

# DIALOGUE

## QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

A publication of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Dieguito

**Imagine a religion where inspiration comes from not one but many spiritual sources.  
Unitarian Universalism**



**A message from the UUA (UU World - Spring 2012)**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 20-24, 2012**

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA**

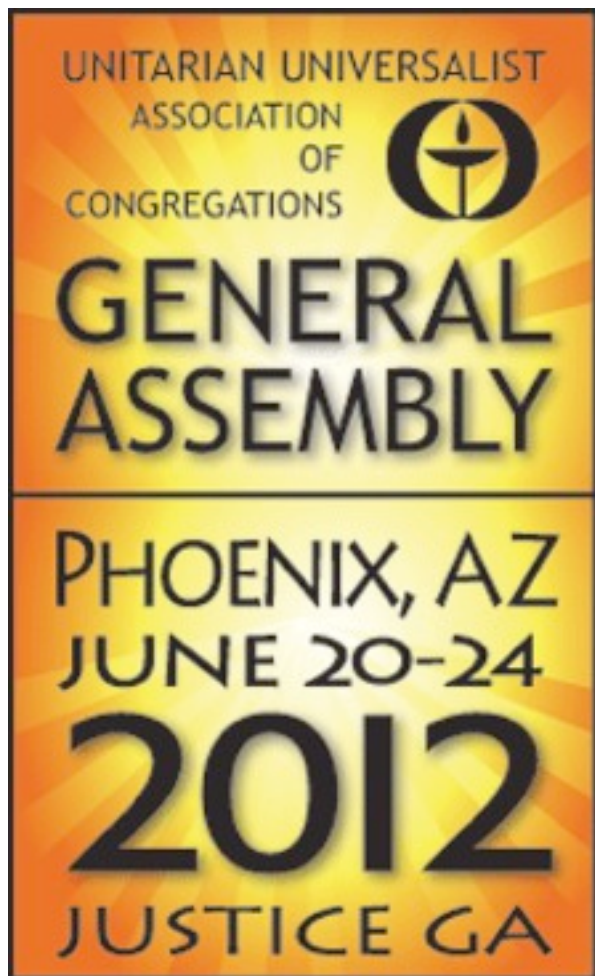
“General Assembly is more than the annual business meeting of the Association. The myriad of programs, worship events, witness and service opportunities, and exhibits not only provide a rich experience to the thousands of UUs who attend each year, they also give participants a renewed sense of energy, up-to-date information, inspiration, and innovative ideas to take back to their congregations and communities.

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General Assembly 2012 will be a gathering with multiple ways of engaging in justice work for people of all ages. Joining with the people of Arizona we will worship, witness, learn and work together. We will leave General Assembly grounded in our faith, energized for justice and with resources to bring this work home to our congregations.”



***This is a  
historic moment.***



***Be part of the  
story.***

## **GENEROSITY SUNDAY- JANUARY 2012**



15 January 2012 - \$2194 Southern California UU Justice Team

The SCUUJT brings together Unitarian Universalist vision, resources and leadership from across southern California for education, witness and action on the social justice issues of our time. Our current project is to prepare our congregations for a strong presence at the Justice GA in Phoenix, June 2012, and to create a model for effective social justice work by employing two regional community ministers.

# SAVE THE DATES - APRIL-JUNE 2012

## **PASSOVER SEDER: Saturday, April 7, 5:30 p.m.**

Passover is one of the most important Jewish religious festivals. Its celebration begins on the evening of the 14th of Nisan (first month of the religious calendar, corresponding to March or April) and lasts seven days in Israel, eight days in the Diaspora (although Reform Jews observe a seven-day period). Join us in Fellowship as we celebrate the Passover Seder with special dishes symbolizing the hardships of Israelites during their bondage in Egypt. **Reservations required. Bev Conner at: [joyandfellowship@uufsd.org](mailto:joyandfellowship@uufsd.org)**

## **EASTER FLOWER COMMUNION: Sunday, April 8, 2012, 10:00 a.m.**

Easter – The Flower Communion & Creation Reborn: How the story of rebirth and renewal affirms the beauty, awe and wonder of creation. **Contact Rev. David Miller at: [revd@uufsd.org](mailto:revd@uufsd.org)**

## **!!!NEW!!! DRUM CIRCLE AT UUFSD: Saturday, April 14, 2012, 5:30-7:00 p.m.**

Frank Lazzaro, well known San Diego drummer/drum circle facilitator, will be leading a one and a half hour circle at the Fellowship on Saturday, April 14th, time to be announced. He will bring drums and other percussion. **Bring your drum if you have one.** Suggested donation \$5.00. **Contact: Mary Lou Gibson at: [mlggibson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlggibson@sbcglobal.net)**

## **NEW ORIENTATION CLASS, Sunday, April 22, 11:45AM-1:15PM**

Interested in knowing more about our Fellowship and UUism? Join us for a light lunch before we meet. Childcare is available by reservation. Fellowship members will be on hand to tell you a little about our own history and operation. The next opportunity to participate in these events will be next fall. Please call the office for more information and to sign up/request childcare (858-755-9225).

