



**Aug. 3 PINKY BASS: “Looking at Art”**

*Artist, musician, photographer and Fellowship member Pinky Bass will present a brief survey of how curators, artists and the general public view works of art. She will talk about the perspectives of those professionals in their various roles and indicate how those points are reflected in the currently displayed works done by our members.*

Introduction: Wendy Allen

**Aug. 10 DEAN MOSHER: “Stormwater Management at a Critical Juncture”**

*An artist, historian, and vice-president of the Fairhope Single Tax Corporation, Mr. Mosher will give an overview of Fairhope’s often overlooked, underappreciated gullies, outline their critical function in draining storm water from the city and the importance of maintaining them and the parkland that borders them.*

Introduction: Ed Lawrence

**Aug. 17 MINH TRAN: “Every Day is a Holiday”**

*Minh Lordstone Tran, his parents and 7 siblings immigrated to the US from Vietnam in 1975. Accomplished in the martial art of kung fu, he competed in the 1986 Olympics and won a gold medal in the 1987 Goodwill Games. His success in the martial arts led him to a career in Hollywood. Ultimately, Minh discovered Hollywood didn’t offer the life he wanted and he found his way back to another passion, namely drawing. He now concentrates his efforts on his art, raising his family and the importance of finding joy in every day.*

Introduction: Wilma Albers

**Aug. 24 DR. LAL GOEL: “God Against the Gods”**

*Dr. Lal Goel, professor emeritus of political science at University of West Florida, is a superb speaker on comparative religion. He comes from a Hindu background and presents that tradition with great effectiveness and sincerity. Today’s presentation will contrast polytheism and monotheism outlining the degree to which fanaticism affects each.*

Introduction: Elaine Snyder-Conn

**Aug. 31 DR. JOE FONTENOT: “Vision Loss and How to Get Around It”**

*Diagnosed with macular degeneration in 1988, Dr. Fontenot founded Community Services for Vision Rehabilitation in Fairhope after retiring from Cardiology in 2003. His presentation covers different causes of vision loss, their frequency and who is at-risk. Macular degeneration, diabetic eye disease and glaucoma will receive particular attention. The impact of vision loss, including physical, emotional and social aspects will be discussed. How to remain functional and maintain a good quality of life despite vision loss will be explained as will the various resources, training, devices and aids available.*

Introduction: Mary Altherr

**Everyone is invited to attend the Last Sunday of the Month potluck following the August 31 program. Please bring a dish to share and join us for fellowship and conversation.**

## FROM THE SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship Social Action Committee met on July 12, 2008, chaired by Vivian Gooding.

1. Minutes of the last meeting were approved.
2. The committee voted to give a Sunday service program on September 28, 2008, outlining the principal social causes we recommend to the Fellowship Board of Directors for support using allotted SAC budget funds. Members of the committee will give short descriptions of the various organizations we are/may in future support.

Jack Gooding will talk about the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Vivian Gooding will talk about the Lighthouse (helping abused women)

Stu Chapman will talk about Amnesty International.

Ann Chapman will probably talk about Aid to Inmate Mothers and about Alabama Arise and its various activities.

Flo Schneider will talk about the Alabama Free Clinic.

Flo Schneider or Jeanine Normand will talk about the Interfaith Alliance.

Pat Smith will be approached to talk about Habitat for Humanity.

Bert Brun will talk about Heifer International and possibly Oxfam.

In the talks we will emphasize volunteer opportunities to Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship members.

3. Our mission statement, sent out recently by Ann Chapman, was approved.

Regarding recent Committee support for a community nursing student, Ann Chapman will follow up to possibly arrange a newspaper/photo story.

The committee agreed to recommend to the Board that we contribute another \$250 in 2008 for an additional animal to be placed

through Heifer International. Committee members were urged to try to come up with a copy of the missing March 9, 2008 meeting minutes.

New business: the Committee voted to recommend to the Board that we donate \$200 to the Baldwin County Boys Ranch.

Regarding the upcoming meeting of Alabama Arise in Montgomery, Ann Chapman will try to find a convenient way for our congregation to be represented.

She circulated a brochure regarding activities of the Mobile Bay Keepers; we could consider supporting this organization.

A motion was passed to request the Congregation Board to inform the committee when it actually OKs an expenditure of funds (from the Social Action Committee budget) to support funding recommendations.

Two other agenda items had to be deferred owing to lack of time: a report on a food initiative for community gardens and the structure of the committee regarding quorum numbers (note: the six regular members at today's meeting did represent a quorum).

The meeting adjourned about 10:40 a.m.

*– submitted by Bert Brun*

### Authors' Discussion Group

**This group meets the second Thursday of each month at 9:30am in the FUF Library. Newcomers are always welcome to join the group, whether to participate or just listen.**

**August's author is Joshilyn Jackson. September will be a free-for-all. Everyone interested in attending is asked to bring a book by any favorite or new author to share with the group.**

**We will also be voting on which authors to discuss in the coming months.**

## BOOK REVIEW FROM THE GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE

### *“Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed”*

(Viking; \$29.95), by Jared Diamond

This was truly the most interesting nonfiction book I have ever read, and one that compels me to think daily about where modern civilization is headed and why... not a pretty picture. The book vividly and painfully illustrates the profound effects of resource use and abuse, climate change, and interrupted trade on civilizations.

