

November 2007



A Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association

BILL BAIRD: "The Joy of Giving"

Nov 4

Bill Baird is a retired professor emeritus of Auburn University. He and his wife formerly served in the Peace Corps in Micronesia. Recently he's been volunteering with Habitat for Humanity and Callaway Gardens, and he is building and grounds manager at the Auburn UU Fellowship. Since retirement Bill has discovered the joy of giving, and seeks opportunities to make a difference that will give his grandchildren a decent chance for a habitable planet.

Introduction: Wilma Albers

SCOTT SCATTERWHITE: "Veterans Speaking Out Against War"

Nov 11

A founding member and president of Veterans for Peace, NW Florida, Scott Satterwhite offers his views about war. Scott joined the Navy in 1989, where he was trained as a corpsman. After several tours with medical units supporting the Marines, he was honorably discharged in 1999 and joined his first anti-war protest shortly afterwards.

Introduction: Edna Harris

CHARLENE LEE & WENDY ALLEN: "Green Building and Smart Communities: Hidden Connections to Your Wellbeing"

Nov 18

Smart Growth activists Wendy Allen and Charlene Lee are Fellowship Friends. They describe smart growth of communities, green building, and their work organizing Greencoast 2008, where the public will be able to learn about building profitable, sustainable and healthy places to live and work.

Introduction: Harvey Joanning

MICHAEL PATRICK, Ph. D.: "Thanksgiving As It Really Was"

Nov 25

Historian, author and Fellowship Member Michael Patrick will take another look at one of our favorite holidays.

Introduction: Dorothy Dowell

Everyone is invited to attend the Last Sunday of the Month potluck following the October 28 program. Please bring a dish to share and join us for fellowship and good conversations.

Sunday Service 11 a.m., 1150 Fairhope Ave.

Adult discussion group meets each Sunday at 10 a.m. Come join us!

Write 1150 Fairhope Ave., Fairhope, AL 36532. Tel. 251-929-3207. Visit our website at

www.fairhopeuu.org

Fellowship Continues to Offer Variety of Activities

Bird Walk Planned for November 14

Our field trip in October may have been the best yet! So many birds were seen at Bayfront Park.

Our next trip is Wednesday, November 14, leaving the Fellowship at 8 a.m. Don't be late for we only wait five minutes. We are going to the Gulf area where we will visit the Mariculture Center and the Gulf Shores Water Treatment Plant.

Bring a sack lunch and drink. We will finish up at the home of Bo Davidson for lunch on his pier, while we look for loons and mergansers. We'll return early afternoon.

Please email Hindsite5@bellsouth.net if you plan to go so I will have a general head count and can notify you of any change in plans. Rain does not deter us but a real storm is another story.

Kris Lindquist and Nancy Martin will help lead this trip. We will carpool - if you ride with someone please pay them \$3 to help with fuel cost. No charge for the trip but a \$5 or \$10 donation to the Fellowship will be appreciated.

- Celeste Hinds, Phone 928-6526,
Hindsite5@bellsouth.net.

Documentary Looks at Elections

Votes for Sale (2006, 60 min.) is the October 6, 2006 episode of PBS's **NOW** hosted by David Brancaccio, dealing with the influence of big money on the election process. It examines the Clean Elections movement adopted in Maine and Arizona to clean up politics and allow ordinary citizens to run for public office.

Everyone is welcome to attend the First Saturday Documentaries at the Fellowship. No charge, but donations are welcome. **Votes for Sale** will be shown starting at 7 p.m. Nov.

Third Saturday Entertainment Movie

In **The Great Muppet Caper** (1981) Kermit, FozzieBear, and Gonzo travel to London as reporters to follow up on a major jewel robbery. Charles Grodin, Diana Rigg, John Cleese, Robert Morley, Peter Ustinov and Peter Falk appear. This is a brief 95 minute comedy that children could sit through with comfort.

Join Fellowship members and friends in enjoying this film October 20, 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. There is no admission charge, but donations are welcome.

- Wilma Albers

Authors Discussion Group Announces Selections for Winter Reading

The Authors Discussion Group, which meets the second Thursday of each month, has selected the following authors for winter reading:

Nov. 8 David McCullough, discussion led by Joanne Rains

Dec. 13 Mark Twain, discussion led by Jean Lawrence

Jan. 10: Chris Bohjalian, discussion led by Pam Perkins

Feb. 14: Maya Angelou, discussion led by Ruth Geraci

Each month, those attending the discussion are expected to read one or more of the selected author's writings. The group welcomes new members to its discussion, which starts at 9:30 a.m.