## **UUFSD ANNUAL AUCTION FUNDRAISER: Saturday, May 5, 2012 (See page 11)**

Our Cinco de Mayo Auction Fundraiser Party planning has now begun in earnest. We are soliciting auction items and signing up volunteers for the day of the event. Please pass by the Auction Table in the core area for more information.

**“LIFE BECOMES ART; STORY CLOTHS AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA’S HMONG PEOPLE “- ART EXHIBIT AND FORUM: May-June 2012 (See pages 12 & 13)** The walls of Fellowship Hall will tell a poignant story of heroism, betrayal, survival, beauty and resurgence. The story will unfold through story cloths made by the Lao Hmong and photographs of the Hmong. We will have a forum on social issues highlighted in the show on Monday, May 21, from 7 to 9 p.m., in Founders Hall. Our YRUU jointly with the SAC, have determined that the June Generosity Sunday collection will be donated to “My Library,” an education project for underserved Hmong and other youth in Laos.

## **NEW MEMBER CIRCLE: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

At this event, those wishing to become members will sign the membership book, complete the membership process and share their stories. Childcare again available upon request. Then, on Sunday, May 13th, new members will be recognized during the Sunday service.

## **JOY COMMITTEE QUARTERLY POTLUCK: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:00 p.m.**

Join us for an evening of food, fun and games. The Quarterly Pot Luck is an opportunity to join members and friends for an evening of fellowship. **Contact: Bev Conner: [joyandfellowship@uufsd.org](mailto:joyandfellowship@uufsd.org)**

## **MUSIC SUNDAY: Sunday, May 20, 2012**

"Make A Joyful Noise". Songs by Orlando di Lasso, Orazio Vecchi, G.F. Handel, Marvin Hamlisch's "A Chorus Line", John Rutter and many more. The children's choir will perform at this Music Sunday.

## **“LIFE BECOMES ART” FORUM: Monday, May 21, 7-9 p.m.**

The forum will include a modified Laotian blessing ceremony. Mr Bob Montgomery, Director of the San Diego Branch of the International Rescue Committee, will join Roger and Nancy Harmon as our speakers for the evening.

## **ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP CAMPOUT: May 25 to May 28, 2012**

This year we have reserved the Big Sage Group site at the El Prado Campground in the beautiful Laguna Mountains for Memorial Day Weekend, May 25 to May 28. This traditional Fellowship campout has taken place for at least 35 years, probably longer. contact Betsy Gilpin ([betsygilpin@yahoo.com](mailto:betsygilpin@yahoo.com), 760-230-2515). **(Also see Camp Horse Haven, July 6-8, 2012)**

## **CLUSTER CHOIR PERFORMANCE: Saturday, June 9, 2012, 7 p.m.**

The UU Cluster concert includes 120 singers from the congregations of San Dieguito, Summit, Chalice, Palomar and First Church San Diego. The work is Jason Shelton's "Sources" <[jasonsheltonmusic.com](http://jasonsheltonmusic.com)>. The concert will include a professional orchestra and percussion accompaniment. The Cluster Youth Choir (ages 13-18) will perform at the beginning of the concert and join the adults for the finale. This will be a benefit concert for a local charity organization to be announced at a later date. Cost per person has not yet been set, but will be nominal. Please help support this wonderful and joyful gathering of our UU friends and neighbors. **Contact Gianna Drogheo at: [gianna@uufsd.org](mailto:gianna@uufsd.org)**

## **SUMMER SOLSTICE SERVICE: Sunday, June 17, 2012, 10:00 a.m.**

Our Annual Summer Solstice Service has become the traditional end to the congregational year. All are welcome to bring drums and/or other rhythm instruments as we celebrate the longest day of the year and the beginning of summer. **Contact Rev. David Miller at: [revd@uufsd.org](mailto:revd@uufsd.org)**

