



Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministry

Divinity in Every Living Being

Fall 2011

SPIRIT OF LIFE - The President's Message



September 2011

Dear Ones,

I hope this newsletter finds you well as for most of us our congregation's year is getting underway.

As we proceed through this year, I'd like to look back briefly at the highlights of last year.

This year we said thank you and goodbye to several board members. Trish Kirk retired from the board but continues to produce our fabulous newsletter! Thank you Trish! Lee Devoe said 'so long' too. We're grateful for her service and for serving on the Ethical Eating Core Team.

We also sadly bid adieu to long time board member and past president, Rev. Gary Kowalski. Gary has been the backbone of UFETA/UUAM for twenty years. He has been an inspiration to many on our journey to animal rights and advocacy in Unitarian Universalism. I, personally, owe Gary a debt of gratitude for his example of how to do parish ministry and animal advocacy, and for allowing me to follow him around General Assembly before and after I started seminary, asking questions and generally adoring him. Gary will continue writing and inspiring us all in many ways. See Dr. LoraKim Joyner's tribute to Gary in this newsletter.

The UU Animal Ministry board is so thrilled to have received just over \$28,000.00 in grant money for our Reverence for Life program and for the development of our DOVE (Demonstrating our Values through Eating) religious education curricula. This exciting development will allow UUAM to reach many more Unitarian Universalists.

Of course, the passage of the Ethical Eating Statement of Conscience is an important development. While by no means as strongly advocating for animals as we would have liked, the fact that our denomination is beginning this conversation should give us hope. The passage of the Statement of Conscience allows you, as UUAM members, to engage with your congregation in the context of the SOC, and I encourage you to do so.

Also, our presence at GA was noteworthy. We had a wonderful booth, created and staffed by board member Jennifer Greene, and supported by our two new candidates for the board, Dianne Waltner and Dr. Russell Elleven, and others. Former UUAM president, Rev. Dr. LoraKim Joyner, was all over GA, giving workshops and networking. We were all happy to be working with the coalition that worked on the SOC.

2010-2011 was a full year and moved us along in our organizational maturity, visibility, and influence.

2011-2012 promises to be an exciting and fruitful year as well.

We will be holding our elections for new board members on Saturday, October 22 at 9 a.m. Pacific Time. Mark your calendars and please join us! See this newsletter for candidate biographies.

We will continue to work on using social media and communicating with you and beyond UUAM.

I would like for us to also think about our experience as advocates and activists and the many ways that we hold this hard, tender, heartbreaking, heart-opening work. As I read the list, I'm struck by the passion and the pain of all of us. I feel the deep desire for significant, real, transformational change in our denomination and the disappointment that comes from living with the urgency of knowing the suffering that other animals are undergoing by the billions.

In any movement for justice there are multiple strategies - there are reformers and radicals, those who prod toward gradual change and those who push for immediate change. Friends, I believe that all the strategies available to us are needed. This is how all social justice movements prevailed - not to say that any of them have yet succeeded fully.

We each come to this work from a place of love and empathy. It is love that fuels

our ability to feel with the other , which stirs us to abandon the comfort that comes with silence or complacency or even despair. It is love that calls us to stand outside of our communities at times and risk the sense of aloneness that I know we all feel.

That is why it is so important that our community, our UUAM community, be grounded in love and compassion for one another and for those whom we would draw to our cause.

I feel the frustration with our co-religionists who it seems “just don’t get it or just don’t care.” Or even with fellow advocates who employ different strategies than our own. What works for me, when I’m mindful, is to touch the love that I feel for other animals, and to remember where I come from and the multiple ways I fail to live as justly as I aspire to...to extend my compassion to others...and to myself for falling short.

I’m mindful, too, that we have a peacemaking Statement of Conscience and would like to explore how we, too, can be makers of peace while holding the felt knowledge of the violence we abhor.

I hope that this year we can engage in discussions about the ways our work is grounded in our UU faith and supported by spiritual practice - whatever that may be.

What might it be like for us to share with one another how or what practice fuels us and allows us to do this important work with joy?

I just heard Alice Walker say, in talk called “Love’s Activism: All You Have to Throw Is Your Heart,” on a Peace Week teleconference: *“Love activism attracts loving people, and loving people are the most courageous...the best place on earth is to be with the souls who are committed to love....”*

I’m going to start thinking of myself as a “love activist.”