- Diane Ehlers

Non-Fiction Book Discussion Group Meets

New participants are always welcome at the Non-Fiction book discussion, which meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month starting at 9:30 a.m.

Thursday Night Colloquium (TNC)
November 2007

SHOULD UNITARIANS OPPOSE RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM?

The following sequence of topics has been proposed for the continuation of the popular Thursday Night Colloquium during November:

Fundamentalism (November 1)

Should we oppose religious fundamentalism?

Should we support the rational critique of holy books?

Indoctrination (November 8)

Should we oppose religious indoctrination?

Should we support secular education?

Theocracy (November 15)

Should we oppose theocracies and autocracies?

Should we support secular democracy—i.e., separation of church and state?

Intolerance (November 29)

Should we oppose those who condemn heretics, infidels, and atheists?

Should we defend persecuted skeptics?

Those members and friends interested in discussing the above topics are invited to join us at the Fellowship on Thursdays (except for Thanksgiving) from 7-8:30 p.m.

— Bud Gardner

Collector's Choice to Be Our New Art Exhibit

We all have another opportunity to share one of our favorite works of art with others in the Fellowship! Our November/December art exhibit will be brought together by our members and friends.

We're inviting each of you to bring one piece of art, either done by yourself or by another artist, to the Fellowship on Friday morning, November 2, between 9am and noon.

We'll ask each contributor to bring along a brief (25 words or less) statement about the art, which we will copy and place beneath the piece.

Previous shows in which members and friends have participated in this way have been very popular. It's a great way of getting to know each other better. Be a part of it...bring something you love!

The reception for the show will be held the following day, Saturday, November 3, from 3-5 pm. As always, there will be art to look at, good conversation, music, food, wine and soft drinks. And as always, we'll have a great time! Bring your family, friends, and neighbors.

On Sunday, January 3, you may pick up the work after the service, or during the following week.

— Jean Lawrence

Game Night Gathers Fun-Lovers Twice Monthly

Fellowship Game Night drew a record number of participants in October, with poker, Rummycubes, Bridge, Quiddler and Mahjongg being the games of choice for about two dozen UU members and friends.

Game Night offers a wide selection of board and card games twice a month, on the second and fourth Saturdays from 6:30 –9 p.m.

Participants may bring games of their choice, or just arrive and see what's available. All are invited to bring their own beverage, and a snack to share if they wish.

If you are interested in setting up or participating in a particular game, email Ruth Geraci with your idea, uuruthg@gulftel.com, or just show up. There's always room!

2007 Membership Survey: Your Results

Forty-five surveys were returned in October, an excellent response rate! The results:

Q1. How important is it to you that Sunday programs reflect a connection with the Seven Unitarian Principles?

Not important at all	11 votes
Somewhat important	9 votes
Important	17 votes
Very important	8 votes

Q2. During the fifteen minutes before our Sunday Fellowship starts would you wish to have the auditorium portion of our building established as a quiet place where people can enjoy the music that is provided? The foyer would remain a place of social gathering and conversation.

Yes	26 votes
No	12 votes
Don't care	7 votes

Q3. Do you wish to continue the practice of collecting food and paper donations for the Ecumenical Ministries Food Pantry?

Yes, ongoing weekly	14 votes
Yes, monthly several times a year	16 votes
Yes, once or twice a year	12 votes
No	0 votes

Q5. What do you think is a fair amount to suggest as a donation for attending our Saturday Night Concerts?

\$3	1 vote
\$5	15 votes
\$7/7.50	6 votes
\$8	2 votes
\$10	8 votes
free will	1 vote

Comments included:

(Q1) Relate to the principles and less to self-promotion.

(Q1) Since UUs are free thinkers and seekers of new knowledge, any well prepared speaker should be able to present his/her topic. Those who are narrow-minded are free to stay home any Sunday they don't approve of the topic . . .

(Q1) Only insofar as there is no creeping religiosity in the program .

(Q2) Don't care, but more seating will be needed if the auditorium is closed. No one wants to stand and chat. Some just can't.

(Q2) How do we keep the noise down in lobby when people want to enter the auditorium? Every time you open the doors the noise explodes inside.