# Building & Grounds

By Ken Schultz

Our campus occupies 6.7 acres of unique chaparral habitat that was here for thousands of years before we arrived. Our facilities have been built into this landscape, initially with many small widely spaced buildings, and more recently with larger central buildings. As the original buildings age they need more intensive upkeep, and even our “new” buildings are over 10 years old, so they need attention too. We have been working with the landscape to make it more attractive and green during our dry season. We’re using mostly native plants to fit better into our little piece of the “Interdependent Web of Life,” and getting rid of invasive exotic plants where appropriate. Our new irrigation systems make the plants near our buildings greener, and they also make the brush less vulnerable to wildfire. There’s a lot to do, but we have plenty of momentum from past efforts.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee has accepted the challenge of maintaining and enhancing the beauty of our site and the utility of our facilities, but it’s a big job and we need

the help of all members to get the job done. The monthly Buildings and Grounds work parties are a great opportunity for fellowship with other UUFSD members – where friendships often form through working on common goals together. It’s a responsibility we all must share, but it can turn out to be more of a joy than a burden. Plans for this year include our regular grounds trimming, weeding and planting and also some long postponed painting of the steps, the bridges and the kitchen.

***We have NO committee meetings!*** The Buildings and Grounds Committee has a work party on the first Saturday of each month, occasionally shifting dates to avoid holidays, etc. We gather at the Fellowship at 9:00 a.m., jointly work on various chores and then have lunch together at noon and adjourn until next month. Information about the work parties is sent out by e-mail the week before. RSVPs are helpful for people providing lunch. We need **your** help to make these work parties successful and productive. We ask you to join our e-mail list and to volunteer an occasional Saturday morning. Please join us.

We have two levels of membership on the Buildings and Grounds Committee: A B&G Committee **Worker** is someone who will be on our e-mail list and will try to come to occasional work parties. A B&G Committee **Leader** is someone who will try to participate in most work parties and will in addition help us plan the work for those work parties and occasionally take the lead on one of the B&G tasks. If pulling weeds, painting, and pounding nails are not in your repertoire, you can still support the effort by helping prepare the lunch as a **Chef**.

Please come lend us a hand. Just print this page, fill in the blanks and return it to the Fellowship Office or send it to Ken Schultz ([ken-schultz@cox.net](mailto:ken-schultz@cox.net)). Thanks!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

B&G Committee Level: Worker \_\_\_\_\_ or Leader \_\_\_\_\_ and/or Chef \_\_\_\_\_

Skill or Interest: \_\_\_\_\_



# All in a days work

Thanks to the March 3rd crew.

Michael Scott, Glen Bowdwn, Stu Smith, Joe Penny Eleanor Bartho, Ane Larocca, Betsy Gilpin  
Nancy and Roger Harmon,, Rosa Maria Leon, Leticia Corona, Darren Heinrichsen, Pamela Parker  
Pete di Girolamo, Ed Mlakar,, Greg Brown, Kathryn Sturch, Maria Penny, Judith Barney,

B&G

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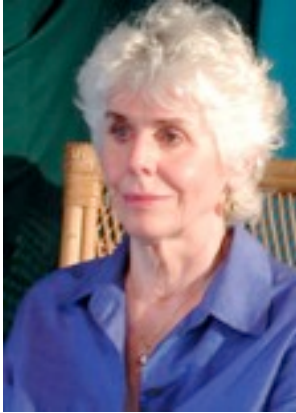
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2012



# My Personal Voyage



by Molly Low

I feel blessed as I look back over my rich life of 86 years. I was married to Tony Gagné, father of my four beloved children, for twenty years before I divorced him. I was married to Paul Low for twenty years, until he died. Cris Crisler and I have been together for 19 wonderful years. Watch out, Cris!

I feel blessed that my beloved Cris and I can live in the lovely retirement community White Sands of La Jolla. Though we have segued into the “older old” category, we are still walking, our minds are still relatively sharp, and we enjoy life with family, friends and our various projects. We’re happy. Like most of us, I’ve experienced times of great happiness, times of sheer bliss, times of treading water, times of suicidal despair. I loved being a mother. I’ve always enjoyed working hard at jobs and art projects I liked. As a child I wanted to be a concert pianist, then an opera singer, then a famous novelist, then a surgeon, then, later, a psychiatrist. Eager to plunge into new things, I’ve never, ever been bored.

You may ask: Have you changed much? Yes, I certainly have. I worked hard at shucking the reserved, proper, judgmental, naive, somewhat masochistic Molly who feared and could not express anger. It took me many years to become more relaxed and open, yet assertive; to become less naive, less judgmental, and to find the warm and huggy Molly so long buried beneath my carapace. Back in our thirties my best friend and I decided we wanted to metamorphose into “tough old birds” as we aged. Friends assure me I’ve reached that goal . . . and then some.

How did I shuck that tight-assed Molly who was reared to emulate Princess Elizabeth? The smart-aleck answer is: with difficulty. It took me painful years of hard work and some therapy to “come to realize” I must take my children and leave Tony Gagné. In my second marriage, it took even longer to realize my masochistic part in the destructive battles Paul Low and I engaged in, and longer still to be able to walk away at the first sign of a new battle. Paul told me he was grateful when I “cut him off at the pass.”