Last, and certainly not least, please make sure that your membership is up to date. And if possible consider increasing your amount or making a special donation so that we can continue to expand and create programs.

As always, my deep respect and love to you all,

rev. beth
President UU Animal Ministry

UUAM CHAPTER UPDATE

We celebrate the addition of our 23rd UUAM Chapter at the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, led by Julie Derby and Jo Haluska. They had a kickoff event this past July with a service, vegan treats, and a cute hand sign that said, "I love UUAM."

I would also like to highlight the work of our UUAM chapter at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore, the South Jersey Animal Advocates. They were recently featured in the Press of Atlantic City on July 20th. Their fifteen members, some of which are people from outside of the congregation, have recently worked to protest the Atlantic City Rodeo, and regularly donate to the Humane Society. Said group organizer Cynthia Grzywinski, "When I heard about the national group (UUAM), I really wanted to put my compassion into action and do something with other people to make a difference." They sure are making a difference. To read the full article go to: http://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/communities/galloway/uuc-group-in-galloway-works-to-make-life-better-for/article_e8a6c703-969a-515c-8421-58d971ee8f2a.html.

TRIBUTE TO REV. GARY KOWALSKI



This past summer Rev. Gary Kowalski retired from the UUAM Board, of which he had served as president for many years when UUAM went by its former name, UUs for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.. His dedication to nonhuman animals has led to UUAM's growth and presence in congregations. Not only has he served Unitarian Universalism, but he has offered a steadfast and passionate animal ministry to the greater community. He gifted the world through his many books, some of which include: *Earth Day: An Alphabet Book*, *The Souls of Animals*, *Goodbye Friend: Healing Wisdom For Anyone Who Has Ever Lost A Pet*, and *The Bible According To Noah: Theology As If Animals Mattered*.

He was not always so tuned into nonhuman animals, as he told me in this story of his grandfather's death when Gary was in his 30's. The story of Koko and her kitten came along to help him understand that all creatures stand under the sentence of death, but that love and healing are also universal. He began to understand his connection and kinship to a larger family of life and to realize that, while the universe was not necessarily created for the purpose of preserving or protecting a little slice of individuality, we might very well be here to help guard and perpetuate the Earth and her multitude of inhabitants.

His ministry too includes human animals, as evidenced by his 30 years of parish ministry service. He now serves as an Interim Parish Minister, enjoying painting

and poetry.

We thank you Gary for your spoken and written words that have brought poetry to our lives and helped us paint a vision of the beloved multispecies community.

FINANCIAL REPORT For Year Ending June 30, 2011

UUAM's Operating Income for the year was \$7,901, and its Operating Expense was \$9,135, so it therefore had a Net Operating Loss of (\$1,234).

Operating Income included the following:

Memberships & Other Contributions	\$7,687
Investment Income	140
Sales of Animal Blessing Guide	74
Total Operating Income	\$7,901

The \$7,687 in Memberships & Other Contributions came from 105 donors, for an average contribution of \$73. Two donors gave \$1,000 each at the *Albert Schweitzer Lifetime Member* level, and another donor continued her annual contribution of \$500. All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Kansas City contributed \$655 as part of a designated church service collection.

Operating Expense included the following:

General Assembly	\$2,286
Advertising	5,656
Website	946
Supplies, Postage, Misc.	247
Total Operating Expense	\$9,135

General Assembly expenses included the charge for exhibit space in the convention center, and some of the materials displayed. (The volunteers who staff the exhibit pay for their own GA registration and travel expenses.)

Advertising expenses were for the graphic design and publication of three ads that ran in the UU World, including the color, two-page "Ethical Eating - Food and Faith" one that appeared in the edition published in May. That ad and others can be seen at <http://www.uuam.org/uuworladays.php>

Website expenses included a one-time, webpage redesign charge of \$450, and \$300 in recurring fees for the previous webpage, which have been discontinued.

At June 30th, UUAM's Unrestricted Cash Balance was \$8,473, which is approximately the balance as of this Newsletter's publication date. This is the amount available to continue to fund the activities listed in the Operating Expense section (above), as well as other initiatives at the board's discretion to advance UUAM's ministry.