- comments continued on Page 4

Q4. Priorities regarding charities:

<u>Name</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
Aid to Inmate Mothers	3	13	8	4
AL Arise	11	8	9	1
AL Free Clinic	19	11	2	0
Amnesty International	12	8	10	1
Baldwin Rescue	4	13	8	1
FEFF	2	7	9	3
Habitat for Humanity	21	9	6	0
Interfaith Alliance	9	6	6	6
Lighthouse	12	10	4	3
Oxfam	6	4	13	3
Project Hope	3	8	9	4
So. Poverty Law Center	15	9	5	3
UU UNO	1	13	9	3
World Vision	0	5	16	4

Members Comments Regarding Survey — continued from Page 3

(Q2) Quiet greetings and conversations ok.

(Q2) Yes, but please, no shush police. Maybe a polite sign inside the closed doors of the auditorium? Something like Quiet please inside auditorium from 10:45-11 a.m. for music and meditation.

(Q2) Keeping the time from 11:30 or so until 12 as a period of silence for all except the participants is a terrible idea ...If the membership wants silence during a musical performance, move that to after the greeting and introduction of visitors.

(Q) No – emphasize quiet conversation.

(Q3) Yes, once or twice a year, holidays and special needs.

((Q4) Not familiar with the organizations listed. Maybe we should have a program where each one is explained and how they help.

(Q4) I thought offering revenue was for maintenance of UU property and operations.

(Q4) All the above are worthy subjects. I believe Ecumenical Ministries (not listed) is a local cause that I prefer benefits from our donations.

(Q4) Consider additional charity– small nursing scholarship.

(Q4) Local needs for charities.

Q4) Focus on local needs, but not abandonment of world poverty and injustice.

(Q4) I would like to know how much money we have for donations. It looks like there is a large number for a relatively small allocation or sum to be divided. But I would say give something. I'm less familiar with those I designated medium priority.

(Q4) I can't be of much help in rating the suggested charities. I am only familiar with one of the 14 listed. Suggest such a listing be accompanied with a brief statement showing how they fit in with the 7 Unitarian principles...I think the list presented is very weak on supporting causes to save the world, those causes often coincide with what fundamentalists denounce, for example, family planning. Some additional causes might concern the environment.

Few (substantially) rather than small donations to many.

(Q4) I should divide our giving into two categories– one local charities to not only help individuals with their needs but also to boost our reputation as being church-like so we can participate in Ecumenical affairs better. The second category would be gifts to save the world. This leaves out traditional non-local charities which we can hope traditional churches will take care of.

(Q4) All the above [charities] have some merit – maybe a donation to United Way would cover those in Baldwin Co. How about any ecological/environmental organizations or Zero Population – what issues do we need to address? Maybe like in Ashville UU there should be a Sunday once a month to split donation dish with organization named?

(Q5) Give a choice – suggested donations, regular and plus size: \$6 to support cause=regular, \$12 to support cause=plus size. Some concerts should be free. Some concerts should ask for higher donations (up to \$20, perhaps) if they cost us more or in case of paid musicians.

(Q5) I would leave it free will, trusting to the generosity of the audience.

(Q5) As a coffee house?

(Q5) \$10 suggested. They can always give less. \$7 is awkward.

(General) I think the Fellowship is wonderful just as it is now.

I appreciate the time and effort members and friends put into responding to this survey. Survey results will be presented to the Fellowship Board for consideration. Thank you for your interest and candor.

– Ruth Geraci, President

Your Social Action Committee Reports

Welcome to November. This is the Season of Giving when the gloom of changing weather contrasts with the joy of holidays. As your Social Action Committee has struggled with the issue of how to harness our giving capabilities, we've decided that direct service locally and support for organizations that reach out to the larger world is a logical approach for our efforts.

Locally, our continuing contributions to Ecumenical Ministries brought the following letter from Sally Deane, Emergency Aid Coordinator to this Fellowship:

Dear Friends of EMI: Thank you very much for your recent donations to our food pantry. We truly appreciate all that you are doing to help keep our pantry stocked. Your recent donation was an extra blessing since the months of September and October always see a great demand on our pantry."

We'll be continuing our food drive for EMI in spades through the next two months and will appreciate your thoughtfulness in contributing all you can in nutritious canned or packaged foods (and a few treats!). The brown wicker giving box is in the foyer.