One of the biggest boosts to my eagerness to change was discovering the Universalist Church in 1954, in Binghamton, New York. Here I found my intentional family, my true home at last. Here I could talk about anything - well, just about anything - without fear of being told I was unladylike or rude. Here I could discover and develop latent leadership abilities. I tossed my Episcopal upbringing out the window without regret, though it took me a year to be sure enough to yank my four children out of their Episcopal Sunday School. They **loved** our new church; they became active in UU youth affairs. I soon joined the Board of Trustees, became Secretary, then Moderator.

In 1966 I made a huge, painful change. I ended our marriage and moved our children to Princeton, New Jersey. There I worked as Registrar at the New School for Music Study until I was accepted in 1968 for two-years’ training as a psychiatric rehabilitation worker under the aegis of Einstein College of Medicine in New York City. Here I worked with chronically disturbed mental patients at Jacoby Hospital, under supervision.

Why did I make such dramatic career changes? In my thirties, in an effort to understand myself and my deteriorating marriage, I devoured every book I could find on psychology and psychiatry and found them tremendously helpful. As my marriage was collapsing I arranged for conjoint therapy with a psychiatrist. These painful sessions also helped me tremendously. Now I wanted to help others. At Jacoby Hospital I met Paul Low, a retired diamond merchant. He was the only man accepted to the psychiatric rehabilitation program. We married in 1969 and rented an apartment in Manhattan. My nine year-old daughter Jeannie lived with us. Her three brothers were in college.

In the early seventies I changed course again. After realizing I no longer felt comfortable working with chronically ill mental patients, I left Jacoby Hospital. I took courses in writing, wrote some poems, a few short stories, and began my unfinished “great American novel.” I also discovered the joy of photographing people. When friends told me the photos I took of them were the best they’d ever had, I asked my medical-student son, Jim, to teach me how to develop and print my portraits in my tiny Manhattan apartment kitchen. In 1978 Paul and I retired to La Mesa, California. When, a few years later, Paul and I took a year’s trip around the world, I photographed many people in many countries. After we returned home I studied black and white photography at Grossmont College.

From 1984 to 1994 I did four black and white documentary photo essays: seniors in rest homes, blacks living in La Jolla, teenagers in trouble, and perinatal women in recovery from substance abuse. Two of my documentary series were purchased by the state and by San Diego County, who have exhibited them widely. UCSD's Geisel Library keeps the originals of all four in Special Collections.

During this time I joined the First Unitarian Church of San Diego. Here I sang in the large choir and served on the Membership Committee. Paul did not go with me. After Paul died in 1991, I met Cris Crisler, a research chemist and clinical psychologist. We fell in love and have been together since 1992. Cris was President of the Board of Trustees at the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of San Dieguito (UUFSD), so I joined him there. But there was no choir! No live music! Just hymns and taped classical music.

So in 1993 I took a deep breath and plunged into my last career: music and choir director. Although I had studied piano since I was five, attended Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and taken singing lessons since my early sixties, I had no idea how to direct a choir. My dear friends Bonnie and Myron Fink, professional musicians, taught me how. Bonnie loaned me liberal choir music from the church choir she was directing. At my first lesson, Bonnie stared at me in amazement and said, "Molly, you have a *beautiful* voice." It was too late to become a diva, but I sang at her pupil recitals and at UUFSD. And I now had enough musical training to try directing a choir.

My love of music began in infancy, when Mother played the piano and filled our home with classical music soaring from vinyl records and our Magnavox radio. When I was five I talked Mother into piano lessons. During the Metropolitan Opera's Saturday matinee radio broadcasts I sang along with the glorious soprano arias. Friday afternoons as I walked up the driveway after school I could hear the Philadelphia Orchestra's matinee music filling my home. When I sang my heart out in bed at night and vowed to become an opera star, Mother told me to stick to the piano which "you do so well, dear." So I did.

But after a year at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, I decided I wasn't willing to practice all day in hopes I could make it as a concert pianist. It was too confining! There was a big world out there, and I wanted to taste it all, not sit all day alone at the piano. So in 1944 I transferred to Oberlin College, then to Katharine Gibbs Secretarial School in Manhattan. In 1945, at nineteen, I married Antoine (Tony) Gagné and we started our family. I had my Steinway piano, but was too busy to play much.