UUAM's Restricted Cash Balance at June 30th (and currently) is \$28,375, which is the difference between the \$31,250 in grant funds awarded to UUAM during the year and the \$2,875 that has so far been spent for one of the two grant-funded projects. The two projects - Demonstrating Our Values Through Eating (DOVE) and Reverence for Life (RFL) - have been funded by the Unitarian Sunday School Society and the UUA Funding Program. These funds are restricted in the sense that they must be used only for the purposes proposed in the grant requests.

For internal financial control purposes, each month the board receives a report that details Beginning Cash Balance, each contribution (donor name and amount) and other Operating Income amounts received during the month, a register showing each check written during the month and the purpose of the expense, and the resulting Ending Cash Balance

Charlie Talbert
Treasurer
Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministry

REVERENCE FOR LIFE PROGRAM - Update



Get ready to hear some wonderful news! In June the UU Animal Ministry received a substantial grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism. This grant's award will support the growth of the Reverence for Life Program through the following means:

- Visiting congregations to conduct the Multispecies Awareness Encounter (cofacilitators currently are Rev. LoraKim Joyner, DVM, and Dr. Susan Gore).
- Designing a webinar to simulate the Multispecies Awareness Encounter for those congregations unable to host a weekend encounter.
- Coordinating the writing and publication of the book, *Reverence for Life: Towards the Multispecies Encounter* (we are still waiting to see if Skinner House Books approves the final proposal for this book).
- Staff to coordinate and administer the Reverence for Life Program so it is available beyond our current four pilot congregations, opening date February 2012. Rev. LoraKim Joyner is the current RFL Coordinator.
- Updating the UUAM website to hold the materials and resources for both the

RFL Program and the proposed book.

- Publication of new editions of the RFL Program Resource Book and Seeking Circle Guide

For the next year we have scheduled visits to five congregations to conduct the Multispecies Awareness Encounter. This special weekend contains a Friday evening potluck and movie/discussion, Saturday workshop, and Sunday worship experience (to be shared with the local congregation's worship team).

- Unitarian Church of Hinsdale - September 23-25, 2011
- UU Community of the Mountains - February 17-19, 2012
- First Unitarian of Albuquerque - March 2-4, 2012
- First Parish of Concord - March 23-26, 2012
- First Unitarian Society of Madison - April 27-29, 2012

Many of these congregations open this weekend experience to neighboring congregations as well as the public, so if you live near them, see about registering and attending the event.

Please contact Rev. Joyner if you'd like to schedule a weekend or to find out more how your congregation can enter the Reverence for Life Program (amoloros@juno.com)

The RFL Team - *Rev. LoraKim Joyner, Dianne Waltner, Rev. Russell Elleven, Jennifer Greene.*

ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministry will have its Annual Board Meeting
October 22, 2011 at 9:00 am Pacific Time
Conference Dial-in Number: (760) 569-0100
Participant Access Code: 221794#

Please join us for our annual meeting via conference call. All UUAM members are encouraged to attend.

We will give an update of our year. And hold our elections.

Here are the new candidates for the board:

Dianne Waltner

Dianne Waltner has been a member of 1st UU of Wichita, KS for about 7 years. She has been involved in the Ethical Eating SOC and hosts monthly vegan potlucks. This Meatless Monday group put together a cookbook in 2009 as a church fundraiser, and is working on another one this year, focusing on the holidays

(vegan recipes along with other tips to help "green the holidays".) Vegan workshops, community holiday potlucks, and film showings are some of the other activities Dianne has organized. She has been a member of UUAM for several years and is a member of the Reverence for Life Team. She would be honored to serve on the UUAM board.

Rev. Dr. Russell Elleven

The Rev. Dr. Russell Elleven serves Westside Unitarian Universalist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Earlier in life he was successfully employed in higher education for 17 years as a professor and administrator. He is part of the Reverence for Life Team, helping write curriculum and assist pilot congregations through the process. He hosts a vegan potluck at Westside where he attempts to make something edible once per month. More information is available on his website: www.rke.cc.

Remaining on the board:

Rev. Dr. Beth Johnson, President

Charles Talbert, Treasurer

Rev. Dr. LoraKim Joyner, Trustee

Jennifer Greene, Trustee

Jim Sannes, Trustee

MEMBERSHIP

To renew your UUAM membership or join to support our efforts, please use our membership application: <http://www.uuam.org/joinuuam.php>

Newsletter Editor: Trish Kirk