Especially for the holidays, we will again support the Unitarian Universalist Social Committee's GUEST AT YOUR TABLE initiative (Nov. 18 through Jan.6, 2008) to benefit Human Rights and Social Justice causes. This is an example of using organizations organized for the purpose of addressing the greatest of social causes around the world. UUSC supports: 1) Advancing economic justice; 2) Defending civil liberties & access to democratic processes; 3) Promoting environmental justice; 4) Protecting rights in humanitarian crisis, locally demonstrated by help to Katrina victims. There will be more details at our Sunday, November 4 program. This is a cause that can be supported by holiday giving OR by UUSC membership for their continuing work.

Locally, FUF will become a sponsor of the Eastern Shore Peace Network being revived by

will be the annual Fairhope Christmas parade.

Regionally, Alabama Arise Citizens' Policy Project (AACPP) sends notice of an Equal Voice for America's Families campaign, to bring 3,500 people from across the South to Birmingham in Sept. 2008 to announce a national family platform for change. Information is available on www.caseygrants.org/equalvoice2008.

At AACPP's 9/15/07 annual meeting, discussion of priorities ... highlighted the sometimes tough call between long-haul commitment and legislative feasibility. In addition to tax reform and budget adequacy... (identified as permanent priorities'),... representatives placed the following issues on the 2008 agenda: 1) a moratorium on the death penalty, 2) fair and adequate Katrina relief, 3) constitutional reform, 4) environmental justice, and 5) a state investment in asset-building for low-income Alabamians ... these priorities to drive legislative advocacy work around two other issues - money & politics (a package of governmental transparency proposals) and public transportation.

There's a lot to be done. Here's to the strength of our Unitarian community!

FUF Board Reviews Long Range Plan

FUF Board members recently reviewed the first year of our Long Range Plan, approved by the FUF membership in 2006. It was noted that our publicity has been very successful in attracting visitors interested in our programs. The efforts of the Social Action Committee have contributed positively to our long range plan for increasing membership through community involvement in charitable and social causes. FUF is doing well in its plan of finding new ways to embrace diversity and expression of diverse beliefs through various discussion groups, including the new Thursday Night Colloquium. Another long range plan was for the establishment of a Building Expansion Fund. After some discussion, the Board approved establishing a Building Expansion Fund for

Oxfam: An Economic and Social Justice Initiative

The following is part of a series to introduce FUF members and friends to the many charitable causes that request our donations each year. Information is provided by our Social Action Committee. This article was written by Ann Chapman.

Oxfam America, an affiliate of Oxfam International, has 22 new items this holiday season in addition to its online alternative gift catalog. See Oxfam's website which is www.OxfamAmericaUnwrapped.com. How about a dozen baby chicks, mosquito nets, or perhaps a life jacket to help Oxfam finance their support to severely impoverished people – or the planting of 50 trees to support the environment? (The mosquito nets and life jackets are \$18 each, chicks \$40 per dozen.)

What IS Oxfam? Noted for attempts to eradicate world hunger, Oxfam is a wrap-around global organization with affiliates in America, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hong Kong, Spain, Ireland, New Zealand, Netherlands, and Quebec; links in Japan and India; and an observer group in Mexico. Their web site informs that its top agenda items is dedication to fighting poverty and injustice, working toward a world in which people can live with dignity, with basic needs met, basic rights respected, and the ability to control their own lives.

Oxfam's economic and social justice initiative is dedicated to helping people in poverty exercise their right to: 1) a sustainable livelihood, i.e. food, income, dignified working conditions, protection of natural resources on which they depend; 2) basic social services, i.e. access to basic care, clean water, education; 3) life & security, i.e. reduction in suffering due to armed conflict & natural disasters, personal or communal violence & forced displacement; 4) be heard, i.e. achieve civil and political rights & influence decisions affecting their lives; 5) an identity, i.e. equal rights & status for women and others oppressed or

social justice, putting partnership at the core of their work; at the same time they work toward significantly improving the quality, efficiency & coherence of their work.

A major independent 2006 evaluation of their *Promises to Keep* initiative covering trade, education, humanitarian response and gender was positive. Total program expenditures 2005/2006 (defined as costs of long & short-term development & humanitarian response projects, exclusive of management costs) were \$638.25 million.

A great deal of detailed information re spending and programs is available on the web-site, Oxfam

Mid-South Neighbors

Mid-South District (MSD) is our neighborhood of UU congregations – 33 congregations in Alabama, Mississippi, most of Georgia, and parts of Florida and Tennessee. We want to be good neighbors for each other. We also want to keep growing Unitarian Universalism, and we are gently accomplishing that in MSD.