I told the eight or nine eager souls who signed up for weekly two-hour choir rehearsals that we would have fun learning together. And we did. We grew. I offered group singing lessons before choir rehearsals. I started two yearly Music Sundays featuring the choir and soloists. I donated the Baldwin piano so we could have a concert series. The Music Committee (Cris was Chair off and on) arranged for several musical coffee houses, but an attempt to form a children's choir fizzled. I hired Monette Moreno to give us drumming workshops, and play at the Sunday Service the next day. Cris and I attended UU Musician's Network five-day conferences every summer. We took workshops, met lovely choir and music directors from the U.S. and Canada, and brought back a sack full of appropriate choir music.

When I reached my mid seventies I realized it was time for UUFSD to hire a part-time professionally trained choir director, one who could direct instrumentalists playing with our choir on Music Sundays, who could form a children's choir, who could work more hours if UUFSD could afford it. But how to accomplish these dreams? Well, I gave a year's notice and resigned. While it was nip and tuck there for a while, the congregation happily voted to hire a quarter-time choir director. Hallelujah!

Cris and I began backing away from leadership at UUFSD. It was time for this old couple to make room for new younger members. Life here at White Sands with my beloved Cris is packed with new friendships and activities. We are close to our children. And we still sing in the UUFSD choir and attend Music Committee meetings. I am happy.





# The Bad Old Days

by Judith Barney

During our Sunday morning discussion a few weeks ago, I was reminded of my days as a pregnancy counselor back in the pre-Roe v. Wade days. We were, of course, discussing the brouhaha about whether Catholic agencies such as hospitals and soup kitchens should be required to furnish contraceptives for their staff workers. Things were a lot less complicated in the old days - more difficult, of course, particularly in Missouri where I lived. It was a felony there to discuss abortion in any way shape or form.

The Unitarian-sponsored Clergy Consultation Service was founded to circumvent such unholy laws. Our St. Louis church was loaned a discreet house belonging to a sympathetic manufacturer and hired a highly qualified obstetrical nurse and receptionist to run our (otherwise volunteer) counseling shop five days a week.

We had help from Planned Parenthood in analyzing urine samples to verify pregnancy, and money came from UU churches all over the country to pay salaries and utilities and give us a back-up fund for absolutely urgent abortions, those for indigent women who had to be on a train for New York, California, or Kansas City, Kansas at the latest.

We counseled women who made up their minds to abort (and often we had to persuade whole families and/or couldn't care less fathers) to borrow \$200, the minimum fee at a good facility, plus whatever mode of transportation they could afford. If they were a few bucks short, we passed the hat. Those who were working or in school almost always found enough for airfare. My favorite was the beautiful young lady who absolutely had to be back in two days because she had just won a beauty contest, before she knew she was pregnant, and would have to pose (in a bathing suit) for a commercial photo-shoot set up.

The less said the better about the day the Supreme Court decision (Roe v. Wade) came down. Our twelve line switchboard was lit up like a Christmas tree from 7:00 a.m. until I left at 6:30 p.m. We stopped making appointments after filling the calendar for the following three weeks.

If you gave a little extra to the UU Clergy Consultation Service during those tough times to keep us going, this is your belated thank you. You done good - and so did we. And I've no rap sheet to this day.



# Smart Thinking

by Paul Pearah

You may have noticed announcements in the weekly bulletin for something called the SMART Recovery® Program on Tuesday nights from 6:30 to 8:00 in Founders Hall and wondered what this activity might entail. Is it a group of greens discussing how to recover raw materials, or maybe a bizarre offshoot of Mensa, or perhaps strangest of all a cult of anonymous alcohol and drug abusers in our very midst, possibly performing quirky rituals and incantations, aspiring to recover from some dread disease that we can only hope isn't contagious?

Truth be told, it's closest to the last of the three, but there is some refreshing news! For starters, while the group exists to help people overcome a wide range of self-defeating habitual behaviors (I've seen alcohol, marijuana, and drug use, shoplifting, gambling, and aggressive driving, among others), there are no rituals or incantations. SMART Recovery® (Self-Management And Recovery Training) is not a 12-step group like Alcoholics Anonymous, though attending 12-step groups is not discouraged. SMART does discourage people from labeling themselves as "alcoholics" (for instance) and the controversial disease model of addiction is not forced on anyone. There are no sponsors but rather support for a self-directed and carefully planned path to individual recovery. SMART meetings are open to the public, free of charge, anonymous and confidential, and an envelope is passed at the end for voluntary donations. There is no requirement for a belief in God or a "Higher Power" because SMART rests on a foundation of fact-based principles of science and psychology and evolves with them. There are no sponsors but rather support for a self-directed and carefully planned path to individual recovery.