Jared Diamond relates the fascinating rise and fall of numerous very different societies and civilizations, ranging from Easter and other Pacific islands to Greenland, Rwanda, the Mayans, Haiti, Australia, the Montana Bitterroot Valley. He traces their histories using an abundance of fascinating archaeological and anthropological evidence. I learned, for example, that studies of refuse showed that Greenland Vikings fish or ate fish, unlike the Greenland Inuit, with whom they ultimately shared space, instead relying on beef and sheep, until being reduced to eating tiny rodents in their final Greenland years. I also learned that it was Greenland's ivory that most fostered trade with Europe originally, when African ivory became unavailable during the Crusades.

Just as Christian customs in Greenland played a role in the Vikings' demise, Easter Islanders religion and its five chiefdoms rivaling to build the tallest, most immense stone statues (some 50 feet tall) played an equally important role in that island nation's collapse. The accounts also underscore the importance of the precautionary principal when it comes to resources. The Mayans, despite a superb irrigation system, could not cope with the combined effects of an unanticipated extended severe drought and overpopulation.

Diamond cites a mind-boggling abundance of studies to support his accounts of demise, and brings ecology front and center in the history of peoples, in stark contrast to typical history books which tell the tales of leaders fighting leaders and nations absorbing other nations based on sentinel battle events. The destruction or decline in critical resources such as wood or stone, the loss of trade support from neighbors, cultural intransigence, soil loss, and changing climates all figure into Diamond's accounts and are beautifully integrated.

The role of culture and religion in the downfalls of several societies is also portrayed, as were how the societies were organized and resources shared (or not). I loved Diamond's careful amassing of data and his reconstructions of what happened over time, in a number of cases refuting prior theories in light of the physical evidence.

Although the book is a “must read” in my estimation, it was occasionally a vexing read. So here is my prescription to eliminate the pain. Skip the very first chapter on Montana. It appeared “thrown in,” quite possibly to justify a tax break for a vacation there. Diamond certainly made the point that resources in Montana – soils, minerals, timber, and pasture -- have been ravaged, water resources polluted, and the land subdivided to death in the Bitterroot Valley, but unless this is news to you (doubtful in Baldwin County), skip it. Also, in virtually every chapter (each about a different society), Diamond draws beautiful conclusions and then reiterates them, sometimes *ad nauseum*. I have been tempted to write him and offer my “slash and burn” editorial skills free of charge for any future book. The quick fix, however, is to skip all paragraphs beginning with phrases in any way resembling, “In summary...,” “We have seen...,” etc. With these steps, I think you can truly



## AUGUST DOCUMENTARY MOVIE

### "SICKO"

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2ND, 7PM



Michael Moore's latest film, *Sicko* delves into the health care industry, showing what's wrong with this country and what's right with others, and that it's possible to change things for the better.

Free admission, donations gladly accepted.

## COME JOIN US!

### Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship

1150 Fairhope Avenue  
Fairhope, AL 36532  
251-929-3207

#### Sunday Service 11am

Adult discussion group meets  
Sunday at 10am

[www.fairhopeuu.org](http://www.fairhopeuu.org)

## C O R R E C T I O N

In last month's piece welcoming new member Mary Van Antwerp, please note a line from one of Mary's poems was misquoted. It should have read "O gden has a whey with words, my couplets always turn out curds."

## NEWSLETTER

Submit calendar events or articles specific to the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship for publication one week prior to the last Sunday of each month. For events, please include all pertinent information. Members and Friends are invited to submit poems, quotations or other brief words of wisdom to be published in the newsletter as space allows.

Provide written copy or email to editor at:

[nanpie@juno.com](mailto:nanpie@juno.com)

EDITOR/PUBLISHER: Nancy Martin

DISTRIBUTION: Diane Ehlers and Ruth Allbritton

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Sat., Aug 2:** Documentary Movie "*Sicko*", 7pm

**Tue., Aug 5:** Knitters' Group, 1-3pm

**Wed., Aug 6:** Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-430pm

**Thu., Aug 7:** Nonfiction Book Group, 930am

**Sat., Aug 9:** Game Night 630-9pm

**Tue., Aug 12:** Knitters' Group, 1-3pm

**Wed., Aug 13:** Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-430pm

**Thu., Aug 14:** Authors Discussion Group, 930am

**Tue., Aug 19:** Knitters' Group, 1-3pm

**Wed., Aug 20:** Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-430pm

**Sat., Aug 23:** Game Night 630-9pm

**Thu., Aug 21:** Nonfiction Book Group, 930am

**Tue., Aug 26:** Knitters' Group, 1-3pm

**Wed., Aug 27:** Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-430pm

**Sun., Aug 31:** Last Sunday Potluck 12pm



## Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship Officers for 2008

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Vice President: Terry Lindquist

Vice President for Programs:

Elaine Snyder-Conn

Recording Secretary: Bert Brun

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