New things happen all the time that are part of our growing story. For example, this fall the website for MSD – www.msduua.org – was re-done! Pay a visit and you'll find, under the Congregations' tab, a map that locates our congregations and links to their websites. Under Resources' you'll find tons of resources! The Home' tab has vital information; the home page has current stories and key links.

A big piece of news this year is the arrival of a new congregation – the UU Congregation of Tupelo, Mississippi! We congratulate them and welcome them to Mid-South and the UUA!

It's great to be a neighbor in the community that is MSD, and great to stay in touch!

– Eunice Benton, Mid-South District Executive
9 County Rd. 1058, Oxford, Mississippi 38655

Celebrate Thanksgiving with UUs!

Thanksgiving Day will be celebrated at the FUF again this year! Kris Lindquist has agreed to lead the planning for this gathering, which was well-attended last year. Please let her know if you plan to attend, so there can be an accurate head count. Sign-ups will be available for contributions of food. More details will be

FUF Buys Water Buffalo

Bert Brun, active in your Social Action Committee, sends this report:

The FUF sent \$250 to Heifer International for purchase of a water buffalo to be used in a Philippines village. The organization has several ongoing animal dispersal projects in three provinces in that nation. A typical project provides a draft animal to each of 48 families. Participants are trained to agro-livestock technologies and managerial-leadership skills. Women are leaders in the projects, and female heads of households are given priority for water buffalo (also known as carabao) dispersal.

As for the animals themselves, females produce an average two gallons of milk a day, providing both food and income (milk beyond a family's needs is sold at market). In addition, the powerful, placid animals can plow through mud that stalls tractors, feed on crop residues and yield manure-fertilizer, also hauling cartloads of crops to market. One recent buffalo had three calves which were passed on to other needy families.

NEWSLETTER

Submit calendar events or articles specific to the Fairhope Unitarian Fellowship for publication one week prior to the last Sunday of each month. 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:

uuruthg@gulftel.com

EDITOR/PUBLISHER: Ruth Geraci

DISTRIBUTION: Diane Ehlers and Ruth

Allbritton

Mark Your Calendar

Thur., Nov. 1: Nonfiction Book Group, 9:30 a.m.

Thur., Nov. 1: Men's Harmony Chorus, 3 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 1: Thursday Night Colloquium
Fundamentalism, 7 p.m.

Fri., Nov. 2: Bring art (see article p. 3)

Sat., Nov. 3: Art Reception, 3-5 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 3: Documentary, *Votes for Sale*, 7 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 6: FUF Board meeting, 9:30 a.m.

Tue., Nov. 6: Knitters' Group, 1-3 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 6: FUF Choir rehearsal, 3-4 p.m.

Wed., Nov. 7: Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-4:30 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 8: Author Discussion Group, 9:30 a.m.

Thur., Nov. 8: Men's Harmony Chorus, 3 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 8: Thursday Night Colloquium,
Indoctrination, 7-8:30 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 10: Game Night, 6:30-9 p.m.

Sun., Nov. 11: Social Action Committee, 12:15 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 13: Knitters' Group, 1-3 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 13: FUF Choir rehearsal, 3-4 p.m.

Wed., Nov. 14: Bird Walk, 8 a.m.

Wed., Nov. 14: Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-4:30 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 15: Nonfiction Book Group, 9:30 a.m.

Thur., Nov. 15: Men's Harmony Chorus, 3 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 15: Thursday Night Colloquium,
Theocracy, 7-8:30 p.m.

Sat., Nov. 17: *The Great Muppet Caper*, 7 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 20: Knitters' Group, 1-3 p.m.

Tues., Nov. 20: FUF Choir rehearsal, 3-4 p.m.

Wed., Nov. 21: Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-4:30 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 22: Thanksgiving dinner at FUF.

Sat., Nov. 24: Game Night, 6:30-9 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 27: Knitters' Group, 1-3 p.m.

Tue., Nov. 27: FUF Choir rehearsal, 3-4 p.m.

Wed., Nov. 28: Back Porch Folk Singers, 3-4:30 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 29: Men's Harmony Chorus, 3 p.m.

Thur., Nov. 29: Thursday Night Colloquium,
Intolerance 7-8:30 p.m.