This approach is implemented through a 4-Point Program offering specific tools and techniques for each of the program points:

- Point 1: Building and Maintaining Motivation to abstain from the undesired behavior
- Point 2: Coping with Urges to engage in the undesired behavior
- Point 3: Managing Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviors (problem solving)
- Point 4: Living a Balanced Life including a healthy mix of activities and prudent trade-offs between short term and long term satisfactions consistent with one's own chosen goals and values

The tools of the program include individual and group activities specific to evaluating the decision to make a change; devising a plan for change; and perhaps most importantly utilize the psychological tools based on a branch of cognitive behavioral therapy called Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). Several tools for scrutinizing one's own thinking are taught, including conscious examination of chosen beliefs (individually and with the group) and even mediation. The fundamental premise underlying REBT is that our thoughts determine our feelings and behaviors, and that we can, with effective tools and concerted effort, change our thinking. The implications are profound: those well versed in the methods of SMART can not only willfully abandon their unwanted behaviors but can also control their emotional states. In short, you can change the way you behave and the way you feel by changing the way you think!

I must admit I was skeptical when I first encountered SMART in 1996, having failed miserably to change my drinking behavior using the 12-step approach in earnest for several years. I certainly was not very open to anyone telling me what I had to do or believe in order to make a change. Fortunately no one did, and after 6 months of challenging the facilitators of five different meetings and reading a few books I decided I had a plan that would work. I stopped drinking alcohol then, and best of all I now have much better control over how I feel from day to day as well as the capacity to make my dreams come true.

# GIVING HANDS

# CARING HEARTS

2012-2013 PLEDGE DRIVE

## ***GIVING HANDS AND CARING HEARTS PLEDGE DRIVE***

Our annual pledge drive campaign is done for this year. All that remains is receiving the pledges still outstanding, so we can have a firm number from which to prepare our annual general budget.

This year's campaign focused on specific areas of Fellowship life that enrich and fulfill us. We heard from speakers on RE, both from the parents' and children's perspectives, about our beautiful campus, music, spirituality, and social action. Our speakers spoke from their hearts about how their participation in these areas enriches their lives.

Our campaign theme, "Giving Hands and Caring Hearts", helped focus our collective compassion and generosity on worthy goals: having a full-time Director of Religious Education, more hours for our choir/music director, resulting in more wonderful musical experiences; hiring help for our hard-working volunteers, who maintain our buildings and grounds; and enabling more social action that helps us improve our world.

As of this report, the pledge drive is thus far successful, with the majority of received pledges being increased over last year. If this trend continues, then we will be able to achieve at least some of our goals.

John Sherman  
Stewardship Committee Chairperson

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY** THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

# ANNUAL UUFSD FUNDRAISER



*The 2012 Auction planning has now begun in earnest. The Auction Committee is soliciting items for the live and silent auctions as well as fixed price auction. Please pass by the Auction Table after services and pick up an Auction Donation Form; we need your help. You can also obtain the form at: <http://uufsd.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Donationform2012.pdf> , or contact Betsy Gilpin at: [betsygilpin@yahoo.com](mailto:betsygilpin@yahoo.com) . We are also actively seeking volunteers for a variety of tasks related to the auction. Contact Livia Walsh at: [livwalsh1@gmail.com](mailto:livwalsh1@gmail.com), if you're interested in helping. There will be lots of terrific items for purchase in every auction category, tasty Mexican cuisine, wine, music, dancing and—whoohoo so much more! Look for the Auction Brochure in April. Can't make the Auction, no problem, you can send us your bids on items you want by email and we will bid for you. The excitement is building, be part of the celebration!!*

# *Life Becomes Art; Story Cloths and Photographs of Southeast Asia's Hmong People*

By Roger and Nancy Harmon

In May and June the walls of Founders Hall will tell a poignant story of heroism, betrayal, survival, beauty and resurgence. The story will unfold through “story cloths” made by the Lao Hmong and photographs of the Hmong. We will have a congregational “walk thru” lead by Nancy and me, on Sunday, May 6, after the service. Please join us.

We will also have a reception and forum on social issues highlighted in the show, on Monday, May 21, from 7 to 9 p.m., which will include a modified Laotian blessing ceremony. And, the

YRUU jointly with the SAC, have decided to dedicate the June Generosity Sunday collection to “My Library,” an education project for underserved Hmong and other youth in Laos.



**My Library**

The Hmong are a tribal minority who prefer living in the mountainous regions of northern Laos and the neighboring countries of Thailand, Vietnam and China. Over the last 200 years Hmong have migrated from their ancestral homes in China to these Southeast Asian countries; this process accelerated with the Southeast Asian (so called “Vietnam”) War in which Hmong supported both sides. The U.S. CIA had armed the Hmong in Laos to fight in the highlands in “the Secret War.” As the war in Southeast Asia wound down in defeat for the Hmong who had sided with the Lao government and its American ally, and revolutionary governments took over in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, hundreds of thousands of Hmong fled across the Mekong River to Thai camps established to hold them.

