watch D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty sign the bill legalizing same sex marriage in the District of Columbia at All Souls Church, Unitarian, where I am a member. Our office helped launch the Standing on the Side of Love campaign at the 2009 General Assembly, and we organized over 1,000 Unitarian Universalists who attended the National Equality March for full equality for BGLT people. I also worked with the Coalition to Stop Stupak and Pass Health Care Reform to protect women's rights to comprehensive reproductive health care and abortion coverage in the health reform bills.

2010 has already been a busy year. The Sexuality Education Advocacy Training (SEAT) in Washington, D.C. from March 20-23 brought an interfaith group of 44 youth, young adults and adult allies to D.C. to lobby for comprehensive sexuality education. UUs across the country are mobilizing to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and we are closer than ever to seeing Congress and the military repeal the harmful and discriminatory "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

My arrival in Washington, D.C. coincided with President Obama's inauguration, and the spirit of hope here was electric. But hope alone cannot change our country's policies or culture – we must hold our elected leaders accountable to the full diversity of people they represent. The main opposition to employment non-discrimination, abortion rights and comprehensive sexuality education comes from conservative religious voices. Members of Congress and the general public need to know that Unitarian Universalists support gender and sexual justice because of our faith and our most deeply held values. Putting those values into action is the only way to realize our hope for social change.

Honor Your Hard-Working Women With a Clara Barton Sisterhood

UUWF's Clara Barton Sisterhood was created in 1979 as a way for local women's groups, congregations, and others to honor women aged 80 or over for their service to their religious and larger communities. Since then just under 600 women have been enrolled in the Sisterhood.

Why women aged 80 and over? This program is named for Universalist Clara Barton, best known for organizing nursing corps during the American Civil war, leading (by presidential request) the post-war search for missing soldiers from both sides, and founding the American Red Cross.

She achieved all this after the age of 40, during an era when many women died before reaching that age.

We send each woman enrolled in the Clara Barton Sisterhood a certificate suitable for

framing and a letter recognizing her accomplishments. The minimum donation is \$80, and can download an enrollment form at www.uuwf.org/honorsawards.html.

The following is a list of women enrolled in the Sisterhood between January 1, 2009 and April 1, 2010:

- Juliet Masters Sanger, honored by the Alliance of First Parish UU Church, Arlington, MA
- Rev. Elinor Artman, by the Clara Barton Guild of Heritage Universalist Unitarian Church, Cincinnati, OH
- Rose Pavlow, by the Women's Group of Westminster Unitarian Church, East Greenwich, RI
- Jean Elyse Dunlap, Joan S. Olsen, by the Demeters of All Souls UU Church, Kansas City, MO

- Genevieve Ann Stevens Gersbach, Shirley S. Inhorn, Women's Alliance of the First Unitarian Society, Madison, WI
- Margaret Deinger, Elsie B. Jefferson, Nell Jones, Janet McCormick, Marge Routon, Alliance of the First Unitarian Church of the River, Memphis, TN
- Margaret Beikle, Jean Peterson, Association of Universalist Women from the First Universalist Church, Minneapolis, MN
- Diana List Cullen, Phoebe Hoss, Angie Henry Utt, New York, NY, The Women's Alliance of All Souls Church, New York City
- Trish Judd, UUWF Chapter of the UU Congregation, Santa Fe, NM
- Phillippa Paddison, Unitarian Universalist Church of Savannah, GA
- Marion Moos, by the UU Women of Spokane, UU Church of Spokane, WA

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UU Women

*Advancing justice for women
through education and advocacy*

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*For late-breaking news,
visit us online at www.uuwf.org.*



Long-time UUWF member and supporter Mary-Ella Holst (left) with President Linda Lu Burciaga at First Parish, Brookline, MA, where they presented a Sunday service focusing on Margaret Fuller in March. Linda Lu also spoke this spring to the Women's Alliance at Mary-Ella's congregation, All Souls in New York City, and to the Alliance at the First Religious Society, Newburyport, MA.