Estimates are that only half made it to relative safety across the Mekong River. Many on the losing side suffered death or became refugees. (200,000 Hmong are estimated to be in the U.S., alone.) Also, in the ensuing years, the Hmong minority in Laos, overall, has been greatly disrupted and are struggling, economically and socially.

Still, from adversity beauty sometimes springs, as well! The story cloths on display, called pan dau in Hmong are one example. They were made in the refugee camps in Thailand from 1984 to 1993; the photographs were taken in Laos, Thailand and the U.S. from 1967 to 2012. The conditions of both displacement and life in Thai refugee camps is shown in these story cloths and photographs.

The experience of the Hmong is a common pattern through past history and continues today: A large portion of a minority group become displaced through war or economic change. People



become internal migrants in their own country, leaving their traditional homelands (the highlands, in the case of the Hmong) and being forced by government policy or economic necessity to settle elsewhere. The Office of the UN High Commission for Refugees reports 27 million internal migrants in the world today. In the case of the Hmong of Laos, many have been forced to the lowland areas, where they compete for scarce farm land or live on the margins of the towns and cities.

Alternatively, the displaced may flee and seek asylum in a neighboring country, waiting in camps or eking out an existence in the countryside and the cities. Here they wait for one of four options: remaining in the country of asylum; becoming refugees in a third country; returning home of their own choice; or through forced repatriation. The Lao Hmong who fled have experienced all of these sad situations. As of the end of 2010 UNHCR documents 11 million refugees worldwide.

The Baan Vinai Refugee Camp was one of numerous camps “ housing those who escaped from Laos. In almost every home women and girls (and some men) sewed clothing, worked handicrafts and decorated them, using their excellent appliqué and embroidery skills. The story cloths were not made in traditional Hmong life, but were made to sell to camp refugee workers or to Thai or other entrepreneurs outside the camp, who sent them to tourist centers to be sold.

In frequent trips to Laos, we have continued our interest in the Hmong, especially those internal migrants who have been forced from the highlands. We have Hmong friends who live on the outskirts of the former royal capital of Luang Prabang. This family makes pan dau to sell it to tourists in the the craft market held on the main street at night.

In addition, we have joined other travelers in supporting various educational efforts for Laotians. One of the most impressive is **My Library**. This non-governmental organization was started by an American woman, Carol Kresge, who saw the tremendous need for educational opportunities for underserved youth. She opened a library in a simple, two-story shop. It has expanded into a place where Hmong and other Laotian young people go to study, learn English and Japanese, use computers, borrow cameras and display their photographs and get great support from their peers and from travelers who stop by and chat or offer financial support. (It is supported only by contributions.) Our day at My Library is described at [http://www.worldviews2000.com/ Sharing\\_the\\_Experience.html](http://www.worldviews2000.com/Sharing_the_Experience.html).

Further Reference: **The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down.** A classic book on Hmong in America, especially on different perspectives of a Hmong girl with epilepsy in California. And, do check out the My Library website: <http://www.thelanguageproject.org/> It is especially exciting that our Fellowship will be supporting My Library through the June Generosity Sunday offering.





# *Social Action*

## NIDO APT THANX

Fue una bendicion que hayan aceptado ser mi congregacion. No encuentro palabras para expresar la felicidad que gracias a ustedes mi hijos y yo tenemos desde el día que llegamos aqui, hasta el día que nos vayamos. Gracias de Nuevo por permitirnos tener todo lo que nos dieron. En serio gracias por darnos la oportunidad de hacer uso y disfrutar de todo lo que nos dieron. Agradecemos de todo corazon por todo. Siempre estaran en nuestros corazon. Los queromos, Veronica, Jesus y Julieta

### **UUFSD SOCIAL ACTION PARTNERSHIPS**

**UUFSD Christmas Gift Project  
at the El Nido apartments. El Nido  
is an Interfaith Shelter for victims  
of domestic violence.**



## NIDO APT THANX

It was a blessing that you agreed to be my congregation, I can't find words to express the happiness that, thanks to you, my children and I have since the day we arrived here until the day we might leave. Thank you again for allowing us to have all that you gave us. Seriously, thank you for giving us the opportunity to make use of and enjoy all that you gave us.

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With our whole hearts we are grateful for everything. You will always be in our hearts.

We love you,

Veronica, Jesus and Julieta

# Native Plants at UUFSD-Hard to Love?

by Greg Brown



We all know that UUFSD's site is a beautiful and mostly wild piece of land, but many of us don't realize just how unique and precious our six acres are.

Conservation biologists have recognized *southern maritime chaparral* as a special and imperiled kind of chaparral along the San Diego coastline, and this is what covered our site when we began to build our campus in the 1960s. This vegetation is uniquely suited to our soft sandstone soil and the coastal location. Its extremely limited

distribution has been severely reduced by development, and what's left in the region represents only 12% of its original extent.\* It's home to several rare and endangered plant species.

Our seventh principle calls on us to **respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part**. In the 1960s there was less awareness of the value of native plants, water conservation, and invasive species. The founders planted trees and shrubs and ground cover to bring some green to the dry hillside, but innocently used plants that often weren't well suited to our site over the long term. We've had to cut down some of the pine trees that were leaning dangerously or dropping their limbs. One consultant has told us that **all** pine trees are a fire hazard and that we should cut them all down! So far we've decided to reduce fire hazards in other ways. Non-native (exotic) jade plants have grown into giant clumps and in some areas are crowding out native plants. They are now classified by landscape architects as "invasives" that should be controlled or eliminated.

I believe that we should make native plants our first choice to create a green, welcoming campus that is easy to maintain and doesn't require frequent watering like conventional landscaping. Invasive plants should be kept from spreading and, where feasible, replaced with carefully chosen drought tolerant natives. There is a wide range of native plants available commercially, plants from southern California, Baja California, and the coastal islands. We can choose to plant more of the lush green species like lemonade berry and toyon, both of which occur naturally on our site and stay green even in summer and fall. Not all natives appear dry and brown during the dry season, and many of them are also fire resistant.

Admittedly, native plants can be trickier to establish than standard nursery plants. We southern Californians are used to the hardy "bomb proof" horticultural varieties that suck up a lot of water and fertilizer, but are also pretty reliable. On the Buildings & Grounds Committee, we've turned away from average institutional landscaping and focused on using nearly all natives. In the last decade or so we've learned a lot, but we still have things to learn, and we invite members to join us in our quest. It's worth the effort to live by our UU principles.

Planting natives gives us a chance to restore the balance of nature, to live in harmony with what was here when we came, and not just push it out or cover it up. We can learn how to create a place that attracts birds and other wildlife, a place that takes little water or maintenance, a place that is beautiful and welcoming, a haven for our fellowship activities. As we learn to achieve this balance, we can provide a living demonstration project, an example for the community of what can be done. Let's make it so.

\*"Southern Maritime Chaparral", by David Hogan, John Sawyer, and Colin Saunders; in *Fremontia*, Journal of the California Native Plant Society, Vol.24:4 Oct 1996



# All Fellowship Campouts



Almost since the founding of UUFSD, members and friends have gathered at the top of Mt Laguna for a Memorial Day weekend campout. The organizer used to have to show up at 5AM at the Alpine Ranger Station and stand in line to reserve our favorite site, the Hollyhock group site in Horse Heaven Campground. Now, it's all arranged online, and sometimes we manage to get this site and sometimes we don't. Not to worry, we do always get a site somewhere on Mt Laguna.

After a couple of Memorial Day weekends when the weather turned nasty, we have also scheduled a campout as near the Fourth of July as possible. The weather is reliably sunny and warm by then. Some folks come to both campouts and others to one or the other, depending on their own schedule and/or preference.

Campers can arrive after 2PM on the first day the site is reserved and should plan to leave by 2PM on the last day. In between, it is pure fun! The adults take groups of kids on hikes to collect pollywogs in Big Laguna Lake or

up Lighting Ridge or to the Desert Overlook. Mountain biking is along the many trails is also popular. Back in camp, there are bugs to find, logs to walk, games to play, tents to hide in, and of course, yak, yak, yak, the favorite adult activity. Somehow the camp experiences can really foster connections. Newcomers, this is a great way to get to know others better.

On Saturday night we have a community stew dinner,- actually several stews. Someone makes a beef stew, someone else a chicken one, and generally there is a vegetarian stew simmering as well. Everyone brings something for one of the stew pots and a side dish to share. Guaranteed – no one goes hungry. After dinner, there are songs around the campfire and s'more's to eat. Folks bring wood for the campfire. For other meals you are on your own, but don't be surprised if food gets shared around, especially among the kids, who might think another families' fare more appetizing than their own.

The campsites are beautiful, have fantastic views and come equipped with picnic tables,

potable water and pit toilets. We usually break even on the group site fee if families pay \$25, singles \$10 and day-trippers \$5/person. Yes, it is close enough for those of you who do not like to camp to arrive by mid morning Saturday, enjoy the day in the mountains, the community stew dinner, and a little singing around the campfire and still be home by 10 or 11PM.



**For questions or more information, contact Betsy Gilpin (760-230-2515, [betsygilpin@yahoo.com](mailto:betsygilpin@yahoo.com)).**

